

53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries held during October 31, November 1-2, 2025 at Kochi

Theme: **Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable Bharat**

Guest of Honour : Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha

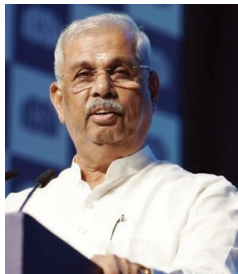
Special Guest : Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group

INAUGURAL SESSION



SPECIAL SESSION

Chief Guest: Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala



Technical Session - I

Progressive Regulatory Reforms – Navigating Change with Strategic Foresight

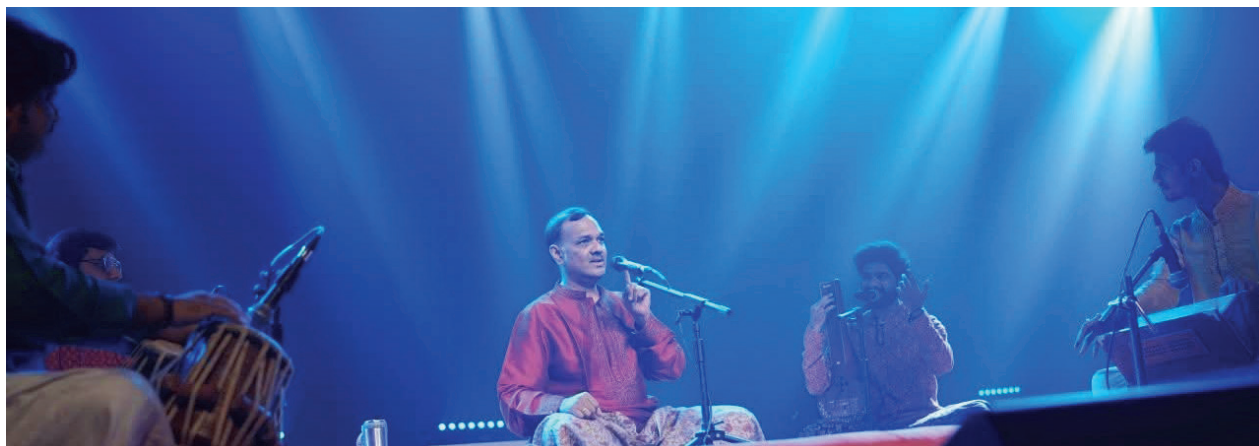


Flag March



Cultural Evening

Pandit Sanjeev Abhyankar, Internationally Acclaimed Hindustani Classical Music Vocalist (Mewati Gharana)



Celebration on Kerala Piravi Day



Technical Session - II

Capital Market Reforms vis-à-vis Sustainable Economy



Technical Session - III

MSMEs & Startups: Role of Financial Ecosystem & Technology



Technical Session - IV

Circular Economy: New Perspectives and Emerging Role of CS



B2B Session - Dess



B2B Session - NSE



First Special Session

Innovation & Leadership: Inspiring the Next Generation



Second Special Session

GIFT-IFSC: Enabling Growth and Professional Opportunities for achieving vision of Viksit Bharat



Open House Session



Technical Session - V

AI Emergence: Capabilities, Possibilities and Challenges



Technical Session - VI

Grassroot Governance – Promoting Equity & Inclusion



Vote of Thanks



Best Regional Council and Chapter Awards 2024

**Best Chapter Award in Silver Grade
Salem Chapter of SIRC of ICSI**



**Best Chapter Award in Gold Grade
Kochi Chapter of SIRC of ICSI**



**Best Chapter Award in Platinum Grade
Hyderabad Chapter of SIRC of ICSI**



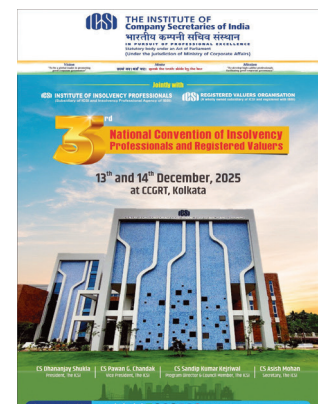
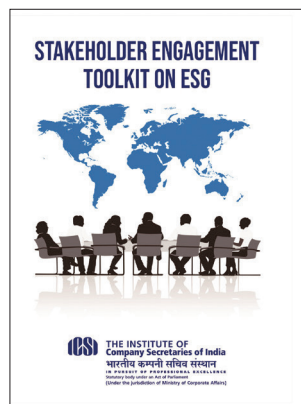
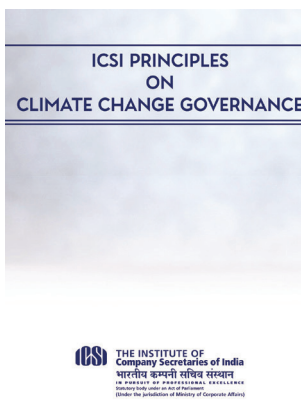
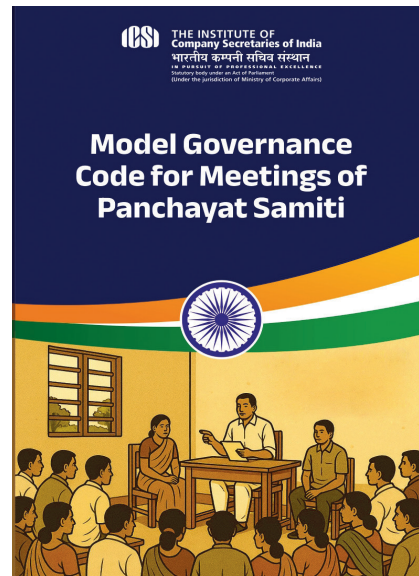
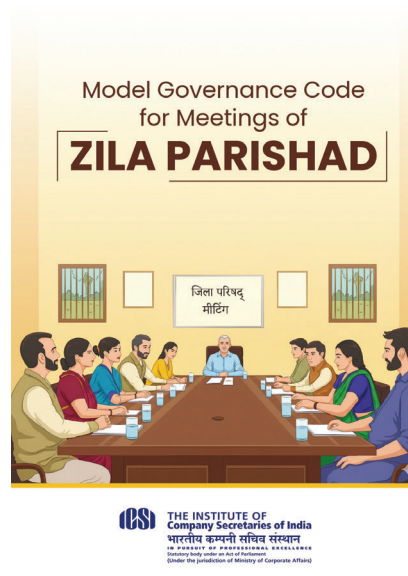
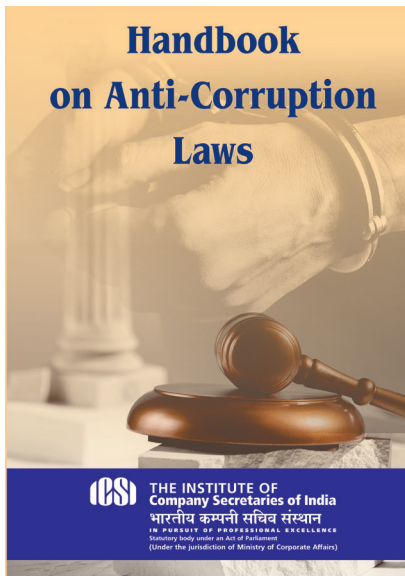
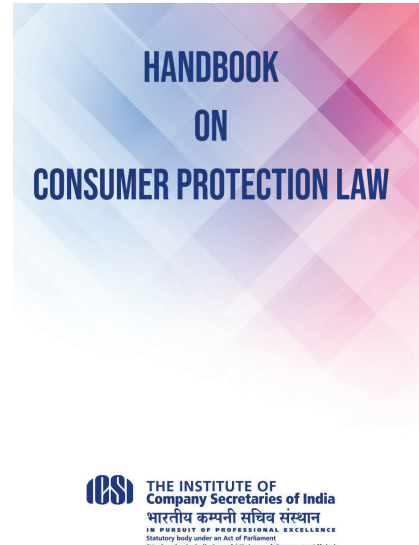
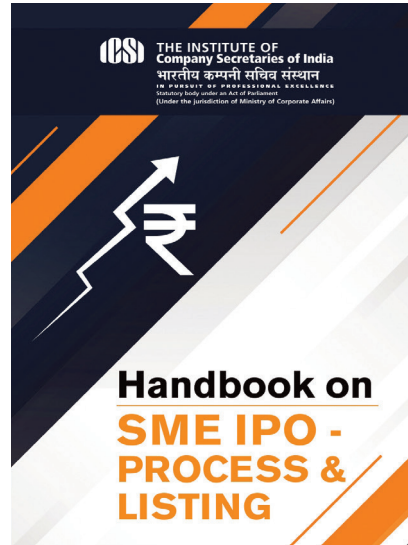
**Best Chapter Award in Diamond Grade
Bengaluru Chapter of SIRC of ICSI**

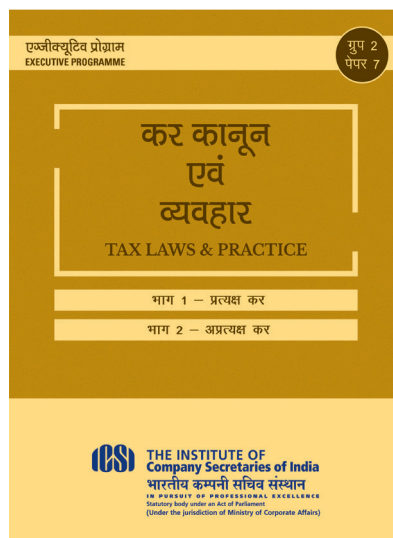
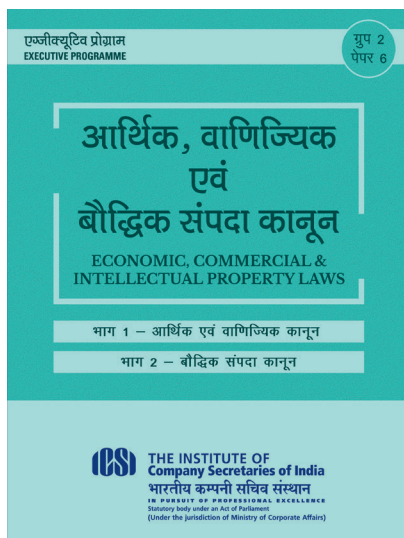
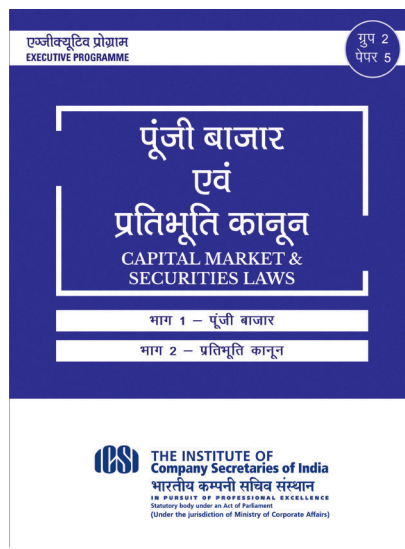
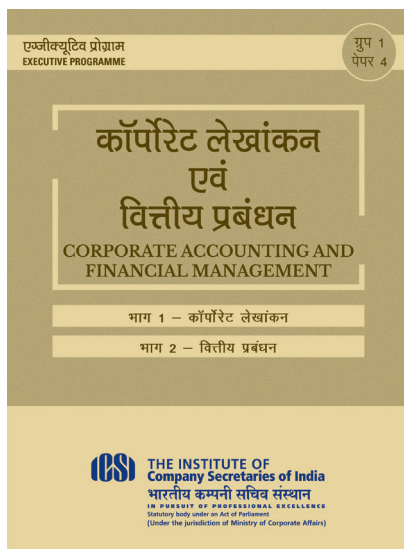
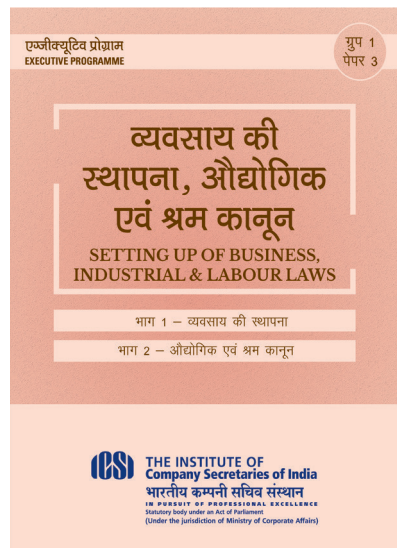
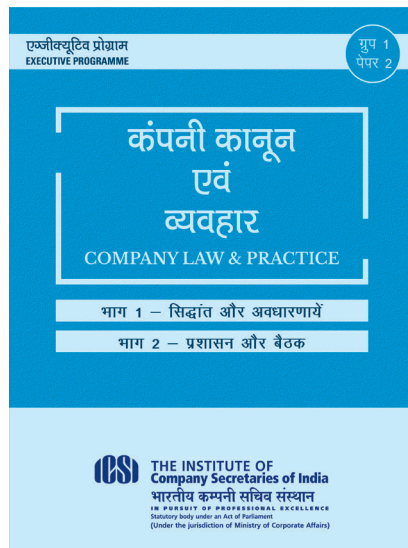
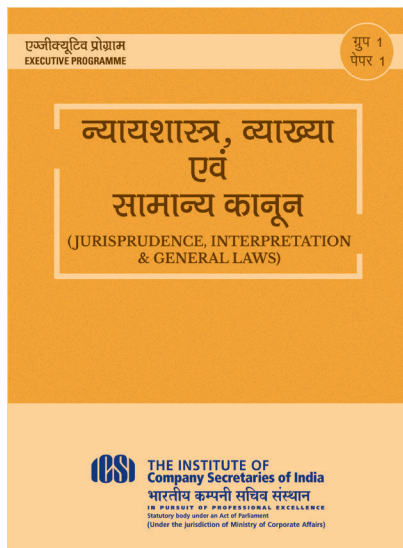


National Best Regional Council Award - Western India Regional Council of ICSI



Releases at 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries





Proceedings of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries held during October 31, November 1-2, 2025 at Kochi

Theme: Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable *Bharat*

The Institute organized the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries at Hotel Grand Hyatt, Kochi, Kerala on October 31 & November 1-2, 2025, on the theme “Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable *Bharat*” in hybrid mode, i.e., physical as well as virtual mode. The Convention witnessed the presence of around 4,000 delegates present in-person and connected virtually from different parts of the country and abroad. A galaxy of distinguished guests, invitees, speakers and professionals from India and abroad made the Convention a grand success.

Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon’ble Governor of Kerala, Chief Guest; Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon’ble Member of Lok Sabha, Guest of Honour and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, Special Guest graced the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries. Their august presence and motivating address added yet another memorable day in the history of the Institute.

INAUGURAL SESSION

Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon’ble Member of Lok Sabha, Guest of Honour and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, Special Guest inaugurated the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries.

CS Madhusudhanan EP, Chairman, SIRC, The ICSI welcomed everyone at the Convention and introduced the Guest of Honour, Special Guest and other dignitaries on the dais. He expressed his happiness and gratitude towards Central Council of the ICSI for organizing this Convention in the Southern Region at Kochi.

CS Dwarakanath Chennur, Programme Director & Council Member, The ICSI extended a warm welcome to all the attendees at the Convention and conveyed his gratitude to Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon’ble Member of Lok Sabha, Guest of Honour and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, Special Guest for their kind presence. He introduced the theme of the Convention i.e., “Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable *Bharat*” and underscored its timely relevance as it reflects a wide spectrum of opportunities for professionals to explore, adapt, align and grow with the nation’s ambitious developmental goals. Appreciating the theme of the Convention he highlighted that professionals like Company Secretaries must remain at the forefront of governance and play a pivotal role in shaping a developed India, ensuring that progress remains inclusive and development is sustainable.

CS Pawan G. Chandak, Vice-President, The ICSI, in his address underscored that the ICSI as a premier professional body advocating principles of Good Corporate Governance has grown tremendously as the only recognized body in

India and the largest in the world to develop and regulate the profession of Company Secretaries. Relating the theme, Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable *Bharat* to the Vedas and ancient scriptures, he highlighted that our sacred texts have long advocated not just for growth, but for growth that embraces inclusivity and ensures sustainability. He further stressed that this timeless wisdom finds resonance in the ethos of ICSI, which is committed to fostering development that is forward-looking, inclusive and rooted in sustainable practices.

CS Dhananjay Shukla, President, The ICSI, commenced his presidential address by welcoming the dignitaries and the delegates to the Convention. He thanked the Guest of Honour and Special Guest for gracing the occasion and expressed his delight on the Convention being organized in Kochi, describing the city as an emerging epicentre of commerce, culture and connectivity. He elaborated the theme “Progressive, Inclusive, and Sustainable *Bharat*,” linking it to reforms, inclusivity and sustainability and envisioned a Progressive *Bharat* poised for transformative reforms, an Inclusive *Bharat* committed to uplifting every citizen and a *Bharat* capable of delivering on different fronts including the profession of Company Secretaries. He highlighted key initiatives of the ICSI like the QRRT mechanism for quick responses, Service Charter, ICSI Pulse podcasts and free online Capacity Building Series covering topics such as GST, FEMA, IPR, and NPO. etc. He highlighted ICSI’s inclusivity initiatives, viz. certificate course for female Company Secretaries and shared updates on Government engagements for regulatory extensions and tax audit advocacy, along with strategic collaborations like CIMA exemptions and global partnerships. He concluded with a quote of Helen Keller: “Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much,” and called for unity to propel ICSI forward.

Shri M. P. Ahammad began his address by acknowledging the presence of 78,000 skilled Company Secretaries, emphasizing their vital role in nation-building and global branding. He highlighted India’s demographic advantage, noting that the country’s vast pool of qualified youth offsets concerns about capital and presents immense potential for global opportunities. He urged the need to energize this youth force and create employment avenues that align with international markets. He drew attention to pressing social issues like urban poverty and spoke about the persistent food insecurity in various cities and shared his company’s CSR initiative, Hunger-Free World, which is providing daily nutrition to over one lakh people across India. He also outlined other CSR initiatives like educational support for high-IQ students from underprivileged backgrounds and the establishment of Grandma Homes to care for neglected elderly parents. He shared that his company has been allocating 5% of its net profits to CSR since 1998.

The following releases were bestowed at the august hands of Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha, Guest of Honour and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, Special Guest along with other dignitaries present at the dais:

1. Souvenir of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries;
2. Handbook on SME IPO - Process & Listing;
3. Handbook on Consumer Protection Law;
4. Handbook on Anti-Corruption Laws;
5. Study Material of Executive Programme in Hindi Language;
6. Publication on Model Governance Code for Meetings of Zila Parishad;
7. Publication on Model Governance Code for Meetings of Panchayat Samiti;
8. Flyer of ICSI Capital Markets Week, 2025;
9. Flyer of 3rd National Convention of Insolvency Professionals and Registered Valuers.

Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha, Guest of Honour, while delivering his address stated that Company Secretaries are the architects of ethical practices, custodians of corporate conscience and nation builders, shaping the moral compass of India Inc., & fostering a culture of collaboration and inclusivity. He said that the role of Company Secretaries is utmost important as they are the link between the corporate, regulator and stakeholders. He further added that excellence in governance is not a one-time achievement, it is a living culture, cultivated through daily commitment and integrity. He mentioned about the vital significance Grassroot Governance holds in today's socio-political landscape where the Panchayati Raj system has empowered communities at the local level. He further stated that by leveraging AI tools, global best practices, and advanced governance standards, Company Secretaries are not just supporting businesses but are future-proofing India's corporate sector. He concluded by saying that Company Secretaries should embody good governance in their actions and champion it across boardrooms and communities.

CS Asish Mohan, Secretary, The ICSI, delivered the Vote of Thanks at the Inaugural session of the 53rd National Convention, extending heartfelt gratitude to Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha, and Shri M. P. Ahammad, Chairman of Malabar Group, for gracing the occasion with their esteemed presence. He warmly acknowledged the profound insights shared by the distinguished guests, which enriched the convention and for offering thoughtful perspectives on governance, sustainability, and ethical leadership principles that will undoubtedly inspire Company Secretaries in building a more inclusive and sustainable Bharat. He expressed his deepest gratitude to one and all for their enthusiastic support to the Convention.

FIRST TECHNICAL SESSION: PROGRESSIVE REGULATORY REFORMS – NAVIGATING CHANGE WITH STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Session Co-ordinator: CS Manish Gupta, Former President & Council Member, The ICSI

Panelists: Shri APM Mohammed Hanish, IAS, Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Sports & Youth Affairs and Waqf Departments, Government of Kerala; Dr. Praveen Trivedi, Executive Director, International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA); Shri S. Santhanakrishnan, Former Council Member (Govt. Nominee), The ICSI

CS Manish Gupta in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme, welcomed the learned panelists and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

Shri APM Mohammed Hanish, in his opening remarks shared that over the past 20–25 years, India has been on a fast track of irreversible progress, with significant enhancement in human resources. Trust and collaboration have paved the way for pragmatic solutions and a greater practical application of Statutes. He said that Kerala, in particular, has been at the forefront of new initiatives. The State has pursued industrial growth with distinctiveness in company operations, emphasizing factors that should drive down production costs in an increasingly competitive and challenging global terrain. Across the country, there is healthy competition in improving the ease of doing business and Kerala has excelled with a 99.2% achievement in implementing government-recommended reforms. He concluded by saying that Kerala became the first State to promulgate an ESG Policy just two weeks ago and said that to achieve the dream of a developed nation, collective participation is imperative.

Dr. Praveen Trivedi, in his opening remarks discussed that the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), though only five years old, reflects India's dynamic growth trajectory and is aptly positioned to enhance the ease of doing business. Its core vision is to reclaim financial services that were previously routed outside India, offering capabilities that were once unavailable domestically. He said that the role of Company Secretaries and Financial Professionals is pivotal as they serve as the first line of defence against financial misconduct, especially in areas like anti-money laundering (AML) and countering the financing of terrorism (CFT). He said that the authority is committed to enabling foreign entities and guiding them through legal and compliance aspects, including ancillary services regulation. He also informed that there has been a growth in the number of entities growing from 92 in 2020 to over 1,000 by 2025 as the scope within IFSCA has been expanding. He urged the Professionals to explore opportunities in GIFT City.

Shri S. Santhanakrishnan affirmed that the ICSI's growth had been remarkable and continued to accelerate. To support India's ambition of building globally competitive firms, ICSI should take proactive leadership in drafting contemporary legislation and presenting it to the Government. Given the rapid transformation in regulatory frameworks, continuous professional development is essential. Today, every regulatory shift impacts our ecosystem and Company Secretaries must no longer be viewed merely as Key Managerial Personnel

or Compliance Officers as their role is expanding and professional opportunities are abundant. He concluded by saying that foresightedness and agility will be the key to unlocking the full potential in India's evolving corporate landscape.

CS Manish Gupta summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

SPECIAL SESSION

Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, Chief Guest graced the Special Session of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries.

CS Dwarakanath Chennur, Programme Director & Council Member, The ICSI conveyed his gratitude to Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, for his esteemed presence as the Chief Guest. He expressed his delight on holding the 53rd National Convention in Kochi, renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant role as a hub of trade and commerce. He highlighted that the theme of the Convention Progressive, Inclusive and Sustainable *Bharat*, emphasizes growth with integrity, opportunities for all, and development that nurtures both people and the planet.

CS Pawan G. Chandak, Vice President, The ICSI commenced his address with a special acknowledgment to the Chief Guest for honoring the occasion with his presence and expressed his delight on the Convention being held in Kochi. He highlighted Kerala's remarkable strides in areas such as progressive reforms, inclusivity, high literacy rates, a flourishing start-up ecosystem and its commitment to sustainability. Underscoring the significance of inclusive development and ethical corporate governance, he emphasized the instrumental role of ICSI in empowering CS professionals with expertise required to meet this objective and contribute meaningfully to the broader mission of nation-building. He stressed that innovations like artificial intelligence, blockchain and quantum computing are set to redefine traditional frameworks, ushering in both transformative opportunities and intricate challenges.

CS Dhananjay Shukla, President, The ICSI, commenced his address by warmly welcoming the Chief Guest and delegates to the Special Session of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries, expressing heartfelt gratitude for their presence. He described the Convention's theme as a reflection of India's transformative journey, emphasizing that development must be holistic, inclusive, and environmentally responsible. He commended the Chief Guest's visionary leadership in higher education and governance, highlighting his commitment to uplifting academic institutions, promoting inclusive learning and fostering ethical public administration. He outlined India's landmark reforms like the new Income-tax Act, GST, IBC, SEBI laws and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, which have collectively enhanced transparency and ease of doing business. He highlighted the Institute's global initiatives like conferences in Australia, Dubai and Sri Lanka and the launch of the India-Australia Facilitation Centre, outlined national initiatives like support for martyrs' daughters, fee waivers for Agniveers and programmes on Panchayat Governance & Agri Business and also briefed on institutional strengthening

measures like MSME and ESG Boards, Strategic MOUs and establishment of the ICSI ADR Centre. He concluded by reaffirming the Institute's commitment to strengthening the governance ecosystem and nurturing Company Secretaries who will facilitate the growth across regions and support India's journey towards Viksit Bharat.

The following releases and Best Regional Council & Chapter Awards for the year 2024 were bestowed at the august hands of Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala along with other dignitaries present at the dais:

1. Publication on ICSI Principles on Climate Change Governance (IPCG)
2. Publication on Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit on ESG Awards

Awards

1. Best Chapter Award in Silver Grade - Salem Chapter of SIRC of ICSI;
2. Best Chapter Award in Gold Grade - Kochi Chapter of SIRC of ICSI;
3. Best Chapter Award in Platinum Grade - Hyderabad Chapter of SIRC of ICSI;
4. Best Chapter Award in Diamond Grade - Bengaluru Chapter of SIRC of ICSI;
5. National Best Regional Council Award - Western India Regional Council of ICSI.

Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, Chief Guest, in his address, emphasized the righteousness and deep relevance of the ICSI Motto – Satyam Vada, Dharmam Chara, i.e., Speak the Truth, Follow the Path of Righteousness. He stated 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. He discussed vision of Viksit Bharat and urged professionals to introspect their role in the same. He urged them to contribute ideas, inputs and innovations that benefit the common man. He also recalled a story from the Mahabharata and explained how Yudhishtira exemplified the true essence of truth and righteousness. He stressed that it is not enough to understand the words; one must grasp their spirit and in the same way, comprehend the true spirit of Viksit Bharat. In conclusion, he encouraged the fraternity to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and ethics, thereby contributing meaningfully to the nation's progress.

CS Asish Mohan, Secretary, The ICSI, delivered the Vote of Thanks at the Special Session of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries, extending heartfelt appreciation to Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, for honouring the event as the Chief Guest. He acknowledged the Governor's inspiring message, which encouraged everyone to advance together with shared purpose, fostering unity and collaboration to elevate the profession and contribute meaningfully to the creation of a more sustainable and inclusive Bharat.

Flag March

The special session was followed by ICSI Flag March, a vibrant display of ICSI unity surging forward like a wave, brimming with pride, solidarity and an indomitable spirit.

Celebration of Kerala Piravi Day

Second day of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries commenced with celebration of Kerala Day natively known as, Kerala Piravi, which is observed on 1st November, with a beautiful dance performance, Thiruvathirakali.

SECOND TECHNICAL SESSION - CAPITAL MARKET REFORMS VIS-À-VIS SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Session Co-ordinator: CS B. Narasimhan, Immediate Former President and Council Member, The ICSI.

Panelists: Shri Manan Lahoty, Partner and Head of Capital Markets Practice, Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas; Dr. Dinesh Soni, Group Head - Compliance, Nuvama Wealth Management Limited & Former Managing Director & CEO, NSE Administration and Supervision Limited and CS (Dr.) K. S. Ravichandran, Practicing Company Secretary, Coimbatore.

CS B. Narasimhan in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme, welcomed the learned panelists and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

Shri Manan Lahoty commenced his address by highlighting India's growth-oriented capital market culture where investors prioritize high equity returns over safer options like FDs or bonds. He briefed on the challenges of popularizing ESG and corporate bonds for retail investors, noting historical shifts from tax-free bonds to equities due to market safety and advocated for tax benefits and mutual fund channels to drive increased participation. He urged the ICSI to engage with bodies like IVCA to educate venture capital and private equity funds on the importance of appointing Company Secretaries early for ensuring better governance from the start and encouraged the professionals to upgrade their skills with AI to position themselves as essential partners in efficient business management. He concluded by stressing proactive measures to balance global ESG expectations, investor sentiments and market risks like overvaluations, urging better governance to protect investors and foster sustainable practices.

Dr. Dinesh Soni commenced his address by discussing the evolving role of governance in India's capital markets, emphasizing the integral involvement of Company Secretaries across diverse fields. He discussed the transformative shifts in supervision over the past decade that led to a surge in investor participation from 1.5 crore to 12 crore and attributed this growth to the collective efforts of all stakeholders. He highlighted key advancements such as enhanced surveillance capabilities of Stock Exchanges and the strategic use of technology, which have significantly strengthened investor protection and fuelled capital market growth across sectors. He reinforced the resilience and potential of India's capital markets and concluded by emphasizing the need to elevate investor protection to foster expansion across industries.

CS (Dr.) K. S. Ravichandran commenced his address by highlighting Kerala as the first state to approve an ESG policy. He stressed that capital market reforms must drive a sustainable economy through robust investor protection and advocate for transformational regulations, outcome-based reforms and zero tolerance for fraud or misrepresentation. He proposed strengthening green financing and preventing greenwashing by establishing a unified ESG disclosure framework, ensuring non-green practices are not misrepresented as green to promote genuine sustainable investments. He recognized Company Secretaries as key enablers of fair practices, transparent disclosures and non-discriminatory information flow. He concluded by emphasizing an outcome-driven approach to embed sustainability into corporate and market conduct.

Thereafter, the session was opened for panel discussion wherein speakers also answered suitably to various queries raised by audience which made the deliberations fruitful and interactive.

CS B. Narasimhan summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

THIRD TECHNICAL SESSION - MSMEs & STARTUPS: ROLE OF FINANCIAL ECOSYSTEM & TECHNOLOGY

Session Co-ordinators: CS Praveen Soni, Council Member, The ICSI and CS NPS Chawla, Council Member, The ICSI

Panelists: Shri Alok Bansal, Co-founder & Executive Vice Chairman, PB Fintech Limited (Policybazaar); CS S P Kamath, Immediate Past President, The Cochin Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Ms. Vineeta Hariharan, Public Policy Exponent & Former Chief of External Missions, Ministry of MSME and Lt. Cdr. Sajith Kumar E V (Retd.), Project Director, Kerala Startup Mission

CS Praveen Soni in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme, welcomed the learned panelists and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

CS S P Kamath elaborated on the challenges faced by MSMEs, particularly in securing adequate funding and financial support. He stated that despite being the backbone of the Indian economy, the sector continues to grapple with systemic issues in access to finance. He pointed out a significant gap between the government's policy intentions and their on-ground implementation, which further compounds the problem. Talking about the startup ecosystem, he highlighted that while India has emerged as a global leader in the startup, entrepreneurs still encounter numerous hurdles ranging from limited funding opportunities to complex regulatory frameworks and burdensome documentation. He stressed the urgent need for customized schemes tailored to the unique needs of MSMEs/Startups.

Ms. Vineeta Hariharan in her address emphasized that entrepreneurship represents the core vision of India's future, with MSMEs and startups serving as the primary engines to fulfill the aspirations of the nation's youth. While MSMEs continue to grapple with numerous challenges, the Government is actively implementing measures to support them, particularly in areas such as access to finance, technological adoption and capacity building. However,

there remains a significant gap in the last-mile delivery of Central Government programs to MSMEs. She highlighted the pivotal role that Company Secretaries can play in bridging this gap, not just within corporate boardrooms, but by extending their expertise to grassroots MSMEs. She advocated for the establishment of decentralized MSME hubs in every district, fostering inclusive growth and regional entrepreneurship.

Shri Alok Bansal highlighted that the challenge in funding is not the availability of capital, but the stringent underwriting processes that Banks and NBFCs complete before disbursing funds. While startups often find access to private sector funding relatively easier, MSMEs continue to struggle to secure financing through these channels. He further stated that although some fintech companies have begun exploring working capital solutions, these efforts have yet to scale meaningfully. For fintech-driven funding models to succeed, traditional financial institutions like NBFCs and banks need to ease their underwriting norms and support more flexible credit mechanisms. He emphasized that there are no shortcuts when it comes to compliance and governance, as both are foundational elements essential for an organization's success.

Lt. Cdr. Sajith Kumar E V commenced his address by spotlighting the remarkable growth of MSMEs and Startups in Kerala. He observed that the traditional distinctions between Tier-1, Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are rapidly fading, with Kerala evolving into a unified urban landscape. He noted a growing uniformity in resource availability and awareness among MSMEs in Kerala, enabling them to effectively leverage various schemes offered by both the Central and State Governments. He further underscored the success of MSMEs operating in the B2B segment, attributing it to smoother cash flow dynamics and more efficient market exploration strategies within the B2B framework.

Thereafter, the session was opened for panel discussion wherein speakers answered suitably to various queries raised which made the deliberations fruitful and interactive.

CS NPS Chawla summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

FOURTH TECHNICAL SESSION - CIRCULAR ECONOMY: NEW PERSPECTIVES AND EMERGING ROLE OF CS

Session Co-ordinators: CS Rupanjana De, Council Member, The ICSI and CS Ashish Karodia, Council Member, The ICSI

Chair: Shri Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh, Director General & CEO, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)

Panelists: Dato' Akbar bin Moidunny, President, The Malaysian Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (MAICSA), Dr. Ashok Kumar Mishra, Council Member (Govt. Nominee), The ICSI and Ex-Technical Member, NCLAT, Shri Dinesh Kumar A N, Joint Director, Energy Management Centre, Department of Power, Govt. of Kerala, Ms. Sharmila Gopinath, Corporate Governance Consultant & Former Specialist Advisor, Asian Corporate Governance Association (ACGA).

CS Ashish Karodia welcomed the Session Chair along with the learned panelists. He briefed about the session theme and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

Shri Gyaneshwar Kumar Singh emphasized the relevance of the circular economy in today's global landscape, where nations are grappling with the challenge of reducing emissions. With India's ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2070, the circular economy emerges as a pivotal strategy. He underscored that by 2050, circular economy practices are projected to contribute to 44% reduction in carbon emissions. He also acknowledged the role of the ICSI as a conscience keeper for Indian businesses, guiding them toward sustainable and responsible practices. He highlighted the Government of India's LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment) initiative, which promotes sustainable living and behavioral change. He stressed the urgent need to rethink waste management, advocating for a shift from abundance-based models to frameworks rooted in resource efficiency. In this context, he identified three foundational pillars of the circular economy: Research & Development, Financing and Education.

Ms. Sharmila Gopinath elaborated on the enduring and evolving nature of the Circular Economy concept and emphasized that the idea is not new, as practices promoting reuse, recycling, and efficient resource utilization have existed for centuries. She explained that the Circular Economy is not limited to environmental sustainability alone; it also encompasses innovation, efficiency, and strategic frameworks that guide organizations in adopting responsible business models. She emphasized that companies must now design green products and integrate sustainability into their core business strategy, rather than treating it as an optional initiative. She highlighted that Company Secretaries play a pivotal role in drafting sustainability policies, ensuring transparency and accountability and preventing greenwashing practices so that investors, regulators and consumers can place genuine confidence in corporate disclosures and sustainability claims.

Shri Dinesh Kumar focused on the significance of the ESG Framework and its close linkage with sustainability and responsible resource management. He highlighted that the renewable energy sector plays a crucial role in advancing the goals of a green and sustainable economy. While explaining the true essence of being "green," he stated that it goes beyond mere adoption of eco-friendly practices, it means that companies must utilize energy responsibly and sustainably, ensuring minimal environmental impact. He emphasized that responsible consumption is as important as responsible production and every stakeholder, from individuals to corporations, must be accountable for how resources are consumed, promoting a culture of conservation and efficiency. He urged Company Secretaries to play an active role in guiding organizations toward responsible energy practices, sustainability-driven decision-making and transparent ESG reporting, thereby contributing meaningfully to the vision of a Circular and Sustainable Economy.

Dr. Ashok Kumar Mishra emphasized the significance of hosting the event near the Periyar River, symbolizing renewal and sustainability as the core tenets of the circular economy. He highlighted that Company Secretaries play a pivotal role in governing and building capacity for this transformative model, which is projected to contribute \$2.5 trillion to India's economy by 2050. He stressed upon the importance of managing limited resources and applying circular principles across sectors, including services. By offering strategic advisory and fostering entrepreneurship, CS professionals can become job creators and catalysts for change. He concluded by urging the ICSI for developing protocol for certifying the reports related to environment governance.

Mr. Moidunny expressed his sincere gratitude to ICSI for the invitation and shared insights upon the evolving role of Company Secretaries in the era of circular transformation. He emphasized that while the global economy has long operated on a linear model, it is now shifting toward regeneration seeking to decouple growth from resource consumption. He underscored that this transformation hinges on robust governance structures rooted in accountability, compliance and transparency. He highlighted the shift in corporate liability for corruption from individuals to organizations, placing Company Secretaries at the forefront of implementing integrity frameworks. Looking ahead, he expressed optimism for deeper India-Asia collaboration on ESG and AMLA initiatives, affirming that the circular economy is not just an environmental imperative but a governance revolution, with Company Secretaries standing at the heart of this change.

Thereafter, the session was opened for panel discussion wherein speakers answered suitably to various queries raised which made the deliberations fruitful and interactive.

CS Rupanjana De summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION: INNOVATION & LEADERSHIP: INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Session Co-ordinator: CS Mohan Kumar Aravamudhan, Council Member, The ICSI

Speaker: Dr. K. N. Raghavan, IRS (Retd.) Secretary General, Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) & Former International Cricket Umpire.

CS Mohan Kumar Aravamudhan in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme and welcomed the learned speaker for sharing views and experiences with the delegates.

Dr. K. N. Raghavan passionately discussed several themes centered on innovation, leadership and personal development, drawing a parallel with the evolving world of cricket. He emphasized the concept of *ikigai* which was mirrored in the innovative changes in cricket. He also highlighted the role of fitness and psychology, citing how

the West Indies' adoption of a sports psychologist in the 1970s transformed them into champions, reshaping their mindset and pushing them toward greater success. In the context of leadership, he discussed how Kapil Dev's leadership during India's 1983 World Cup victory was a prime example of vision, resilience and faith in one's own abilities despite opposition. He also warned about the "seven deadly sins" in corporate leadership, such as envy, selfishness and laziness, urging leaders to avoid them to foster an environment of trust, collaboration and growth. He further emphasized the importance of hobbies in shaping our lives and maintaining a balanced perspective, advising that individuals should continuously upskill and keep abreast of changes. Drawing inspiration from the Bhagavad Gita, Raghavan underscored the significance of having a clear and conscious purpose in life, taking decisions that benefit the greatest number of people and fostering a mindset that is free from the fear of failure. He concluded by saying that true leadership stems from self-confidence, vision and the ability to inspire transformation, both on and off the field.

CS Mohan Kumar Aravamudhan summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks to the speaker.

SECOND SPECIAL SESSION - GIFT-IFSC: ENABLING GROWTH & PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACHIEVING VISION OF VIKSIT BHARAT

Session Co-ordinator: CS B. Narasimhan, Immediate Former President, The ICSI

Speakers: Shri K. Mahipal Reddy, Executive Director, International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), Shri Sathyaraj C.M., General Manager, International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA).

CS B. Narasimhan welcomed the learned speakers, briefly introduced session theme and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

Shri K. Mahipal Reddy in his address emphasized the shared vision between the IFSCA and the ICSI, underscoring their collaborative commitment to advancing India's financial ecosystem. He elaborated on the foundational aspects of GIFT-IFSC, tracing its remarkable growth trajectory and outlining the core business activities permitted within the jurisdiction. He also shed light on the robust regulatory architecture that governs GIFT-IFSC and its significant contribution to enhancing India's position in the global financial market.

Shri Sathyaraj C.M. commenced his address by stating that India is poised at the cusp of a remarkable transformation, one that transcends mere economic expansion to encompass institutional maturity, strategic clarity and a bold global vision. He underscored the importance of cultivating a robust financial ecosystem, noting that India's strong macroeconomic fundamentals, adherence

to the rule of law, demographic advantage, expansive domestic market and boundless investment potential make it an attractive destination for foreign capital. He also spotlighted key features of GIFT-IFSC, including its advanced infrastructure, world-class sports facilities, the International Fintech Innovation & Research Centre, the thriving Global Insurance Centre (GIC) ecosystem among other strategic initiatives and various available professional opportunities.

The session ended with the Vote of Thanks to the speakers.

OPEN HOUSE SESSION

Third day of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries commenced with an interactive Session of the Council with the members. CS Dhananjay Shukla, President, The ICSI, CS Pawan G. Chandak, Vice-President, The ICSI, CS B. Narasimhan, CS Manish Gupta, CS Rupanjana De, CS Manoj Kumar Purbey, CS NPS Chawla, CS Suresh Pandey, CS Mohan Kumar Aravamudhan, CS Dwarakanath Chennur, CS Ashish Karodia, CS Venkata Ramana R., CS Praveen Soni, Council Members, The ICSI and CS Asish Mohan, Secretary, The ICSI were present on the dais. CS Dhananjay Shukla, President, The ICSI apprised members about the various initiatives, recognitions and representations submitted by the Institute to various Regulators and replied suitably to the queries/suggestions raised/given by the members during the open house.

FIFTH TECHNICAL SESSION - AI EMERGENCE: CAPABILITIES, POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES

Session Co-ordinators: CS Venkata Ramana R., Council Member, The ICSI and CS Manoj Kumar Purbey, Council Member, The ICSI.

Panelists: FCS Jacqueline Waihenya Chairman, Institute of Certified Secretaries, Kenya; Prof. (Dr.) Bindu S. Ronald, Vice-Chancellor, Maharashtra National Law University, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar; CS Divya Kumart, President, Chief Legal Officer & Company Secretary, Datamatics Global Services Ltd.

CS Venkata Ramana R. in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme, welcomed all the learned panelists and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

FCS Jacqueline Waihenya emphasized the growing relevance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its ethical governance in the corporate world. She discussed that Company Secretaries act as the crucial interface between the Board, decision-makers, and operational teams, placing them in a key position to guide responsible AI adoption within organizations. She elaborated on the concept of Artificial Generative Intelligence (AGI), emphasizing that while AI can be a transformative tool, it must be used responsibly—without causing harm, perpetuating bias, or hindering innovation. She further urged Company Secretaries to make their corporate leaders understand that AI Governance has become a strategic issue, encompassing decision-making, risk management, and

stakeholder engagement. She also suggested that AI Ethics and Governance should be integrated into ESG reporting frameworks and further highlighted that Ethics and Governance must remain at the core of every AI-driven corporate agenda, ensuring that technology serves humanity responsibly and transparently.

Prof. (Dr.) Bindu S. Ronald, in her address, spoke on the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi in taking India to a new world and appreciated the theme of the Convention i.e., "Progressive, Inclusive, and Sustainable Bharat" as being in perfect alignment with this nation's vision. She highlighted that AI is currently ruling the global market and has brought about a massive transformation across sectors. She noted that AI is reshaping how we create, innovate, and disseminate knowledge and information, acting both as a catalyst for creativity and a disruptor to the existing Intellectual Property (IP) framework. She touched upon the concept of Automated Decision-Making, emphasizing its potential to influence governance, business, and individual rights. She concluded by emphasizing that ethical AI governance and robust legal frameworks are essential to balance innovation with protection of individual rights in India's journey towards Viksit Bharat.

CS Divya Kumart highlighted the growing influence of AI across all sectors, including Banking, Education, Information Technology, etc. She noted that AI has been present in India for nearly a decade, and its evolution has significantly transformed the professional landscape. She explained that the first stage of AI primarily focused on automation, while the current phase—Generative AI—has led to exponential growth in wealth creation and productivity. With AI tools now capable of creating documents, conducting analytical work, and designing flowcharts, professionals have become far more efficient and effective in their roles. She further discussed the concept of "Augmented AI," which relates to decision-making models where human intelligence serves as the heart and robotic intelligence acts as the brain. She further highlighted the importance of the Digital Data Protection (DDP) Act, urging Company Secretaries to stay well-versed with data privacy and AI-related legal frameworks. She concluded by emphasizing that AI should be leveraged thoughtfully as a tool that complements human intelligence rather than replacing it ensuring that innovation and governance evolve hand in hand.

Thereafter, the session was opened for panel discussion wherein speakers answered suitably to various queries raised which made the deliberations fruitful and interactive.

CS Venkata Ramana R. summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

SIXTH TECHNICAL SESSION - GRASSROOT GOVERNANCE – PROMOTING EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Session Co-ordinator: CS Suresh Pandey, Council Member, The ICSI.

Panelists: Dr. Sanjeeb Patjoshi, IPS, DGP & Ex-Joint Secretary to Government of India Ministry of Panchayati Raj; Prof. (Dr.) G B Reddy, Vice Chancellor, National University of Advanced Legal Studies (NUALS), Kochi; Dr. Chhavi Rajawat, Former Sarpanch, Village Soda

Tonk District, Rajasthan; Ms. Bhakti Sharma, Former Sarpanch, Barkhedi Abdullah Village Bhopal District, Madhya Pradesh.

CS Suresh Pandey in his introductory remarks briefed about the session theme, welcomed all the learned panelists and invited them for sharing their views and experiences with the delegates.

Ms. Bhakti Sharma shared valuable insights drawn from her extensive experience at the grassroots level. She elaborated on several challenges faced by Gram Panchayats such as lack of awareness about the scope of implementation, the prevalence of selfish motives, limited access to skill development institutions, especially for girls, lack of administration, inadequate finances etc. She also discussed the pivotal role that Company Secretaries can play in strengthening the Panchayati Raj framework and further highlighted that Company Secretaries need to understand the real issues faced at the grassroots level and extend their expertise to guide Panchayats in areas such as conducting effective meetings, ensuring inclusion of women in decision-making processes, promoting transparency through social audits and adherence to the Model Governance Code in Gram Panchayats.

Prof. (Dr.) G. B. Reddy shared an insightful view on Grassroot Governance in India, emphasizing that the principles of Corporate Governance should effectively reach the local self-governance system. He recalled Mahatma Gandhi's vision of Gram Swaraj and highlighted the relevance of ideals like self-reliance, Swadeshi, organic living and 100% literacy in today's rural development context. He also discussed the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments as landmark reforms that revolutionized local self-governments and strengthened democratic participation. He also mentioned the Ministry of Panchayati Raj's 2025 reports on Sarpanch Pradhan and Sarpanch Pati, reflecting efforts toward leadership strengthening and gender inclusivity. He further emphasized the role of Company Secretaries and urged them to promote capacity building, financial independence, inclusive governance and CSR-based village adoption.

Dr. Chhavi Rajawat, in her address, emphasized that India needs more professionals to participate actively in nation-building, especially in rural development. She urged professionals to come forward and collaborate for the holistic development of villages, stressing that governance in boardrooms and in villages share a common foundation i.e., trust. She also drew a powerful parallel between corporate governance and rural governance, explaining that villages are not different from organisations, just as corporate leaders work for compliance, transparency, and accountability, Panchayat leaders strive for participation, inclusion, and collective decision-making. She further noted that Panchayati Raj Institutions, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), and Social Enterprises represent India's grassroots governance framework and mirror the corporate sector—where shareholders

are replaced by villagers, elected representatives act as directors and the community itself serves as the auditor.

Dr Sanjeeb Patjoshi, in his address, emphasized the need to recognize farmers as skilled workers, underscoring that dignity and self-respect are essential for every individual. He further highlighted the importance of grassroot governance, stressing that efforts must be directed toward ensuring that rural citizens are aware of and benefit from various Government schemes. He also urged Company Secretaries to explore ways in which Pension and Health Insurance Schemes can be designed and implemented for rural populations to ensure their social and financial security.. He also spoke about the role of cooperatives, mentioning the challenge of elite capture and highlighting the significance of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), particularly their women-centric nature, along with the growing importance of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in empowering the rural economy.

Thereafter, the session was opened for panel discussion wherein speakers answered suitably to various queries raised which made the deliberations fruitful and interactive.

CS Suresh Pandey summed up the discussions and proposed the Vote of Thanks.

VOTE OF THANKS

CS Asish Mohan, Secretary, The ICSI proposed the Vote of Thanks at the Conclusion of the 53rd National Convention. He expressed his gratitude to the Chief Guest, Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala; Guest of Honour, Shri N. K. Premachandran, Hon'ble Member of Lok Sabha, and Special Guest, Shri M P Ahammad, Chairman, Malabar Group, for their kind presence and words of wisdom at the National Convention. He also thanked all the moderators and speakers for fruitful deliberations, powerful and thought-provoking insights during the technical and special sessions. He also appreciated and thanked President, The ICSI; Vice President, The ICSI, Programme Director, 53rd National Convention Programme Organising Committee and Council Members for their support and guidance in organizing the event. He also thanked Past Presidents; Chairman, SIRC; Chairperson, Kochi Chapter; Past and sitting Regional Council Members; Past and sitting members of the Chapter Managing Committees; esteemed members and team ICSI from Headquarters, SIRC, Kochi and other Chapters of Southern Region for the grand success of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries. He also conveyed his sincere thanks to the sponsors, advertisers, volunteers, media and hotel Grand Hyatt, Kochi for their support. At the end he thanked one and all for the resounding success of the 53rd National Convention of Company Secretaries.