Strengthening Regional Collaboration in Astronomy: The Current Landscape and Future Vision of the South East Asia Astronomy Network (SEAAN)



Hakim L. Malasan, Indonesia - Chair
Abel Yang, Singapore – Vice Chair

Astronomical major infrastructures in Southeast Asia a few decades ago





Sirindhorn Observatory, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, **Thailand.**



Langkawi National Observatory, Langkawi Island, **Malaysia**



Bossha Observatory, Bandung, West Java, **Indonesia**




CHINA
MYANMAR
LAOS
THAILAND
VIETNAM
CAMBODIA
Phnom Penh
Yangon
Bangkok
Hanoi
Taipei
Taiwan
Philippine Sea
Manila
PHILIPPINES
South China Sea
MALAYSIA
Kuala Lumpur
Singapore
SINGAPORE
Bandar Seri Begawan
BRUNEI
Phuket
Jakarta
INDONESIA
Manado
Ambon
Kupang
East Timor
Darwin
AUSTRALIA
North Pacific Ocean
PALAU
Indian Ocean
Christmas Island
Scale 1:32,000,000 at 5°N
Mercator Projection

The establishment of SEAAN

Proposed in the SPS 5, the 26th IAU General Assembly in Prague, August 2006

1st SEAAN meeting ⇨ in conjunction with Siam Physics Congress (SPC), Thai National Astronomical Meeting (TNAM), 22-24 March 2007 in Bangkok

Aim: To establish effective mechanism for nurturing and sharing the development and experiences in astronomy research and education among South-east Asian countries

Motivators

- Commissioning of National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand (NARIT) in 2004
- Plan and construction of a 2.4-m diameter advanced reflecting telescope at Dai Inthanon National Park, Chiang Mai, Thailand
- The 1st International Olympiad in Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA), December 2007 in Thailand, follow by the 2nd IOAA, August 2008 in Indonesia

Strengths in South-East Asia Region



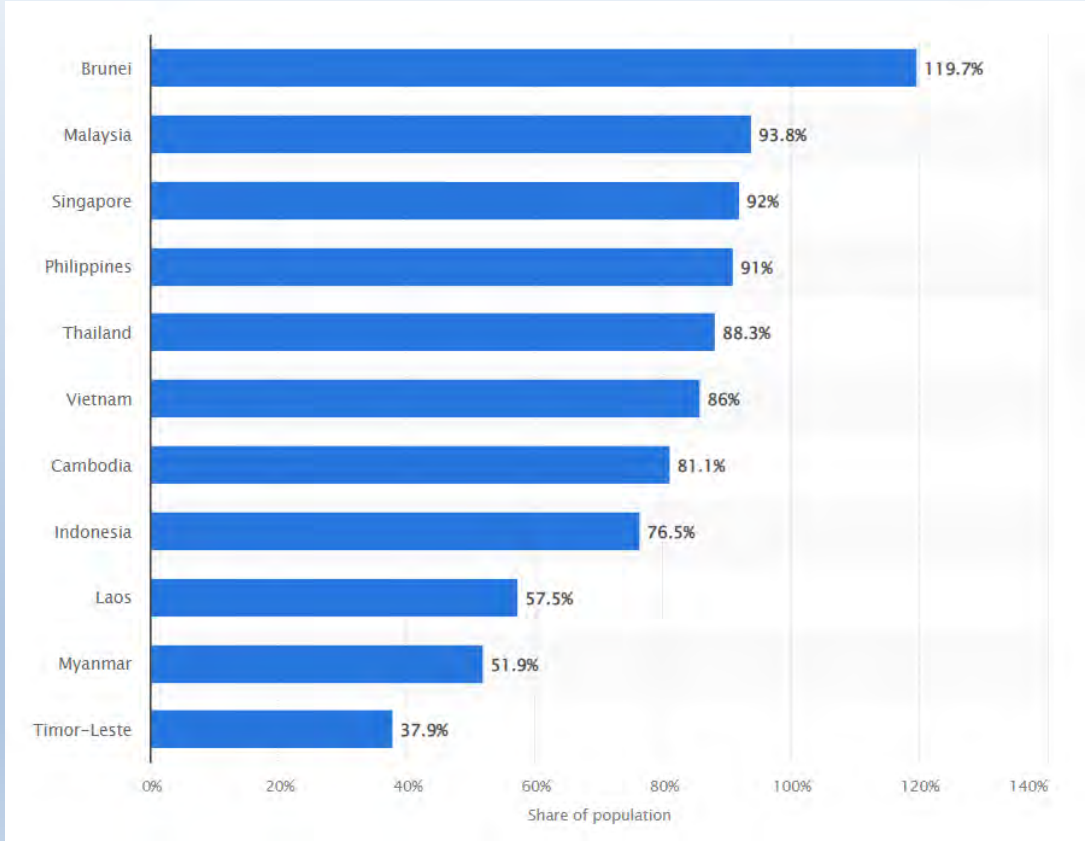
Demographic profiles within South-East Asian Countries

Country	GDP per capita* (USD)	Population (million)*	Wealth (billion USD)**	Astronomers/ Population (per 10^4)***
Indonesia	12,400	267	1823	0.0007(18)
Malaysia	29,100	32.6	682	0.005(21)
Philippines	8,400	109.2	764	0.0005(5)
Thailand	17,900	69,0	1160	0.006(44)
Singapore	94,100	6,2	1381	0.005(3)
Vietnam	6,900	98,7	797	0.001(15)
Myanmar	6,300	56,6	116	0.0004(2)
Laos	7,400	7,5	27	-(0)
Cambodia	4,000	16,9	53	0.001(2)
Brunei Darussalam	78,900	0,46	14	-(0)

Sources: CIA World Fact Book, in https://theodora.com/wfb/, https://www.photius.com/, https://www.iau.org/administration/membership/individual/distribution/, wiki

Internet penetration in Southeast Asia as of July 2022

(Source: Statista.com)



- There were 421.3 thousand internet users in Brunei in January 2022.
- Brunei's internet penetration rate stood at 95.0 percent of the total population at the start of 2022.

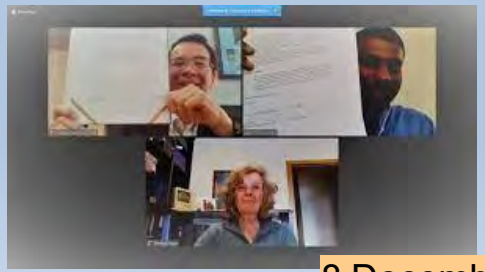
IAU Southeast Asia Regional Office for Development (SEA-ROAD)

The SEA-ROAD has established during the IAU General Assembly in Beijing in August 2012, and was assigned to be situated at the National Astronomical Research Institute of Thailand (NARIT), in Chiang Mai. Working closely with other IAU regional offices and language center throughout the world. SEA-ROAD is committed to the development of astronomy in ASEAN nations, namely:

Union Myanmar, Thailand, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Kingdom of Cambodia,
Socialist Republic of Vietnam Malaysia
Republic of Singapore State of Brunei Darussalam Philippines
Republic of Indonesia
Timor Leste.



28 August 2012



8 December 2020

SEAAN Meetings

















The 13th SEAAN Meeting in Manila, The Philippines











14th SEAAN meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand







SECOND CIRCULAR!

15TH SOUTHEAST ASIA ASTRONOMY NETWORK MEETING

Bandung, Indonesia | 13-15 October 2025

"Strengthening SEAAN Collaboration: Unlocking Potential with New Astronomical Facilities"

INVITED SPEAKERS

- **M. Honma (NAOJ, Japan)**
  "Current Status of NAOJ and Collaboration EAMA-SEAAN"
- **Pedro Russo (Leiden University, The Netherlands)**
  "Science Communication"
- **E. Sungging Mumpuni (BRIN, Indonesia)**
  "Progress of the Construction of National Observatory of Timau, and Science Prospects"
- **Orapin Riyaprao (NARIT, Thailand)**
  "Collaboration in Archeo and Ethno- Astronomy among South East Asia Countries"
- **Taufiq Hidayat (ITB, Indonesia)**
  "Development of Radio Astronomy in Indonesia and Networking in South East Asia Countries"

IMPORTANT DATES

- Abstract Submission Opens: July 1, 2025
- Abstract Submission Deadline: July, 31 2025
- Abstract Decision Notification: August, 15 2025
- Registration Opens: August, 15 2025
- Registration Deadline: September, 15 2025
- Conference Dates: October, 13 - 15 2025

REGISTRATION FEE

- IDR 1,250,000 (USD 80)

PUBLICATION FEE

- Proceedings with ISBN: Free
- Scopus-Indexed Proceedings: TBA

FURTHER INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION

https://as.itb.ac.id/seaan2025/

15th SEAAN
SOUTHEAST ASIA ASTRONOMY MEETING
13-15 Oktober 2025 - Bandung - Indonesia



Public Lecture



Nobel Prizes in Astronomy: Precision Astrophysics
Prof. Paul Ho
Academia Sinica Institute of Astronomy and Astrophysics (ASIAA), Taiwan



Supermassive Black Holes and Distant Galaxies: An Observational Perspective
Prof. Huub Rottgering
University of Leiden, Belanda



Moderator
Prof. Premana W. Premadi
Institut Teknologi Bandung

Gratis! (kuota terbatas)

Dapatkan Doorprize menarik!

Tautan pendaftaran:
bit.ly/publiclectureSEAAN

Rabu, 15 Oktober 2025
14.00 - 16.00 WIB

Multipurpose Hall
CRCS Building lantai 3
ITB Ganesha, Bandung

Fathia (085759311312)

Reviving of SEAYAC

Established in 2009, during the SEAAN Meeting a “Southeast Asia Young Astronomers Collaboration (SEAYAC)”. **Objectives:** To gather young astronomers in the Southeast Asia to exchange experiences on their research works and initiate some research proposal on mutual interest topics. In 2009, we had Rogel Mari Dionisio Sese for a Chair of the SEAYAC.

Propose: To revive again the SEAYAC. At present, Astronomy in Asia has been developed significantly, astronomical infrastructures, manpower, collaboration both national and international level. Propose to appoint a new Chair, Co-Chair and members for the SEAYAC Executive Committee.



National Astronomical Infrastructures in Thailand.



Thai National Observatory
Inthanon National Park, Chiang Mai
Optical Telescope - 2.4 and 1.0 m.



Thai National Radio Astronomy Observatory
Huay Hong Krai Development study center,
Doi Saket, Chiang Mai
Radio Telescope - 40 and 13 m.

Thai Robotic Telescope Network (TRT)



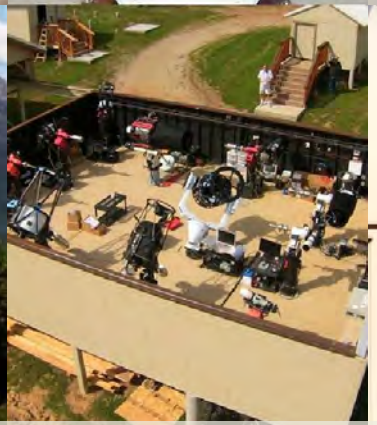










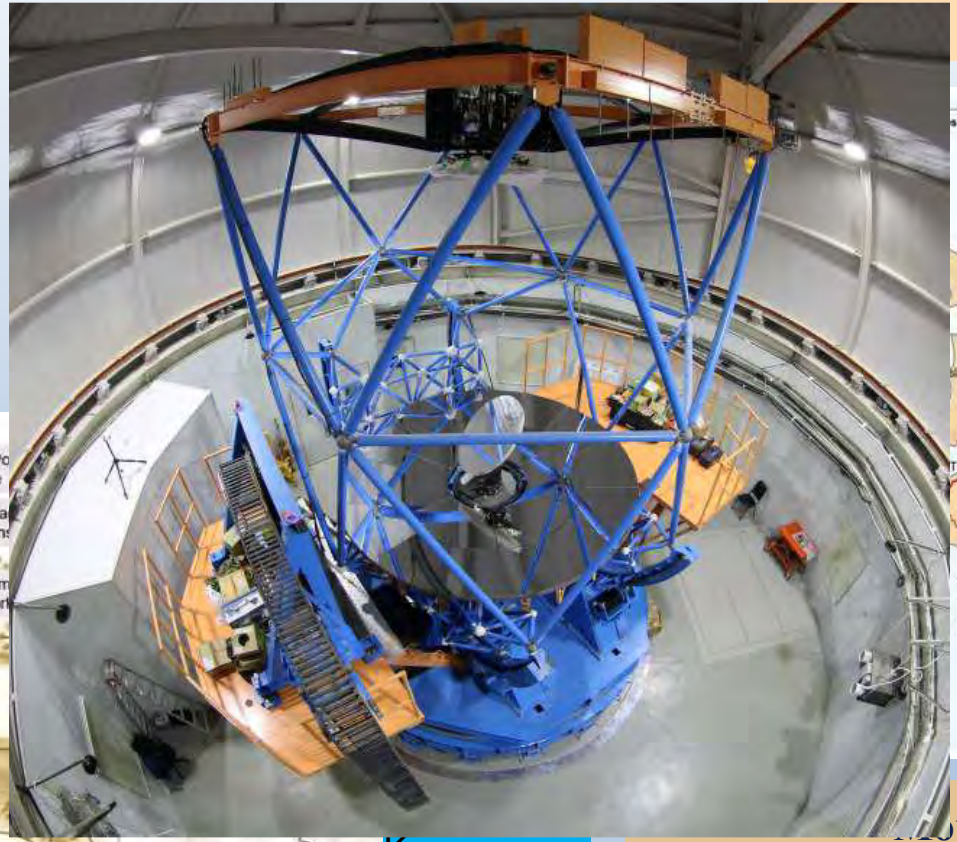




CHILE CHINA USA AUS

Timau National Observatory, Kupang, Indonesia

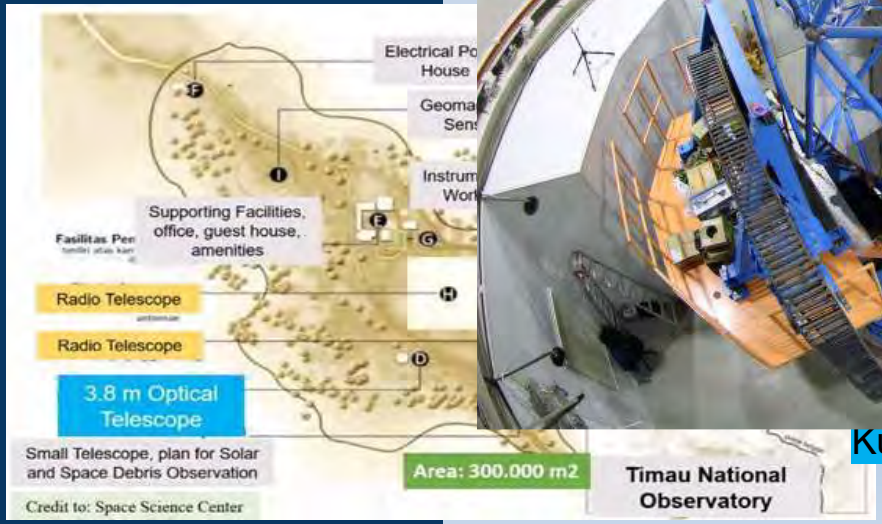
A new astronomical observatory in south-



Kupang

Mount Timau





unt Timau:
123° 56' 24.4" E, 9° 35' 4.9" S, 1532m



Thai National Radio Telescope
Diameter: 40 meters
Location : Doi Saket, Chiang Mai



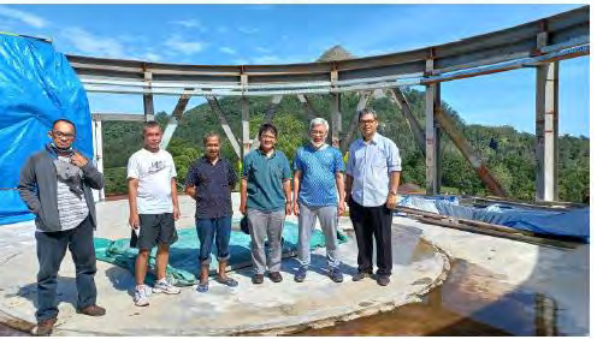
VGOS Telescope
Diameter: 13 meters
Location : Chiang Mai, Songkhla

PART 2: RADIO TELESCOPE FOR NATIONAL OBSERVATORY

(Sitompul et al. 2024)

- 20 m class at Timau site
- Working in several bands: L, S, C, X, Ku, K, Ka (1 – 44 GHz)
- For VLBI of astrometry and geodesy

- Private communication with Y-C. Minh (KASI) and M. Honma (NAOJ), since 2014
- FGD Radio Telescope, Thursday, 27 May 2021: K. Sugiyama, T. Jung, K. Fujisawa





Determination of the position of the future radio telescope in Timau, December 2021



Similar to one of KVN Stations

BIG LIFT – 8 JULY 2025





Director of Bosscha Observatory, Hesti Wulandari







Representative from SHAO, Sun Mian

World-wide Collaboration for VLBI (Very-Long-Baseline-Interferometry)

EAVN
EVN
LBA
GMRT







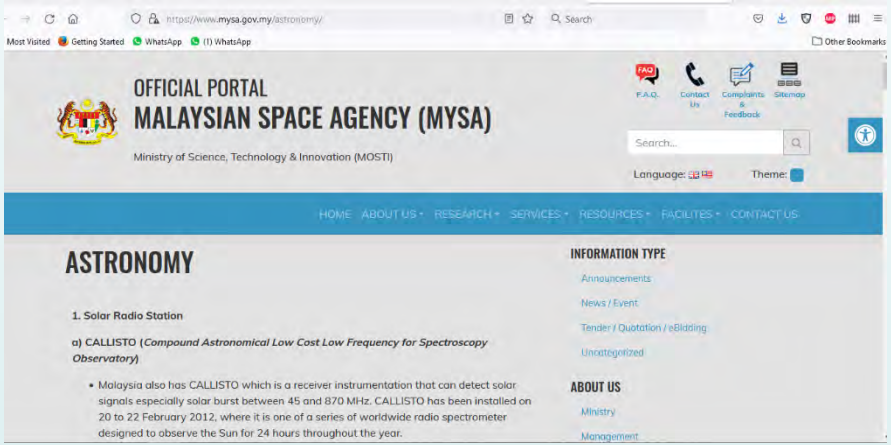




Image credit of background world-map:
Illust AC

Malaysia

- National Space Agency of Malaysia (ANGKASA) Kuala Lumpur ⇨ Malaysia Space Agency (MYSA)
- Al-Khwarizmi Astronomy Center, Malacca
- Sultan Iskandar Planetarium, Kuching, Sarawak
- Terengganu Science Center, Terengganu
- Universities; (UM, UKM, USM, UDM)
- NGO's (Starhunter Society, Astronomical Society of Malaysia, Falak Syarie Group etc), Communities: "apadilangit"



OBSERVATORI NEGARA LANGKAWI

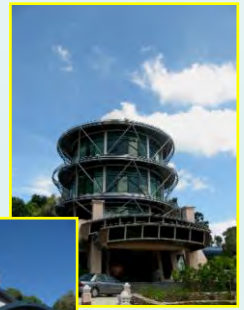
Langkawi National Observatory



50.8-cm (f/8.1) Reflector









Brunei Darussalam

The Astronomical Society of Brunei Darussalam (Malay: *Persatuan Astronomi Negara Brunei Darussalam* / **PABD**) was officially registered to the Registrar of Societies, the Royal Brunei Police, in accordance with the Laws of Brunei, Chapter 203: Societies Act, on **January 6, 2003**

The **only non-government organization** related in the field of astronomy in Brunei

Advisory Board councils constitute of Government bodies:

- Chief Syarie Judge as Patron
- Syarie Judge, Syariah High Court
- Survey Department, Ministry of Development
- University of Brunei Darussalam (UBD)
- Islamic University of Sultan Sharif Ali (UNISSA)

PERSATUAN ASTRONOMI NEGARA BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

PABD's Mission

- To **promote and advance the field of astronomy**, particularly Islamic astronomy (astronomy Syarie) in Brunei Darussalam;
- An agent **to inform on current issues** related to astronomy;
- To provide **advice and / or negotiations** in the field of astronomy to any individual and / or agencies;
- **Organize and conduct activities** specifically related to the field of astronomy among the members of PABD; and other sports, social, cultural and welfare activities;
- Providing facilities to carry out PABD activities;
- Creating and instilling spirit of brotherhood and kinship among PABD members;
- Forging partnerships with clubs and other registered associations through activities PABD;
- Disseminating knowledge and information in the various aspects of astronomy;
- Accepting donations / assistance provided by the Government and of any non-governmental organizations and scholarships for PABD members in achieving the objectives of the association.

Current Areas of Focus

There were 421.3 thousand internet users in Brunei in January 2022.

Activities 2003 – 2022
https://bruneiastronomy.org/web/about-pabd/pabd-achievement/

Astronomy Outreach

- Public Observation (Astronomical phenomenon)
- Telescope for All: Making Space for All (MASA)
- Telescope Workshops
- Public Engagement Digital
- Astronomy Celebration (Observe the Moon Night, Astronomy Day, etc)

Islamic Astronomy

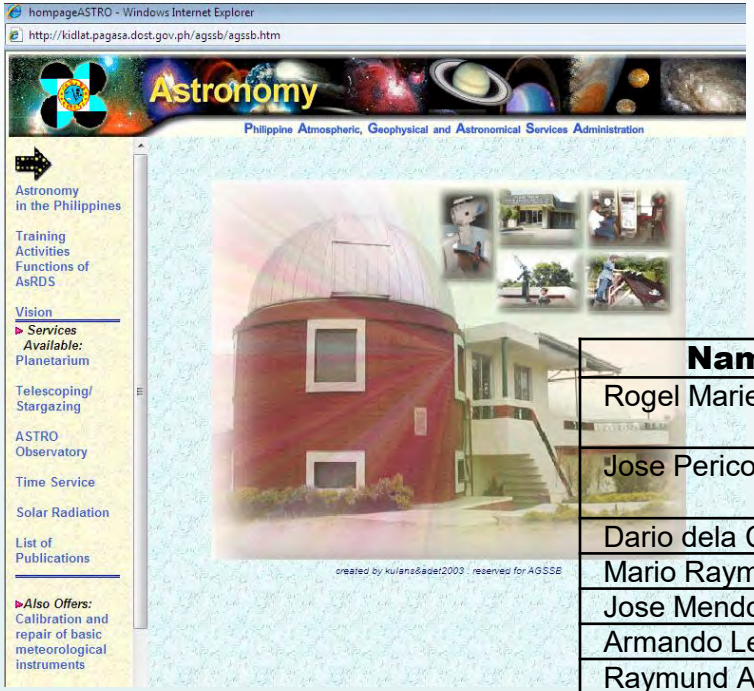
- Data collection on the New Moon Crescent / Research on visibility criteria to determine the first day of the hijri month / Islamic calendar
- Research on Islamic Prayer Time (Dawn Prayer) to measure accurately the start and end.
- Workshop on traditional astronomy instrument (quadrant)

Citizen Science

- NameExoWorld 2019
- All-Brunei Darussalam Asteroid Search Campaign 2022

Astrotourism

- Skywatching
- Milkyway observation
- Meteor Shower Camp
- Darksky Preservation
- Total Solar Eclipse Chaser (TSE 2042)



1. Philippines Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration (PAGASA)
2. Rizal Institute of Technology

THE PHILIPPINES

Name	WG
Rogel Marie Sese	Theoretical Astrophysics and Radio Astronomy
Jose Perico Esguerra	Theoretical Astrophysics & Cosmology
Dario dela Cruz	Optical Astronomy
Mario Raymundo	Optical Astronomy
Jose Mendoza IV	Optical Astronomy
Armando Lee	Optical Astronomy
Raymund Ang	Optical Astronomy
Salvador Quirimit	Optical Astronomy
Michael Bala	Optical Astronomy
Marichu Charito Zarate	Optical Astronomy
Ma. Rosario Ramos	Solar Physics
Benny Nieva	Solar Physics

45-cm (*f*/12) classical cassegrainian GOTO reflector equipped with SBIG ST8 CCD camera and spectrograph

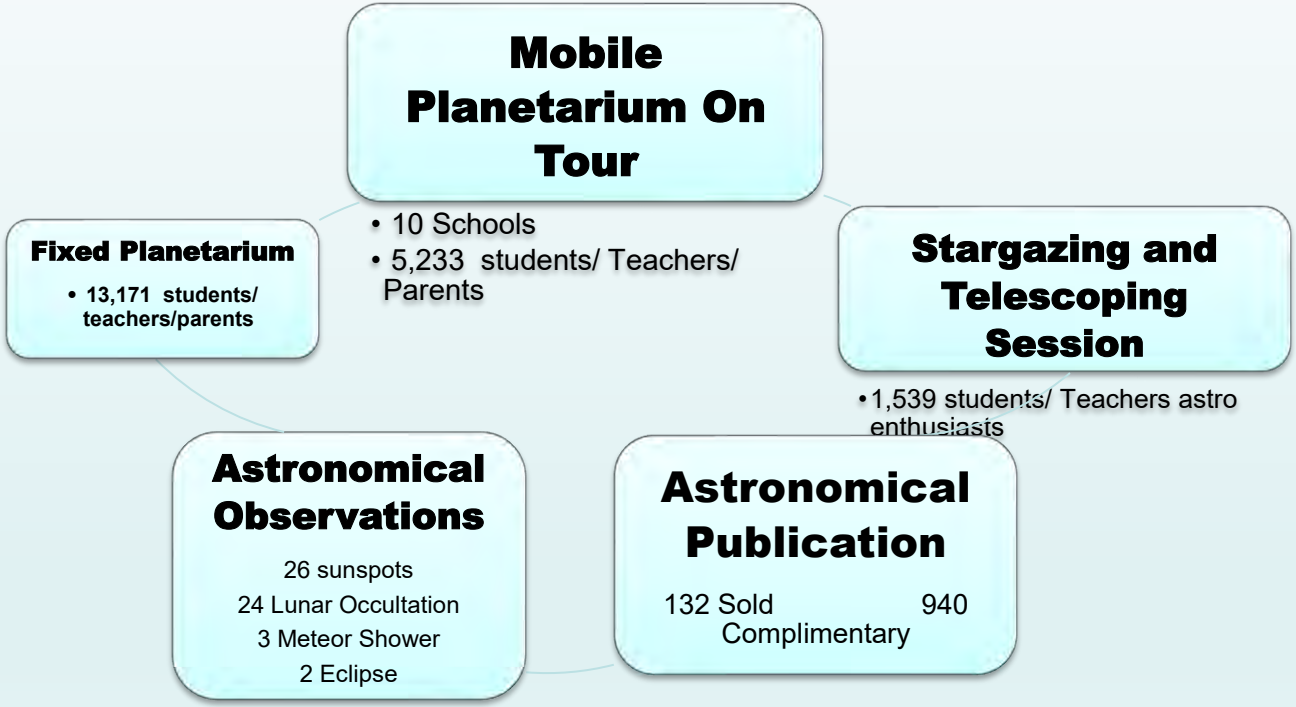
Main support for its operation by GAO, JAPAN







PAGASA


Mobile Planetarium On Tour
• 10 Schools
• 5,233 students/ Teachers/ Parents
Fixed Planetarium
• 13,171 students/ teachers/parents
Stargazing and Telescoping Session
•1,539 students/ Teachers astro enthusiasts
Astronomical Observations
26 sunspots
24 Lunar Occultation
3 Meteor Shower
2 Eclipse
Astronomical Publication
132 Sold
940 Complimentary

RIZAL TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

- **OUTREACH PROGRAM**
  - Conducted mobile planetarium lectures to 10 private ad public schools in Metro Manila
- **Collaboration with public and private agencies**
  - 3 Universities for research and development project
- **Collaborations with NARIT**
  - Ethnoastronomy Workshop - Rizal Technological University (RTU) and Bataan Peninsula State University (Abucay Campus)
  - Research Internship and Apprenticeship with NARIT
  - Research Collaboration with Moana Loa Observatory for Astronomical Studies
- **Astronomy and Space Science Research Forum/ Seminar/Workshop**
  - Astronomy and Space Science Research Gala, Feb 20-22, 2019
  - Astronomy & Space Science Research Colloquim, March 6-8 2019

International Center for Interdisciplinary Science and Education

VIETNAM

The founder of the center is an oversea Vietnamese, Prof. Jean Tran Thanh Van. **ICISE organizes each year about 15 conferences and schools, out of that about 1/3 on astronomy/astrophysics**. A school, so-called Vietnam School of Astrophysics (VSOA) has been organized annually since 2013. VSOA2020 taking place at ICISE in August will focus on **Stellar Physics**.



V$_N$A$_E$T$_W$L$_S$Y N° 32. October 2020

VATLY NEWSLETTER

The main lesson to be retained from these days is probably that excellence is the top priority. And a democratic academic environment needs to be created where any topic can be addressed and discussed on an equal footing by all, independently from age and position. No one is always right, we all may be wrong at times, but we should have a chance to argue freely.

Phung Ho Hai

CONTENT

This thirty-second issue of the *VATLY NEWSLETTER* opens with the traditional *NEWS FROM THE LABORATORY*. Next, Nhung tells us about the *IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC* on Vietnam in general and on our team in particular. As *A HAPPY CONSEQUENCE OF THE PANDEMIC*, we hosted this Summer a few interns who would otherwise have worked abroad: Hoai, Thai and Ngoc write about this experience. Bac Pierre reports about *A RECENT FRAUD* that marred the academic landscape in Vietnam and we copy excerpts of two articles that

and we want to express our deepest gratitude for the confidence you have placed in us and the friendly support that you have expressed. As it had become obvious that our problem could not be solved at the level of the Institute, Diep, following advice from Professor Chien, sent a letter to Professor Chau Van Minh, head of VAST, stating in particular: "*Our research field is astrophysics, which unfortunately is not present on the scene of Vietnamese basic research at a level comparable with what it is on the international scene. However, many scientists, both in Vietnam and abroad, are aware of its*

RESEARCH

Essentially limited to: Pr. Phan Bao Ngoc, IU (HCM city), Pr. Dinh Van Trung, IOP (Hanoi), Pr. Dao Tien Khoa, INST/Vinatom (Hanoi), VNSC/VAST Department of Astrophysics (7 PhD+1 master student) (Hanoi).

Most of us are working on radio astronomy: brown dwarf (Ngoc), molecular complexity around evolved stars (Trung), nuclear astrophysics (Khoa), high-redshift galaxies and stellar physics (DAP).

We use data obtained from collaborations or from archived data.

In 2017, Vietnam joined the East Asia Observatory (EAO) as an observer. Vietnamese astronomers can use EAO's facilities. Currently, we are actively joining the activities of the Observatory: co-proposing large programmes and analyzing data from these programmes, taking shift, serving on TAC, participating EAO users meeting.





OUTREACH AND TRAINING

Several amateur astronomer clubs

Planetariums and similar initiatives at various places, Hoa Lac, Quy Nhon, Nha Trang, Vinh…

Good introduction to astronomy/astrophysics given to space science students at University of Science and Technology of Hanoi (USTH) and future high school teachers in universities of education in TPHCM and Hanoi.

There are a couple of dozens of students (master, Ph.D, and postdoc) studying abroad on astronomy/astrophysics. Some are coming back to the country.

We are proposing to include astronomy/astrophysics to the master plan for the development of space science in Vietnam for period 2020-2030 and beyond.

SINGAPORE: People and activities

- Mostly theoretical research
  - from Singapore's geographical constraints
- Mostly engaged in education
  - Teaching is first priority, very little funding for research
- Astronomers/astronomy education in NUS, NTU
- NUS non-major enrolment 1200~1500/year, 4 modules
- NUS astrophysics specialisation enrolment O(10)/cohort
  - No PhD programme

HOME TEAM TINY1 NANO1 CONTACT TINYMOS



TINY1

The world's smallest astronomy camera
2016

About

The TINY1 camera was developed to allow astronomy to be accessible to all. The pocket-sized camera was machined from a single block of aluminium featuring an augmented reality star map, to guide users through the stars and constellations. It also features 5GHz WiFi to allow remote control from your smart phone and sharing to social media. A patented noise reduction algorithm and an advanced BSI CMOS sensor allows it small and compact form factor.

Features



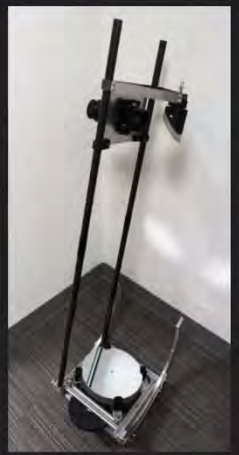
Telescope-in-a-box



200mm f/5 Newtonian

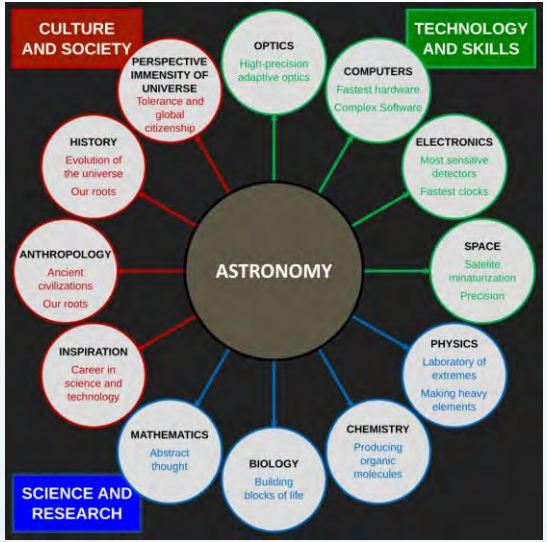
- Total carrying weight 12-19kg (depending on case)
- As small as 56x46x30cm when packed
- Set up in 15 min
- Fully balanced with 1.5kg counterweight
- Helical crayford focuser
- 3d-printed and machined parts

Full CAD files, plans and more available at
https://wiki.nus.edu.sg/display/TEL/Telescope-in-a-box+Home



4 modules in 2 pillars:

- Human Cultures:
  - Einstein's Universe and Quantum Weirdness
  - Understanding the Universe
- Thinking and Expression
  - Sky and Telescopes
  - Big Bang, Universe and Unsolved Mysteries



- Astrophysics graduates should be well-equipped to support industry
  - Emphasis on adaptable skills
  - Build industry partnerships
- Support the broader economy
  - Most astrophysics graduates in Singapore should not become professional astronomers
  - Also note the crisis in higher education (too many PhDs, not enough faculty positions)
- Focus on astronomy education in context of the big picture
  - Emphasis on analytic skills with astrophysical data
  - Translate these skills to support national developmental goals
- Outreach efforts should benefit as many people as possible
  - Special opportunities from Singapore's size

- A suitably-sized and sustainable community
  - Large enough to make a difference
  - Not too large to be unsustainable
- Supports the economy, nation and region through its graduates
  - **Good jobs outside academia**
  - Avoid the crisis in higher education with strong employment figures

At the general level:

- A gateway to science education
  - Visual, inspiring, easily accessible

At the research level:

- A gateway to data science
  - Trains analytic skills
  - Noisy, uncertain data



Myanmar


University of Mandalay


THE 9th SOUTHEAST ASIA ASTRONOMY
NETWORK (SEAAN-2017) MEETING,
YOU ARE GALILEO WORKSHOP,
INTRODUCTION TO ASTRONOMY WORKSHOP
29th NOV 2017 - 2nd DEC 2017
UNIVERSITY OF MANDALAY
Vixen

Challenges of Astronomy and Astrophysics Education in Myanmar

Human resource for astronomy education and research

Our current capacity is good only for rudimentary education of astronomy

We require proficient human resources for astronomy education in an advanced level, expertise in handling of telescope to observe heavenly objects.

Security measurements required to organize night gazing parties involving young students need an assistance from local governing and administrative body.

Workshop in Mandalay University to approve the Astrophysics syllabus and curriculum



28th-29th September 2017

Outcome; board of study of Myanmar Universities approved to insert astronomy as an elective course in undergraduate physics course

CAMBODIA

Royal University of Phnom Penh in Phnom Penh
Department of Physics: Equipped with 8” Celestron
Contact Person: Prof Chey Chan Oeurn, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs, Faculty of Science, Dr. Tharit Sriv



Higher Education:

- **Undergraduate in Physics and Geography:** Astronomy course is existed in the fourth year.
- The course is still applied at private university where RUPP lecturers are invited to teach Astronomy.

Activities: Educations

Higher Education:

Graduate Class in Physics

at RUPP:



- The astronomy course was taught by Prof. Hakim L. Malasan
- Students worked on Astronomy for their researc report.



Activities: Seminar

- Seminar on Astronomy at Faculty of Science:
  - Date: 2009, 2010, 2014, 2015
- CASEAN Conference 2013 (Exoplanets, RUPP)



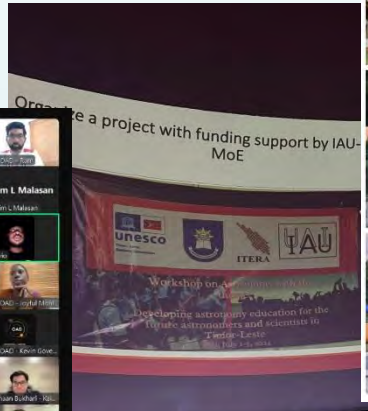




Newest member: Timor Leste

- National University of Timor Leste
- SESIM Timor Leste National Commission for UNESCO













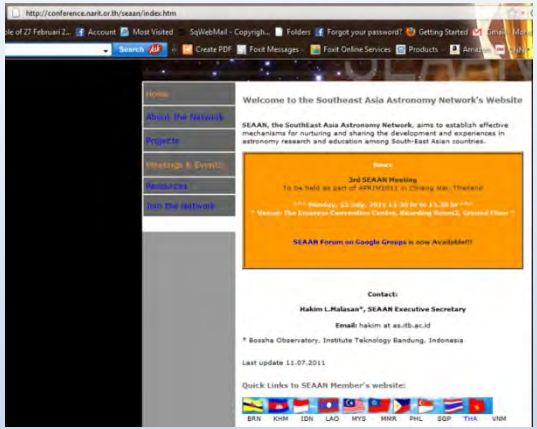
Visit:
http://www.narit.or.th/seaan/index.htm



Established in 2007

Chair: Boonrucksar Soonthoruntuum (NARIT)
Vice-Chair: Hakim L. Malasan (ITB, ITERA)

2025:
Chair: Hakim L. Malasan (ITB, ITERA)
Vice-Chair: Abel Yang (NUS)



National representatives:

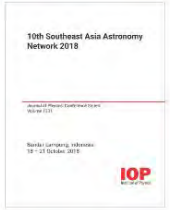
Brunei Darussalam: Hazzary Achmad, PABD
Cambodia : Tharit Sriv, RUPP
Indonesia : Hesti R T Wulandari, ITB
Laos : Sulintone/Bounpone Sayasenh, LNU
Malaysia : Norhasliza Yusof, UM
Myanmar : Yee Yee Oo, Univ of Mandalay
The Philippines : Chat Rosario Ramos, PAGASA
Singapore : Abel Yang, NUS
Thailand : Saran Poshyachinda , NARIT
Vietnam : Pham Ngoc Diep, VNSA
Timor Leste : Luis Nivio de F. Soares (NOC Timor Leste)

Working groups:

I. Radio Astronomy (Koichiro Sugiyama, Taufiq Hidayat)
II. Optical Astronomy (E. Sungging Mumpuni)
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THE FOURTH
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Editor:
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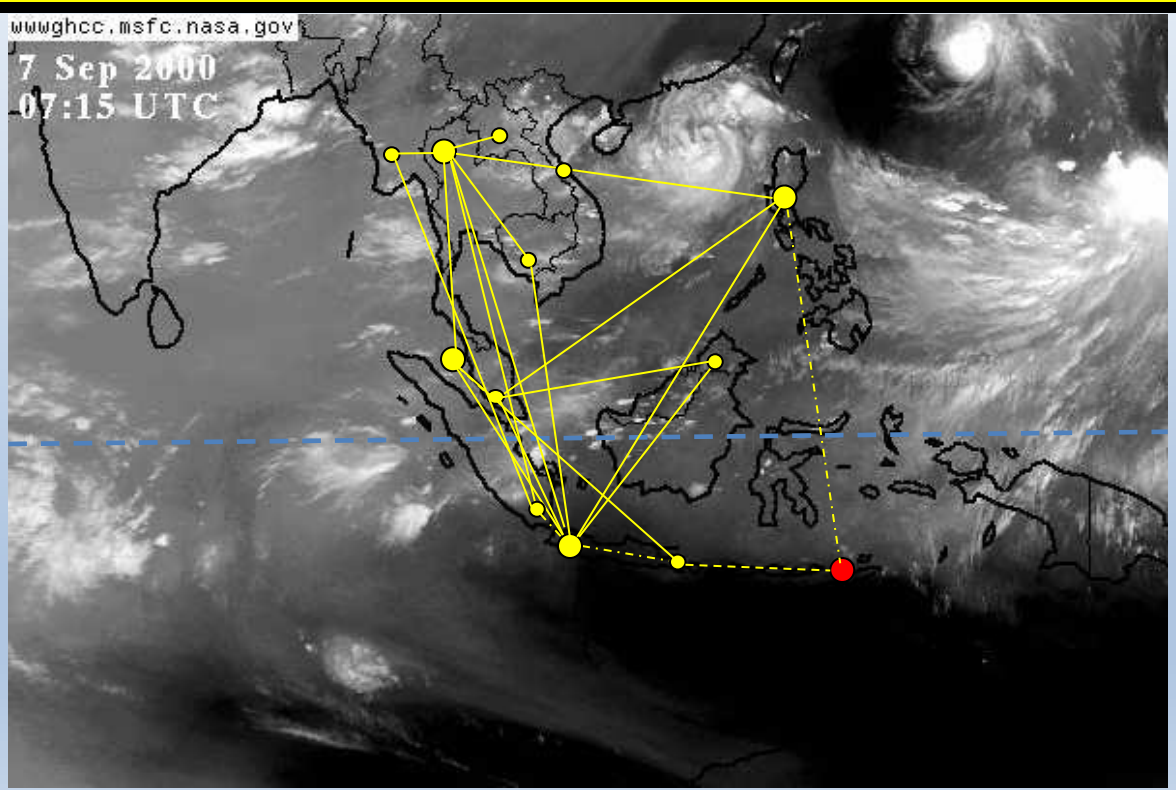
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Regional Astronomical Collaboration and Network



Regional Astronomical Collaboration and Network

- One of an important mission of SEAAN is to seek for collaboration both in national and international levels.
- The collaboration, if ever put into action, will make possible for member institutes or countries to share information, responsibility in advancement of astronomy.
- Moreover, the network will help increasing research capacity and building on achievements.

Conclusions

Southeast Asia has gone a big stride on development of Astronomy during the last few decades. At present, we have large Astronomical Infrastructures such as Optical telescopes (2.4-meter Telescope at in Thailand, 3.8-meter telescope in Indonesia), Radio Telescope (40-m and 13-m VGOS). We have new techniques for data analysis, machine learnings and AI for data managements. We have many national and international collaborations. The more important is we have significant manpower in Astronomy now in the Southeast Asia: Researchers, Faculty Members, Postdoctoral Fellows, Research Assistants, Graduate and Undergraduate students with expertises in many disciplines in Astronomy. We are ready to join the international platforms and can fully strengthen astronomy in this part of the world.