



PRESS RELEASE

Subject : Transit of Mercury on 9th May 2016
Issued by : Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, Bengaluru

A Transit of Mercury will occur on 9th May. During this event, Mercury will move in between the Sun and the Earth. We can see Mercury as a small dark spot moving across the face of the Sun in a few hours. The transit will start at 4.40 pm IST and will last for 5 hours. However, from India, we can see the transit only until local sunset.

Since Mercury appears like a dot barely recognisable, one would need a small telescope to see the event. If you have a telescope, then the safe way to see it is to project the image of the Sun onto a sheet of paper and look at the image of the Sun on the paper. **DO NOT** look at the Sun directly or through any optics like lens, binoculars or telescopes, which can lead to permanent blindness. Seeing the Sun and the transit of Mercury by projecting its image on a screen is perfectly safe. People with well protected filters and cameras can attempt to record the transit **at sunset only**.

At the Planetarium in Bengaluru, telescope projections will be set up to view the transit. People are advised to visit the premises in the evening. Although there are no shows due to the sky theatre up-gradation process in full swing, poster exhibitions on various themes other than the transit have been set up.

The Public Outreach and Education Committee of the Astronomical Society of India has created resources for the public which are available on its website (<http://bit.ly/tom-india>). The website mentioned above hosts an interactive map of India where all these locations are marked. You can visit this map and find out the nearest place where you can go to see the transit of mercury safely. A guide to the transit is also available on our website for free download.

Many organisations are collaborating to broadcast the transit of Mercury live on websites from different locations in India. The links to these broadcasts are also given on the website <http://astron-soc.in/outreach/activities/sky-event-related/transit-of-mercury-2016/>.

In addition, Rajya Sabha TV will also be transmitting a live telecast of the transit from Srinagar at this time on 9th May.

Additional information

The organisations that are broadcasting online the transit of Mercury live are:

1. Public Outreach and Education Committee of the ASI and the University of Kashmir from Srinagar
2. Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics and Jyotirvidya Parisanstha from Pune
3. Nehru Planetarium from New Delhi
4. Udaipur Solar Observatory from Udaipur
5. Sagar International School from Alwar