

**Galilean Nights Event ID:** gn1,082

**Number of telescopes:** Have 6 Scopes but used one 4" Reflector.

**Number of organisers:** 1+ 8 Stellarview Space Club Members.

**Number of attendees:** 60 - 100 participants.

**Event Report:**

Shoranur (Kerala), India. Nov.12, 2009

**GALILEAN NIGHTS - EVENT REPORT.**  
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Wow!!, Superb!!, Fantastic!! These were the words with praise and applause - the clapping broke the silence at the first sight of the Green Laser that pierced through the night-sky almost touching the stars! The sandy river bed from where we conducted the first day's program attracted many people from all walks of life - many of them had just come down to the river side for an evening walk and got curious at the sight of the laser beam being flashed in the dark.

In Kerala, which is the most literate State in India, has otherwise generally no exposure to Astronomy - but after starting our Astro-Club about a year ago in one of the hubs here in Shoranur, things have certainly changed the situation from what it used to be earlier. We conducted many Skywatch programs in several Schools and Colleges as part of IYA-09 activities and Galilean Nights and the programmes were well attended by many.

It was amazing to see and feel that the intelligent Science Students asked several questions related to Astronomy in the Quiz Program that was conducted in one of the Schools ranging from Big Bang, Black Holes, Gravitational Lenses and even Tachyons and Large Hadron Collider and even the much discussed 'Boson' the God's Particle as they have heard about these and do not have much of an idea. Even a tiny tot from the audience raised this question "Have you ever seen the edge of the Universe?". We were surprised to hear such questions but had no real and a definite answer to give - but simply mentioned "we can't see it through the Telescopes either!"

On the 2nd and 3rd day we had organized Skywatching programs at the Club premises with nearly 60 to 100 people including the members and their parents who gathered on the rooftop terraces of the organizer's residence. After the initial introduction and orientation of the Nightsky we started our telescopic observations that was well presented. Most of the first timers other than the Club members had a wonderful experience when the Laser easily pointed out the Stars and marked out the Constellations, especially the Sunsigns and explained how the imaginary figures were drawn out by the Greeks. They were too fascinated to hear the legendary greek stories behind these Constellations.

During the Telescopic observations we had initially picked up ever smiling Crescent moon with a few craters and Jupiter the King planet with its 4 Galilean moons and that was first experience for many to see these objects in close encounters. Later on in the night we could pick up few double stars, galaxies and clusters. The Club received all praises and we had comments coming from the audience like "we have seen only stars and moon in the night sky, but how do you know and differentiate between planets and stars?".

Our Astronomy Club "STELLARVIEW SPACE CLUB" has planned to conduct many Astronomy outreach programs in various Schools and other educational institutions, including Sidewalk Astronomy at public places in the forthcoming months. This year the State Government's Education Department has taken keen interest and initiatives in promoting Astronomy in Schools all over Kerala under the title "GALILEO LITTLE SCIENTIST" and the Department has enthusiastically supported the Schools with gifts of Telescopes and other Educational Materials which are routed through our Club. I am happy to note that we receive all praise and support from these quarters that will encourage and nourish our activities to promote the subject of Astronomy into a wider field.

As an added incentive, there was media coverage during these programs and that was telecast in the local Cable TV Network.

K. R. NAIR  
FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT  
STELLARVIEW SPACE CLUB  
SHORANUR (KERALA-INDIA)