

Hiranandani Upscale School students discover two new asteroids

Chennai, December 06, 2016: Vishwath Ramachandran of class 9 and Vishweshwar Ramanakumar of class 10 of Hiranandani Upscale School (HUS) in Kelambakkam, have made two provisional asteroid discoveries as part of a nationwide campaign conducted by International Astronomical Search Collaboration (IASC) program, United States, which aimed to popularize astronomy in the country. Students got to access images of the sky taken by the 'Pan Starrs' (The Panoramic Survey Telescope and Rapid Response System) Telescope, which is located at Hawaii, US and uses a 1.8m (60 inch) telescope to survey the sky to look for asteroids, comets and Near Earth Objects (NEO).

The provisional discovery has been confirmed and officially recognized as an asteroid discovery by the international agencies concerned. The asteroids have been given designated numbers and will be named after the students.

SPACE, a Delhi-based NGO which acts as the nodal agency for organizing asteroid search campaign facilitated the students with necessary orientation and training in advanced data analysis and astrometrical software, which helps compare astrometrical images to discover moving objects and also offer hands on practice to hunt for asteroids.

The ecstatic students of Hiranandani Upscale School said, "We are excited to make the discovery and this has truly given us a boost to follow through with our interest in astronomy. We hope to further pursue programs in space science in the future."