

Galilean Nights Event ID: gn943

Number of telescopes: 2

Number of organisers: 5

Number of attendees: 79

Event photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/space-lover/sets/72157622551127047/>

Event Report:

Publicity--

We started the publicity campaign one month before the event. Our project coordinator, Upamanyu Moitra delivered a speech on Galileo on September 25, during Durga Puja, a Bengali festival. During the Puja, we could reach out to a large number of people, so we made the most of this opportunity. Moitra announced that we would organise an astronomy event on October 24 and invited everyone present there to attend it. So we could tell the audience about Galileo and his achievements and make them feel strongly about Galileo. Curiously, it was during a religious event when we were talking about a man who proved religious ideas wrong! This speech created a buzz in the neighbourhood about Galilean Nights. Everyone in the locality kept asking us about it.

A couple of days prior to the event, we started distributing leaflets among local people. We made sure that everyone in the locality saw the wonderful Galilean Nights poster. We used the Internet, especially Twitter, to promote our event.

We phoned a lot of people, inviting them to be a part of this event.

Event Night--

Organising Members: Papia & Biplab Moitra, Tripti Roy, Ujjayini Moitra and Upamanyu Moitra

Everyone could participate in this event for free. We provided the participants with snacks/refreshments.

Two telescopes were set up on the terrace of Prof. Dhiranando Roy Study & Research Centre on October 24. Firstly, a brief speech on Galileo was delivered. Upamanyu gave everyone a brief introduction to telescopes and then showed Jupiter/Moon through telescopes. Being the winner of the 100 Hours of Astronomy Youth Participation Award, he received a Celestron SkyScout. We used this instrument to make this event more interesting. Audio presentations Jupiter/Moon were made with SkyScout. We also let the attendees operate the SkyScout themselves in order to make them feel more comfortable. The atmosphere of the event was very informal and that undoubtedly fascinated the attendees. Attendees were shown slideshows and short video clips on astronomy and space missions. Upamanyu answered people's queries. He talked briefly about various superstitions and their impact.

In short, the six-hour event was very successful.

Reaction--

The reaction was overwhelmingly positive. All the attendees looked through a telescope for the first time in their life.

Most said that the experience was unforgettable and as fascinating as a sweet dream. Mr Shashwat described the event as an "ode to mystery". Most common words/phrases in the reaction sheet were "great", "wonderful", "awesome", "excellent", "splendid", "entertaining", "well done", "thanks" and "keep it up". Everyone said that this event inspired them to learn more about astronomy and made them feel very privileged. They requested more such events in future. We connected with them emotionally.

Mr Sengupta said: "It was really splendid to catch a glimpse of Jupiter and his four moons in this vast cosmos. Life itself is a riddle and astronomers throughout the history of civilisation have tried to unravel its darkest secrets. It's really a glory to be alive and wonder at the magnificence of the Universe. I'm simply left with 'awe' in a word."