

## Preface

As part of its continuing support for the organization of Discussion Meetings in frontier areas of science and engineering, the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research hosted a 3-day meeting titled **'Big Bang and Alternative Cosmologies: A Critical Appraisal'** during January 1997. Support was also received from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA), Pune, and from the Mehta Research Institute, Allahabad.

Prof. J. V. Narlikar of IUCAA took the lead in structuring the meeting and organizing it. This meeting – devoted in sequence to 'Strengths of the Standard Model', 'Constraints on the Standard Model', 'Alternative Cosmologies', 'Anomalous Redshifts' and 'Big Bang vs. Alternatives – provided a much needed opportunity for presenting somewhat unorthodox, carefully thought out points of view in these areas to a critical audience, and to be confronted with experimental evidence.

I am pleased that the invited talks at this meeting are being brought out as a special issue in the **Journal of Astrophysics and Astronomy** by the **Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore**.

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