

#COSMOS Gazing Beyond

Exploring the cosmos, one starry night at a time, how International Astronomy Day brings the universe closer to us all.



Twice a year, the world looks up in unison to celebrate International Astronomy Day, a global tribute to the wonders of the cosmos and humanity's endless curiosity about the universe. This special day, observed on a Saturday between mid-April and mid-May (and again in the fall), is more than just stargazing. It's a celebration of science, exploration, and our collective cosmic journey.

A Starry Beginning

International Astronomy Day was first celebrated in 1973, thanks to Doug Berger, then president of the Astronomical Association of Northern California. His vision was simple yet powerful: bring astronomy to the people. Telescopes were set up in public spaces like



parks and shopping malls, inviting passersby to pause and peek into the vast unknown. Since then, the initiative has grown globally, with amateur astronomers, educational institutions, and science organizations hosting events, workshops, and skywatching sessions.

Why Celebrate Astronomy?

Astronomy isn't just about stars and planets, it's a gateway to understanding our place in the universe. From ancient civilizations that aligned temples with celestial bodies, to modern missions probing the edges of our solar system, astronomy

has always pushed the boundaries of human knowledge. It blends art, science, history, and even philosophy. On International Astronomy Day, people are encouraged to explore this fascinating field regardless of their background or age.

What Happens on Astronomy Day?

Over the world, observatories open their doors for free public visits. Planetariums hold special shows, schools organize space-themed activities, and astronomy clubs invite the public to view celestial wonders through telescopes. From lunar craters and Saturn's rings to far-off

galaxies, the universe becomes a little more accessible. In the digital age, even those in light-polluted cities or cloudy regions can join in. Virtual observatories, livestreams from NASA or ESA, and mobile stargazing apps make it possible to explore the skies from anywhere.

India's Cosmic Connection

India has a rich astronomical heritage, from ancient texts like the Surya Siddhanta to modern marvels like the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). Institutions like the Nehru Planetarium in New Delhi and the IUCAA in Pune

often host public events to mark the occasion. Indian amateur astronomy groups are also highly active, conducting public observation sessions, astrophotography competitions, and educational webinars in regional languages.

Looking Forward

International Astronomy Day reminds us that curiosity has no boundaries. It invites us to look beyond the noise of daily life and into the silence of space, a place that holds endless questions and countless possibilities. Whether you're a budding astronomer or just someone

who enjoys a quiet evening under the stars, this day is your invitation to reconnect with the universe. So, this Astronomy Day, step outside, look up, and remember: we're all part of something much bigger, and far more beautiful, than we can ever imagine.

Did Jahangirnama Fall Prey To His Son's Dislike Of Him?

PART:3

Jahangir's memoirs make it clear that many artists and craftsmen travelled with him, even if their names or activities are rarely mentioned. Therefore, when Jahangir left Agra for the city of Ajmer in Rajasthan in 1613, and remained there for almost three years, signed and dated paintings depicting the emperor must have been done in the city. His son also had his own small entourage of artists accompanying him, even when he undertook military campaigns, as Nanha's depiction of the submission of the redoubtable Rana of Mewar reveals, the artist has included himself at work in the painting.



Jahangir's wine cup, nephrite jade, probably by Said-a-ye- Gilani, 1613.



Jahangir receiving son in garden, by Manohar, 1610-15.



Prince Khurram receiving the submission of the Rana of Mewar in 1614, by Nanha, around 1615-18.

#THE ARTS



Portrait of Mirza Ghazi, 1610.

been done in the city His son also had his own small entourage of artists accompanying him, even when he undertook military campaigns, as Nanha's depiction of the submission of the redoubtable Rana of Mewar reveals, the artist has included himself at work in the painting.

These prolonged absences from the major cities may explain the apparent reduction in the number of artists in royal service. The



Illuminated calligraphy, by Mir Ali, 1610-20.

House of Books that included the huge imperial library must have remained in the palace at Agra, but the leading artists and calligraphers accompanied Jahangir on his travels. In 1618, when he mentions copies of the Jahangirnama being made, and the artist Abu'l Hasan painting a splendid frontispiece for the royal copy, the court was in Ahmadabad, the capital of Gujarat. This was also the only opportunity that another artist,

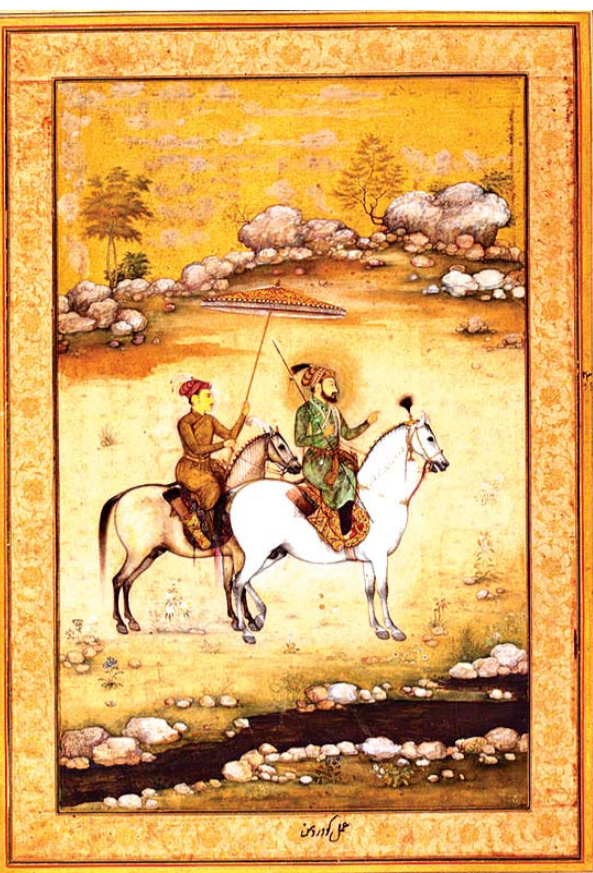


Bishndas, had to study two minor rulers of Gujarat, Rao Bharah and Jassa Jam, who never travelled out of the province.

Portraiture reached an unprecedented level of naturalism under Jahangir, a phenomenon that is usually attributed to the royal artists' exposure to European portraits. Famously, the English ambassador Sir Thomas Roe, who visited Jahangir in Ajmer and then travelled with the court for a time,



Left to right- Portrait of Shah Jahan holding an emerald, painting by Mohammad Abed, 1628. Shah Jahan and son Dara.



The Gujarati land-owners Rao Bharah and Jassa Jam, 1680-20.



Portrait of Zain Khan Koka, by Manohar, 1600.

begun under Akbar but reached unprecedented levels of accuracy in Jahangir's reign.

Single portraits were clearly used as templates to transfer the image to scenes of court assemblies. A portrait of Mirza Ghazi, with its plain pale green background, is reproduced at exactly the same size in a group scene of Jahangir and his courtiers in a garden.

Different colours have been used to fill in the outline of the group portrait than were used on the single portrait.

The portrait has beautifully painted gold flowering plants on indigo-dyed paper, and decorative borders of great inventiveness were added to paintings and calligraphic specimens that were preserved in the albums of Jahangir, now all dispersed.

Sometimes, the panels of calligraphy often dating to much earlier times and treasured as the work of a great master, were themselves decorated with small panels depicting animals, or with shimmering golden illumination and flowers.

The flowers were derived from European engravings, probably seen by Mughal artists in the borders of Netherlandish prints of Biblical scenes owned by the Jesuits and often brought out by them in court gatherings.

Jahangir mentions in his memoirs an Iranian poet who had been given the title 'Bibadal Khan, the Peerless One'. His name was Sa'ida and he probably arrived at the Mughal court early in Jahangir's

reign. His skills were many and varied. In addition to being a poet, he was a calligrapher, a lapidary (cutter, polisher or engraver of gemstones), and one of several specialists who was able to inscribe in minute lettering the title of Jahangir on his personal possessions made of precious stones, jade or imported Chinese porcelain. He was also a goldsmith who was given the position of head of the goldsmiths department.

His ability to work hardstones perhaps explains the appearance, during Jahangir's reign, of objects made of nephrite jade that were inscribed with the emperor's titles. One of these is a wine cup inscribed with Persian verses, the hijri date 1022, and the regnal year 8 (corresponding to the first half of 1613). The verses can be connected to Sa'ida-ye Gilani, who almost certainly dated the cup.

The raw material, imported from Khotan, was probably already in the royal treasury when Jahangir became emperor, but no finished artefacts can be reliably dated before his reign. The techniques used to fashion nephrite jade, which cannot be carved but has to be abraded or incised using diamond drills and small lap wheels, are the same as those used to shape objects of rock crystal, a material commonly found in the subcontinent and already used for hundreds of years.

To be continued...

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

#OBITUARY

An Architect of Scientific Thought and Education in India



PROF. S. LOKANATHAN (1929-2025)

Prof. S. Lokanathan, a distinguished physicist and revered educator, passed away peacefully at his home in Bengaluru on April 30, 2025, at the age of 96.

With 14-year experience of working in US and UK, including a Ph.D. in Columbia with Jack Steinberger (Nobel Laureate 1988), and working in Oxford for 7 years, he joined IIT Delhi in mid 60s. Realizing the need for good teaching in Universities, settled in Rajasthan University in 1969. He retired in 1989, was an emeritus scientist for 5 years, and continued his passion by teaching students in planetarium in Bengaluru since then. He provided an impetus to research in the department of physics through international conferences and

major funding from central governments, setting a research infrastructure with diverse experimental techniques to study materials. He established the High-Energy Physics group which he later led to collaborate with CERN (Centre for European Nuclear Research in Geneva), a collaboration that brought a lot of recognition and funding for Rajasthan University. He coordinated an International program in Physical Sciences benefiting many faculty members in different areas of physics from a post-doctoral training in Sweden. In addition to his well-acclaimed book on Quantum Mechanics, he had major contributions in a program to teach Physics through Experiments. His lifelong commitment to physics and education has left a lasting legacy in both academic and public science communities. Prof. Lokanathan will be deeply missed by his family, colleagues and students who cherish the academic values imbibed from him. He was, in the words of many, "an outstanding professor of physics from the golden age of Rajasthan University." His dedication, humility, and brilliance inspired generations of students, colleagues, and science enthusiasts. Prof. Lokanathan is survived by his family who, along with the wider academic and scientific community, mourn his loss deeply. His legacy - as a teacher, renewed his passion by teaching students in planetarium in Bengaluru - will continue to illuminate the path for many in the field of physics.

May his soul rest in peace.

#CANINES

Protect Your Pup

The Essential Vaccination Checklist for Dogs

Just like humans, dogs need timely vaccinations to protect them from serious and often fatal diseases. Whether you're a first-time pet parent or a seasoned dog lover, staying on top of your dog's vaccination schedule is crucial to ensure their long-term health and safety. Here's a handy checklist of core and non-core vaccines that your dog should receive.

- Core Vaccines (essential for all dogs)**
 - Rabies:** Legally mandated in most places, it protects against a deadly virus transmissible to humans.
 - Canine Distemper:** A highly contagious virus affecting the respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous systems.
 - Parvovirus (CPV):** Often fatal in puppies, it causes severe vomiting and diarrhea.
 - Adenovirus (CAV-1 & CAV-2):** Protects against infectious hepatitis and kennel cough.

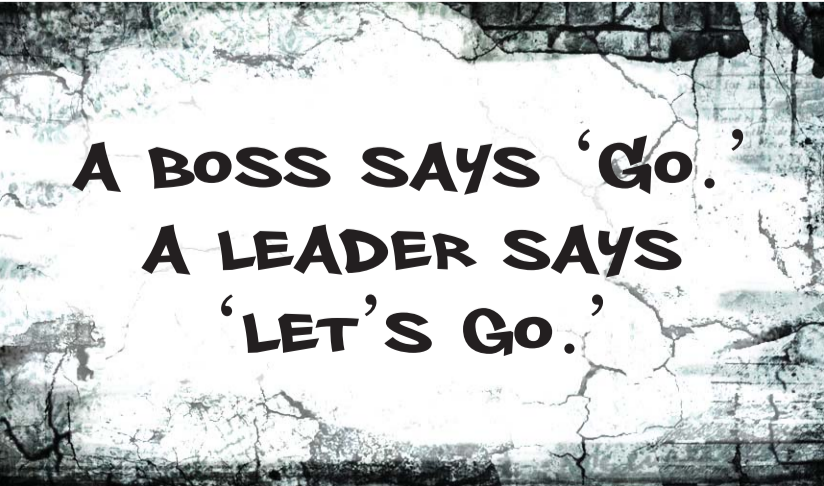
Non-Core Vaccines (based on lifestyle and location)

- Leptospirosis:** Recommended for dogs exposed to standing water or

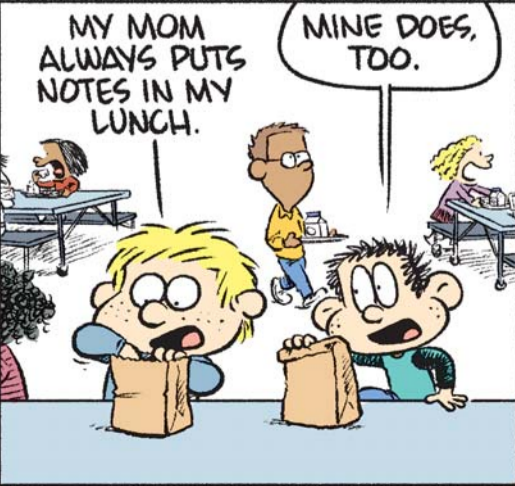


- wildlife.
 - Bordetella bronchiseptica:** Helps prevent kennel cough, common in boarding or social environments.
 - Lyme disease:** Ideal for dogs in tick-prone areas.
 - Canine Influenza:** For dogs that frequent parks, daycare, or grooming centers.
- Puppy Vaccination Tip:** Begin core vaccines at 6-8 weeks of age and follow up every 3-4 weeks until 16 weeks. Adult dogs need booster shots annually or every three years, depending on the vaccine. Consult your veterinarian to tailor a vaccination plan for your furry friend. A few jabs now can save your dog from serious health risks later. Is your dog up to date with their shots?

THE WALL

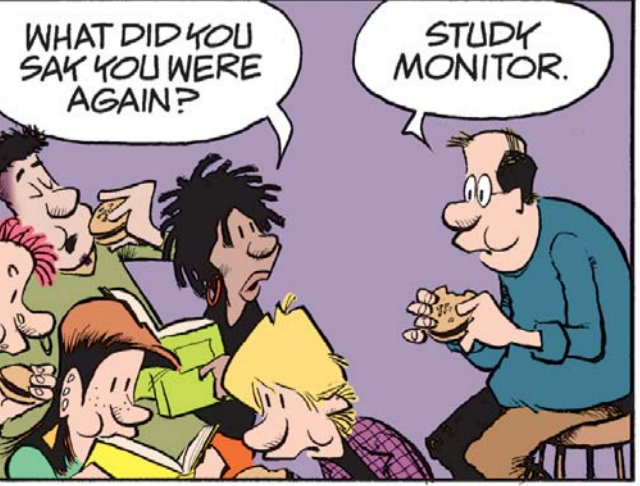


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

