

Astral travel in 2 decades, says astrophysicist

By A Staff Reporter

Dr. M. K. V. Bapu, director of the Indian institute of astrophysics, forecast in Bombay on Friday the possibilities of spacecrafts from the earth travelling to the vicinity of the nearest stars by the end of the 20th or early 21st Century.

He said that the developments of the last ten or 15 years promised these possibilities. The only other method of getting in touch with the outer world was through radio communication, he said. Some efforts had been made a few years ago in this context, but these were still in its early stages.

Dr. Bapu was delivering the inaugural lecture of the Nehru Centre science lecture series at the Nehru planetarium premises. The inaugural lecture will be followed by lectures of several other distinguished scientists.

END OF THE EARTH

Dr. Bapu also spoke of the end of the planet earth. He said that the sun had been shining for 5 billion years and would continue to shine in the same way for another 5 billion years.

Then it would grow into a giant red ball and in a few 100 million years the oceans would start to boil. The sun would grow to 30 times its size, though, by then, all life on earth would have perished.

The sun would then start moving towards the stellar graveyard and the temperatures on earth would get lower. But, by then, it was unlikely that life would regenerate.

Dr. J. V. Narlikar, who presided, suggested that the lectures at the centre should be held twice a month and hoped that they would become a regular feature in the cultural and educational life of the city.

Mr. Rajni Patel, general secretary of the centre, said that the centre was also planning a 'Discovery of India' hall, which would show the progress made in India in science and culture. The construction of the hall would commence in November, he said.