

October 7, 2014

Dear colleagues,

The past three months witnessed a flurry of lectures, conferences and awards. Among men of eminence who visited us were Professor P.M. Ajayan of Rice University and Professor D.D. Sarma of the Indian Institute of Science. The former delivered the CECRI Foundation Day lecture while the latter the CSIR Foundation Day lecture. Others who visited us include Professor A. Subramaniam (IITM, Chennai), Dr. Pietzak Bjorn (Nanosurf AG, Switzerland), Professor P.A. Ramachandran (Washington University), Dr. Julian Schwenzel (Fraunhofer Institute for Manufacturing Technology & Advanced Materials, Germany), Mr. Joses Samuel (Cadenswoth, Bangaluru), Dr. Paul Ramesh (Apollo Hospitals, Chennai), and Dr. K. Kalyanasundaram (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland). We also had Professor K. Vairavan of the University of Wisconsin, whose lecture *Lessons and Inspiration from the Life of Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar* provided glimpses of the personality of the great visionary. I would urge you all to read and be inspired by Professor Vairavan's book on Dr. Alagappa Chettiyar, a copy of which is available at our library.

Let me congratulate SAEST and NCCI teams for very ably organizing two national conferences and in the same breath to Mr. Someshwar Pandeya, Hindi officer and his team for celebrating Hindi Month and the success of this celebration will be when each of one you starts teaching Hindi to others and using Hindi in your day-to-day life. My accolades also go to Dr. V. Ganesh for bagging the 2014 CSIR Young Scientist award in Chemical Sciences, making it a hat trick of such awards for CECRI. My appreciation also goes to Mr. KR. Saravanan for securing a Raman Charpak Fellowship. In all the above, I find positive elements that should steer us to greater glory.

There are also noticeable changes in social and sporting activities in the campus. Today, our staff and students enthusiastically take to football, volleyball, basketball and cricket on a regular basis. It is also a delight to see the new tennis court occupied, even during spells of drizzle. Staff and students should now strive to establish other sports amenities such as, for example, an indoor badminton court. Lighting in the campus is much better and the colony looks cleaner and greener these days owing to the tireless work of the Colony Affairs Committee and garden staff. The clarion call by the Prime Minister for a *Swacch Bharat* must provide added impetus to get our habitats litter-free. With the solar power plant and the sewage disposal unit expected to be functional sometime soon, the comfort level at CECRI should leapfrog.

We are happy with our funds position, a large chunk of which coming from CSIR. Several new projects are on the pipeline, specifically a project that Dr. Sathyanarayan will sign with Boeing and another from Oil India that Dr. Syed Azim, Dr. Parthibhan and Dr. Subramanian hope to bag. Udhe, a famous chlor-alkali company, is also set to grant a major project in the coming days. Needless to emphasize that now is the time, when India is firm-footed on the economic front, that we should be undertaking path-breaking projects for both the public and private sectors. In this context, it is well to select R&D projects that impact the global market and national needs.

Many important publications have sprung from CECRI. We have also signed memoranda of understanding with VIT and Karunya University, which I hope will add to our present momentum. With three scientists having joined and another set to join us shortly, we will have a shot of young blood infused into our system. Aiding our research are the newly-commissioned PPMS and the soon-to-arrive HR-TEM. It is, however, important that genuine users are allowed access to the new facilities without hassle. Although much ground has been covered in implementing ERP, the dual processing mode will continue until all the ERP modules are seamlessly integrated.

In a changing trend, anonymous letters seem to have given way to pseudonymous ones! I appeal to those who resort to this act of cowardice to make use of open channels of communications to express their opinions and vent their grievances. The cowardly ruse is an avoidable embarrassment to the institute. It also bites away precious time from high-ranking officials and ministers, who can otherwise devote their time for nation-building. It is high time these people sublimated their energy for constructive work. They are free to come to me with evidence of wrongdoing. I assure immediate corrective action based on the veracity of the evidence. Leaving aside aberrations such as pseudonymous letters, the institute is on its intended path, ably aided by every one of you.

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