

## Preface

The two special issues of *Pramana – J. Physics* Part I (Physics & Technology of Lasers, Materials & Optics, Vol. 75(5)) and Part II (Laser Applications, Vol. 75(6)) have emerged out of papers and invited talks presented at the National Laser Symposium (NLS-09) held in January, 2010. The year 2010 marks the 50th Year of Laser, a cause for celebrations world-wide commemorating the invention of laser in 1960. It has therefore, been our special endeavour to substantially strengthen the scientific content of National Laser Symposium encouraging wider international and national participation of scientific fraternity involved in the field of lasers and laser applications. Besides making the contents of the symposium available to a wider audience, these two special issues of *Pramana* are also intended to serve as a reference for future research, which the symposium hopes to have stimulated.

The National Laser Symposium is an annual event sponsored by the Department of Atomic Energy, Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (DAE-BRNS). The symposium is organized in collaboration with Indian Laser Association (ILA) and is held at different locations in India, each year. The ninth DAE-BRNS National Laser Symposium (NLS-09) was held during 13–16 January 2010, at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Mumbai. The symposium provides a dedicated platform for young researchers in laser physics and technology to interact with eminent scientists from India and abroad, and to present their latest work.

As in previous years, National Laser Symposium (NLS-09) covered frontline research in basic laser physics, as well as, significant advances in development and applications of laser technology. Dr. Srikumar Banerjee, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India, inaugurated the symposium. The keynote address at the symposium was delivered by Prof. Swapan Chattopadhyay, Sir John Cockcroft Chair of Physics, Universities of Lancaster, Liverpool & Manchester, and Director, The Cockcroft Institute, UK. The four-day symposium included 22 invited talks by leading experts and young researchers from India and abroad, 212 contributory papers presented as posters, and 10 oral thesis presentations.

For publication of these special *Pramana* issues the papers were painstakingly peer-reviewed by a team of experts. Papers found suitable for publication by reviewers duly appear in these special issues of *Pramana*. Special thanks to members of the 'Scientific Committee' of NLS-09 and the esteemed reviewers for having meticulously refereed all contributions received by us. We express our sincerest gratitude to all the invited speakers for accepting our invitation to share with us the latest developments in their field of research. We also

appreciate the authors' efforts in contributing papers presenting their latest research results and participating in the symposium. We take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed towards organizing this symposium.

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