

An Open Letter to the Prime Minister of India from concerned Citizens (Nov 25th, 2022)

Religious Controversy created by Central Building Research Institute

A recent social media announcement from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) on a Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) project to illuminate the Vighraha of Sri Ram on Rama Navami day has caused a stir [1]. A tweet campaign initiated by a Member of the Parliament of India based on a complaint by a senior CSIR scientist and an Open letter by a Scientific Community and Scientifically Oriented Citizens registered the protest to the CBRI project [2]. As citizens of this great land we must address the religious stir caused by CBRI and the resulting protest under the banner of Science and offer evidence to solve the misunderstandings.

The highlights of the controversy

CBRI proposes to design or has designed an electro-mechanical apparatus that will keep adjusting to the Sunlight so that the Sunrays reach the inner sanctum on the Luni-Solar date of Ram Navami at Ayodhya Ram Mandir. Illuminating a Vighraha on certain religious dates is a common sight throughout the land that is Bharat. The reasons for and benefits of such illumination are not widely known. So, it is construed as ancient engineering marvels and extravagant palatial showcases of a belief system. However, the Upanishads and other scriptures explain the benefits of these nodes of time for a culturally refined way of life in tune with nature. These scriptures also provide the spiritual reasoning for shining the natural Sunlight in various temples [3]. The CBRI electro-mechanical apparatus design for illuminating an object of worship on a Luni-Solar Calendar date does not seem to align with any scriptural teaching. CBRI should be required to provide such a reference if they disagree with this statement.

The comments in the Open Letter, cited earlier, indicate that the scientists have not studied the experience-based religious reasons for the Sunlight illumination of a temple complex. If so, a systematic, unbiased study must establish why a well-reasoned practice is not scientific for the comments in the Open Letter to be credible.

Evidence of Religious concepts that helps solve the misunderstandings

One of the foundational principles for the illumination of the Vighraha in temples is the concept of an internal celestial sphere associated with the human body. The internal celestial and internal celestial events are explained in identical terms to the external celestial sphere [3]. Certain nodes of seasonal times of the external celestial sphere are conducive to experiencing the inner celestial sphere in human beings [4]. Even Ayurveda understands this aspect of nature in its practice. (Ritu Charya).

Sunlight is designed to illuminate the Vighraha on such beneficial calendar dates. It is to be noticed that the temple orientation is aligned with the position of the Sun, or the Sunlight is reflected (without a mirror) to suit the temple orientation on these special dates. It is common knowledge that a Stick (like a cricket wicket) named Shanku accurately measures the Sun's position. Advanced mathematics to calculate the motion of the Sun and to know the directions have been used for ages (Indian Circle Method).

The ancient Calendar System is Scientific

The ancient Solar Calendar of Yajur Veda is seasons based. According to Saha Commission, this ancient Vedic calendar is 'scientific' (but they chose to ignore it and recommend a national calendar system to agree with western systems) [3]. This calendar is used for the sacraments and other religious rites, even today.

A standing Example of the Vedic Calendar

We have a standing example of this season-based calendar, illuminated by the seasonal Sun that works even today in Sringeri Vidyāśāṅkara Astronomical Theater. The temple teaches seasons-based rituals, Purana stories, Yoga, and Vedanta with the dance of the Sun in the temple [3].

Suggested Next Steps

India and the world need to be taught about this unique ancient scientific astronomy that considers the season's effect on human beings. CBRI scientists should study the temple culture. Sringeri Vidyāśāṅkara Temple technology is the first logical step for this study. There are hundreds of temples with illumination on special occasions. CBRI and other agencies can spread the ancient knowledge presented in Sringeri to India and the world.



References

1] 20th November 2022, CSIR tweet.

https://twitter.com/CSIR_IND/status/1594334001392930816?s=20&t=um7RRNnrKTZWIBfD5nTckQ

<https://twitter.com/MahuaMoitra/status/1594557535125737473>

2) An Open Letter from Scientific Community and Scientifically Oriented Citizens

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeQJxEmt0pLYjcEaRAOipDbA1_Zp8dWMVt3oaJyKRtE1ZVSGw/viewform

3] Sringeri Vidyāśāṅkara Temple Astronomical Theater : A Thematic Architectural Study, Viswa Nath Sharma,

<https://indicabooks.org/books/sringeri-vidyasa%E1%B9%85kartemple-astronomical-theater/>

Please Note: This work was done by an individual over a decade and published by Indica organization as Nihswartha Seva (with no self-interest). T

4] Yogic & Vedic Heritage Festivals of Bharata (translated work of) Shri Rangapriya

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