

CORRESPONDENCE

Church and the results of scientific research. Galileo became convinced of the Copernican theory that the planets revolve about the sun and with the telescope he had built, made observations conflicting with the *Bible*. Galileo was prosecuted for heresy and spent his last years under house arrest. Similarly, Darwin's theory appeared alien to the Church.

With regard to Astrology (*Jyotisha*) and Education,

- *Jyotisha* is one of the six *Vedangas*: *Siksha* (Phonetics), *Vyakarana* (Grammar), *Chandas* (Metrics), *Nirukta* (Etymology), *Jyotisha* (Astronomy, including relevant Mathematics plus Predictive Astrology) and *Kalpa* (Rituals). For an introduction to the works of Aryabhata, Bhaskara, Varahamihira, the basics of time and the limbs of *Panchanga* (*thithi*, *nakshatra*, *yoga*, *karana* and *vara*) see ref. 1.
- The Indian conception of TIME is sophisticated. On the macrocosmic scale a *Mahayuga* is of 43,20,000 years. On the microcosmic scale, a unit of time, *Truti* (33750th part of a second), has been mentioned.
- Indian literature, such as the *Mahabharata*, abounds in astronomical data.

Studies in Ancient Indian History need this knowledge. There is a considerable knowledge base (human expertise, textbooks, journals and databases) on Astrology.

- Even subjects such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), aiming to build smart machines for tasks requiring human intelligence have been criticized. There are always believers, non-believers and social critics.
- A liberal education enables one to see the world with all its miseries, mysteries and marvels and lets him form his own mental model of the world. Acharya Sankara said '*Viswam darpana drisyamana nagari tulyam nijantargatam*' in hymn to Dakshinamurti. (A seeker questions his guru: 'We speak of things as existing and appearing? Are they true, real and what is their relationship to the ultimate truth?' The seeker is advised to see the universe existing within Him, like a city seen to exist within a mirror.)²

Scientists should avoid taking 'holier than thou' attitudes while talking of education. Science has produced nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Ethics has only been of recent concern

to Indian scientists^{3,4}. In summary, the editorial summarizes a non-existent threat to Science. (The cartoon is in poor taste.) Subjects such as Astrology have their place in the educational system. Science has enough credibility to stand on its own strengths. UGC is only fulfilling its obligation to the society at large in starting courses on Astrology. This will not have any effect on Science education in the country. The credibility and strengths of Science education will depend on the honesty and commitment of the scientists themselves.

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1. Balachandra Rao, S., *Indian Astronomy – An Introduction*, University Press, Hyderabad, 2000.
 2. Sri Sankaracharya, *Dakshinamurti Stotra*, Samata Books, Madras, 1978.
 3. Reddy, Amulya, K. N., *Curr. Sci.*, 1999, **77**, 1134.
 4. Valluri, S. R., *Curr. Sci.*, 1999, **76**, 1181.
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IF: A case of richness in poverty

It is gratifying to note that *Current Science* is rated top among the journals in India with an Impact Factor (IF) of 0.567. Undoubtedly, *Current Science* has become one of the most popular science journals in the country and I congratulate the effort that has gone on to make it so successful. However for a young reader like me, it is also

disheartening to note that the IF of *Current Science* coincides with the decimal digits of the IF of the topmost journal of the world (*Annual Review of Immunology*, IF = 47.564). Assuming the rate of increase in IF over the last decade, *Current Science* will reach the IF of the topmost journal in just about 2856 AD! I wish *Current Science* well,

and hope it reaches and inspires many more of our students.

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