

N.1: 24th DAE-BRNS National Laser Symposium (NLS-24) at RRCAT

The 24th DAE-BRNS National Laser Symposium (NLS-24) was organized at RRCAT, Indore during December 2 - 5, 2015. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the year 2015 as the International Year of Light and Light based Technologies (IYL-2015). Thus, it was quite appropriate to organize NLS-24 at RRCAT: a premier national laboratory engaged in research and development of two important light sources, i.e. lasers and synchrotron radiation sources.

Dr. P. D. Gupta, Director, RRCAT presided over the inaugural function and the Chief Guest was Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Member, Atomic Energy Commission. In the inaugural function, Dr. P. D. Gupta welcomed the Chief Guest and all the participants of the symposium.

During his inaugural address, Dr. Kasturirangan recalled his long association with RRCAT and the contributions made by DAE institutions, including RRCAT, to the Indian Space Program. Dr. Kasturirangan described the recently launched Astrosat - A unique observatory in space. He informed that Astrosat, built with the collaboration of several institutions, is the only one in the world having a multi spectral platform including UV, optical and low and high energy x-ray spectrometers, thus allowing a hitherto unavailable flexibility in astronomical observations. He underlined the need for various institutions to join together in such collaborative missions to put India in the forefront of Science and Technology. The key note speech of the symposium was delivered by Prof. Ajay K. Sood of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. He described how laser based techniques like Raman, Ultrafast Spectroscopy and THz spectroscopy provide unique tools to study and understand such materials.

After the inaugural session, Dr. K. Kasturirangan inaugurated an industrial exhibition. This exhibition showcased the latest, state-of-art, laser related technologies and products by leading companies from India and abroad. A separate session for industries was also organized, where information about lasers and related products was presented.

A special session celebrating "IYL-2015" was organized on the second day of the symposium. This session was chaired by Dr. D. D. Bhawalkar, founder director of RRCAT. Prof. S. Umamathy (IISc., Bangalore), Dr. S. M. Oak (RRCAT) and Prof. K. Thyagrajan (IIT, Delhi) delivered expert lectures in this special session. A special first day cover, issued by the Department of Posts, was also released.



Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Chancellor, Jawaharlal Nehru University & Member, Atomic Energy Commission, along with Dr. P. D. Gupta, Director RRCAT and Prof. A. K. Sood, Professor, IISc Bangalore, inaugurating the industrial exhibition in NLS-24.

Apart from the special session, there were seven regular technical sessions comprising of 20 invited talks delivered by the specialists in their respective fields. Continuing the tradition of benefiting the participants, these talks were compiled as articles in the current issue of Kiran - a bulletin of ILA. This issue was distributed to all registered participants of NLS-24.

NLS-24 was attended by more than 500 scientists, researchers, and technologists, from India as well as from overseas countries, representing various educational institutes, research & development organizations. NLS-24 received an unprecedented overwhelming response in terms of contributory papers and Ph.D. thesis presentations. This year, a total of 21 Ph.D. theses were submitted for presentation. After double peer-review, 345 contributory papers (out of 393 submissions) were accepted for the poster presentation in twelve categories.

As in earlier symposia, this time also, the Indian Laser Association played a key role in many activities, including organization of industrial exhibition, assessment of best thesis and posters. Prior to NLS-24, ILA also organized 2 two-day special short courses during 30th Nov. - 1st Dec. 2015, one on "Optical fibers to fiber lasers" and the other on "Terahertz techniques and applications".

In the concluding session, the ILA best thesis award of cash prize of Rs 15,000 and nine ILA best posters awards of cash prize of Rs. 2,500 each, were given. Dr. P. D. Gupta, Director, RRCAT made his observations on the conference, and thanked all invited speakers and delegates for their support in making the symposium a grand success, and declared the symposium closed.

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