The tale of golden crown

Science is based purely on facts, reasoning and logic. What was the logic Archimedes decoded when he ran down the streets of Syracuse shouting out loud, "Eureka!...Eureka!"

Sanaa Srivastava

AIS Vas 6, XII

early 200 years ago, there lived a king called Hiero nearly 200 years ago. He was admired and loved by all in his beautiful Greek city of Syracuse. His city always flourished with riches of all kind. Hiero was grateful to the Gods for his good fortune and to thank them, he decided to offer them a gift, a crown made of pure gold! King Hiero summoned the town's goldsmith. Handing him a block of gold, asked him to make the most splendid crown in the world. The king had already weighed the block to ensure that the crown does not fall short on magnificence. The king also promised him a good reward for

However, a good reward didn't seem enough for the goldsmith who was allured by the glimmering sight of the gold brick. He thought to himself, "The king and the Gods have enough riches. Even if I keep a little gold for myself and mix some silver in



the crown instead, what harm will it do?" Even the walls of the kingdom were loyal to the king and in no time, the king came to know of the goldsmith's plans. Hiero was agitated at the rumour, but he was also a man of justice. He wanted to confirm the rumour himself and asked Archimedes, who was a Greek scientist, "Find

out how much gold had been stolen?"Archimedes was baffled. "How do I come up with a way to test a goldsmith's malice?" he thought to himself. Days passed by and Archimedes struggled with a solution. One day, lifting his head up from a pile of books, Archimedes decided to take bath to calm himself. As he was busy

thinking, he did not notice the bathtub was already full to brim. He slid himself in the bath tub, and he noticed water splash out of it. The more he lowered himself inside the tub, the more water spilled out of the tub. And then it hit him!

Jumping with joy, Archimedes got out of the tub and ran across

the streets shouting 'Eureka! Eureka! I found it!' He straight away went to the king and said, "Majesty, I have found a solution. So, basically, when an object is put in water it displaces it. And, by measuring the amount of water displaced, one can measure the volume of the object. And, all substances have different volume

and density."

The goldsmith had delivered the crown by now. Archimedes took two bowls and filled them with water till the brim. He then put the crown in one bowl and a block of gold of the same weight as the one that was given to the goldsmith in another. As soon as he placed both the crown and the block of gold in the bowls, water spilled out. Archimedes collected and measured the amount of water spilled. The quantity of water spilled differed. Explaining the science behind it, he said, "Gold is denser than silver, which means the silver has more volume. And because of this it will displace more water. This clearly shows that the goldsmith has mixed some other metal in the crown." The goldsmith was ashamed of his wrong doing as he had never thought that he would be caught.

This way, the king found out about the goldsmith's betrayal and punished him. Archimedes, on the other hand, was hailed a hero and the story of his discovery became a legend. GT

