

GUEST EDITORIAL

Status of Chemistry Research in India

VINOD K SINGH

Department of Chemistry, IIT Kanpur 208 016, India

The Indian National Science Academy (INSA) is an Indian adhering body of the International Council of Science Union (ICSU)-non-governmental organisation promoting international scientific activities in different branches of science. There are several National Committees of INSA coordinating ICSU activities in the country. Each committee was asked to prepare status of research work done in India in their domain during the last decade or so. The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) is a body of ICSU that coordinates activities related with Chemical Sciences. As the Chairperson of the National Committee of INSA-IUPAC, we contacted experts in various areas of Chemistry to write a report on the status of Chemistry research. The current issue of PINSA is the outcome from 12 such experts.

If one looks at research output in terms of quality and quantity with respect to funding, chemists are doing very well in the country. This is apparent from the large number of quality research publications from the country that have appeared in various Chemistry

journals. This is due to better infrastructure for research and establishment of several new academic institutes. It is expected that the full potential of these institutes, like IISERs and the new generation of IITs will be seen in the next 4-5 years.

The Nature Index gives its ranking of institutes and countries, by counting research papers in 68 high quality journals. India ranks 13th globally overall and 8th in Chemistry in index global ranking. In other words, Chemistry contributes more in the global overall ranking (close to half), making it a top performer among all the disciplines.¹

India's research output is comparable to other nations, despite our spending on R&D being low (~ 0.9% of GDP). But, a concern is that a smaller country like South Korea is doing better than us. We will have to increase critical mass of researchers in various areas of academic institutions across the country. We will have to strengthen our Universities by providing better infrastructure and quality manpower for research and governance.

¹Arunachalam S, Madhan M, Gunasekaran S *Current Science* **112** 1330-1339 and references cited therein.