

2009 March – April
Sri Lanka Astronomical Association

Report 5 IYA2009-Sri Lanka

***March**

- 1) "Beauty Without Borders"
- 2) SF competition
- 3) Observation Camp – Asian International School
- 4) Observation Camp – Seetha Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Kandy
- 5) Star Quest 09 – Mathematic & Astronomy Society of University of Colombo.
- 6) Astronomy Lecture – Role of Astronomy by Modern Society.

***April**

- 7) 100HA

"Beauty Without Borders"

"On the evening of Feb. 28, the crescent moon passed near Venus and created a beautiful sight for sky watchers."

Start Time: February 25, 2009
End Time: Sunday, March 1, 2009
Location: Global

Summary:

Beauty Without Borders was initiated by members of "Sidewalk Astronomer". It ran as 'mini trial' for "Earth Hour", "Globe at Night", "ISAN" on April 4th and 100HA April 2nd to 5th and Sun Day April 5th.

About 20 **countries** got together to enjoy the beautiful views of Venus, including Sri Lanka. A sidewalk astronomy event was held at Pilyandala for three days to celebrate BWB.

The IYA2009 – Sri Lanka node Secretary, Thilina Heenatigala was also involved in the global organization of BWB and was the webmaster for BWB website.

<http://beautywithoutborders.blogspot.com/>

SF competition

A Science Fiction competition was launched in memory of late Sir Arthur C Clarke. The competition was held among school students and under 3 age categories.

Observation Camp – Asian International School

The Science Union of Asian International School, Colombo organized an observation camp for their students. The program was conducted by the Anandian Astronomical Association.

Program:

Introduction to Astronomy – lecture
Celestial Sphere
Moon Observation session
Fun game
Eye and the Optics inside – discussion
Introduction to Star Map
Saturn Observation session
Lander Activity

Conductors:

1. Mr. Varuna Gunasekara
2. Mr. Pulasthi Kanaththage
3. Mr. Lasitha Senarathne
4. Mr. Kusal Weerasinghe
5. Mr. Hasitha Karunarathe
6. Mr. Madusha Dedigamuwa
7. Mr. Prasanna Deshapriya

Observation Camp – Seetha Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Kandy

Seetha Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Kandy organized an observation camp to celebrate IYA2009. The program was conducted by the Anandian Astronomical Association and Mahamaya Girls' College Astronomical Society, Kandy.

Program:

Introduction to Astronomy – lecture
Celestial Sphere
Observation session
Introduction to IYA2009
Introduction to Telescopes
Observation session 2 – Galilean Moons
Lander Activity

Conductors:

1. Pulasthi Kanaththage
2. Sithum Gunarathne
3. Hasitha Karunarathe
4. Madusha Dedigamuwa
5. Prasanna Deshapriya
6. Sanka Lakshan

Star Quest 09 – Mathematic & Astronomical Society of University of Colombo.

"Star Quest 09" islandwide Annual Astronomy Quiz Competition is organized by the Mathematics & Astronomical Society (MAS) of University of Colombo.

The Quarter Finalists of "Star Quest 09"

1. Ananda College, Colombo 10.
2. Mahinda College, Galle
3. De Mazenod College, Kandana.
4. Sirimavo Bandaranayake Vidyalaya, Colombo.
5. Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo.
6. Visaka Vidyalaya, Colombo.
7. Royal College, Colombo.
8. Nalanda College, Colombo 10.

The Semi Finalists of "Star Quest 09"

1. Ananda College, Colombo 10.
2. Mahinda College, Galle
3. Sirimavo Bandaranayake Vidyalaya, Colombo.
4. Devi Balika Vidyalaya, Colombo.

Summary:

The much heated competition concluded making team from Mahinda College, Galle all island champions and Ananda College team as runner's up.

The competition had rounds in General Astronomy, Observational Astronomy, Cosmology, and Astrophysics.

Certificates were distributed to all the participants and the winning team awarded with medallions and the champions walked away with a trophy.

Astronomy Lecture – Role of Astronomy in Modern Society.

Young members' section of the "Institute of Engineers, Sri Lanka" organized a special lecture for there members. "Role of Astronomy in Modern Society" by Prof Kavan Ratnatunga.

The lecture highlighted the importance of IYA2009 and its impact on the society. It also included the understanding of the danger of global warming and Near Earth Objects.

The event was well received by the Young Members Section.

100 Hours of Astronomy

100 Hours of Astronomy, 2-5 April brought over 100 countries together in a planet-wide celebration of astronomy. The world visited 80 professional observatories around the world during a 24-hour live online tour, and more than a million people had their first close-up views of the Moon, Saturn, the Sun and other objects of interest through telescopes. A Cornerstone Project of the International Year of Astronomy brought the Universe to all the world's citizens to discover for themselves.

From Sri Lanka, two 100HA sessions were held:

- **-Royal College Astronomical Society - Solar observation.**
RCAS committee held a public solar observation session to celebrate 100HA. They chose a more populated venue, which was a public park in Colombo – Viharamaha Devi Park.
From the morning many people have poured in to catch the glimpse of the Sun.
- **-Sidewalk Astronomy sessions, Piliyandala.**
Another group from "Astronomy & Space Study Center" held a sidewalk astronomy session at Piliyandala.

Thilina Heenatigala
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IYA2009 – Sri Lanka
<http://aalk.lakdiva.net>

Sri Lanka IYA2009 National Node website
<http://iya2009.lakdiva.net/>

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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