



सीएसआईआर -केंद्रीयविद्युतरसायन अनुसंधान संस्थान
(वैज्ञानिक तथा औद्योगिक अनुसंधान)

कारैकुडी - 630 006, तमिलनाडू, भारत

CSIR – CENTRAL ELECTROCHEMICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE
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डॉ. विजयमोहनन के. पिल्लै

निदेशक

Dr. Vijayamohan K. Pillai

Director

Dear friends,

भारतीय नववर्ष विक्रम संवत् 2073 की बहुत - बहुत शुभकामनायें

The three months past was witness to some unusually exhilarating moments in science: (i) the observation of gravitational waves, originating from a cataclysmic event a billion years ago in a distant universe, and predicted by Albert Einstein in his general theory of relativity; (ii) grandmaster Lee Sedol winning a historic Go match (a pastime more complex than chess) over a Google-designed machine with artificial intelligence; and (iii) creation of a bacterium with only 437 genes (no living organism in nature is known to possess fewer than 1000 genes). These changes illustrate the transformative power of science. We must, therefore, be proud that we are part of the scientific community. However, to claim our stake in this community, we need to drive ourselves to the last drop of sweat and focus our efforts on socially and strategically relevant areas.

The Dehradun Declaration aims at steering CSIR as a world-class research organization with a societal cause. It is essential that our activities are aligned with this vision statement. While it must be conceded that CECRI's growth profile needs to be notched up, we are on track towards fulfilling the objectives of the Dehradun Declaration.

I would like to compliment NCCI and SAEST for ably conducting the National Congress on Corrosion Control and the National Convention of Electrochemists, respectively. We also had a workshop in Tamil on electroplating in collaboration with the Electroplating & Metal Finishers Association of Tamil Nadu and Eco Electroplating Park (Madurai) for the benefit of micro, medium and small enterprises and entrepreneurs. Our commitment in disseminating knowledge through such meetings was evident in the accolades that poured in from the delegates. The assistance rendered by Dr. G. Radhakrishnan, Dr.

Thirumalai Parthibhan and Shri Santhakumar in hosting a scientist recruitment website also came in for much appreciation from CSIR-NIIST. Many of you have also brought laurels to the institute: Dr. Subrata Kundu (BASE fellowship and Young Scientist award of the Academy of Science, Chennai); Dr. S. Vasudevan (2016 MRSI bronze medal); and Dr. V. Saraswathy (CIDC Vishwakarma Award). Our students are not to be left behind. They too

चेन्नै, मंडपम तथा तूतीकोरिन में विस्तार केंद्र हैं /Extension Centers at Chennai, Mandapam and Tuticorin)

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contributed their mite: Ms. Archana Rajendran (Prime Minister's Fellowship); Messrs R. Rajaram and K. Praveen Kumar (Biotechnology Industry Research Alliance Council Idea-thon award and a Rs 1 lakh cash prize); and several BTech students (scholarships for higher studies abroad). My hearty congratulations to them all. I also applaud our bridge team for bagging the runner's shield in the Hussain Zaheer Memorial Bridge Tournament at CSIR-CIMAP, Lucknow.

The National Science Day lecture this year was delivered by Prof. Ranga Rao of IIT Madras. It was a remarkably informative lecture on Raman spectroscopy. This year's PMS evaluation of scientists, completed as per norms formulated by Dr. Sheela Berchmans and her team, brought in more transparency in grading and in rewarding only efficient performers. With a new director at CSIR-NCL, I will have more time to devote to our institute. We have merged two materials science-related divisions in order to avoid intellectual frittering. Efforts are on to fill in all the groups II & III vacancies. Spadework for creating a few start-up ventures is also in progress.

Your hard work and renewed commitment are beginning to bear fruits. But we still have miles to go to realize our dreams. CSIR has been generous with funds for specialty equipment, and with 108 PhD students we should make breakthroughs in batteries, fuel cells, biosensors, smart coatings, green corrosion inhibitors, etc., paving the road to emerging markets. The lithium-ion fabrication facility at Chennai is another proof of team work, and I am sure it would be a springboard for a start-up.