EDITORIAL

Let me begin by wishing the readers of Physics Education a happy new year.

A little before the turn of the new year, we were informed that a physical quantity of both fundamental and practical interest, the weight of one kilogram, has been redefined in terms of fundamental constants such as the Planck's constant. There was also some sentimentality associated with this change. The block of metal that served as the International Prototype Kilogram and maintained in a laboratory vault in Paris has served for nearly a century. With this change, all such standards based on physical objects have been dispensed with in favour of definitions in terms of fundamental constants of nature. This should not surprise a physicist since it is known that these constants do not change over long timescales, for most part. The new standard for kilogram has become dependent on the definitions of second and meter through the Planck's constant. After nearly 130 years, the International Prototype Kilogram is set for retirement.

One more year is born and one more Indian Science Congress has taken place. This is an annual gathering of Indian scientists that started almost 106 years ago. Irrespective of its merits in the contemporary context, it has unfortunately attracted attention for all the wrong reasons. It is indeed sad that some academics have attempted to pass off ancient literature as proof of the existence of advanced scientific knowledge. There is a lot in ancient Indian science to be justifiably proud of, from the invention of zero to relatively recent Madhava-Gregory Series. On the other hand, the ancient Indian literature is undeniably a treasure trove of literary merit, stories of moral and practical value. Yet, we should avoid inventing non-existent achievements based on poetic interpretations. Even as we enjoy the best of ancient Indian literature, let us not forget to evaluate scientific claims through the rigorous process based on hard evidence.

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