

were apprehensive as to whether they could rise up to the required level. They were counselled by the teachers and coordinators. Later all students got excited by the experiments and were in the laboratory much beyond the scheduled time for the laboratory sessions. There were 12 laboratory sessions, including presentations.

Students were given feedback forms on the last day. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The teachers found that at least 13 students were excellent and showed great promise.

In the future, we plan to have, like MTTs, three stages of the programme: for the first and second year B Sc and first year M Sc students. The course will have regular topics of their curriculum. Experimental physics will always be one

of the courses. The duration of the programme should also extend to four weeks. Since the number of potential students is large, restricting to one centre may not be adequate. Having two or more centres in different regions is part of the plan. Regions where physics education at undergraduate level are weak can be given particular attention, for example, by having a Mini-PTTS only for those students for a shorter duration.

If teachers in colleges and universities can benefit by this redefined pedagogy, it will go a long way in improving physics education in India. One way will be to identify teachers who are doing research and teaching in colleges and universities and to involve them as teachers and tutors. The other is to invite some interested teachers to attend the programme

as observers. But to sustain this activity and fulfil our larger vision, we need unstinted financial support and encouragement. We hope that the academic community and funding institutions will fulfil the same.

**Raghavan Rangarajan**, Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad 380 009, India; **G. Rajasekaran**, CMI, Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai 600 113, India; **S. V. M. Satyanarayana**, Pondichery University, Puducherry 605 014, India; **M. Sivakumar\***, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad 500 046, India; **Sudha Shenoy**, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta 577 451, India.

\*e-mail: msivakumar.m@gmail.com

## Predhiman Krishan Kaw bags the 2015 Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar Prize of Plasma Physics

The Division of Plasma Physics (DPP) under Association of Asia Pacific Physical Societies (AAPPS) has selected Predhiman Krishan Kaw of the Institute for Plasma Research as the 2015 Laureate of 'Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar Prize of Plasma Physics'. The citation reads, 'For his seminal contributions in the areas of laser-plasma interactions, strongly coupled dusty plasmas, and turbulence, nonlinear effects in magnetic fusion devices'. The prize was founded in 2014 by the AAPPS-DPP and is awarded annually for seminal contribution in the field of plasma physics and is named in honour of the Nobel Laureate Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar<sup>1</sup>. Setsuo Ichimaru of the University of Tokyo was the first laureate (in 2014) for his contributions to the establishment of the theoretical basis of the science of strongly coupled plasmas and their applications<sup>2</sup>. Kaw is the second laureate (in 2015). Donald Blair Melrose of the University of Sydney is the third Laureate (in 2016) for his sustained original contributions to the theory of coherent emission processes in astrophysical and space plasmas, and for his seminal contributions to the theory of quantum plasmas<sup>1</sup>. The award ceremonies for the three Laureates are scheduled to take place during the 13th Asia-Pacific Physics Conference in Brisbane, Australia during 4–8 December 2016 (this series of Conferences is held

once in three years, <http://www.aip-apcc2016.org.au/>).

Kaw is an internationally recognized plasma physicist, well-known for his outstanding contributions in several areas of plasma physics, especially nonlinear laser-plasma interactions; strong coupling effects in dusty plasmas; and turbulence and nonlinear effects in magnetically confined plasmas. He was born on 15 January 1948. He completed Ph D from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi in 1966 at a young age of eighteen! He is the first doctoral student from the IIT. Kaw spent several years (1967–1971 and 1975–1982) at the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, USA and then returned to India in 1982. He was at the Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad from 1971–1975. From 1982 to 1986, Kaw was again at PRL. Kaw and colleagues at PRL succeeded in persuading the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, to set up a major programme of plasma physics at PRL. In 1986, Kaw established the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR) at Bhat on the outskirts of Ahmedabad<sup>3</sup>. IPR was funded by DST till 1996. In 1996, IPR was taken over by the Department of Atomic Energy with a considerable up-scaling of the experimental efforts on thermonuclear fusion<sup>4–7</sup>. Kaw served as the IPR's founding director till 2012.

Under the leadership of Kaw, IPR successfully spearheaded India's case for participation in the prestigious ITER experiment (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor and Latin for 'the way'). Currently, there are seven parties participating in the ITER programme and IPR is now the nodal domestic agency looking after this participation. Kaw has received several prestigious awards including the Padma Shri (1985) and Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize (1986). Kaw is the fellow of the American Physical Society and recipient of the TWAS Prize in Physics.

1. Website of the Division of Plasma Physics, AAPPS; <http://aappsdpp.org/AAPPSDPPF/index.html>
2. Kikuchi, M. and Namkung, W., *AAPPS Bull.*, 2015, **25**(1), 51–52; <http://aapps-bulletin.org/>
3. Institute of Plasma Research, <http://www.ipr.res.in/>
4. Kaw, P. K., *Curr. Sci.*, 1993, **65**(1), 20–25.
5. Sen, A. and Saxena, Y. C., *Curr. Sci.*, 1993, **65**(1), 25–36.
6. Kaw, P. K., *Curr. Sci.*, 1993, **65**(1), 36–48.
7. John, P. I., *Curr. Sci.*, 1993, **65**(1), 48–56.

**Sameen Ahmed Khan**, Department of Mathematics and Sciences, College of Arts and Applied Sciences, Dhofar University, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman  
e-mail: rohelakhan@yahoo.com