

A Jubilee Celebration

The **Indian Academy of Sciences** was established in Bangalore on 24 April 1934. The year 2009 is being celebrated as the **Platinum Jubilee Year** in a variety of ways – special lectures arranged at institutions across the country, three Academy Meetings, and special publications, including this volume.

From its founding in 1934 till 1970, the Academy was nurtured, guided and given its special character by its Founder President C V Raman. At the time of his passing, the Fellowship stood at about 242, and all its activities bore the unmistakable stamp of his unique vision and personality. This must be a rare occurrence anywhere in the world.

As we celebrate the Platinum Jubilee, we remember that the Academy has been a part of independent India for the major part of its life, and as a Learned Society it has both witnessed and supported in its own way the growth, deepening and maturing of science in India. Led by many remarkable individuals who have served as Presidents after Raman, the range of activities of the Academy has seen important expansions. The Fellowship stands today at about 928, apart from 51 Honorary Fellows and 34 Associates. The original Proceedings A and B of the Academy have branched into several theme journals during the late 1970s; and these together with several new journals started subsequently, are generally regarded today as the finest science journals from the country. Beginning with its own efforts in science education in the 1990s, the Academy today works with INSA (New Delhi) and NASI (Allahabad) in supporting, planning, and running a variety of activities to benefit both students and teachers all over the country.

To mark this historic Platinum Jubilee year, the Academy invited several of its distinguished Fellows from different areas of specialisation to put together expert reviews on chosen themes, giving a snapshot of the state of science in a conveniently-sized volume. The 42 articles assembled here cover seven major areas, all of them written and edited with care. (The 5 contributions in Physics have additionally appeared in a special issue of *Pramana*, so as to increase their visibility).

We offer this volume to the Fellowship in celebration of our Platinum Jubilee, and hope of course that these essays will reach a much wider readership both within India and abroad. To our colleagues who planned, commissioned and edited the articles in each area, our sincerest thanks.

May we hope that in the coming years and decades, the Academy continues to function to serve the scientific community of the country, maintaining high standards, recognizing talent at the right time, publishing journals of quality, and helping students and teachers of science in various ways. Under its distinguished Presidents, the Academy has set up an enviable record of academic work of a high quality, and we are sure this will continue as we move towards the next important milestone in its existence.

D Balasubramanian
President

N Mukunda
Editor of Publications

Bangalore

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