



आनृशंस्यमनुक्रोशः श्रुतं शीलं दमः शमः।
राघवं शोभयन्त्येते षड्गुणाः पुरुषोत्तमम्॥

(Non-violence, compassion, learning, truthful nature, self-control and tranquil – these six virtues adorn Rama, the best of men.)

- Ramayana AyodhyaKand 2.33.12



Dear Professional Colleagues,

The beauty of Indian culture lies in its traditions, its festivals, its celebrations, but most importantly in the ways and mannerisms in which we show our reverence. The days gone by have been witness to a mood of exuberance, joy and shared sweetness. The celebration of Chaitra Sukladi, Gudi Padava, Ugadi, Cheti Chand and the various other names with which the beginning of the Hindu Year is called along with that of Id-ul-Fitr– have brought about a sense of cheer in the air.

While the world might celebrate the International Women’s Day, once in a year, the Indian households celebrate the power of women, each day, when they bow before the various forms of ‘Devi’. Be it for knowledge, intellect, wisdom, wealth, physical strength, good health, material happiness or spiritual success – it is the divine feminine power that we all look up to and amidst all these blessings, also find grace, compassion and love.

As I pen down this message in the backdrop of high snow-clad mountains and lush green valleys of Srinagar – the mood is serene and the heart is content. The days gone by and the ones ongoing have been nothing less than filled with enthusiasm, mental stimulation and above all a desire to serve the profession and the nation by all ways and means possible.

NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE: TRANSFORMING FUTURE SUSTAINABLY

“Every woman who awakens her true self is a
GODDESS.”

The International Women’s Day as has been celebrated across the world is not merely a day of celebration of women’s rights and equality, but more than that, it is a day raising year-long actions and discussions, attempting to build a future which considers women’s roles as an integral part of the society and, which values their opinions and views emphatically.

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India might feel and emote a sense of pride for its women participation across members, students and employees. Yet, it is a fact well understood, that the dream of Viksit Bharat can be achieved iff there is ample scope and space for women to raise their opinions, voice their concerns, share their ideas and above all participate in decision making.

As United States Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg put it years ago, “Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn’t be that women are the exception.” Women in their roles as Company Secretaries, as Governance Professionals are acquiring positions of Key Managerial Personnel in the Indian corporates.

At the same time, given their acumen with legislations and corporate culture, they are being actively pursued to fill in the legislative requirements of Women Directors and even further Independent Directors. All these developments are opportunities but at the same time pinning a lot of expectations.

The National Women's Conference with its various verticals has over the years of its inception become a platform for raising meaningful deliberations – deliberations laying emphasis on the modern-day issues and challenges and the possible solutions, deliberations exploring opportunities both in the present-day moment as well as in the impending future.

But most importantly, the Conference has become a converging point – of women Company Secretaries, of ideas, views, opinions, all in the presence of eminent experts. The 3rd edition of the National Women's Conference which was recently held during March 28-29, 2025 in the heart of the city of Indore – was no less a delight than its preceding ones. Rather, I feel blessed to be accorded the opportunity to witness the presence of such driven women personas, who with their hard work, grit and passion, have shaped the lives of individuals around them and redefined cultures of entities they have been brought upon to serve.

It was indeed gratifying to listen to Ms. Neeti Agrawal, Industrialist & Social Worker and Dr. Priyanka Mokshmar, Chairman and Managing Director, Vaayu India as they shared their appreciation for the initiative amidst their life experiences and with that their words of wisdom for those to come ahead. I am equally grateful towards Shri Shankar Lalwani, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha from Indore for joining us in the deliberations on CS Professionals vis-à-vis State-Level Opportunities. His words "India is among the fastest growing economies of the world and by 2047 we aim to build a Viksit Bharat and professionals like Company Secretaries have a major role to play in turning this vision into reality", resonated a higher calling for the Governance Professionals.

Even though I may not be mentioning the names of all the Experts herein, I feel truly humbled to be joined by such men and women of erudite, and with them by our Past Presidents and Secretaries, Officials of various Ministries, Council Members and Government Nominees; as we sailed through the first national event of the year.

My heartiest appreciations and commendations to all the delegates who rendered our event both successful and memorable. I feel delighted to share that it is from the stage of this Conference, that the ICSI launched a unique initiative – an online refresher course for female Governance Professionals who have been away from the field and profession for a bit long as they catered to their familial responsibilities.

As is the name, "**Professional Reboot: Women in Company Secretarial Roles**", the Certificate Course for Women CS intends to impart such knowledge as may be fit to render these professionals, corporate-ready, and assist them in fulfilling their professional responsibilities and pursue their dreams as envisioned at the beginning of their journey.

I am hopeful that the Women Company Secretaries shall reap maximum benefit from the course and acquire right knowledge with the right mindset.

ICSI BOARD MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PERSPECTIVES

"With each sunrise, we are given the gift of another chance to make a difference."

The Board of corporates – irrespective of their territorial boundaries have been seen as harbingers of change. Their decisions taken within the bounds of four walls, have lasting impacts globally. In true sense they are the change makers of the nation.

Where on one hand, we take it upon our shoulders, as Governance Professionals – to ensure compliance with the applicable legislations we pin our hopes and expectations upon the Board of Directors of companies to imbibe the true spirit of law and honour its essence in their decision making.

Launched in the month of September 2024, with its first and second editions in Ooty and Port Blair; within a span of 6 months, the Institute of Company Secretaries of India, through its Section 8 company – Institute of Governance Professionals of India, has proudly, yet silently tried its level best, to bring about a shift in the Board thought process, and in the knowledge levels of those seeking.

The 3rd edition of the ICSI Board Mentorship Programme was flagged off in the city best known as 'Heaven on Earth' – Srinagar; with the goal and aim to - BUILD BETTER LEADERS, CREATE A BETTER FUTURE, and STRIVE FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW.

Because for us at the ICSI, a better future and a sustainable tomorrow, hinges upon the thought process, ideologies, ethics, values and principles of the leaders. The way and manner in which corporate decisions have been seen to impact global shifts, it goes without saying, that the future of our nation lies in the hands of corporate decision makers.

The four-day long Programme, amidst the scenic background of Tulips in all hues, registering a participation of more than 40 present and future Directors laid emphasis upon the core dimensions of governance, ESG and CSR. And it is in these deliberations that we got the opportunity to have a peep into the mindset, approach and thought of these delegates as far as the governance matter is concerned. The sharing of real-time issues and challenges faced, and with that the innovative solutions applied upon, left all of us awe-struck; but more importantly brought us closer.

The zeal of the delegates, the hunger for learning something new, and the portrayal of valour in support of good governance, were not only commendable and appreciable but heartwarming too. At the same time, I am extremely thankful to the learned experts who joined us in sharing their thoughts, knowledge and insights, thus, rendering the event all the more successful.

It is moments like these that there is a reiteration of the shared sense of oneness with our stakeholders and the achievement of the ICSI vision "*to be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance*" seems all the more, closer...

PANCHAYAT GOVERNANCE WEEK : FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY AT GRASSROOTS

कोस-कोस पर बदले पानी, चार कोस पर वाणी

India as a nation is one proud of its diversity. And as proudly as I can put it, a major part of this diversity is contributed at the grassroots level. It is at the village level, that a chunk of our history, our culture and our heritage is preserved.

And so, when the very essence of the nation is maintained and taken care of by these small entities, it falls upon our shoulders that the governance within these entities is maintained and taken care of by us. It is with this thought and intent that the ICSI had released the Model Governance Code for the Meetings of Gram Panchayats in the year 2017. The said Code was later on translated into multiple Indian Languages so as to make it easier for the ultimate stakeholders to imbibe its essence and regulate their meetings as per the Code.

As the country stands in unison, the preparations are in full swing for the celebrations of the National Panchayati Raj Day on the 24th of April, in commemoration of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992, which came into effect on that day, institutionalizing the Panchayati Raj system and decentralizing power to the grassroots.

Taking a step forward towards the Panchayat Governance, the ICSI will be celebrating the Panchayat Governance week between 19th April to 26th April, 2025 by organizing programs across India through its Chapters, Regional Offices and one National Program in Delhi. For as the Father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi has put it,

"My idea of Village Swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of its neighbors for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity."

- Mahatma Gandhi

GOOD GOVERNANCE: EMPOWERING CAPITAL MARKETS

"The Concept of Corporate Governance is complex but the principles on which it is based are clear and well-marked. Transparency, accountability, integrity and fairness are its four pillars. Your responsibility determines how these principles are put into practice."

- Shri Ram Nath Kovind,

Hon'ble Former President of India at the celebration of 51st Foundation Day of ICSI

A few years ago, when the then President of India, portrayed his firm belief in the profession of Company Secretaries as the torch-bearers of good corporate governance; our feet had found a new sprint. Ever since, the ICSI efforts towards the goal and objective of good governance have only multiplied.

It gives us immense pleasure to have Shri Ram Nath Kovind, Hon'ble Former President of India, amongst us again as the Chief Guest at our upcoming Middle East Conference, as we lead the world on the path of good corporate governance.

The ICSI Middle East Conference on the theme Good Governance: Empowering Capital Markets is being hosted by the ICSI Middle East (DIFC) NPIO scheduled to be held during April 24-26, 2025 in the heart of UAE.

The 3-day long Programme intends to explore opportunities in novel areas along with strengthening base in the existing ones – all with a dedicated focus on Capital Markets.

I am sure that with your support and presence, we will be redefining history making this the largest congregation at an ICSI International Conference.

The Middle East awaits you !!!

AND THE JOURNEY OF LEARNING CONTINUES...

विक्रबो वीर्यहीनो यस्य दैवमनुवर्तते ।
वीरास्सम्भावित्मानो न दैवं पर्युपासते ॥

(Those who are timid and cowardly depend alone on destiny. The valiant ones with self-respect do not care for it.)

- Valmiki's Ramayana 2.23.16

As we celebrate the Navratri, we also celebrate the beginning of the Hindu Calendar Year – a symbol of new beginnings. And with that we also seek guidance in the character and conduct of Lord Ram on the auspicious celebrations of Ram Navami.

Striving continuously to bring about a difference in the Income-Tax Bill, 2025; if the Institute is endeavouring to conduct meetings and greetings thus creating awareness of our role as professionals; it falls upon your shoulders to continuously update and upgrade yourselves to serve the interests of stakeholders better. The verse above defines the ideal conduct of professionals truly. For it is effort that reaps results.

It is with this intent that the ICSI is launching the 5th edition of its Master Knowledge Series : EEE (Enable, Evaluate, Excel). The EEE 5.0 Webinar Series is an attempt to bring the guidance of experts at your finger-tips – but at the end of the day it is upon you to reap maximum benefit off of it.

We have also revisited the 'ICSI (Library and Reading Room) Guidelines - 2020', in order to facilitate its members and students, has undertaken an initiative of refurbishing a wholesome facility of Library in every chapter, region and CCGRTs. These Guidelines alongwith the SOPs shall govern the functionality of the libraries and are coming into effect from 1st April, 2025.

With that, I am delighted to share that given the success of ICSI Debating Society in the initial select venues, the initiative has been extended to all CCGRTs, Regional Offices and Chapters of ICSI, thus bringing the joy of learning and sharing of thoughts to all members and students.

The times ahead will be redefining corporate cultures, economic pursuits, and national goals. As professionals we must strive to be more, do more, achieve more... every single day...

अनिर्वेदम् च दाक्ष्यम् च मनसः च अपराजयम् ।
कार्यं सिद्धिं कराणि आहुः तस्मात् एतत् ब्रवीमि अहम् ॥

(Insistency, ingenuity, and indomitability of heart are required for achieving results. Therefore, I say so!)

Yours Sincerely



CS Dhananjay Shukla
President, ICSI