

Some significant initiatives in IPR

The recent news item, 'Innovation chain and CSIR'¹ provided a comprehensive picture of the IPR initiatives at home and abroad. Here, I attempt to add a few more points.

Box 1 in the news item on patent information should also include IPR Unit, Indian Council of Medical Research (V. Ramalingaswami Bhawan, Ansari Nagar, Post Box 4911, New Delhi 110 029; Tel.: 011-26589897; Telefax: 011-26589258; e-mail: kanikaram_s@yahoo.com).

The Intellectual Property Rights Policy of the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi was released in May 2002.

Intellectual Property Training Institute, Patent Information System, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (CGO Complex, C Block, 3rd Floor, Seminary

Hills, Nagpur 440 006) conducts training programmes on IPR of one-day, two-days, three-days and five-days duration, with moderate fees of Rs 150, 500, 750 and 1250, respectively.

Science graduates may officially acquire the status of 'patent agent' (qualifying examination under section 126 of the Patents Act, 1970) by appearing in two theory papers [(i) Patent Acts and Rules, and (ii) drafting and interpretation of Patent specification and other documents] followed by *viva-voce*. The written exams are scheduled to be held on 11 and 12 November 2003. (A demand draft of Rs 700 drawn in favour of the Controller of Patent, payable at Kolkata should be sent to the Controller of Patent, Patent Office (Head Office), Nizam Palace, 2nd MSO Building, 5-7 Floor, 234/4 Acharya Jagdish Bose Road, Kolkata 700 020; Tel.:

033-2474401-3; Fax: 033-2473851; e-mail: patentin@vsnl.com).

Similarly, one can enroll in the free-of-cost six-week distance learning package 'General Course on Intellectual Property' of the World Intellectual Property Organizations.

1. Nirupa Sen, *Curr. Sci.*, 2003, **85**, 570-574.

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Indian scientific journals and senior scientists

Many articles/letters about the standard of scientific journals in India have been published in *Current Science*. In a recent issue, we see another excellent letter from Ravishankar¹. The author writes that low-quality science is being published by 'many journals in this country'. He (like many others) does not name any such journal. Authors who criticize Indian journals should also name some 'low-quality journals'. It would help the younger scientists to avoid publishing in such journals.

Though we discredit Indian journals, we never ask: Are all journals, which are being published abroad of good quality? Does it make sense to join in the race to publish in journals having high impact factors? Are they presenting the real picture of affairs? In this context I suggest to readers of *Current Science* a critical commentary from Lawrence in *Nature*². According to him: 'Scientists are increasingly desperate to publish in a few top journals and are wasting time and energy manipulating their manuscripts and court-

ing editors. As a result, the objective presentation of work, the accessibility of articles and the quality of research itself are being compromised.'

In response to Lawrence's article some letters were published in *Nature* (2003, **423**, 479-480; 585). Barcinski from Brazil argues that 'the policy of considering "the journal to be more important than the scientific message" is having an even more devastating effect on science in developing countries'³ as the 'accountability culture' has been imported by these countries and its validity has not been tested in financial and social contexts of importing countries. Obviously, there is no definite solution to Indian problems. Every country has to find its own way in the prevailing social, political and economic conditions.

After discussing the role of editors, reviewers and authors, Lawrence has a few suggestions for the senior scientists: 'It is we older, well-established scientists who have to act to change things. We should make these points on committees

for grants and jobs, and should not be so desperate to push our papers into the leading journals. We cannot expect younger scientists to endanger their future by making sacrifices for the common good, at least not before we do.'

I hope that some of our senior scientists will follow Lawrence's advice and set good examples for their juniors.

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1. Ravishankar, J. P., *Curr. Sci.*, 2003, **85**, 565.
 2. Lawrence, P. A., *Nature*, 2003, **422**, 259-261.
 3. Barcinski, M. A., *Nature*, 2003, **423**, 480.
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