Indian science crisis of performance vs fakeness

This is in response to the contribution by Akhila1. At the outset, science in India and especially in independent India was promoted by government funding. The exceptions (privately funded) though they mattered most, were too few to be counted. While government funding made it possible to expand, it also brought with it certain elements which were counter to scientific institutions and the very pursuit of science. Since the beginning was made on government (bureaucratic) lines with time it acquired frightening proportions. With the advent of RTI and Whistle Blower Protection Act it has now become possible to take a fresh look at the whole system. Science establishments are under so much authoritarian regulations, that in spite of the awareness of all the working scientists about the patent drama enacted by one of the most clever science managers in the history of Indian science, it remained unquestioned for so many years until Jayaram2 who is one of the most concerned observers of Indian science brought it into the open though a little too late. This drama was started in the early nineties and finally got exposed only in July 2006, more than a decade after it got going. This exposure

Rediscovery of Pandanus unguifer Hook. f. (Pandanaceae): A RET species from its type-locality after 75 years

Pandanus unguifer Hook. f. – a dwarf endemic species was described by J. D. Hooker in Flora of British India in 1878 from Mungpo locality below Surlur (British Sikkim region) which now is under Darjeeling District, West Bengal, India. However, Hooker could not come across the male inflorescence of the plant. During the field survey in eastern Himalayan region, the first author came across a small population consisting of only 10–15 plants growing in the bed of a streamlet in the Cinchona plantation at Mungpo locality. A perusal of the literature revealed that the type specimen collected by Hooker was also from the same locality but, of course, there were no Cinchona plantations at that time. A scrutiny of the herbarium specimens housed in different important herbaria, like CAL, LBG, BSHC, ASSAM, K and Index Seminum of different botanical gardens of India revealed that the species was never recorded from any other locality. A few saplings were brought and grown at the Indian Botanic Garden, Howrah, all of which survived and produced flowers. This is the only Pandanus species that produces flowers in potted condition and hence, is of ornamental value. The flowers (flowering during August) are mildly fragrant and creamy white on branched inflorescence. The spathes encircling the inflorescence are also cream coloured. The inflorescence remains fresh up to five days. The plants are locally called as ‘Sano-Tarika’ (Sano – dwarf; Tarika – Pandanus). The female plants of this species are quite common but yet to be introduced away from their type locality.


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