

## Foreword

The Astronomical Society of India (ASI), founded in 1972 through the efforts of several eminent astronomers, has played a key role in promoting research in Astronomy and Astrophysics in the country. One of the main events organized by the Society is its scientific meeting which is held, at least once every two years, in different universities and institutes in the country.

The 29<sup>th</sup> scientific meeting of ASI was organized by the School of Studies in Physics & Astrophysics, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur, Chhatisgarh from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 2011. It is not easy for a university department to host a meeting of this magnitude. It may be noted that this was in fact the second scientific meeting of the Society which was held there. The first one was in 1987 when Prof. R. K. Thakur was the head of the department. This time, Prof. S. K. Pandey, Vice-president of the Society is also the Vice Chancellor of the University. The meeting would not have been a success without the hard work put in by the faculty and students of the department, in particular by Prof. R. C. Agrawal, Dr. Nandkumar Chakradhari, Mr. Laxmikant Chaware and Ms. Samruddhi Kulkarni.

The format of the meeting was somewhat different this time. The executive committee, in its meeting in 2010, had recommended a change in the format for paper presentation. It was felt that in order to attract young researchers as well as researchers from colleges and universities, they should be given a chance to make an oral presentation of their work. Keeping this in mind, the preference for mode of presentations was asked for in the first circular itself and all those who opted for oral presentations (59 out of 147) were accommodated by arranging three parallel sessions.

In three days of the meeting, a total of 14.5 hours were available for scientific deliberations. Out of these, about six hours were reserved for invited talks, about two hours were devoted to thesis presentations and 1.5 hours were taken up by reports from observatories and rapporteur talks. Three parallel sessions in the remaining 3.5 hours made a total of 10.5 hours available for oral paper presentations in which 59 participants presented their work. This format of the meeting was widely appreciated. We did ask several participants for their suggestions for improving the format in the next scientific meeting. The scientific organizing committee (SOC) plans to take into consideration all the suggestions that it has received. If anyone has any further suggestions, he/she is welcome to pass them on to us. We would like to point out that the proceedings has all the abstracts together, irrespective of whether it was an oral or poster presentation.

The SOC had extensive deliberations on the topics to be covered in the meeting and the speakers to be invited. The SOC took into account not only the recent work done by prospective invited speakers but also the scientific programmes of the past few ASI meetings as well as the NSSS meetings so as not to have repetitions and to give a chance to those who have not spoken recently in these meetings.

Unfortunately, in spite of trying our best, a few invited speakers did not submit their write up. As a result, the proceedings do not reflect the full range of the topics

covered in the meeting. We apologize for that. However, we are happy to have these proceedings ready in a reasonable length of time and hope that these will be useful to the astronomy community.

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