

DECCAN HERALD

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Indian Institute of Astrophysics is 200 years old

By Our Staff Reporter

BANGALORE, Jan. 6. — Prof. M.G.K. Menon, Science Adviser to the Prime Minister, today unveiled a commemorative plaque at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics to mark its 200th anniversary.

The IIA, situated in Koramangala off Hosur Road, traces its origin to a private observatory set up in 1786 at Madras by William Petrie, an officer of the East India Company. It was taken over by the Company in 1789 and in 1899 the astronomical activity was shifted to Kodaikanal.

The Kodaikanal Observatory became the Indian Institute of Astrophysics, a premier research institution under the Union Department of Science and Technology, in 1971.

The IIA centres are now at Bangalore, Kavalur, Kodaikanal and Gauribidanur. January 6 also happens to be the first anniversary of the 2.3-metre Vainu Bappu Telescope.

Prof. R.K. Kochhar, chairman of the bicentennial committee presented Professor Menon with envelopes specially cancelled at all the IIA centres.