

Around the earth in an hour

☐ Students mark the shadow of the sun using Gnomon stick

NT Bureau

Chennai, Mar 25:

SPACE Chennai, an organisation aimed at creating a scientifically aware society and motivating people to contribute to technological and social development of the country, conducted its flagship project titled 'Project Paridhi' on Vernal Equinox day observed on 20 and 21 March. The event was held at KRM Public School at Perambur and Gateway International School at Padur.

According to the Zonal Business Manager-South of Space Technology and Education Private Limited, Venkata Narayanan, over 130 school students from KRM Group of Schools, Chennai Government Girls High School, Sree Nikethan Group of Schools at Tiruvallur and Don Bosco Matriculation Higher Secondary School at Perambur were among many other schools that participated in a field science experiment aimed to replicate measuring the circumference of the earth done by Greek astronomer Eratosthenes some 2,300 years ago.

One could see students marking the shadow of the sun using Gnomon stick as a vertical object to find the shortest



Students of Gateway International School seen marking the shadow of the sun inside the school premises so as to calculate the earth's circumference on the occasion of Vernal Equinox observed in Chennai recently.

shadow. 'Following this, they measured the sun angle. And using simple mathematics further, the students arrived at the circumference of the earth,' explained Venkata.

According to him, a majority of participants calculated 40,070 kms of earth's circumference in just an hour out of the actual circumference 40,075 kms. 'This implies that the accuracy level of the candidates was 99.9 per cent,' he said. Those gathered at the event venue also included enthusiastic parents and

teachers, who were seen enjoying the students' involvement in the field science activity.

The programme was inaugurated by KRM Public School principal, Sivasakthi Balan while the chief guest of the occasion was Tamilnadu Astronomical Society president Vijaykumar.

Speaking on the occasion, Balan said, 'I could see a high degree of happiness among the students since they are still involved in the learning process. I only wonder how they could make such a complex

calculation in an hour.' The chief guest spoke about the solar system and planets.

According to the organisers, March equinox occurs the moment when the sun crosses the celestial equator - the imaginary line in the sky above the Earth's equator - from north to south. On the equinox, night and day are almost exactly the same length, that is 12 hours, all over the world. 'This is the reason it's called an 'equinox', derived from Latin, meaning 'equal night', said Venkata.

<http://newstodaynet.com/chennai/project-paridhi-marks-circumference-earth>

Project Paridhi marks circumference of earth

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Friday, 25 March 2016



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