

## Foreword

The 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Astronomical Society of India was hosted by the Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital from 22–24 February 2005. About 250 participants from different parts of the country and a few from outside India attended the meeting.

During the meeting there were exciting oral presentations on a number of themes, namely the Sun, stars, interstellar medium and galaxies, cosmology and future facilities, in addition to a mini symposium on radio astronomy and brief reports from the observatories. The programme also consisted of 7 theses presentations from young astronomers who had just completed their theses. About 150 poster papers were also presented in various categories (Sun and Solar system, stars and galaxies, extra-galactic astronomy and cosmology and instrumentation). Two evening lectures, one by T. Padmanabhan on ‘Quantum vacuum: much ado about nothing’ and the other by S. Shetye on ‘An introduction to tsunamis’ also enlivened the meeting. The proceedings consisting of the Presidential Address, the theses talks and the abstracts of the oral and poster presentations will give a flavour of the meeting.

KS would like to thank all his fellow colleagues of the scientific organising committee, namely J.S. Bagla, N. Banerjee, D. Bhattacharya, T. Chandrasekhar, Y. Gupta, S.N. Hasan, D.K. Ojha, A.K. Pandey, M. Parthasarthy, T.R. Seshadri, P. Sreekumar and P. Venkatakrisnan, for their able help in chalking out the scientific programme. Considerable effort and time was spent by all the SOC members to try and make the meeting a success. We thank them for their efforts. The president of the ASI, S. N. Tandon is thanked for giving a free but helping hand to the SOC. We thank N. M. Ashok, Y. Gupta, S. K. Sethi and P. Venkatakrisnan for giving excellent summaries of the poster contributions, and T. Chandrasekhar and Siraj Hasan for their help in the difficult task of deciding the best thesis. No meeting can be successful without the active participation of a large number of people. We thank all those who took part in the meeting.

The local organising committee, chaired by Ram Sagar, and consisting of his colleagues Tarun Bangia, U.S. Chaubey, K.G. Gupta, S.K. Gupta, Brijesh Kumar, S.S. Kumar, T.S. Kumar, Sneha Lata, A. Omar, A.K. Pandey, P. Pant, B.B. Sanwal, Nitin Sharma, Mahendra Singh, K. Sinha, Alok Taori, Wahab Uddin, R.K.S. Yadav and post-docs and PhD scholars of ARIES, did a wonderful job of taking care of all the local logistics. We thank them for the considerable work that they have put in to take care of the participants, so that they could enjoy the meeting. All the SOC’s logistical problems were ably sorted out by Ram Sagar and Mahendra Singh. We also thank Sandra Rajiva of the BASI editorial office for her help in bringing out these proceedings.

K. Subramanian and D.J. Saikia  
Guest Editors