

Young Astronomer Talent Search Winners Begin Educational Visit to ISRO's Sriharikota Space Centre

- Minister Shri Krushna Chandra Patra flags off the educational tour at Pathani Samanta Planetarium
- Top 30 students selected from more than 76,700 participants across Odisha
- Winners to gain first-hand exposure to India's space research and satellite launch operations

Bhubaneswar, May 26, 2026:

The top 30 winners of the 19th edition of the Young Astronomer Talent Search (YATS), a flagship initiative of Tata Steel in collaboration with Pathani Samanta Planetarium (PSP) under the Science and Technology Department have embarked on an educational exposure visit to the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota Range (SHAR), Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The visit is scheduled from May 26 to May 29, 2026.



The educational tour was flagged off by Science and Technology Minister Shri Krushna Chandra Patra at the Pathani Samanta Planetarium in Bhubaneswar. He said that "For the first time YATS winners are getting a chance to visit ISRO's facility at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. This exposure visit will enlighten them on space science, astronomy and astrophysics. These young astronomers will bring laurel for the state and the nation in future."

Speaking on the occasion, Additional Chief Secretary of Science and Technology Department and Chairperson, Pathani Samanta Planetarium Smt. Chithra Arumugam urged the students to work hard to be among the space explorers. This opportunity will surely inspire all, she said.

This year's YATS witnessed overwhelming participation, with more than 76,700 students from across Odisha taking part in the competition through both offline and online modes. The top 30 students were selected through a rigorous multi-stage evaluation process designed to test scientific aptitude, curiosity and understanding of astronomy and space science.

The flag-off ceremony was attended by Additional Secretary of Science & Technology Smt Sibani Mohanty and Director In-charge of Pathani Samanta Planetarium Smt. Urmiprava Maharana, Chief

of Corporate Services, Tata Steel Meramandali (TSM) Shri Subhramshu Panda along with senior officials from the Government of Odisha, Tata Steel and Pathani Samanta Planetarium.



During the visit, the students, accompanied by teachers and officials from Tata Steel and Pathani Samanta Planetarium will explore various facilities at SDSC-SHAR and gain insights into India's space missions, launch vehicle systems, satellite technologies and tracking operations.

With the theme "Stargazer Today, Gagannaut Tomorrow", the 2025-26 edition of YATS aims to ignite imagination and strengthen scientific temperament among students. Since its inception in 2007, the initiative has engaged over 5.4 lakh students, with more than 260 winners having visited various ISRO facilities across the country. YATS continues to be one of India's most impactful science outreach programmes, inspiring the next generation of scientists, innovators and space enthusiasts from Odisha.

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