

Message from the Head of Institute, ARIES

The happy confluence of centenary year of general relativity, launching of ASTROSAT and installation of 3.6 m Devasthal optical telescope (DOT) of ARIES in the year 2015, encouraged us to organize a National conference on compact objects in ARIES during May 6-8, 2015, called Recent Trends in the Study of compact objects II - Theory and Observation, or, RETCO-II. The first RETCO was held in IIT Guwahati in 2013. The enthusiasm in the astronomy community to participate in this edition of RETCO was overwhelming. Limited space allowed us to confine the conference to about sixty one participants. Experts, post-doctoral fellows and research fellows, working on topics ranging from white dwarfs, neutron stars, black holes, supernovae, astrophysical jets etc came to ARIES with great enthusiasm. The conference which was a meeting point of x-ray, optical and radio astronomers with theoreticians and numerical simulation experts, became an instant success. ARIES faculties also reviewed the status of presently available facilities and status of upcoming observing facilities in ARIES to the participants, targeting especially the young researchers to explore possible areas to use ARIES' observing facilities. Our faculties, students and other staff, enthusiastically helped the organizing committees to smoothly conduct the conference. For three days the participants thronged the conference venue till late in the evening, arguing strenuously about their theory and interpretation of observed data. This was the first time a scientific meeting directly on the topic of compact object was ever organized in ARIES. I express sincere gratitude to all the participants who came and made this conference a great success, I also missed the presence of some of the experts who wanted to attend the meeting, but could not make it due to prior engagements. From ARIES' point of view, we hosted this series of meeting in order to give young researchers of ARIES a platform to seek out new collaboration, and to showcase ARIES' observing facilities to the wider community. Full funding of this conference shows that ARIES stand by on its commitment to strive towards scientific excellence. Finally, I would thank the National Advisory Committee, the Organizing Committee and the Local Organizing Committee members for their tireless effort to organize such a high quality meeting in ARIES.

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