



**June 2009**

**Popular Post**

## **Trademark for Hindu Temple Deity Pictures – Should Hindu Temple Deities be Patented?**

Few months back, Attukal Temple at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala had secured trademark protection for the picture of the deity and the title (tag) associated with the temple – Sabarimala of Women. Attukal Bhagavathy Temple at Trivandrum holds the [Guinness world record for the largest gathering of women](#) in the world during the world famous [Attukal Pongala Festival](#) (February – March). Now Kerala High Court has registered a suo motu case against patenting of temple deity, on the complaint of a resident from Trivandrum, who has alleged that patenting means that the temple is a business project and not in tune with religious purpose.

Trademark on the picture of the Attukal Devi and title ‘Sabarimala of Women’ means that only the Attukal Temple administration body has the right to use them and this helps to prevent unauthorized use of the picture and the title. (Even this blog cannot publish the picture of the deity.)



The present case that has been registered against the trademark of Attukal Devi was filed by R.S Praveen Raj and you can find details about the case filed here at [Sri Praveen's personal blog](#).

The need for patenting arose after the popularity of the deity started attracting millions of devotees. Other Shakti or Devi Temples in the region started to use similar tags and pictures to attract devotees. The ritual of Pongala, which was limited to a few Devi Temples in Kerala, is today performed by thousands of temples. The popularity of the Pongala ritual even forced a Christian church in the region to conduct a similar ritual.

“It is not the first time that a temple has sought protection under the IPR. The Tirupati and Kalakasti temples in Andhra Pradesh applied for Geographical Indication tag. The Attukal Temple administration wanted a TM mainly for two reasons. The Attukal aravana (sacred food) is sold with the goddess's image on the tins, within the temple premises, but spurious versions are available in the local market, we wanted to put an end to that. The other reason was that the Chakkulathukavu temple in Thiruvalla, around 130 kms from here, has been attracting women in large numbers to offer Pongala. The gathering at Attukal is bigger, but there is no guarantee that it will remain so in the future, so we want monopoly on the appellation – Sabarimala of Women,” said temple superintendent, Mr Sreekumar Nair. (The Statesman, Kolkata)

There is no doubt that trademark on the picture of a Hindu deity converts it into a business outfit. Common man usually associates trademark, patent etc with trade, service, goods etc. Sorry to say but the attempt to trademark also converts the deity into a product who can be marketed. It also shows ugly competition among different temple trusts to attract maximum crowd.

The monopoly of the picture of a deity to a particular trust or spiritual organization will have far reaching consequences as people can start claiming trademark to deities and

use it for business and other purposes. Trademark on a particular deity will also make it impossible for devotees to publish the picture of the deity. There are numerous other dangers associated with trademark protection to Hindu deities and this can even cause numerous economic, social and regional problems.

There is no doubt that getting a trademark of a deity is due to fear that other people or trusts will take away a share of the wealth that deity brings to a particular temple trust. The people who run the trusts and temples should realize that Hindu devotees have the freedom to worship any deity at any place and in any form.

Trademark and patenting of pictures of Hindu deities should not be allowed at any cause.

Nothing moves in this universe without the power of Goddess Shakti and had people who apply trademark realized this; they would not have attempted to confine Mother Goddess within a trademark.

Mother Shakti appears as an innocent child, loving young woman, compassionate mother and also as Goddess Kali, who devours the universe. Let us all pray to Mother Shakti and Goddess Kali without the boundaries of trademarks and patents. Don't force Goddess Shakti to take the aggressive avatar of Goddess Kali by treading the path of Adharma.

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Posted by abhilash on [27.5.09](#) \_

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oriental said...

Access should be given to all deities. Limiting this for financial means is unjust. This causes unnecessary obstacles in the path of the person who wants to gain something. Invariably it can be deemed that persons running all manner of religious establishments get a good remuneration for their jobs.

Religion, spirituality, mysticism and divination are all for the betterment of people giving them more context in an otherwise mundane life of survival/injury/illness, work, competition, jostling in society and the elusive search for an unattainable state of happiness. Even if the individual claims that they are content then this is just due to their perception and their own condition is different from everybody else and can change.

[May 27, 2009 3:54 PM](#) 

Anonymous said...

visit

<http://secularcitizen.net/> for detailed articles on this issue. The petition faxed to Chief Justice of Kerala also is found posted there.

[May 27, 2009 6:20 PM](#) 

oriental said...

Kerala is not a secular place and neither is India no matter how much it tries to portray itself as such. Kerala has lots of churches, mosques and temples and is known as god's own land or the land of god. Everybody there indulges in some sort of ritual wick may not be worship but maybe weddings, remembrances, funerals, major festivals and so on. People of all political persuasions such as communists, socialists, nationalists and independents take part in some form of gathering with spiritual traits.

Regarding India, politicians take ritualistic oaths of office in the name of god and have to negotiate through different traditions to some common area of non-religion.

Kerala amounts to mean the place of the coconut. The coconut is a very important cash crop. It seems like a living being with hair/coir on its outside and a primitive child like face composed of dark indentations at its side. It has a skull like shell that once opened reveals the vegetarian non-living flesh; it it not even plant material. It exudes a fragrance and has nutritious juice. The Coconut is used in spiritual rituals in different cultures not least in Kerala.

Skulls and the bones are said to possess powers. They deceased person or animal to whom the skull was once part of its life supposedly can communicate to living beings through mediums, dreams, apparitions, or mystical messages for people to find its skeletal remains and for it to subsequently find a state of peace once found. These tales show that humans and animals are more mysterious then they think.

[May 28, 2009 9:03 PM](#) 

oriental said...

There are stories of skeletons that are malevolent and cause mishaps to occur to those in its vicinity. Blessings, exorcisms, incantations or spells do not always rid the place of the petrifying presence and it is necessary to vacate the area to avoid a supernatural clash. Some hauntings die away with time.

[May 28, 2009 9:44 PM](#) 

oriental said...

The nutritious juice that spills out dribbling on the outside of the coconut shell is not the blood/life force of the coconut but is instead the natural vegetarian sap which can be taken neat or mixed with other fruit juices to make a non-alcoholic beverage.

[May 28, 2009 10:27 PM](#) 

oriental said...

Drinking blood and eating flesh of humans is not advisory. Humans eat lots of junk foods and are an unhealthy mix of hormones. They contain numerous diseases, defects and irritants and precursor disease cells that could be passed on to the consumer of such goods. Human body parts have been used in divination ceremonies possibly to evoke spirits or ward off evil and human sacrifice has been used to please different gods. Other matter such as animals, plants and natural rocks and stones can harm one in a similar way.

[May 30, 2009 9:33 PM](#) 

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