



Figure 2. *Pteropus giganteus* on a tree branch.

adapted to human habitation. In Tamil Nadu we observed ca. 20 colonies of these bat roosting in the trees on roadside and the bats are well accustomed to the din of vehicular movement. Flying foxes usually have wide foraging area ranging from 20 to 50 km (ref. 7). Figure 1 in

Mahato *et al.*¹ is not the Indian flying fox *P. giganteus* (Figure 2), but a medium-sized fruit bat, *Rousettus* sp. or *Cynopterus* sp., which is not a flying fox. This error in the identity of the species is to be corrected. *Prosopis juliflora* is one of the food plants of *Cynopterus sphinx*⁸. The flying fox *P. giganteus* mostly roost in the canopy of large trees and cutting these trees surely poses a threat to the roosting colony of bats and the absence of bats will surely affect the beauty of Hamirsir Lake.

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Test exams and limitless human mind

Sangode¹ highlighted numerous entrance exams imposed by UGC (NET, SLET, SET, GATE) that one needs to qualify to register for a Ph D in the Indian universities². It is likely that these preliminary examinations may help eliminate academically weak students, but may curb original thinking.

Qualifying in these examinations should not be the stand-alone criterion for selecting candidates. Zare³ notes that in India much emphasis is placed on the number of publications as opposed to the quality and originality of the work in assessing the value of an individual

researcher. Sangode¹ argues that merely passing the entrance exams does not test the ability of a researcher to generate original and quality data.

I believe Indian science lacks original thinking and to address this problem, a rigorous training at the school level is required. The history of science provides several examples of eminent personalities who have been free thinkers. For example, Kalman Vanky, a Romanian physician and author of *Smut Fungi of the World*, developed a keen interest in the study of smut fungi, after attending a lecture on it. He initially studied them as

a hobby, but later went on to write monographs (six volumes) on the subject.

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