Hon’ble Minister for Law and Justice, Communications, and Information Technology Shri Kapil Sibal Ji, my colleagues in Computer Society of India, Distinguished Invitees, Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Shri Kapil Sibal Ji for readily agreeing to participate in today’s function and grace the occasion. Sir, your presence is a great source of inspiration to all of us in CSI.

We are releasing the Golden Jubilee logo to mark the occasion. The logo will become part of all our communication from 6th September 2013. An interesting Panel Discussion on “Kal Aaj Aur Kal” – Role of CSI in the Modern Cyber Era is scheduled as a part of the event. We are expecting some of the best talent from India to join us during the panel. Dr. R. Chidambaram, the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India and Chairman, Scientific Advisory Committee to Cabinet has kindly agreed to Chair the Panel. Our beloved past presidents – Shri S. Mahalingam and Dr Ratan Dutta have agreed to participate in the panel. Many other who are all members of CSI and in Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India has kindly agreed to be with us for the function and be part of the panel.

As the event is in New Delhi, the RVP of Region-I, Prof. R K Vyas and his team of Chapter office bearers of that region are doing everything possible to make the event a grand success. I must mention Prof Hoda, Shri Shankar Lal, Rajeev, Shikha, Mani, Baskar, __, and a host of others who worked assiduously with unfathomable zeal and enthusiasm to make this a very memorable occasion. Of course, our veteran CSI enthusiast Dr Ratan Dutta, Past President of CSI and Chairman of the Nominations Committee, is guiding us through every step and is a source of inspiration to all of us. Hon’ble Minister Sir, CSI is proudly marching in to a Golden Era deriving strength and confidence from its Golden legacy. Having started in 1964 as a Computer User Group and registered as a society in 1965, CSI has come a long way and the Executive Committee decided in its meeting in April this year to celebrate in a fitting manner. Two year long celebration across the country was the vision set by them. That is the reason for the Curtain Raiser function today. 2013-2015 has been perceived by CSI-ians as the Golden Jubilee celebration period that you have agreed to launch today. Execom also expressed that there can be no other place for such historical occasions than “Rajdhani”. We are grateful to you Sir, for being with us during the Curtain Raiser.

Let me take this opportunity to place before you and the august audience a few facts about CSI. The size of CSI is unique with 40+ Chapters; 450+ Student Chapters; 200,000 members, including student members.

CSI has done nation proud by many of its past achievements in true spirit of Bhagwat Gita – Karmayevadhikaraste ma paleshu kadachana – and gave it to the nation in various forms and formats. CSI started O, A, B programs and transferred to DOEACC – which later became NICLIT – Plans are on to make it a University. It is now part of the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, which you are presiding over as its Minister. CSI started the Software activity as a software user group - Nurtured the software Industry in its infancy – Created NASSCOM – by Shri F C Kohli, Harel, Shri. J. Satyanarayana, Secretary, Department of Electronics. Similarly, CSI started the hardware activity - Nurtured the hardware industry, mainly through exhibitions during its annual Convention – Created MAIT – Brig SVS Choudhary, one of past presidents played a major role in shaping MAIT in its formative years.

But Sir, CSI retained the scholastic part as Software Division and Hardware Divisions. CSI Annual Conventions – Was the Main place and was the only place till mid 90’s – for ‘Hardware and Software Industry – Now focuses more on user needs. Vision is getting ready to host the CSI Annual Convention this year in December. In terms of ideas generation and input to Government of India in Human Resources Development, it is to be noted that one of the past CSI annual conventions, the one held in New Delhi more than a decade ago, nucleated the idea of IITI for India. Besides, CSI – for initial 20 years – did IT Manpower training for PSUs and Banks – Government recognized the CSI Training – Banks recognized the CSI “Training and Certification” and reimbursed the expenses of their employees – In fact, the CPPDs in Banks were “manned” by CSI Certified Professionals for a long time.

Sir, I would with your kind permission, marginally transgress the limits of modesty and humility and state for the sake of membership gathered here, that we feel that CSI has done “India Proud” by its thought, word, and deed.

We have some significant activities and achievement to report on the international front. School children of India – SAARC and SEARCC Competitions – Indian team won the First Place many times. CSI represents India in IFIP – International Federation for Information Processing; has brought many IFIP conferences to India since 80s, during times when Indian presence in this area was relatively unknown to the world.

During an occasion like this CSI is proud to look at our membership scrol, which sounds like a “who is who” in India. Shri. F C Kohli – TCS – one of the Past Presidents, Shri. Shiv Nadar – HCL – Life Member, Dr. M G K Menon – Distinguished Fellow, Shri. Sam Pitroda – Distinguished Fellow, Shri. Rajendra Pawar – NIIT – Life Member – Coordinated the Bank Training Program on behalf of CSI, Dr. N. Seshagiri – NIC – Member, Shri. Narayanamurthy – Infosys – Life Member. Of course, I must mention my dear friend Satya, Secretary, Deity who is a Life Member. Sir, I am sure you recognize each one listed just now. There are many more.

As we launch our Golden Jubilee celebrations, we can contribute towards creating India - NexGen. Perhaps, a few years from now, we will see news item that may read as follows:

India is most connected country in the world. India has its own Search Engine. India develops world's fastest router. India creates history by driving 1000 Terabits of data through a pair of Optical Fibers across the country. India unveils world's largest Supercomputer. Indian software assets take the world by storm. India has the largest number of software design professionals. India moves on to Quantum Computing and Communication after unprecedented success in Silicon based computing. In India, every third person is an electronics designer of sorts. India becomes the largest designer of custom-made products. India successfully integrates 3D Printing technology and personalized product design.

When it happens, Computer Society of India should be perceived as the anchor for such change. With your blessings, we would like to put our acts together and make the necessary moves today. Everyone in CSI has a significant role to play in such transformation. Each one of us would like to do our bit.

Another important factor that CSI should focus on is the Academia - Industry interaction. Indian academic system have always excelled and remained comparable to the best in the West. Indian industry today is moving its attention more towards products as opposed to services. Indian industry is looking up to academia for help. CSI being body of professionals from academia and industry is in a unique position to address this need. The efforts of the students and professionals near you to submit their work. Wherever necessary, help them reach the exciting standards that we as Editor of Board sets. You will be doing a yeomen service to CSI as well as the fellow professionals and more so, our dear student members.

The natural next question perhaps is “What can CSI do for Government?” CSI can participate in Government Policy, Planning, and Standardization Committees. CSI can prepare Technology Foresight and Technology Forecasting Reports periodically. CSI can participate country-wide in Human Resources Development - Skill Development – Finishing School – Research and Development – Encouraging Innovation – Help in Incubation; perhaps a host of other engagements.

Sir, kindly permit me share our members sentiments and request; this relates to “What can Government do for CSI?” Of course, government can help CSI with annual financial support; Sponsor CSI’s participation in IFIP at all levels; perhaps, make a CSI Bhavan in Lutyens’ Delhi!

With best wishes,
Prof. S V Raghavan
President, Computer Society of India

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