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Students befriend chemistry

The Outreach Programme of National Chemical Laboratory (NCL) recently organised a lecture of NCL Chemist Dr Mangesh Nandagopal. The subject was 'Chemistry you can eat'. He demonstrated experiments to discuss the science behind foods. He showed how common kitchen ingredients could be used as chemical 'reagents' to do fun science at home. NCL's Outreach lectures are being held once a month at the Venture Centre on Pashan Road. The talks are free and open to all. Topics like 'Why does iodine turn raw bananas dark, but not ripe bananas? How do you determine the vitamin C content of colas? How do you measure acidity of foods using red cabbage juice?' were discussed. About 110 school students from several schools all over Pune attended this talk, which concluded with a spectacular demonstration of preparing ice cream by cooling with liquid nitrogen.

The students also got to taste the ice cream. The next lecture in the series will be by Prof Arindam Chowdhury from the department of Chemistry IIT Powai. He will talk about 'Seeing single molecules' on May 30. These talks are free for the school students between 8 and 10 standards and science teachers. Registration can be done by sending the e-mail to register@excitingscience.org NCL scientists are also offering the mentoring for students who are planning research based projects for the National Science and Technology Fair. This exciting science group and Venture centre are also hosting 'Saturday Science Videos'. These are screenings of selected videos related to science and technology, held between 4 pm and 5.30 pm every Saturday over the summer at the Venture Centre.

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