

July 10, 2017

Dear colleagues and friends,

First, I would like to convey my apology for the delay in regular communication due to few recent incidents like CSIR review, Directors' Meet and more importantly the meeting with our Hon'ble Minister. My frequent travel schedule to CSIR HQ and few other scientific institutions also has contributed to this minor delay in the quarterly communication.

At the outset, let me assure that everything is fine with CSIR unlike what few news media have expressed in various columns. Although there is a slight pressure to generate more revenue from industrial research there is no need for panic as CSIR is a robust organization with a high buffer capacity. I am sure that the present leadership of CSIR and its labs will evolve and adopt the changes smoothly and take CSIR to a position of strength and relevance for the people of the country. Perhaps, we may have to prune the contract staff a little bit and also move 10-20% of the staff from their comfort zone to a domain of higher accountability and hard work in order to improve the efficiency. This is going to be very important to save some resources, but I am optimistic about the outcome. It is true that the bold and generous decision to implement 7th financial commission pay scale has created a dent in our finance retribution. However, things are not as bad as what is portrayed in the news media and this along with the disconnected decision to generate 20 and subsequently 40% of budget from external resources in 3 and 5 years, respectively, has to be seen holistically as a positive factor to strengthen our industrial base.

For the last few months a lot of things happened here. CSIR was reviewed at multiple levels and at Chemical Cluster Review we received excellent support from the Prof. Balaram Committee. Sectoral committee after critical evaluation of all XII five year plan projects has suggested pursuing few leads and all of our FTTPs received positive comments. We routinely see private and public sector companies visiting us for projects and I must thank many of our wonderful colleagues for this. Indeed, we had formed a Business Strategy Group under the chairmanship of Dr. S. Mohan to take stock of our revenue generation periodically and this has shown significant progress in our successful revenue generation efforts. More important is the visit of our Hon'ble Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences & Vice President, CSIR Dr. Harsh Vardhan on 25th February. During his visit, he inaugurated additive manufacturing (3D) printer unit and launched a preliminary model of soil testing kit

developed by our scientists. Media covered these programs very well again thanks to the special efforts put by our colleagues in PPMG. In fact, during the Directors Meeting in New Delhi during 5-7 May, Hon'ble Minister specially mentioned our lab in this rural area doing commendable work with all sophisticated equipment which is not available even in big cities. But friends, we need many more technological achievements to come up to become equal to some of the best labs in the chemical clusters, both in ECF generation as well as the in the quality of science. However, we have recruited some of the best quality scientists and engineers recently and they would undoubtedly take this lab forward.

I welcome our new recruits Dr. S.P.Thipperudraswamy, Central Instrumentation Facility; Dr. Jayakumar, Dr. Sindhu Nambiar and Dr.N Rajasekaran Electroplating & Metal Finishing Technology; Dr. R. Malini, Electro Inorganic Division; Dr. V. Ravi Babu, Electrochemical Power Sources Division; Shri. Harshal Agarwal, CECRI Madras Unit; Dr. R. Mayandi, Dr. Shekhar Hansda, Dr. S.M. Ganesan, Ms. R. Monika, Dr. Aiswarya Bhaskar and Dr. C. Arunchandran Corrosion & Materials Protection Division; Dr. J. Ravindran, on transfer from CSIR-NIO, Goa to CECRI Mandapam Unit; Dr. M. Kathiresan, Electro Inorganic Division; Dr. A. Pandikumar, Functional Materials Division; Dr. K. Giribabu and Dr. V. Murugan, Electrodeics and Electrocatalysis Division; Shri. V. Gopalakrishnan, CIF; Shri. S. Sukumar, Electrical Section; Shri. M. Pradeeban, Workshop section; Shri. J. Marimuthu, Civil Engineering Division and Shri. M. Karthi, Recruitment Section. I request all to extend your support and co-operation to our new talents and also request to share office space and lab equipment with them.

We have successfully conducted skill development training programme under CSIR Integrated Skill Initiative and Prof. K.T.Jacob, RC Chairman was the Chief Guest during the inaugural function. I appreciate the efforts taken by Shri. Rajashekar, Dr. Angappan and their team for organising wonderful Skill development programmes which provides high visibility among all CSIR labs. National Corrosion Council of India (NCCI) organised Corrosion Awareness Day programme (in collaboration with CSIR-CECRI) at St. Mary's College, Thoothukudi. CECRI Ladies forum organised Science awareness programme for school students and celebrated International Women's Day with Prof. L. Cindrella, Department of Chemistry, NIT Trichy as the Chief Guest. And, as part of Water day, AcSIR Ph.D Scholars planted 100 saplings in our campus. I am grateful to all our Ph.D. students for their commitment and concern for our common planet. We also celebrated Republic day, National Science day, Noble day, National Technology day and International day of Yoga with enthusiasm. Also, we successfully organized Technical cum Cultural event Intersect'17, conducted

'FUNMAT-2017'– workshop on advanced functional Materials, CSIR-JRF Examination, Research Council and Management Council meetings, conducted ERP workshop on Stores and Purchase module for COSP, Sr.COSP, SPO of various CSIR Labs and the recent visit of Shri. K.R Vaidheeswaran, CSIR Joint Secretary (Admin) are notable one among many.

As usual, many of our colleagues have made outstanding achievement in many areas during the last four months and we should be proud of their accomplishments. Prominent among them are CRSI Bronze medal to Dr. Sailaja Krishnamurthy of our Materials Electrochemistry Division and Dr. S. Vasudevan, conferred as "chartered Chemist" by the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK and also "Fellow of The Academy of Sciences Chennai (FASCh)". Dr. Subrata Kundu, has been awarded with Best Scientist and Dr. V. Ganesh, EEC Division has been awarded with Best Young Researcher of the year 2017 from South India ASDF awards- 2017. Mr. K. Subramani won an award at India International Science Festival held at NPL, New Delhi and Mr.Raju Thota at SCICON-16 held at Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore and won second prize for best paper presentation award in the ICETN 2017 organized by the Vels University, Chennai. Mr. K. Selvakumar has won second prize for his oral presentation during the ICREST 2017 organized by Alagappa University, Karaikudi. Dr. T. Siva got Berger award for excellence in coating research and promotion. Mr. N. Mohammed Azeezulla deputed to University of Greifswald, Germany for DADD-DST (PPP) Fellowship. Mr. Selva Chandrasekaran has got Post-Doctoral Research at Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology, Korea. Final year B.Tech students, Ms. M. Kamalambika and Mr. Salunke Ashish Shivaji, got admission for Ph.D. at Kansas State University and University of North Texas, respectively. There are many more such achievements from our B.Tech. and Ph.D. students and normally we list and congratulate them in every monthly collegium meeting. These awards and honours are testimony to their hard work and commitment, which also speaks volumes on our present research ecosystem, ensued with an agile administration.

I must also congratulate all colleagues who got promoted recently including Mr. S.T. James, Mrs. S. Bagyalakshmi, Mr. V. Sagadevan, Mr. N. Koodalingam and Mrs. G. Bharahi Priya due to their contributions and I am sure that they all will do better in future due to added responsibilities. Few of our senior people including Dr. D. Jayakumar, Dr. Suresh Bapu, Dr. Nathira Begum, Dr. G.N.K. Ramesh Babu and Dr. Chandrasekaran have superannuated and there will be a gap since it is not possible to replace the knowledge and expertise of all these leaders in a short time. However,

institutions must grow and younger people will eventually take up positions to facilitate more core programs in Electrochemistry and contiguous disciplines.

Before I wind up, let me once again request all of you to focus more on your work and contribute for the sustained growth of the institute. We have been promised about many important projects in Li-Ion batteries, corrosion protection and carbon dioxide reduction by big multinationals and public sectors and visit to CIMFR, Dhanbad and Hindustan Petrochemicals Global R&D centre, Bangalore have fructified new projects. Hindustan Zinc, Udaipur, Applied Materials, TATA Steels and Reliance Refinery at Jamnagar are finalizing couple of projects and negotiations are on many other companies like IOCL, and Oil India. Since all these projects need to be monitored by an agile team we need many changes in the infrastructure. I also suggest all our scientists to concentrate more on private and sponsored projects and it is desirable to have, at least two projects for every scientist to match with our ambition. I am also delighted to share with you that one of our most important nuclear scientists, a living legend, Padma Vibushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar, has agreed to give our CECRI foundation Day Lecture this time. We look forward for each one to work hard with more passion and enthusiasm to move at a rapid pace. All FTFPs must be completed for technology transfer and Li- Ion battery manufacture and Fuel cell demonstrations should commence with the help of private industries. Once again, I thank all of you for your unconditional support.

Vijay