

## INDIAN WOMEN and MATHEMATICS

Jaya NN Iyer

The Symposium ‘Indian Women and Mathematics’ (IWM2013) was organized at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research at Pune, India, during 26-28 July 2013.

This was a follow-up of IWM-2012 held at Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, India, during 8-10 January 2012. This was the first meeting to be organized in India, to facilitate interaction between women mathematicians with an active research programme, College teachers from around the country and graduate and undergraduate students. The goal was to attract more women into mathematics and the lectures were kept at a very accessible level. The response was encouraging, and the National Board of Higher Mathematics, India, offered to support this venture. This prompted the organizers Professors Vyjayanthi Chari (University of California, Riverside, USA) and Jaya NN Iyer (IMSc, Chennai) to apply for funding to continue the activities in a more systematic way.

This resulted in the second Symposium “Indian Women at Mathematics-2013” at Indian Institute of Science Education and Research at Pune, India during 26-28 July 2013. See <https://sites.google.com/site/iwmiiserpune/home>.

The symposium was attended by around 100 women college and university teachers, in addition to young women at various stages in academics. The focus of this meeting was to introduce new mathematics and also enable the participants to showcase their knowledge. This was facilitated by having two mini-courses; on Mathematical Biology and Non-Commutative algebras. Both are emerging and largely unexplored areas in mathematics. The plenary talks focused on different aspects of mathematics; study of groups via analysis and geometry, enumeration problems, nonlinear analysis and other areas. The young researchers and contributed talks by participants were delivered and was received with enthusiasm and attention. The poster presentations also attracted attention and interest. The participants and invited specialists had ample time and opportunity to have informal discussions and interaction. The mathematics department and the Director at IISER, Pune, also gave their whole hearted support and help to host the event. The cultural activities included a music concert by renowned vocalists and instrumentalists in Indian Carnatic music, and a short movie was presented.

The meeting concluded with a session on feedback from the participants. The concern voiced was to give exposure and bring the teachers to the forefront in advancing their knowledge base and skills in mathematics. This will filter down in improving the education at undergraduate levels in the country, especially at college and universities in smaller towns. To this effect, a Women's Teachers Training programme is planned at Mumbai University, Mumbai, during 23-28 December 2013. We expect to have two more meetings in 2014. The

Symposium concluded with a vote of thanks by the Convener, Profs. Rama Mishra (IISER, Pune) and Shantha Bhushan (FLAME Institute, Pune).

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