

weak; which illustrates some of the difficulties astronomy faces in Saudi Arabia.

The paper makes some recommendations to overcome some of these problems.

WG 1.4

A Global Distribution of Archives of Astronomical Data

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Astronomical observations can in principle be re-used for many purposes besides the original ones. If archived in meaningful units and on accessible media, past observations constitute a very beneficial source for teaching and training, as well as an efficient and inexpensive basis for modelling, testing pilot projects, and similar experiments.

Archival material has many important applications in astrophysics. Since all astronomical objects are evolving, and some show important periodic changes too, appeal to data over a long time-base is crucial. In addition, the opportunity to carry out panchromatic spectral investigations, and statistical analyses of greatly enlarged scope, will lead to significant improvements in the interpretation of spectra and in (re)classification of objects.

Modern computer technology can enable this vision to be realized, and the IAU has promoted special-interest groups within various disciplines to investigate the feasibility of archiving data. It is a fundamental tenet that archives of data become available to astronomers in any part of the world.

Next Wednesday morning (August 24), JD 20 will address the feasibility of connecting the many independent databases in the world to make their contents available for dissemination to as many users as possible. Those interested in the potential of such a tool are warmly invited to attend that debate.

WG 1.5

IUCAA as a Facility in Astronomy and Astrophysics

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The Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics was established by the University Grants Commission of the Government of India in 1988. It has now a set of buildings of its own on a campus of 8 hectares. The buildings are designed to house faculty, laboratory, computer centre, data centre, lecture halls, cafeteria and guest accommodation. The Centre regularly conducts schools and workshops at different levels and it is hoped that it will attract visitors from other countries as well. In August 1993, IUCAA hosted the sixth Asian-Pacific Regional Meeting of the IAU, and in January 1994 it hosted the International School for Young Astronomers - also under the auspices of the IAU.

The poster will present a few pictures of IUCAA's facilities, some tabulated information on its academic work, and highlight the meetings proposed in the near future.

WG 1.6

Development of Astronomy among Children and Lay Public in India

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Schoolchildren in India are exposed to elements of astronomy as part of the curricula at primary, middle and secondary stages. In class X (age 15-16 years) there is a chapter on astronomy as part of general science which gives elementary information about the solar system and stars. The physics course for class XII (age 17-18 years) contains a chapter which deals qualitatively with the birth and end stages of stars, the Galaxy, and the origin of the universe. However, a large number of children either do not enter school or drop out after a few years. Even in the schools, astronomy is generally neglected due to the shortage of human and material resources. Various strategies are therefore being adopted in India to make astronomy accessible to children and adults, especially in the rural areas. The author has personal experience of participating in these programmes, some in the most backward areas in India. He discusses the strengths and weaknesses of these programmes. His experience may be relevant to many developing countries.

WG 1.7

An Astronomical Observatory for Central America: A Realistic Way of Strengthening Basic Space Science in Developing Countries

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Modern astronomy developments and their cultural, scientific and technological implications in the contemporary world have made it necessary to create an observatory equipped with computer, electronics and new astronomical technology, for the use and benefit of Central Americans, to contribute to the strengthening of essential aspects of their lives, and to reduce the gap with industrialized countries. In this paper, we present a project which contains the basis for the establishment of this astronomical centre, and we describe the whole process required to choose the place for the observatory after site testing; the design and construction of the observing system and its accessories, and of the means of access; the training of Central-American scientists and technicians in basic space sciences in Central-American territories; and the provision of basic astronomical services to