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BYURAKAN ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY

1946 — 2026

Founded by Viktor Ambartsumian

80 YEARS UNDER THE ARMENIAN SKY



**ARMENIAN  
ASTRONOMICAL  
SOCIETY  
Newsletter**

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## LOCAL NEWS

**BYURAKAN ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY 1946–2026: 80 YEARS UNDER THE ARMENIAN SKY**

In 2026, the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO) marks its 80th anniversary.

Founded in 1946 by the world-renowned Armenian scientist, Academician Viktor Ambartsumian, this scientific center has become a symbol of Armenia and one of the leading astronomical institutions in the region.

The Observatory is located on the southern slope of Mount Aragats, near the village of Byurakan, where the clear skies and high-altitude conditions provide an excellent environment for astronomical observations.

From its earliest years, BAO has been a center of major scientific discoveries. In 1947, Viktor Ambartsumian discovered stellar associations, demonstrating that stars are formed in groups and that the process of star formation is ongoing. This groundbreaking discovery significantly transformed scientific understanding of stellar evolution.

BAO has also hosted world-renowned observational programs, most notably the First Byurakan Survey (Markarian Survey), which led to the discovery of thousands of galaxies with ultraviolet excess, now known as Markarian galaxies. This unique observational material has been inscribed in UNESCO's "Memory of the World" Register. Today, the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory continues its scientific, educational, and outreach mission as one of Armenia's leading research institutions. It conducts advanced astrophysical research, hosts international conferences, and organizes summer schools and educational programs for young scientists.

Over the past 80 years, Byurakan has become not only a major scientific center but also a symbol of Armenian scientific thought, continuing to inspire new generations of researchers to explore the mysteries of the Universe.



## PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BYURAKAN ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY

On 3 February, a press conference was held at the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, dedicated to summarizing the 2025 scientific and organizational activities of the NAS RA Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO), as well as presenting the planned programs for 2026, in anticipation of the 80th anniversary of the Observatory.

In his remarks, BAO Director Areg Mickaelian presented the main achievements and activities carried out in 2025, followed by an overview of the initiatives planned for 2026.

As part of the event, the Annual Scientific (Astronomical) Journalism Competition 2025 awards ceremony was also held.

The prizes were awarded in three categories:

- 🏆 Best Author Article:  
Ani Karapetyan (*168 Hours*) and Hrayr Nazaryan (*Armenpress*)
- 🏆 Best Audio/Video Material:  
Lilit Madunts (MIR TV and Radio Company) and Sevak Vardumyan
- 🏆 Most Active Journalist of 2025:  
Hrayr Nazaryan (*Armenpress*)



The press conference concluded with a Q&A session with journalists.

## ARMENIAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY FEATURED IN EAS FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

An article dedicated to [the Armenian Astronomical Society \(ArAS\)](#) was published in the February issue of the [European Astronomical Society \(EAS\) e-Newsletter](#), highlighting the Society's activities, achievements, and international role.

Founded in 1999 (officially registered in 2001), ArAS is a non-profit professional organization uniting astronomers from Armenia and the diaspora. Today, it includes 108 members from 49 institutions across 21 countries and plays a key role in coordinating astronomical activities in Armenia, closely collaborating with the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory.

The Society actively promotes scientific exchange and professional development through annual meetings, conferences, and educational programs. Among its flagship initiatives is the Byurakan International Summer School (BISS), widely recognized as one of the leading astronomy schools worldwide. ArAS also supports early-career researchers through awards, including the Yervant Terzian Prize, and by facilitating participation in international programs.

ArAS maintains strong engagement in science communication and outreach, publishing the *ArASNews* newsletter since 2002, organizing public lectures and school programs, and producing Armenian-language popular science content. It also contributes to interdisciplinary fields such as Archaeoastronomy and Astronomy in Culture, in collaboration with international organizations.

*At the international level, ArAS is an affiliated society of the European Astronomical Society and is recognized by several global organizations, further strengthening its role in the international astronomical community.*

Visit the [link](#) for more information.



## NATIONAL ROUND OF THE ASTRONOMY OLYMPIAD

On 23 February, 24 students who had advanced to the national round of the Astronomy Olympiad gathered at the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory (BAO). In addition to participating in the competition, they had the opportunity to explore the research institute named after Viktor Ambartsumian.



The participants represented Yerevan, as well as the Aragatsotn and Shirak regions of Armenia. During the Olympiad, students completed four theoretical problems over the course of four hours. Based on the results of this stage, a five-member national team of Armenia will be selected to participate in the 19th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA), to be held in Hanoi, Vietnam, in October.

Following the competition, the students met with BAO Director Areg Mickaelian, who introduced them to current research activities in science, particularly in astronomy, as well as the Observatory's ongoing work.

The program also included a visit to the Viktor Ambartsumian House-Museum, where participants learned about the life and legacy of the renowned scientist, and a tour of the 2.6-meter telescope.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### VLADIMIR AIRAPETIAN AMONG THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2025 GODDARD CENTER DIRECTOR'S AWARD

Astronomer Vladimir Airapetian, an international advisor to the Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory, has been named among the recipients of the 2025 Goddard Center Director's Award for "exceptional advances in solar-stellar physics showing how powerful eruptions from the young Sun may have driven the formation of life's building blocks on the early Earth."

His recent scientific achievements include the following:

- A paper recently published in Nature Astronomy dedicated to stellar eruptions observed in stars analogous to the young Sun.
- Another article published in the same journal, focusing on the emerging scientific field of heliobiology.
- A separate study carried out using the Chandra X-ray Observatory, through which he revealed the evolution of X-ray emission from young Suns.



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF BYURAKAN ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY'S ASTRONOMERS

No.	Authors	Title	Publication
1.	Gabuzyan, H.; Harutyunyan, A.; Sedrakian, A.	<a href="#">Thermoelectric coefficients of two-flavor quark matter from the Kubo formalism</a>	Astronomy & Astrophysics
2.	Yeghikyan, A.; Samsonyan, A.; Azatyan, N.; Andreasyan, D.; Baghdasaryan, D.; Nikoghosyan, E.	<a href="#">The turbulence of the interstellar medium of active galaxies</a>	Astronomy & Astrophysics

**ArAS News is the electronic newsletter of the Armenian Astronomical Society, distributed to all ArAS members since the beginning of 2002.**

**The newsletter features informational materials on [ArAS](#), the [Byurakan Astrophysical Observatory](#), and Armenian astronomy in general. It includes reports on ArAS Annual Meetings, the participation of Armenian astronomers in major international meetings, and articles dedicated to the anniversaries of prominent Armenian astronomers and ArAS members.**

**In addition, ArAS News covers the admission of new ArAS members, the achievements of Armenian astronomers, developments in astronomical education in Armenia, Armenian archaeoastronomy, and scientific review articles on significant studies.**

**Researchers who wish to share their work with the scientific community are invited to submit their articles to [lilit.darbinyan7@gmail.com](mailto:lilit.darbinyan7@gmail.com).**

**All submissions will be considered and reviewed for possible publication in upcoming issues of ArAS News.**

**Issues of the ArAS Newsletter are available online at the [following link](#).**