Energy requirements are the loudest cry of the day at global level and developing countries like India are more starving for any such energy venture which appears relatively lesser eco-environmental polluter. In view of ample availability of few large rivers in India the planners of Govt. of India advocated to go for Hydro-power projects, almost immediately following the beginning of our five year plan systems of development and assessment of growth and illusive prosperity, right at the dawn of Nehru era in the socio-political and industrialization history of this country. A number of massive cement concrete structures were erected midway of river flows. We still remember that at the beginning of the World famous Bhakra Nanagl Dam Pt. Nehru very emotionally said that such creations are the Temples of Modern India. We all believed in it and pursued to follow the, Mahajano yen gatah sa Pantha, dictum and spread networks of mini, midi to large Dams, where ever possible. No doubt these structure fed us with our ever rising hunger of power, energy and irrigation, besides potable water to little extent. The famous green revolution of our country has been a contribution of many such Hydro-power dams.

However, as we grew in our experiences, the public became more aware of their rights and basic requirements and ecological awareness spread far and wide, not only in India but all over the world, we also turned conscious that creation of grand dams was not the most desirable solution of power, energy, irrigation and potable water requirements. It is interesting to recall that decision to construct massive water reservoirs by our planners was our imitation of the then prevailing western and Russian model of developmental requirements. It was very obvious, ours having a newly acquired in-experienced democracy. We could have never so easily opted for thermal and Nuclear Energies, on account of various solid reasons.

Among myriads of options which became possible and eco-friendly to our biosphere, for a number of reasons (right or wrong) Hydro-power projects attracted highest attention of our planners at state, central as well as peoples participation level. Consequently even in a small and newly born states like Uttarakhand as many as three hundred hydro-power projects have been conceived, constructed or are under construction and at various stages in pipe line. During this journey of our quest of energy and irrigation sources one of the greatest controversy banged at national as well a international level, on the name of Tehri Hydro-power Project (developed in the state of Uttar Pradesh now in the geographical area of new state of Uttarakhand). The reasons of the high blown controversies were myriad. For people it was a question of evacuation of their mother soil, besides rehabilitation of evacuees, which still remains an issue despite almost forty years of its initiation. For geologists it was a question of Tehri Dam being constructed in a very highly sensitive seismic zone of mid Himalayan belt. Then the Dam took almost thirty years, before it could start generation of partial of our energy requirements. The exorbitant cost, which largely financed from foreign resources, also remained an issue.

Similarly there came the controversy of Narmda Sarovar Dam. It too became a hot national issue crossing the national boundaries even, at least to be a question of ecological aspects. And more recently planning of about
250 mini to large hydro-power projects in a small state of Uttarakhand has critically attracted the attention of all concerned viz. politicians, educationists, environmentalists, seismologists, geologists, economists, sociologists, psychologists, religious leaders, biologists, taxonomists and hydrologists. As many as about two dozen dams are mid way of construction, while other about 225 are in pipe line. The controversy is very hot.

It is at this juncture the Book entitled, "Economics of River Flows : Lessons from Dam Removals in America, authored by : Dr. Bharat Jhunjhunwala, has been published.

The book contents are dived in five gross sections, entitled:

I. Why Dams are being removed in America : It contains two chapters
II. Examples of Dam removal in America : This section has six chapters.
III. Cost power analysis of hydropower dams : It has three chapters.
IV. Environmental impacts of hydropower Dams: It is divided in five chapter and
V. Economic values of free flow of rivers. It has three chapters.

Besides the Introduction, bibliography due indexing etc. etc and a number of tables and few photographs of some important Dams of the west, mainly America.

The account given by the author is real field based and mostly obtained and contributed through his personal contacts of eminent scientists, engineers, ecologists, economists, environmentalists, social biologists and even NGOs. All sections lucidly explain the themes with strong logostics.

Each chapter is full of real site examples and statistically analyzed for cost- benefit data, where ever required, questions and their possible solutions as well as doubts and apprehension, mainly to the cause of environment, ecology, economy, bio-diversity and psychological implications, to be read between the lines. The contents of book are highly informative, knowledgeable and may appear controversial to micro-analysts of economics and bio-ecologists, besides the politicians and planners. The language is simple and highly explanatory.

After going through the contents of the book, which are coolly alarming the reader is bound to question the current validity of hydro-power projects, being envisaged at national level in general and at state of Uttarakhand level in particular. A new state like Uttarakhand which is developing faster than thought earlier, a state which boosts itself as one of the richest Hydro-power potential Energy State of the country ( besides a state of Herbo-medicinal products and a state of religio-touristic avenues and adventures ) can' should ignore or take up such controversial informative issues, remains debatable. It is indeed very hard to take up decisions on issues of development Vs ecology, pollution, human de-settlements & rehabilitations, bio-diversity disturbances, employment opportunities to revenue earnings for the poor baby state, learning to stand up and walk and run with the world. However, the issues remain open so that a safe all agreeable decisions can be approached for the betterment of people of the state in particular and a strong partner in the development of the nation in general.

The author is certainly to be credited for collection of huge data, its analysis as an economists as well as an environmentalists. His concerns are most genuine and justified, but we have to read the book, discuss it first at various levels / platforms and find out an alternatives of clean energy / power generation, employment and revenue generation, ecology and bio-diversity conservation & preservation and fully satisfying to human ethos at all strata's of our socio-cultural milieu. The book is a must read for all those who are associated with various professions related to development, growth, ecology, besides by the economists, planners, advisors and most importantly politicians of today and tomorrow.

-Editor in Chief