



SPACE asteroid hunters discover rare Trojan asteroids

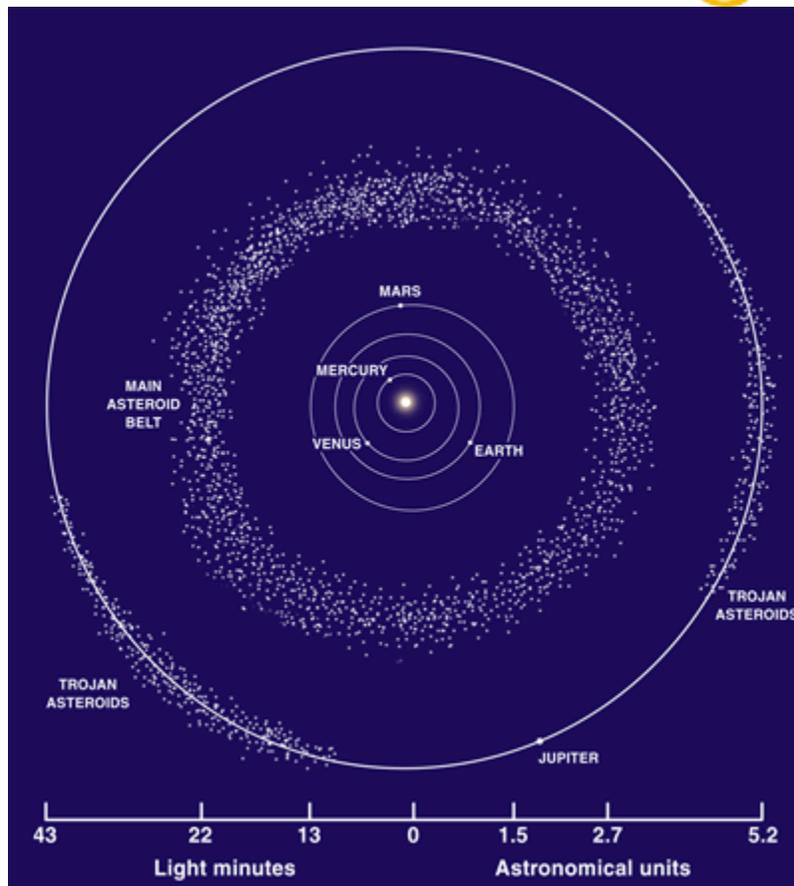
Contact: Mila Mitra /Aakanksha Sinha
Mobile: 9971641274/ 9212669920
Email: pr.spaceindia@gmail.com

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SPACE has done it again! **All India Asteroid Search Campaign (AIASC) 2011** is riding high on the successful discovery of **Trojan** asteroids by Bal Bharati Public School, Rajinder Nagar participants. **Pragya Chawla**, a class XII student and **Aparajita Aggarwal**, a class XI student have made this 'rare' discovery as they've succeeded in mapping a '**Trojan**' asteroid. This marks a great achievement for SPACE and the school, as Trojans are hard to search and there have been very few discoveries so far. Trojan asteroids are located in the Jupiter's orbit.

SPACE brings All India Asteroid Search Campaign for more than 60 schools and organisations where the participants are provided a hands-on training to analyze images they receive by email, taken with the 24" and 32" telescopes at the Astronomical Research Institute (ARI) Observatory located at Charleston, USA. The AIASC Phase I which concluded on 7th July has been a huge success this year as there have been many breakthrough discoveries. Participating school students across the country have made **2 provisional discoveries, 21 preliminary discoveries of asteroids, 7 Near Earth Objects (NEOs) confirmations and 165 Observations**. Preliminary discoveries have to go through a confirmation process to be declared as provisional. Umang Bhatia and Chintan Betrabet of Ryan International School, Sohna Road, Gurgaon were the first to make a provisional asteroid discovery. These numbers are increasing with the ongoing Phase II of the asteroid hunt. In 2010, two Delhi school students made a discovery as a part of AIASC.

The rare Trojan discovery made by Bal Bharati Public School students is a great achievement as Trojan asteroids are located in the same orbit as Jupiter, at the Lagrangian points.



Trojan Path

The Trojan asteroids come from the Main Belt but are captured gravitationally by Jupiter, these objects move 60 degrees ahead of and behind Jupiter in its orbit. Trojan according to the dictionary stands for 'a person of courageous determination or energy'.

The Director of **International Astronomical Search Collaboration** (IASC), Patrick Miller announced this at a meeting of Global Hands on Universe on 25th July as this is the **first time** a **Trojan** has been discovered in the **history of IASC**. Prof. Miller says, "There are thousands of Trojans but millions of Main Belt Asteroids. There are several orders of magnitude difference in their numbers. They are much more distant from the Sun than Main Belt Asteroids." This discovery has not only bought laurels to the school but also to the whole country. The opportunity provided by **SPACE** along with **regular guidance** and



students' sincere hardwork has been instrumental in positioning India on the world map in the field of astronomy and space science. SPACE conducts a specialized workshop for each Phase to train the students with the basics of the software 'Astrometrica' used for the search.

Space Group CMD, **Sachin Bahmba** congratulated the successful participants on this momentous occasion in Indian academic circles and said, "These children will eventually become the torch bearers of the scientific temper in the coming future".

SPACE announces Pragya Chawla and Aparajita Aggarwal as **STUDENOMERS of the Phase I AIASC campaign** for their stupendous effort. SPACE would also felicitate these students on a public platform after the completion of the All India Asteroid Search Campaign 2011.

Patrick Miller, Director, IASC says "This is an outstanding discovery...a wonderful accomplishment. Congratulations!!!"

For more information contact SPACE spokesperson, Mila Mitra at 9971641274/9250901042 or milam@space-india.org