

Cultural-Grant Aid in Astronomy for Developing Countries from the Japanese Government

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Abstract. In order to promote education and research in developing countries, the Japanese Government began in 1982 providing high-grade equipment within the scheme of its ODA (Official Development Assistance). Since then, for astronomical development, twelve planetaria have been donated to eleven countries and seven reflecting telescopes, with accessories, have been installed in Asian and Latin-American countries.

1. Introduction

The programme of providing scientific and educational equipment to developing countries, operated by the Japanese Government, is called the Japanese Cultural Grant Aid and is a part of ODA (Official Development Assistance). The donation of astronomical instruments, such as research telescopes and educational planetaria is part of this Cultural Grant Aid. Application for such Aid must be formally made through the Japanese Embassy in the country concerned, by the submission of an application document. The aid provided is not exclusively for astronomy and, therefore, applications for astronomy must compete with applications from workers in other fields in a country that seeks aid from the Government of Japan.

No special application form exists. In preparing an application document, applicants should give good reasons why the equipment is needed and are advised to include a short history of astronomy education and, if applicable, astronomy research in their country. It is essential to name and to describe a responsible institution within the country, where the equipment can be housed. It is most important to describe any guarantee by the applying country for the provision of the building needed to house the equipment being sought. Finally, the completed application document should be submitted to the Japanese Embassy through the **Host Institute** and the **Ministry of Education** of the country concerned, with signatures by representatives of these respective institutions.

Upto the end of the Japanese fiscal year 2000, the following countries and their respective institutes have received the astronomical equipment indicated in the next section.

2. Equipment Donated by the Japanese Government 1986-2001

Reflecting telescopes and accesories have been given to:

- 1987 Singapore, 40-cm reflector (Science Centre)
- 1988 Indonesia, 45-cm reflector (Bosscha Observatory, Institute of Technology, Bandung)
- 1989 Thailand, 45-cm reflector (Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok)
- 1995 Sri Lanka, 45-cm reflector (Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Modern Technologies, near Colombo)
- 1999 Paraguay, 45-cm reflector (Asunción National University)
- 2000 Philippines, 45-cm reflector (PAGASA, Quezon City)
- 2001 Chile, 45-cm reflector (Cerro Calan Astronomical Observatory, University of Chile).

Planetaria have been given to:

- 1986 Burma (Myanmar) (Pagoda Cultural Centre)
- 1989 Jordan (Haya Cultural Centre)
- 1989 Malaysia (Space Science Education Centre)
- 1990 Philippines (a supplementary projector for the already-existing planetarium in Manila)
- 1993 India (Burdwan University, West Bengal)
- 1993 Argentina (a supplementary projector for the already-existing Planetario de la Ciudad, Buenos Aires)
- 1994 Uruguay (a supplementary projector for the already-existing Planetario de la Ciudad, Montevideo)
- 1998 Vietnam (Cultural Memorial Hall, Vinh City)
- 1998 Thailand (a supplementary projector for the already-existing planetarium in Bangkok)
- 1998 Sri Lanka (a supplementary projector for the already-existing planetarium in Colombo)
- 1999 India (Tamil Nadu Science and Technology Centre, Chennai)
- 2000 Uzbekistan (Tashkent City Park).

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