

Preface

The fifth International Conference on Gravitation and Cosmology (ICGC-2004) was hosted by the Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi during 5–10 January 2004. The conference was attended by about 115 participants from India and abroad. The focus themes of the meeting were Cosmology, Gravitational waves and Quantum gravity. In addition to seventeen plenary talks of an hour each, in this ICGC, there were eight short talks of half an hour each which were more specialized than the plenary talks but still accessible to a wider audience. The meeting concluded with a conference overview. There was a public outreach lecture by C M Will titled ‘Was Einstein Right?’ and a delightful pre-dinner talk by C V Vishveshwara on ‘The Cosmos in Cartoons’. There were four workshops on the topics of Classical Aspects of Gravitation, Quantum Aspects of Gravitation, Cosmology, and Gravitational Waves and Relativistic Astrophysics respectively, two running in parallel at a time. In addition to the contributions appearing in this volume there were four other talks at the meeting: 1) B Jain (Gravitational lensing, dark matter halos and dark energy), 2) E Copeland (Attempts to explain the nature of dark energy – how desperate can we get?), delivered kindly by R Crittenden, 3) J Pullin (Possibilities for experimental signatures of quantum gravitational physics) and 4) R P Kerr (On Kerr–Schild metrics). Due to a variety of reasons, they could not be included here.

The conference was made possible due to financial support from a number of organizations and a list of sponsors appears in an earlier page. In particular, we are grateful to ISRO for its generous support and Dr. K Kasturirangan for his personal interest in the meeting. We would like to thank all the contributors for their cooperation in bringing out these proceedings. We acknowledge the efforts of all the speakers, participants, members of the SOC, NOC and LOC which made this a very stimulating and enjoyable meeting. We would like to express our appreciation for the volunteers of the LOC and the staff of Riveria Suites for the excellent arrangements. We thank G S Manjunath for his help in producing the final version of the proceedings. Finally, we thank the Editorial Board of *Pramana* for having agreed to bring out the proceedings as a Special issue.

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