

## Quarterly Message – April – June, 2014

### **Dear Cecrians:**

This is a regular communication from the director's desk, summarizing our activities during the previous three months. I want to assure you that CSIR-CECRI is making great progress as reflected in new projects and an impressive line-up of papers and patents. The many awards and recognitions that our scientists are being conferred with are testimony to their hard work and commitment. Other inter-related objectives such as having more PhD students and independence to young scientists have also gained traction. We have landed more private projects, allowing greater freedom to project leaders. I am sure we can scale greater heights with due planning and a sharper focus.

The RC in its June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014 meeting recorded its appreciation for our efforts towards visibility and high-impact research publications. The RC stressed the need for goal-setting for products such as lithium batteries with respect to conceptualization, design, and testing with a strong possibility of prototype fabrication. There are pockets of excellence spread over the campus, but a stand-out brigade needs to be singled out: Dr. Mohan for his Boeing project, Dr. Jeyakumar for his industrial project on sensors and Dr. Satyanarayana who is negotiating a new industrial project. In the same breath, I must also acknowledge the efforts of Dr. Palaniswamy and his team in conducting the recent CSIR-UGC Joint NET examination, and Dr. Jayachandran and his team for the installation of solar photovoltaic panels. The ERP team is progressively transforming the institute into the digital mode by going live on different modules. Other developments that help enhance our visibility include a contribution from Dr. Phani's group that adorns the cover page of PCCP, nominations of Dr. Ganesh and Dr. Naveen Chandrasekhar for the CSIR-Young Scientist Award and Dr. Subratha Kundu for the NASI Scopus Young Scientist Award, and the upcoming events of NCCI and SAEST.

India is passing through interesting and challenging times, both economically and socially. That places us at a vantage point where we can even dabble with new assumptions, questions and new theoretical constructs that may help advance technologies that are so indispensable for quotidian lifestyle such as batteries and corrosion-resistant formulations. It is easy to see the humane face of electrochemistry here. We should latch on to this opportunity. The government, as an enabler, has chipped in with funds that we may spend wisely for journals, consumables, equipment, and works and services.

I would like to see scientists meeting me with exciting results/data rather than for renovation work or office space. It must be noted that we have a system in place for the latter. As for administrative matters, I would appreciate discussion in the presence of the respective administrative heads.

Here are a few things that I would like to see implemented/pursued.

1. I would like our BTech and PhD students, project assistants and staff to bring out a 15-minute video on CECRI, which may be uploaded on social networks such as YouTube. You are free to form groups, draw information from PPMG/TTBD and to make use of any reference scripts available with TTBD Head, Mr. Alagesan. The best video will be endorsed by the institute and uploaded on CECRI website.
2. I also would like our BTech students to get involved in our flagship projects such as 'energy from waste' and 'generation of heat by incineration of waste.' Please approach Dr. Sheela Berchmans for further details.
3. As put forth in my message during the last CECRI foundation day, let us demonstrate to students of nearby schools the essence of chemistry in day-to-day life. I would urge our research scholars to take up this initiative and come forward with ideas. I promise a motivational research fund for the best group.
4. Please desist from arranging slapdash meetings. Members need to be intimated in advance and the agenda should be circulated among them. Short-notice meetings should be an exception not a norm.
5. Kindly acknowledge and respond to all correspondence (fax, e-mail, etc). Please deputize another staff to look into office correspondence during your absence. Negligence w.r.t. correspondence will not be tolerated. Individuals and section/divisional heads can be held responsible for laxity and appropriate action may be initiated against them.

There is one more thing I want to tell before closing this message: Kindly stop sending anonymous letters. Anonymous letters are an act of cowardice. I assure action within 24 hours for genuine complaints. You are free to meet me in my office for redress. Most anonymous complaints are meant to settle scores at the personal level; it is also difficult to verify their veracity. Genuineness, if any, is often blighted by the absence of names/signatures, which frustrates confidential investigation. We will, therefore, continue the policy of 'destroy without opening' although in the past we did open such mails and took action. During the recent recruitments, I was forced to grapple with the challenge of answering a fictitious complaint to the PMO. Our letter to the specified address drew a

blank, with a 'No Such Addressee' comment. We have several open channels of communication and hence I cannot understand why malicious allegations should be taken up for personal vendetta. I promise that there will be no action against individuals who reach me with evidences.

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"The future isn't something hidden in a corner. The future is something we build in the present."-- Paulo Freire

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