

**BREAKTHROUGH SCIENCE SOCIETY**

8A Creek Lane, Kolkata 700014, WB, INDIA

Tel: (033) 22640563, 9433369069, 9477514644

E-mail: breakthrough@ieee.org, breakthrough.wb@gmail.com Web: www.breakthroughindia.org

Registration No. S/86180 of 1996-97 under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961

A Voluntary Organization Committed to the Cause of Science, Culture and Scientific Outlook

To
The News Editor

Date: 19-05-2020

Dr Radhakanta Koner, Secretary, Breakthrough Science Society, West Bengal Chapter sent a memorandum today to Director, Birla Industrial & Technological Museum, in which the Breakthrough Science Society expressed concern over installation of "Ayurvedic Disinfectant Tunnel" at the premises of BITM. In the letter, Breakthrough Science Society asked for scientific evidence of the efficacy of 2:1:1 combination of thyme, camphor and menthol in protecting humans against the novel coronavirus.

In the letter, a WHO advisory has been cited where it has clearly recommended against the use of any form of spraying disinfectant on human body (see the document, <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/cleaning-and-disinfection-of-environmental-surfaces-inthe-context-of-covid-19>).

So, Breakthrough Science Society requests BITM to make it mandatory for visitors to go through the time-tested practice of washing hands with soap for 20 seconds and wearing double-layered masks, instead of subjecting children to whole body spray of any substance.

News by

Pratyush Sikdar
Office Secretary
Mob: 9432810145

Full documents appended below.

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To
Dr V S Ramachandran
Director, Birla Industrial & Technological Museum
Kolkata

Date: 19-05-2020

Dear Sir,

We have come to know from newspaper and social media reports that an "Ayurvedic disinfectant tunnel" has been installed at the BITM premises, and visitors, especially school-children are passing through this channel before entering the building. We, as members of the scientific community, have a few concerns about this practice.

Has it been established through any scientific study that a whole-body spray of 2:1:1 combination of thyme, camphor and menthol protects humans against the novel coronavirus? If there is such a scientific evidence, kindly let us know that by citing the relevant paper published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. If this practice is based primarily on belief, you are probably giving children a false sense of security, due to which they are likely to ignore social distancing practices after the spray.

Science is all about asking questions and seeking evidence. Through this practice, are you really exposing children to this fundamental tenet of science, or are you asking them to believe without seeking evidence?

Moreover, WHO has warned that even if truly disinfectant chemical compounds are used, spraying on human body has several health related repercussions in the long term. So, WHO strongly disapproves disinfectant spraying of any form (<https://www.who.int/publications-detail/cleaning-and-disinfection-of-environmental-surfaces-inthe-context-of-covid-19>).

We would request you to make it mandatory for visitors to go through the time-tested practice of washing hands with soap for 20 seconds and wearing double-layered masks, instead of subjecting children to whole body spray of any substance.

Dr Radhakanta Koner
Secretary, Breakthrough Science Society
West Bengal Chapter