TRANSIT OF VENUS: TRANSIT OF A LIFETIME

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June 6, 2012 was a wonderful experience of observational astronomy to the public that had happened especially in Balagtas, Orion, Bataan, specifically among students, faculty, parents and staff of Orion National High School (ONHS) now known as Justice Emilio Angeles Gancayco Memorial High School (JEAG MHS) had witnessed one of the rarest predictable astronomical phenomena that repeat every a hundred and more years with pairs of Transits eight years apart – the Transits of Venus.

The Transits of Venus are one of the most awaited events that scientists, astronomers, and science enthusiasts have experienced to observe. As discussed and informed by NASA, Venus passes directly between earth and the sun, thus, we could see distant planet as a small dot gliding slowly across the face of the sun. Archeologically, this rare alignment of these heavenly bodies is how we measured the size of our solar system.

Fortunately, Philippines are one of the very few countries where this very rare phenomenon can be completely observed. It is also remarkable that only three areas in the country where observation and experiencing astronomy on its first hand ever occurred had taken place namely: PAG-ASA Astronomical Observatory, UP Diliman; Daet Camarines Norte and Orion National High School (ONHS) in Orion, Bataan. The ONHS students and other viewers in the said school used welder’s glass #10 and # 12, together with the home – made dobsonian reflecting telescope which was lend and assisted by Mr. Ezekiel G. Rodriguez, a passionate amateur astronomer from UP Diliman and a resident of Puting Buhangin, Orion, Bataan who unselfishly shared his expertise.
and skills in viewing such phenomenon to the students, faculty and staff of ONHS and to the public of Orion municipality.

The transit lasted for six hours and thirty-nine minutes that started at 6:12 in the morning and has completed its travel at 12:49 in the afternoon. The transit occurs in pattern that repeats every 243 years apart separated by long gaps of 121.5 years and 105.5 years. After year 2012, the next Transits of Venus will occur on December 2117 and December 2125. Planet Venus transits are factually of great significance as they used to gain the first scientific estimates of the size of the solar system. According to NASA report, the observation of the 1639 transit which was combined with the principle of parallax has provided an estimate of the distance between the Sun and Earth that was more accurate than any other up to that time, hence the occurrence repeated last June 6, 2012.

Consequently, the Transit of Venus which has occurred last June 2012 has delivered scientists with a number of other research opportunities, in particular with the refinement of techniques to use in the search of exoplanets. Therefore, this is a rare phenomenon that constituents of Orion made them proud of for having the chance of seeing it!

Reference:

https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/transit/catalog/VenusCatalog.html