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जनता शिक्षण संस्थेचे







शिवाजी विद्यापीठ,कोल्हापूर

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अखिल भारतीय अंधश्रद्धा निर्मूलन समिती,शाखा सातारा

यांच्या संयुक्त विद्यमाने आयोजित दोन दिवसीय राष्ट्रीय विज्ञान परिषद



वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण : सामाजिक जाणीवजागृती



राष्ट्रीय विज्ञान परिषद

प्राचार्य डॉ. गुरुनाथ फगरे; डॉ. विलास खंडाईत

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पहिली आवृत्ती

ऑगस्ट २०२३

सर्वाधिकार

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Fostering Scientific Temper to Sustain the Clear Stream of Reason

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Abstract :

It was Pandit Nehru who asserted the importance of science to build modern India. India has included scientific temper as a fundamental duty in the constitution. The Palampur Declaration highlights the need of fostering scientific temper in Indian society. The paper examines the role of scientific temper in cultivating reason among Indian people.

Keywords: Scientific temper, reason, superstitions

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the First Prime Minister of India, wrote:

"It is science alone that can solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening of custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, or a rich country inhabited by starving poor... Who indeed could afford to ignore science today? At every turn we have to seek its aid... The future belongs to science and those who make friends with science."

In 1976, India became the first country to include in its Constitution 'Scientific Temper with humanism' as a fundamental duty of all citizens of the country [Article 51-A(h)]. The 1981 statement clearly argues a case for 'humanity's assertion of being in charge of its destiny and not a passive victim of malevolence of stars'. It further insists: "The spirit of inquiry and the acceptance of the right to question and be questioned are fundamental in scientific temper."

Urgent steps need to be taken to stall a marked increase in public display of religious and sectarian identities, ascendance of irrational cults, glorification of obscurantist practices, religiosity and wielding of religious symbols. India suffers due to discrimination based on caste, gender and ethnic identities, perpetuated on the basis of irrational beliefs and superstitions.

The ushering in of the Internet and the World Wide Web has paved the way to reassert democratic, open, transparent and egalitarian nature of science on a much bigger scale today. However, to serve the immediate goals, in the academic and policy circles science is being replaced by 'innovation'-which is a mix of science, technology, management, marketing, organisations, and a host of other things.

Scientific Temper can be equated to application of the scientific method based on logic and evidence.

As is made clear by the Palampur Declaration, Scientific Temper is essentially a world-view, an outlook, enabling ordinary citizens to choose efficient and reliable knowledge while making decisions in their individual and social domains.

Scientific temper is the pursuit of rational inquiry.

The Palampur Declaration has also given the warning against the use of science for mitigating human needs. It makes abundantly clear how Green Revolution of the 1960s helped India succeed in warding off famines and import of food grains, but the problem of income disparities and environmental degradation emerged.

Scientific progress without scientific understanding is unthinkable.

Today, technology has been used for propagating irrational, outmoded and antiquated ideas. Today, there are several religious channels but there is not a single Indian science channel.

The Palampur Declaration "Scientific Temper Statement Revisited-2011" clearly suggests the following remedy for fostering scientific temper in Indian society:

Every one is born with the Scientific Temper. The child wants to touch, feel, experiment and explore everything on its own- the basic ingredients of Scientific Temper. However, somewhere down the line, owing to societal or traditional influences or due to the type of education being imparted in our schools, the child loses the tendency to ask questions and explore natural phenomena, leading to accept notions forced upon it without putting them through the scientific rigour. Therefore, Scientific Temper needs to be incorporated into the school curriculum at all stages so that the spirit of scientific inquiry can be inculcated from a young age.

Rabindranath Tagore, the Noble Laureate, has given us the vision of modern India in one of his poems which reads:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high
Where knowledge is free
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
Where words come out from the depth of truth
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way
Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit

Where the mind is led forward by thee
Into ever-widening thought and action
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

In this poem, Tagore asserts that India should not lose its clear stream of reason into the dreary desert sand of dead habit.

Thus, it must be concluded that scientific temper is the only important means to sustain the clear stream of reason and prevent it from getting lost into the world of superstitions and black magic.

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