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800 Physics Whizzes in Singapore for the International Physics Olympiad
- Singapore plays host for the first time

Top students and their mentors from around the world are here in Singapore to compete in the 37th International Physics Olympiad (IPhO). The competition is the most prestigious competition of its kind for pre-university students. The event takes place from 8th to 17th July 2006.

The opening ceremony at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) today was officiated by Singapore’s Minister for Education, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam.

The annual IPhO has been challenging students since 1967 and achieves a key goal of promoting scientific discovery among young people. It pits the best of the best against their peers, all of whom are selected after rigorous rounds of nationwide tests in their home countries. Winning a medal at this prestigious competition is thus no small accomplishment.

While the competition itself will be rigorous, it won’t be all work and no play as the participants will get to take in the sights and sounds of Singapore. Various tours and activities have been planned to make the experience memorable for the participants. The students will also get a taste of campus life as they will be staying at NTU, the games village and accommodation venue.

Also, for the first time in Olympiad history, the IPhO participants will mingle and dine with four Nobel Laureates - Prof CN Yang (1957), Prof Masatoshi Koshiba (2002), Prof Douglas Osheroff (1996) and Prof Aaron Ciechanover (2004); and a Templeton Laureate – Prof Paul Davies. The scientific giants, invited here with the support of NTU’s Institute of Advanced Studies, will give special lectures.
**Inspiring young students**

Nurturing a pool of talented youths in physics will be critical in supporting Singapore’s push for excellence in education and R&D, says the Organising Chairman of the 37th IPhO, Prof Xu Shuyan from NTU’s NIE. “We hope, by staging IPhO here in Singapore and through the various events planned in conjunction with it, to reach out and further inspire Singapore’s young minds and interest them in Science.”

Professor Er Meng Hwa, NTU’s Acting Provost and Steering Committee Chairman of the 37th IPhO, adds “The IPhO is an excellent platform for top pre-university students from all over the world to get to know Singapore as an educational and research hub.”

NTU’s President, Dr Su Guaning, says, “NTU is proud to be the lead organizer and the “games village” of the 37th International Physics Olympiad. We hope this Olympiad experience will further open the participants’ horizon so that they, in turn, may one day transform the world of science.”

The 37th IPhO is jointly organised by Singapore’s Nanyang Technological University (NTU), National Institute of Education (NIE), National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Institute of Physics, Singapore (IPS). The event is supported by the Ministry of Education (MOE).