

PREFACE

A small international discussion meeting of distinguished physicists working in the general area of Mesoscopic and Disordered Systems was held from 18–20th Dec. 2000 in IISc, Bangalore.

The motivation for holding this meeting was the intrinsic fascination of the field, which abounds in interesting and subtle physics issues. While on the one hand it is directly related to the fast emerging area of mesoscopic and nanoscopic devices, on the other hand it is leading to theoretical developments which have general application in a large number of other areas of condensed matter physics.

A second motivation for the meeting (and even more so, for its timing) was that many of us thought that this would be the best way to felicitate our distinguished colleague Narendra Kumar, who has made outstanding contributions to this field (and turned 60 in April 2000). So the discussion meeting focused on themes closest to his research interests within the above broad area.

During and after the meeting there seemed to be widespread support for the idea of bringing out the talks presented there in a special issue of *Pramana*, and all the speakers graciously agreed to contribute. There were several distinguished colleagues who would have wanted to take part in the discussion meeting but could not do so because of other commitments. We thought it would be appropriate to request them to contribute as well, even though this did lead to a delay in bringing out the special issue. Again, many of the colleagues we contacted graciously agreed to our request. The ensuing pages contain the fruits of their efforts. We hope that the condensed matter physics community will find this special issue of value.

The discussion meeting was made possible thanks to the generous support and help we received from ICTP Trieste, JNCASR Bangalore, IISc Bangalore, and RRI Bangalore. Many other institutions, in particular the SNBNCBS Kolkata, TIFR Mumbai, etc., helped with travel support for the colleagues from those institutions to attend the meeting. We take this opportunity to thank all the people in these institutions who assisted us in any way, all the authors who have contributed to this special volume, and the staff of the editorial office of *Pramana*, for their generous help.

Finally, we would be echoing many peoples' sentiments if we use this occasion to thank Narendra Kumar, our friend and colleague, for being the person he is, and to wish him many more happy years, full of physics and laughter, ahead. We hope that the memories of the meeting will be cherished by him and all the others who took part in it, and this special volume by him, all the contributors and by its readers.

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