



आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः।

(Let noble thoughts come to me from all directions.)

Rigveda 1.89.1



Dear Professional Colleagues,

Each time a few beautiful words bound together to form meaning come across, either they are saved in the photo gallery of my phone to be shared through social media or with you through the pages of this Journal. Indeed, there are moments of great contemplation and ponderance – to find the right fit, each time. The Sanskrit shlokas, just as the one mentioned here, with their expansive views and time and place agnostic nature, have been a constant companion through these messages.

And yet, when I sit to pen this message and share the variety of aspects and activities of the Institute, all through the month gone by and the ones ahead; no single quote can be said as one-size-fit-all.

Nonetheless, without much ado, I would begin with the job at hand. But first things first, let me begin with the most recent happenings of the month – one that brought October and November together – and with that the CS brigade spread across the entire nation – the 53<sup>rd</sup> National Convention of Company Secretaries.

### 53<sup>RD</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COMPANY SECRETARIES – THE BIGGEST CS CONGREGATION

*“A river cuts through a rock, not because of its power but its persistence.”*

The nip in the air, the long list of festivals - one after the other, the changing attire, the hues of fruits per se, all softly yet in their own unique ways, announce the change of season. And while we prepare ourselves for this change - there's a change around us that constantly expects us to grow, develop, learn and find our new selves each day. The dynamism of the business environment and corporate legislation, the much-talked-about digital transformation, the economic policy framework and global relations -

each demands the stepping up of us professionals and very much so a continual process of embracing the new in an unhinged manner.

As an Institute understanding it's prerogative to share your individual journey, it also aspires to make this journey not just about knowledge but about everything else - fostering friendships, cherishing moments, enjoying scenic beauties, sharing song lyrics and dance steps and living a wholesome moment.

As we penned the details of the 53<sup>rd</sup> National Convention of Company Secretaries, we tried our level best to create room for all of these...

And to be truthful, the smiles, the phone galleries brimming to the last byte and the congratulations, appreciations and adulations made it all worthwhile.

Having spent the last few days in the backwaters of Kochi, having watched some of the most beautiful sunrises and sunsets, having heard some of the most brilliant minds share their thoughts, opinions and wisdom, and having met no less than 1600 members in one go, in one place - the feelings cannot be summated within the bounds of these few pages.

Even before I would thank our guests and speakers for sharing their presence with us, I feel truly humbled by the love, faith and affection showered upon me, my Council and my Team for reaching down South from all corners of the nation and making all our efforts successful. And those who could not make it in person to be with us - extended their presence virtually - savouring each moment with us through their screens.

The 3 days of learning were no less than our own extended celebration of lights. And I feel deeply honoured to extend our gratitude towards Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, for gracing the occasion as the Chief Guest, Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha as the Guest of Honour and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar

Group as the Special Guest. Lighting the lamp, sharing their appreciations, their expectations and their words of guidance and support - these dignitaries not only led the way but also added greater impetus to our action.

Each release was observed intently; each pursuit understood. And it made our heart swell with pride when the Hon'ble Governor took to stage and while addressing the gathering and said that "A Company Secretary serves as the guiding force of a corporate entity, embodying this motto in its true letter and spirit, and defining what ethical and responsible business should be." Indeed, as per his pilotage, we Company Secretaries will be focusing on further deepening our roles and contributions in making this nation a Viksit Bharat.

And while I commend upon each of the aspects of the event, my heartiest appreciations go to all the Teams at all the levels of the Institute for their relentless efforts in creating yet another golden leaf for the pages of the History of ICSI.

### **EXPLORE - LEARN - ELEVATE : THE MANTRA FOR A PROFESSIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

Since ages, universities, colleges, academic institutions, and even rules of kings and kingdoms have been known, renowned and remembered for the way they have treasured their knowledge and created room for its sharing. Libraries have always been an integral part of the journey of intellectual growth of any society. The modern-day world marked by digital transition and transformation still holds space for learning - although the ways and means have changed. And yet amidst all the change, the present generation has been accorded the luxury to relish the best of both worlds - the handheld books and the digital access to the whole wide world.

We at ICSI have tried to bring the same experience right at the very place our Students and Members consider their second homes - the ICSI CCGRTs, Regional Offices and Chapters. Having amended the ICSI (Library and Reading Room) Guidelines, 2020 the library infrastructure across all CCGRTs, Regional and Chapter Offices have been upgraded to enhance access to knowledge resources for members and students.

The said move has been made with the intent of keeping ignited the fire of learning within all of us and I am sure that each one of you will make use of this facility as an opportunity to expand the horizons of your mind and gain as much as is possible in your capabilities in deriving benefits from these libraries.

So... bring in your friends along and cherish this wonderful journey together !!!

### **EXTENDING DATES - ESTABLISHING OFFICES : EASE OF DOING BUSINESS PROMOTED IN TRUE SENSE**

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs with its spearheads and all its officials are to be lauded, appreciated and complimented for their untiring efforts in promoting ease of doing business. If the festival of lights was brightened

with the Ministry allowing the companies to complete their annual filing for F.Y. 2024-25 till 31 December 2025 without additional fees acceding to the request of stakeholders, there was more in the offing in the days to follow.

It was a delight to meet Ms. Deepti Gaur Mukerjee, Secretary, Shri Balamurugan D, Joint Secretary, & Sh. N. K. Dua, Director, MCA and express this gratitude for extending due date for Annual Filings in person.

The Institute truly is also equally gratuitous to all the officials for having a considerate approach towards the issues and challenges being faced by the corporates and professionals and establishing numerous offices of Regional Directors and Registrar of Companies across the nation to function under the Companies Act and the LLP Act.

We firmly believe that these initiatives will play a key role in strengthening the governance framework of the India Inc.

### **ICSI GLOBAL CONNECT: REALIZING VISION WITH EACH STEP**

*"Even the smallest drum can call an army if it beats with purpose."*

For an Institute with the vision "to be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance", creating global synergies has always topped the list. And to realize the same, various initiatives have been taken on a continual basis. But it is one thing to visit a nation, host a Conference, seek participation and have the presence of both national and international delegates and share knowledge and information; and a different thing altogether, to have your international counterparts drop by, have a peep into your functioning, commend your efforts and share prospects for the future.

I feel extremely delighted to have had the presence of a delegation of the members from the Institute of Certified Secretaries, Kenya, and Kenya Accountants and Secretaries National Examinations Board (KASNEB) in my office. Not just I, but 'we' are hopeful that the strategies discussed for enhancing Corporate Governance in Kenya & the identification of opportunities for mutual collaboration will soon bear fruit.

If global governance is our mantra, it is only through joint efforts that we shall be able to achieve the same.

To many more synergistic efforts ahead !!!

### **GOING BEYOND CORPORATE: DEEPENING THE GOVERNANCE ROOTS OF GRASSROOTS**

The year 2017 saw us delving into the grassroot governance with rolling out the Model Governance Code For Meetings of Gram Panchayats. This year, the month of April saw us revisiting the Code, and bringing together Panchayats, Sarpanchs, and professionals together for the Panchayat Governance Week all along the length and breadth of the country. It was during these deliberations that the seed was sown for developing **Governance Codes for Meetings of Zila Parishad and Meetings of Panchayat Samiti**.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 institutionalized the three-tier Panchayati Raj system. It is in this system that the constitutional role of Panchayat

Samiti was defined as an intermediate tier between village and district administration and the Zila Parishad became the apex body of rural governance—bridging state policy with community aspirations.

These Model Governance Codes, released at the 53<sup>rd</sup> National Convention, aim to standardize meeting procedures, enhance operational efficiency, and strengthen accountability and transparency, enabling better policy execution and more effective rural development.

We sincerely hope that these Codes will serve as a valuable resource for elected representatives, officials, civil society organizations, and citizens, enabling them to apply governance best practices that strengthen rural local self-government and foster inclusive development across India.

## ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE : LEADING CHANGE SUSTAINABLY

माता भूमि: पुत्रोऽहं पृथिव्याः

*(Earth is our mother and we are her children.)*

- Atharva Veda

For a nation which has its ancient scriptures guiding us to consider the earth as mother, it is imperative that the protection of environment, society, climate and a sustainable thought takes precedence. It is with this intentional backing that the ICSI initiated the development of the ICSI Principles on Climate Change Governance (IPCG) to serve as a globally acceptable framework of responsible climate governance. Released at the hands of our august dignitaries at the National Convention, the IPCG reinforce the commitment of entities, their Boards and Senior leadership, to embed climate resilience into their core business strategy, risk management, performance metrics and accountability structures. By adopting these Principles, entities can demonstrate corporate stewardship on climate governance and playing their part in global journey towards a sustainable future.

In the same spirit, we have launched the **Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit on ESG** - a guiding light for corporates, stewards and other stakeholders in adopting effective, transparent, and sustainable engagement practices to boost their governing architecture of ESG. The toolkit outlines practices with a stakeholder centric approach and principles to be followed while planning and executing stakeholder engagement activities.

Both these publications have been brought in with a much expansive thought, goal and mindset. The present era is one of a climate flux, one where the surroundings require constant attention, and one that obligates us to leave a better world for those to take over. All of this and more, and having a sustainability-driven mindset does not seem like luxurious thinking but a basic physiological necessity in the corporate arena of decision making.

Through these documents, not only do we intend to provoke the thinking of corporates but empower the professionals to lead the way towards a Better World...!!!

Our other publications – be it on Anti-Corruption Law, SME Listing or Consumer Protection Law, too, have been prepared under expert guidance so as to lay in the roadmap for our professionals to be adequately equipped in guiding the corporates on these matters.

## THE DAYS AHEAD: TAKING LEGACIES FORWARD

When I put that header, I, my Team and all the members would heartily agree that all the ICSI events have taken the form of legacy with each passing year. Continuing the spirit of an activity which was initiated with the intent of promoting investor education and good governance in Capital Markets, the Institute is proud to launch the 2025 edition of the ICSI **Capital Markets Week**. Scheduled to be held PAN-India, as is the norm, during December 2025, the event will find the Regulators, the Stock Exchanges, the Experts, us and you deliberating upon the most recent amendments in the legislative arena and the most significant developments in the financial markets arena. It goes without saying, that given the stronghold footing of the Company Secretaries in these markets, our roles in strengthening governance therein and playing leads in providing certifications, we would be expecting your wholehearted participation in the event being held closest to you...

Also, following the lead from my last message, and with the details out, I would also take this opportunity to invite you, your personal and your corporate families to kickstart the new year with us amidst the sand dunes and scenic charm of the beautiful city of Jaisalmer for the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the **ICSI Board Mentorship Programme** being conducted by the Institute of Governance Professionals of India (an ICSI initiative for nurturing governance and sustainability) scheduled to be held during January 08-11, 2026.

## BREAKING LINGUISTIC BARRIERS : SHIFTING FOCUS TOWARDS 'RAJBHASHA'

हिंदी हमारे राष्ट्र की अभिव्यक्ति का सरलतम स्रोत है।

– सुभित्रानंदन पंत

India, per se, is a linguistically blessed nation. We as a country, take pride in our local language, in the dialect and in its uniqueness that changes every few miles. Amidst all these languages, Hindi has been accorded the status of 'Official Language' of the Government of India. And a large part of the population not only speaks and understands it, but uses it as a medium of education as a matter of daily routine.

With this fact in sight, I would like to commend my fellow Council Colleagues in joining me to take a sensitized approach and releasing the ICSI Study Material for the Executive Programme in Hindi as well and I would extend my heartiest commendations towards the Teams executing the same at ground level. Since the ICSI Examinations are conducted in both languages, it seems only befitting that the material may also be provided in both languages as well.

With this as I come close to the conclusion of this message and with all the happenings enlisted, the heart is filled with hope, exhilaration and expectations of a bright future – one that we shall all relish together...

For as Michael Jordan says and I quote,

*“Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen.”*

Yours Sincerely



**CS Dhananjay Shukla**  
President, ICSI