

Colloquium

300 Years of the Longitude Problem

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For centuries, humans knew to estimate Latitude of a place on earth from the altitude of pole star or inclination of Sun's trajectory across the sky. However, they did not know how to find the other coordinate - Longitude - till 300 years ago. The talk is about the problem of finding Longitude at high seas, which was considered unsolvable till middle of Eighteenth century and for which prize money of £20,000 was declared in 1714 by the British parliament (equivalent to £2.5 million in 2014). Innumerable lives were lost due to frequent shipwrecks and starvation deaths during long voyages resulting from lack of the knowledge of Longitude. Apart from the interesting history of solution to the problem, the talk also includes the associated anecdote of one of the first instances of politics in scientific circle.

Thursday, Aug 31st 2017

04:00 PM (Tea/Coffee at 03:45 PM)

Auditorium, TIFR (FReT-B)