

## CORRESPONDENCE

### CONCERN ABOUT INDIAN SCIENCE

Recently two articles by B.P. Radhakrishna (*JGSI*, Feb. 2010 and June 2010) and one on BPR (*Curr. Sci.*, 10 May 2010) have appeared in quick succession which reveal a deep concern about Indian Science and Earth science in particular. Looking at these three it appears that seeds of elaboration were present in his article on 'Indian Nobel Laureates' in the Feb. issue, where BPR characterise Raman as the one and the only Indian Nobel Laureat scientist (in his prestine pure criterion he does not spare even Prof. S. Chandrasehkar and V. Ramakrishnan), he supports his opinion by "in his education he owed nothing to direct contact with physicists outside India" and "he was guided by intensive enquiry without support from sophisticated instrument or from outside experts". This is corroborated by Dr. S. Viswanathan's observation that "Raman warned us against borrowing idea from west". BPR notes further that with a pocket spectrometer and reflected sunlight providing a beam he gave science a most powerful tool" and as told by Dr. S. Viswanathan, Raman himself advised us "not to be carried away by the sophisticated instruments used in USA or UK". BPR emphasizes that because of "the desire to observe and understand that which no one else has ever observed or understood before" which is corroborated by Dr. S. Viswanathan as he writes that "Raman himself warned us to contribute something truly original and not proposed by someone else previously". Further the comments of Raman to Dr. S. Viswanathan that "when will we have our own India made camera". Was it only camera or perhaps symbolizes much deeper and wider yearning of Sir C.V. Raman on the state of science, technology and Industry in India.

One of the directions, as BPR puts, Raman himself elaborated through "it is not the maturity of knowledge associated with age and experience but freshness of the outlook which is natural attribute of youth" and for this BPR

points out that "the principle duty of older generation of scientific area is to discover such talent and genius in the younger generation and provide ample opportunity for its free expression" But in the June issue (*JGSI*), he appears to pick the same thread to point out that "Societies (Scientific) do not seem to bring emphasis on young talent and providing them with ample scope for development". The question is how do we recognize young talent. At present, as BPR himself realizes, it is totally dependent on the modern scientometry, where citation index (CI) and impact factor (IF) decide the merit and quality of a study or paper. The method saves much of the precious time of the eminent experts/peers/committees and also the labour in digging into the paper and finding. Today in most interviews it is asked why this work has been published in national journal implying that it is of much inferior quality, otherwise it would have been published in the high impact factor international journal. The actual contribution implies as BPR defines: "What is the science part? What new ideas projected? Were new procedures outlined? Were new advances made?" But it is taken for granted that the western peers of high impact journal takes care of these critereon. This apparently seems to imply: (1) the peer review of the national journals is not up to and/or robust and reliable enough (in other words even after more than six decades of independence we have failed to produce a peer- review-system, i.e. of international quality, and can earn the confidence of the eminent and top scientists of our country, or (2) quite subtle it might indicate that we have not yet gained the intellectual freedom (or independence) or confidence to judge what is really good science and hence we still depend upon what the western scientist say about the quality of our work.

*Email: upen0106@gmail.com*

U. RAVAL