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Editorial

The Editorial Board of the **Indian Journal of Natural Sciences (IJONS)** extends its warm greetings to our readers, authors, reviewers, scientists, educators, and research scholars. It is with immense pride that we acknowledge one of the most inspiring scientific achievements of the year—India's outstanding performance at the **56th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO) 2026**, where all five members of the



Indian team secured Gold Medals, placing India among the world's leading nations in physics education and scientific excellence. This remarkable accomplishment reflects the strength of India's scientific education system, the unwavering dedication of students, and the invaluable mentorship provided through the National Olympiad Programme.

On behalf of the **Indian Journal of Natural Sciences**, we convey our heartfelt congratulations to the five young Gold Medalists, their parents, teachers, mentors, the **Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education (HBCSE)**, the **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)**, the **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)**, the Olympiad coordinators, and every individual who contributed to this extraordinary national accomplishment. Their collective commitment has demonstrated that sustained investment in scientific education, talent identification, and mentorship can position India among the foremost scientific nations of the world.

Scientific excellence is not measured solely by international awards; rather, it is reflected in a nation's ability to cultivate curiosity, encourage critical thinking, promote evidence-based reasoning, and transform knowledge into meaningful innovations that benefit society. The success achieved at IPhO 2026 serves as a powerful reminder that India's future scientific leadership will depend upon our continuous commitment to strengthening research culture from the school level through higher education and beyond.

As India advances towards the vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047**, scientific research and technological innovation must become integral components of national development. Emerging fields including artificial intelligence, quantum science, biotechnology, climate science, renewable energy, advanced materials, space technology, precision agriculture, computational biology, and sustainable engineering demand highly skilled researchers capable of addressing increasingly complex global challenges. These disciplines require not only advanced infrastructure but also a vibrant ecosystem that nurtures creativity, interdisciplinary collaboration, ethical scientific practice, and lifelong learning.

Particular emphasis must be placed on empowering **young innovators** across the country. Today's school students represent tomorrow's researchers, inventors, entrepreneurs, and scientific leaders. Educational institutions should encourage inquiry-based learning, experimental science, innovation competitions, research internships, patent awareness programmes, startup incubation initiatives, and multidisciplinary project-based education.

Young minds flourish when provided with opportunities to question established ideas, explore scientific problems, and develop practical solutions that contribute to sustainable national progress.

*Equally important is the inclusion of **rural students** within India's expanding scientific ecosystem. Rural communities possess enormous intellectual potential that often remains underrepresented due to disparities in educational infrastructure and access to advanced scientific resources. Establishing district-level research laboratories, rural innovation hubs, mobile science laboratories, digital learning platforms, community science centres, and mentorship networks can significantly enhance scientific participation among students from underserved regions. Scientific opportunity should never be determined by geography; every talented student deserves access to quality research education irrespective of socioeconomic background.*

The research community also bears an important responsibility in promoting scientific literacy and responsible innovation. High-quality scientific publications provide not only validated knowledge but also inspiration for future investigations. Journals serve as permanent repositories of scientific progress, fostering collaboration across disciplines and connecting researchers worldwide. Rigorous peer review, research integrity, reproducibility, transparency, and ethical publication practices remain fundamental pillars of scientific advancement and public trust.

*The **Indian Journal of Natural Sciences** remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting excellence in multidisciplinary scientific research. We continue to encourage the publication of original investigations, innovative methodologies, interdisciplinary collaborations, review articles, case studies, and emerging technologies that address regional, national, and global scientific challenges. We particularly welcome contributions that bridge the gap between fundamental research and societal applications, encouraging innovations that improve environmental sustainability, healthcare, agriculture, biodiversity conservation, energy security, and technological development.*

We also strongly advocate greater participation of undergraduate students, postgraduate scholars, doctoral researchers, early-career scientists, and young faculty members in scholarly publication. Scientific writing, research communication, and international collaboration are essential components of modern research careers, and journals play a pivotal role in mentoring emerging researchers through constructive peer review and dissemination of quality science.

The remarkable achievement of India's young physicists should inspire every educational institution to invest further in scientific talent development. It should encourage policymakers to strengthen research infrastructure, motivate educators to cultivate scientific curiosity, inspire parents to support inquiry-driven learning, and empower students to pursue careers in science with confidence and determination. Scientific progress is ultimately a collective national endeavour that flourishes through collaboration among government, academia, research institutions, industry, and society.

As Editor-in-Chief, I sincerely congratulate the distinguished medal winners, their families, dedicated teachers, scientific mentors, HBCSE, TIFR, the Department of Atomic Energy, and all supporting institutions for bringing immense pride to our nation. May this extraordinary achievement inspire millions of young Indians to embrace scientific inquiry, pursue research with integrity, and contribute innovative solutions for the advancement of humanity.

*The Editorial Board of the **Indian Journal of Natural Sciences** reaffirms its unwavering commitment to promoting scientific excellence, encouraging responsible research, supporting young innovators, empowering rural scientific talent, and providing a global platform for impactful scientific discoveries. Together, let us strengthen India's research ecosystem and build a scientifically enlightened, innovation-driven, and sustainable future for generations to come.*

Editor-in-Chief
IJONS

Cover page image : *Neomarica gracilis* (Herb.) Sprague, Family : Iridaceae /
Common Name: Walking Iris, Apostle Plant.
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