President's Message

M. D. Agrawal

From : president@csi-india.org
Subject : President’s Desk
Date : 1st March, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

On the eve of CSI’s 47th Foundation day on 6th March, 2012, I extend my hearty good wishes to all members and associates. I have always admired the passion and commitment of our members towards building CSI as a vibrant professional body, and wondered what drives them to do this noble work for society, many at times at the cost of their personal comforts and priorities. The pleasure of working for societal transformation through use of Science and Technology is no doubt a source of motivation. Our visionary founders realized early the potential of ICT in transforming the life of citizens and in making the Globe a better place to live in, and set up a long term mission and sound objectives for society, which continue to motivate our members.

There is no dearth of committed individuals in our country, who are passionate about working for societal and professional improvements. It is a welcome development that Government is inviting successful entrepreneurs to take lead and leverage their experience of using ICT for societal cause in helping the Government in bringing in far-reaching improvements in the life of citizens and solving national problems through use of ICT. The recent invitation to IT wizards viz. Shri. Nandan Nilkani, former CEO of Infosys & CSI Fellow and Padma Vibhushan, Shri. S Ramadorai, Former CEO of TCS & also CSI Fellow by the rank of Cabinet Ministers is but a starting step. There is a strong need to invite many more successful entrepreneurs to help Central, State and many other government organizations and the bodies that are involved both in policy formation and providing guidance on full time basis for effective usage of ICT.

Good political support and entrusting the leadership for these changes in the hands of successful entrepreneurs and thought leaders has the power to help bottom of Pyramid in areas of literacy, health, education, employment, productivity, micro-finance etc. CSI will have good opportunity to participate and take active part in these kind of initiatives being led by IT Entrepreneurs. DIT and DSCI have started seeking help from CSI on competency development exercise. I am sure, our good contacts with seniors and with government officials and ministers both State and Central Government will start offering new opportunities. Collaboration, Networking with entrepreneurs and development partnership with leading education institutions shall be our priority to seek leading role for CSI. I am hopeful that in future the new committee will put more efforts to build strong relationships on these fronts. Some of our chapters located in state capitals shall also leverage these kinds of opportunities. Extending help in developing competencies, standardization, modernization of education systems as per growing industry requirements and motivating youngsters for research and entrepreneurship may be a good agenda for our plans and programs.

Association with Institutions and Experts: Powerful ideas, association with committed and resourceful personalities are always a great source of growth and help to building strong committees. During the last two decades, CSI’s bondage with this category has weakened. It will require a conscious approach to strengthen it. Recently, the CEO of a large IT company approached me, expressing his desire to take a lead role in CSI. Considering his passion for IT and relationship, I requested him to help our e-Governance Centre of excellence. We had seen during last 2-3 years, advantages of association with such senior academicians, industry people, Government officials in spearheading new activities. Prof. Rajeev Sangal, Director, IIIT Hyderabad, connected us with a group of conference organizers, who are committed for research focused conferences. Our connection with Joint Secretary in DIT opened up new opportunities for participating in Government education programs. Mr Anil Srivastava, IAS, before he became ExecCom member, set new benchmarks of CSI Excellence Awards. Prof Kannan from IIIT Mumbai volunteers to offer free tutorials to student community. Our Special Interest Group platform can easily provide opportunity to such type of individuals to lead CSI technical activities. There shall be constant endeavor and search for inviting such seniors to help society.

Our plans of setting up few Centres of excellence (COE) may also attract many talented individuals to use CSI platform, where industry, educational institutions and government agencies work cohesively to develop new education services to industry and design industry focused education programs. I am hopeful that the new committee shall explore these possibilities actively.

Association with Corporate Bodies: During last couple of years, we started losing membership of corporate bodies. Though, in most of our technical workshops, conferences, majority of participants are from corporate organizations, there seems to be less interest towards CSI membership. I am sure, our new model of offering complimentary membership to the attendees of CSI programs shall help in this direction. Newly appointed committee-KYC will examine and try to suggest new schemes and services for this segment. Some corporate organizations would like to use knowledge base of CSI and would like to take expert help of CSI seniors for training and seeking guidance on their projects. As Dr. Ramani rightly advised, CSI shall build a strong database of around 1000 experts, whose knowledge can be a great help to our corporate members. Some guest lectures, mentoring sessions, publishing of their best practices and successful case studies, inviting CIOs and their senior managers at CSI forums and at Student branches may offer a good reason to corporate organizations to get associated with CSI. Our local Chapters shall put conscious efforts to start relationship and engagements with CIOs and senior staff and shall communicate advantages of CSI Membership.

Association with Government Organizations: Major IT Investment is happening in government and semi-government sector. There is a good scope for skill development, training and empowerment of staff with IT knowledge and systems. Our director education shall put additional efforts in studying such requirements and identify opportunities. We shall actively approach concerned departments in Government. Recently, I was contacted by DOEACC officials, who want CSI to offer training programs to employees of health and agricultural service sector.

Association with Youngsters and Professionals: Worldwide professional societies are offering counseling, mentoring and helping professionals to augment their knowledge with...
new subjects of IT through certification programs and attending workshops. Under leadership of Prof. NL Sarda, attempts are being made to develop CSI certification programs, both with our own resources and under PPP model. We need to further strengthen this initiative and develop astra to take on these activities. In our membership base, students count more than 80%. A majority of working ICT professionals have strong need of these empowerments. This may be enabled through partnership with quality education institutions, group of experts and academicians. Currently, Mumbai Chapter is leveraging their resources to kickstart development of few certification programs. Based on their experience, other chapters especially Bangalore and Chennai can follow suit. Director education shall extend help.

Focus on Research and Innovations: Friends, along with adopting practice of good governance in services, there is great need to start new programs to promote research and development. History cites many examples where zeal of groups of individuals has brought desired change. Unless India develops a strong research ecosystem in ICT and telecom related fields, as per studies, sustainability may become a challenge. We shall take conscious decision to define road map of new activities on this front. We shall leverage our relationship with various academic institutions and provide a network and connect with industry. Prof. NL Sarda, our Divisional Chairman – Education & Research came up with a suggestion of starting 4-5 research bins in the form of business incubation facility to help entrepreneurship in specific areas such as education and mobile-based solutions, which may also be a good utilization of CSI Mumbai Chapter’s old premises. Some initial limited-time in-house incubation help can be provided to make entrepreneurs to start off with their work. Few mentors and experienced entrepreneurs may be invited to setup this facility. With this, both purposes will be served: using premises for a noble cause and promoting entrepreneurs under CSI platform. I am sure this investment will pay off in the long run and increase credibility of CSI in the Industry.

Innovations and research in IT can indeed integrate computing specialists, scientists in different disciplines and engineers by bringing them together on one platform. Prof. Shyamsundar rightly presented in CSI National Convention at engineers by bringing them together on one platform. Prof. computing specialists, scientists in different disciplines and CSI platform. I am sure this investment will pay off in the long run and increase credibility of CSI in the Industry.

1. Be an enabler for the Indian computing research community to identify major research opportunities for the field and create avenues/platforms for community participation in the process for academia, industry, entrepreneurs, and business.

2. Conduct some surveys and share futuristic projections like -
   i. What are the next big computing ideas?
   ii. What are the considerations for inclusive growth?
   iii. What attracts the best and brightest minds of a new generation?
   iv. Provide a regular CS/IT/ICT R & D Status and make future predictions.
   v. Provide regularly white papers on ICT areas
   vi. Extend help to evaluate education standards in various institutions
   vii. Develop a mentor pool for students with educational institutions, professionals, innovators etc

There may be many good ideas and thoughts in promotion of research agenda under CSI. Our research committee along with ExecCom members shall deliberate and try to draw an action plan to implement such ideas. I request, our chapters and student branches to add in their activity list, promotion of research as an important agenda. Organizing R & D workshops shall be helpful.

Considering long term benefits, we decided to publish CSI communications through a professional agency; M/s CyberMedia. This may help us to reach new members and to use big network of M/s CyberMedia. Our sincere thanks to Mr. Pradeep Gupta, MD and his team to take up this responsibility.

On 6th March, 2012, the auspicious occasion of 47th CSI foundation day, facility of Open Access Computing Research Journal - www.csijournal.org would be launched. My sincere thanks to our research committee for enunciating this project and to Prof. Shyamsundar, who championed this cause. Members will be highly benefited.

Ranchi Chapter hosted an International Conference in partnership with local Industry. It is healthy development where CSI platform is being used by Industry to share latest trends. Our CSI veteran and fellow, Dr D D Sarma successfully organized an International Conference in Hyderabad. Our all India Student Co-ordinator started a new initiative of organizing an Student Computer Quiz under partnership with Microsoft. My sincere thanks to them for all these grand efforts.

Recently national elections were concluded with active support of our Nomination Committee led by Prof A K Nayak, Mr Rangaswami and Mr Mohanty with the help of HQ Staff. They are also putting hard efforts to complete chapter elections. Few defunct chapters got revived with support of our Regional VPs, Hon. Secretary and Dr Bhatia. Efforts shall continue. Sincere appreciations to all team members.

I convey hearty congratulations to all newly elected members both at National and at Chapter level and wish all round success to our new committees.

Activities during last two years may be considered as the start of a turnaround in CSI. We have witnessed fourfold increase in CSI activities. Many good quality conferences and technical programs were organized. There is a long list of activities and contributions, which you can refer in my President’s Message dated 1st Oct, 2011. I would like to convey my sincere thanks to fellow ExecCom members, members and conveners of special committees, members of editorial board and individuals, who came forward to initiate, develop and deploy new services for the benefit of members. My sincere thanks to Industry partners, who extended their financial help to CSI events & programs.

Friends, I enjoyed this journey of strengthening CSI organization, and starting quite a few new initiatives and services and teaming up with some of you. I am sure, considering benefits of these new initiatives, progress on the implementation of these will continue in the hands of new committee under able leadership of incoming President, Shri Satish Babu and President Elect, Prof. SV Raghavan and with support of all ExecCom members, Chapter Committees, Special Committees and CSI officials.

I will cherish my association with all of you with gratitude. I convey once again sincere thanks for providing me this honor of serving society as President.

With Love
Jai Hind.

M D Agrawal