

2008/01/01

Astronomical Association of Lanka

**Report 01-IYA2009-Sri Lanka**

- 1.) Sri Lanka National Node for IYA2009
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**Sri Lanka National Node for IYA2009**

**Astronomical Association of Lanka (AALK)** will act as the **National Node**. **AALK** was founded as the **Ceylon Astronomical Association** in 1959 with **Sir Arthur C Clarke** as President will be in its Golden Jubilee year in 2009. **Prof. Kavan Ratnatunga** who is currently resident in Sri Lanka, has volunteered to be the **National Node Chairman** and **Single Point of Contact** for **IYA2009** to the **International Astronomical Union (IAU)**. The following organizations have joined the effort

**Astronomical Association of Lanka (AALK)**  
**Arthur C Clarke Institute for Modern Technology (ACCIMT)**  
**Astronomy & Space Study Center (ASSC)**  
**Colombo Planetarium**  
**University of Moratuwa**  
**University of Colombo**

In Sri Lanka, there is a significant interest in Astronomy both among the general public as well as among school children. Most of the leading Schools have had active Astronomical Clubs for many years. In the Sri Lanka National node activities we will bring together the main organizations and institutions in Lanka which have been associated mostly with amateur astronomy, with Professional Astronomers of Lankan origin who are mostly doing research overseas.

## **Sri Lanka National Committee for IYA2009**

AALK has appointed a National Committee for IYA2009 which consist of a chairman, secretary, and committee members. Committee members are selected as two volunteers from each above mentioned organizations. Other members from School based Astronomy clubs will be co-opted into the committee is they become active in organizing events for IYA2009

**Chair** - Prof. Kavan Ratnatunga.  
**Secretary** - Mr. Thilina Heenatigala.

### **Committee Members**

#### **Astronomical Association of Lanka (AALK)**

Fr. Mervyn Fernando  
Mr. Yohan Ferreira

#### **Arthur C Clarke Institute for Modern Technology (ACCIMT), Moratuwa. Sri Lanka.**

Mr. Saraj Gunasekara  
Mr. Indika Madagangoda

#### **Astronomy & Space Study Center (ASSC), Subodhi Institue, Piliyandala. Sri Lanka.**

Mr. Pulasthi Kanaththage  
Mr. Sithum Gunarathne

#### **Colombo Planetarium, Colombo 07, Sri Lanka.**

Mrs. K.P.K. Koralagama  
Mr. Nalaka Abeysekara.

#### **University of Moratuwa - Astronomical Society, Moratuwa. Sri Lanka.**

Mr. Malinda Abeynayake  
Mr. Dileepa Kulathilake

#### **University of Colombo - Astronomical Society, Colombo 07. Sri Lanka.**

Mr. Sachith Dissanayake  
Mr. Praveen Janantha

## **Collaborations**

The National Node hopes to collaborate with Institutes listed below in organizing programs for IYA2009.

**Sri Lanka Ministry of Science and Technology**

**Sri Lanka Ministry of Education**

**Sri Lanka National Science Foundation**

**Sri Lanka Association for Advancement of Science (SLAAS)**

**UNESCO, Colombo**

**American Centre, Colombo**

**British Council, Colombo**

**Russian Cultural Centre, Colombo**

**Institute of Fundamental Studies, Kandy**

## **IYA2009 Sri Lanka Activity - Proposed Program**

The Inaugural meeting of the Sri Lanka National Committee for IYA2009 was held on 2007 December 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 11 AM at the Council Chamber of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS). Seven members of the committee attended despite the enhanced security checks on the main roads into Colombo on that day, which prevented some from attending.

The following program of activity for IYA2009 was decided.

- 1) To organize a significant gathering for astronomical activity at least once a month, to be publicised and open to the public. Each of the participating Institutions is expected to organize one or two events in 2009.
- 2) To have weekly articles on Astronomy in the Sunday Times Newspaper.
- 3) In June 2009, organize an Astronomical workshop in collaboration with Professional Lankan Astronomers doing research abroad. Many of them were motivated into a career in astronomy by the Ceylon Astronomical Association, which in its Golden Jubilee year.
- 4) Hold a nation wide multiple choice quiz competition to promote an interest in astronomy as well as study current understanding and misconceptions on the universe in Sri Lanka.
- 5) To have the 2000 edition of Carl Sagan's 13 part TV series **Cosmos** subtitled in Sinhala and screened on National Lankan TV.
- 6) To request the Sri Lanka Philatelic Bureau to issue a postage Stamp in commemoration of IYA2009

A yahoo e-mail group was established to discuss further matters among the committee.

Yahoo group

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/IYA2009-srilanka/>

Sri Lanka IYA2009 National Node website

<http://aalk.lakdiva.net/iya2009>

Astronomical Association of Lanka

<http://aalk.lakdiva.net>

International Year of Astronomy 2009

<http://www.astronomy2009.org>

International Astronomical Union

<http://www.iau.org>

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