

Partial solar eclipse in Hong Kong on June 21

An annular solar eclipse, with the solar eclipse zone stretching across Asia and Africa, will occur on June 21 (Sunday), but it will be visible as a partial solar eclipse in Hong Kong. As the elevation of the sun will be rather high during the eclipse, the event can be best observed at places with an unobstructed view towards the west if weather permits.

The eclipse will begin at 2.37pm and end at 5.25pm, with the maximum eclipse occurring at 4.08pm. The path of the sun and the moon during this partial solar eclipse is indicated in the Annex.

Details of this partial solar eclipse are set out in the following table:

| Time | Phenomenon | Elevation | Direction (Azimuth) |
|--------|-----------------|------------|------------------------------|
| 2.37pm | Eclipse begins | 60 degrees | West (279 degrees) |
| 4.08pm | Maximum eclipse | 39 degrees | West-northwest (283 degrees) |
| 5.25pm | Eclipse ends | 22 degrees | West-northwest (287 degrees) |

During this solar eclipse, Hong Kong will be close to the path of annularity. The magnitude of the eclipse will be 0.89, meaning that 89 per cent of the sun's diameter will be obscured by the moon at the maximum eclipse. This is the solar eclipse with the largest magnitude visible since 2012, and a solar eclipse with an even larger magnitude will not occur until 2070.

To avoid severe eye damage, members of the public should never look directly at the sun with the naked eye nor through a telescope. A safer method is to project the sun's image through a pinhole or a telescope onto a piece of white paper or cardboard and view the projected image. An illustration of the method is given on the website of the Hong Kong Observatory: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/event-solar-eclps16.htm.

Members of the public can watch the whole event via a webcast to be jointly provided by the Hong Kong Observatory, the Hong Kong Space Museum, the Ho Koon Nature Education cum Astronomical Centre (sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen), Po Leung Kuk Ngan Po Ling College and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Solar Tower's Camp on the following webpage: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/webcast-20200621.htm.

For the latest weather conditions and the astronomical observation conditions on June 21, please refer to the nine-day weather forecast issued by the Hong Kong Observatory (www.hko.gov.hk/en/wxinfo/currwx/fnd.htm) and the Weather Information for Astronomical Observation webpage (www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/astronomy/astro_portal.html).

A detailed explanation of the technical terms used for different stages of the eclipse and past solar eclipses observable in Hong Kong are also available at the Hong Kong Observatory's webpage: www.hko.gov.hk/en/gts/event/event-solar-eclps1.htm.

The next solar eclipse visible in Hong Kong will be on April 20, 2023, which will only be barely observable.