

## Agni Pariksha for Lord Hanuman in 2020?

Do you think Lord Hanuman who is presented as the exemplary devotee of Rama and Sita would have to undergo Agni Pariksha for his duties and roles? The Hindu texts such as the Bhagavata Purana, the Bhakta Mala and the Ramacharitmanas present him as someone who is talented, strong, brave and spiritually devoted to Rama<sup>1</sup>. Though it be Valmiki's Ramayana or Tulasi Dasa's Ramacaritamanasa, Hanuman's gradual evolution from his role as helper and messenger of Rama to his more dominant function in Ramacaritamanasa where he stands for Rama's virtues and teachings. We can say he is just not the messenger of Rama or the truth, but a protector of Sita and a devotee/the go to man to solve any sort of difficulties for Rama.

In modern times, we have the protector i.e. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) which derives power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946. Over the years, the CBI has emerged as a premier investigating agency of the country which enjoys the trust of the people, Parliament, Judiciary, and the Government. In the last 65 years, the organization has evolved from an anti corruption agency to a multi-faceted, multi-disciplinary central police law enforcement agency with capability, credibility and legal mandate to investigate and prosecute offences anywhere in India.<sup>2</sup> It is much like when it was time to investigate if Sita is safe or not in Lanka, lord Hanuman was vested with powers to perform the extraordinary task, when the nation Bharat or India is in need for an investigate cases relating to the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya or to bomb blast in Bombay, or Hathras gang rape case and etc., CBI had been vested power to investigate and resolve the issues at large.

Recently CBI has been under a lot of scrutiny and pressure for their lack of completion of important investigation or to prove any offences beyond reasonable doubt. The Madras High Court has directed the Crime Branch (CID) to probe about the missing 100 kg gold from CBI custody.

To go through a short brief of the facts of the case, CBI had seized 400.47 kgs of gold in connection with the investigation against the officials of Minerals & Metals Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) and Surana Corporation Limited on the allegation that MMTC had shown undue favour to Surana, who were importing gold and silver. The seized metal was kept in the lockers and vaults of Surana under the seal of CBI. The CBI in its arguments said that they handed over the 72 keys of the vaults to the Chennai principal special court for CBI cases. In 2013, CBI had filed a closure report, saying the accused had not committed any offence and only violated certain circulars, for which departmental action was recommended.

In 2019, the NCLT had ordered the CBI to hand over the gold bullion to the liquidator so that the proceeds can be distributed among banks that lent money to the company. However, when the vault was opened, only 296kg of the 400 kg gold was found in it. In these circumstances, the liquidator approached the Madras High Court seeking a direction to CBI to return 103.864 kgs of gold.

While studying this petition, the court asked the CBI why no FIR was registered for theft in this regard. The CBI's Special Public Prosecutor submitted that under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, the CBI does not have the authority to register a theft case, which

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bestcollegeart.com/art/the-devotee-by-durshit-bhaskar-mixed-media-6968>

<sup>2</sup> <http://cbi.gov.in/aboutus/aboutus.php>

falls within the domain of the state police. The prosecutor requested the Court to give a direction to CBI to register an FIR for theft and conduct investigation since the prestige of the CBI would come down, Justice PN Prakash observed refused to accept this submission and observed that

*“The law does not sanction such an inference. All policemen have to be trusted and it does not lie in the mouth of one to say that the CBI have special horns, whereas, the local police have only a tail... It may be an Agni Pariksha for the CBI, but that cannot be helped. If their hands are clean, like Sita, they may come out brighter, if not they would have to face the music.”*

The court has ordered the CB-CID's Metro Wing in Chennai, which comes under the state government, to register a regular FIR for theft and entrust the investigation to an SP-rank officer to wind up the probe in next six months, reports said. Do you think the protector or investigator of the nation will prove their loyal service and pureness in the Agni Pariksha? If not, does the DSPE ACT,1946 needs amendment to trust the CBI with more powers or will it harm the agency as a whole?