

## CORRESPONDENCE

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published in *Current Science*<sup>2</sup>. Perception that the Chilika is affected only by the natural causes of siltation, in our opinion, is not correct.

We believe that the research should be need based. Our finding, in the present context draws attention of CDA to initiate further steps. It is noteworthy to mention that such important information is of greater economic value than complacency that Chilika is unaffected by pollution.

We may add that there is no earlier report of PHC in Chilika Lake in any of the

reports of CDA, though more than 2000 motorized boats are operating in the lagoon<sup>3</sup>. So the possibilities of oil pollution need careful study. The floating oil residues have been observed by the sampling team and we have duly reported it in *Current Science* with photographic evidence, so that preventive measures could be taken by the responsible authorities for suitable management of this internationally recognized Ramsar Site.

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1. Sahu, B. K., Pati, P. and Panigrahy, R. C., *J. Coastal Conserv.*, 2014, **18**(3), 285–297.

2. Sahu, B. K., Pati, P. and Panigrahy, R. C., *Curr. Sci.*, 2013, **104**(9), 1133–1134.

3. Chilika Development Authority (CDA), Govt of Odisha, India, Socio-economic condition of fisheries in and around Chilika, JICA-CDA Report, 2009.

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## Plagiarism – a menace in science

‘Combating plagiarism in scientific research’ by Ramasesha<sup>1</sup> is thought provoking and timely when there is an increasing influx of publications which contain materials directly or indirectly obtained from uncited sources or copied verbatim. Earlier, paper writing could require considerable time and energy and the results or writing thereof had rarely a conflict of interests. The originality has become a suspicious phenomenon in the light of present system of easy collecting and pasting information. I fully endorse the ideas of Ramasesha that there should be awareness about the copy-right issues at all levels and a system of rewarding the candidates with original writing to encourage a generation of original thinkers and scientific writers. During the eighties, students had to sit in libraries for hours together. Before initiating the research problem, a thorough knowledge about its information from the country concerned as well as world was required. One had to regularly visit library or oth-

erwise would miss the latest information. The students had to unearth the literature from diverse journals, magazines which used to involve peeping into all issues of a journal and for different years. Sometimes searching 20 issues of a journal would provide only one reference of relevance to research problem. The problem used to be so taxing that in the evening it would appear as if you have been working in a provision store. Reference cards had to be filled after thoroughly going through the journal. That could rarely create problem of plagiarism as one had to pick up the concept and then express in his own language. The students had to produce hand-written material and that could continue for many of writings till the thesis or manuscript was approved for final typing. There was no system of cut and paste and the manual typewriting could require retyping of entire page even for a small mistake. Unfortunately, the libraries are now losing their importance. Reading or writing has

become a thing of past and there is no retention of knowledge in younger generations. The present system, no doubt provides an easy access to the information but at the same time has serious drawbacks. It is unfortunate that even the small kids depend upon internet cut and paste procedure to produce school assignments. Thesis or papers submitted from each institution need to be certified that they do not contain any plagiarized material. There is race for producing more papers for which easy material is available.

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1. Ramasesha, S., *Curr. Sci.*, 2014, **107**(1), 11.

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