

For immediate release

SPACE-trained Student Earth Scientists celebrated autumn equinox at their schools on 23 September, 2014



New Delhi, 24 September, 2014: About eight schools associated with SPACE celebrated autumn equinox yesterday with **more than 800 students under Project Paridhi**. SPACE-trained **Student Earth Scientists** guided their schoolmates in conducting the Eratosthenes Experiment. The students measured the circumference of the Earth with an average accuracy of 95%.

This project was initiated by SPACE 4 years ago **with the intention to increase awareness amongst Indians that science can be done without any complicated scientific equipment.**

The eight schools from Delhi & NCR who conducted the experimentation project are as below:

- Apeejay School, Pitampura
- GD Goenka Public, Dwarka
- Indraprastha World School, Paschim Vihar
- Indraprastha Intl. School, Dwarka
- Presidium School, Indirapuram
- Khaitan Public School noida
- Sachdeva Public School, Rohini
- Bal Bharati Public School, Noida
- The Maurya School, Gurgaon

The autumn equinox occurred on 23 September, 2014 at 02:29 UTC (7:59 IST). On this day the sun shines directly on the equator, and there is nearly equal amount of day and night throughout the world. This is also the first day of fall (autumn) in the Northern hemisphere and the first day of spring (vernal) in the Southern hemisphere.

This experiment, also known as the Eratosthenes Experiment, was first done by Greek Astronomer and Mathematician Eratosthenes around 240 BC, where he calculated the circumference of the Earth using knowledge of the angle of elevation of the sun at noon.

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Through this experimentation project students learnt how simple it is to deduce the circumference of the Earth while still being present at a given location.

This project has also been accredited in a panel discussion on 'Astronomy along Highways and Public Places' held at Nehru Planetarium, Delhi in February 2013, by French Professors, Prof. Denis Savoie and Prof. Bonnet Bidaud.

About Project Paridhi

This project was initiated by SPACE 4 years ago **with the intention to increase awareness amongst Indians that science can be done without any complicated equipment.** Under this project the students find out the circumference of the Earth by taking measurements of the shadows made by the sun in a day to calculate the size of the Earth and its shape, as done 2300 years back by astronomer Eratosthenes, who was able to measure it within 2% of the present accepted value. Project Paridhi can be done on any day of the year, but on days of equinox and solstices the sun's position is optimized for calculations. Gnomons (a Greek word for an object whose shadow serves as an indicator of time, especially of the hour of the day) of all sizes and shapes have been used - including soft drink bottles and cricket wickets to huge gnomons such as Samrat and Ram Yantra at Jantar Mantar and sundial at Barapullah. With the help of this project conducted at our heritage site Jantar Mantar, SPACE has highlighted that such Indian monuments can be used as tools to demonstrate and get the common man interested in science.

About SPACE

SPACE, the pioneer organization working towards the development of science and Astronomy in India, is an ISO 9001:2000 certified company which has been changing the face of Science and Astronomy awareness, education and innovation in India through path-breaking concepts, services and programmes. SPACE, has not only successfully implemented astronomy and space science curriculum in Indian education system but has also been able to provide International platforms to Indian students where they distinctively contribute in scientific discoveries at a very early age. SPACE, constantly strives to use scientific and astronomical programs to foster scientific temperament in society, especially among the youth who are the harbingers of India's future.

Our Flagship Projects

- All India Asteroid Search Campaign- AIASC
- Sally Ride Earth KAM (Earth Knowledge Acquired by Middle school students)
- Project Dark Skies
- Kalpana Chawla Quiz Contest
- Internet Telescope
- Project Khoj
- Heliodysey

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