

School children throng Nehru Planetarium to watch eclipse

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NEW DELHI: Even though the millennium's longest annular solar eclipse was only partial in Delhi, it didn't dampen the spirits of sky-watchers who gathered in good numbers at Nehru Planetarium on Teen Murti Lane here to view the rare celestial event on Friday.

A large number of school children from Delhi and the National Capital Region accompanied by their teachers reached the Planetarium at 10 in the morning.

"The turnout was encouraging. It testifies to increased awareness about celestial events. The participants were aware that they had to watch the eclipse only through a telescope or goggles and knew that naked-eye observation would lead to visual impairment," said M. K. Jain, who is in charge of sky-watch at the Planetarium.

Telescopes with projection equipment were set up by the Planetarium and goggles were also distributed. Members of the Amateur Astronomers Association, Delhi, and



ALL EYES ON THE SKY: School children watching the first annular solar eclipse of the year 2010 in New Delhi on Friday. - PHOTO: RAJEEV BHATT

SPACE guided students on how to view the eclipse and saw to it that everyone had at least one glimpse of the event.

Indira Goswami, a Class VIII student, said it was a dream come true to view the eclipse.

"Now I can tell my classmates that I was among those lucky few who watched the event. Besides viewing the celestial event, I also learnt a lot about the eclipse which will be useful in my science classes," she said.

According to Vishnu Rethinam of the Amateur Astronomers' Association, Delhi, the solar eclipse was watched with great enthusiasm by sky-watchers, particularly school kids who learnt how to safely view the eclipse.