

Editorial

The “Metrewavelength sky: Celebrating 50 years of radio astronomy at TIFR”, conference was held at NCRA-TIFR in Pune, from December 9-13, 2013. As clear from the title one of the aims of the conference was to celebrate 50 years of Radio astronomy research at TIFR as well as 10 years of operation of the GMRT. Radio astronomy at TIFR started with solar observations using the Kalyan Radio Telescope built by Prof. Govind Swarup and his group in the 1960s. Major milestones over the last 50 years include the construction of the Ooty Radio Telescope (ORT) in the late 1960s and the Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (GMRT) in the 1990s. With the construction of the GMRT, the radio astronomy group at TIFR moved to the newly formed National Centre for Radio Astrophysics (NCRA-TIFR) at Pune. The GMRT was the first of a new generation of low frequency radio telescopes that have led to a renaissance in the field over the last few years.

Although celebrating the past achievements of the Radio Astronomy group at TIFR was certainly an important theme of the conference, the main aim of the conference was to bring together leading researchers in a variety of fields, covering all areas of active research at low radio frequencies. New telescopes (LOFAR, MWA, ASKAP, MEERKAT) are now coming on line and the GMRT is itself going through a major upgrade. So although there was a day set aside (at the GMRT campus near Khodad village) after the main conference for reminiscences and celebrations the principal emphasis of the conference was on recent astronomical results and new developments in instrumentation. The broad themes that were covered included Radio emission from the Sun, stars and planets, Pulsars and transient sources, HI through cosmic time, Cosmic magnetic fields, SNRs, HII regions, star forming galaxies, AGN and Galaxy clusters and new developments in instrumentation and techniques. Over 200 astronomers from all over the world registered for the conference, leading to a diverse and vibrant program.

We are grateful to the Scientific Organizing committee for helping us put together such an interesting set of presentations, to all of the participants in the conference for making it a success, and to the Local Organizing Committee for making sure that everything ran so smoothly. As can be seen from these conference proceedings, low frequency radio astronomy is in excellent health, and we look forward to the next decade with great interest.

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