



योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ॥ १.२ ॥

(Yoga Sutras of Patanjali)



Dear Professional Colleagues,

The month of June, while making us all sweat it out with its temperatures peaking to all-time high, raises the heat levels way more for the students taking the Examinations of the CS Executive and Professional Programme. To each one of you, my best wishes at the very outset.

Another significant event that elevates this month to a much higher pedestal, is the summer solstice, and which also coincides with the celebration of the teachings of Maharishi Patanjali – the International Day of Yoga.

Yoga – is not merely a summation of a few body movements or postures (Asanas) but a deep-rooted spiritual practice in the Indian philosophy. Stemming from the ancient Indian Scriptures, the discipline of yoga, is a journey towards healthy living, and ultimately self-realization. Decoding the verse above, Maharshi Patanjali has defined Yoga as Chitt vritti nirodh which means that if you can still the modifications and activity of the mind. His teachings in Yogasutra delve deeper towards physical, mental and spiritual purity.

It is for the practical and long-ranging positive impacts of these practices, even in the 21st century, that the United Nations adopted June 21 as the International Day of Yoga in 2014.

Ten years hence, as a nation, striving to become a global superpower, it is imperative that we take on the baton and be the front runners in teaching Gen-Z across the world – a sustainable way of life marked by imbibing of these practices in daily lives.

But as the old saying goes “preach, what you practice”. Each one of us, while dispensing off of our professional responsibilities must not forget the benefits of balancing our body and minds to give our utmost best in our assignments and activities. This International Day of Yoga – let us all pledge to lead a life worth imitating, let us all strive to calm the ripples of our mind and achieve our professional goals to the best of our capabilities. And what better way to achieve the same than to share the art and science of bringing harmony between body and mind in this fast-paced life.

For as Maharishi Patanjali puts it,

“Undisturbed calmness of mind is attained by cultivating friendliness toward the happy, compassion for the unhappy, delight in the virtuous, and indifference toward the wicked.”

PRACTISING COMPANY SECRETARY: PURSUING EXCELLENCE

“I aim for perfection and I’ll settle for excellence.”

The magnificence of the month doubles and trebles for the Institute and its members – especially the practicing ones.

More than three decades ago, the Company Secretaries in Practice were accorded their first legislative recognition under the Companies Act, 1956. The date of 15th June, 1988 marked the beginning of a never-ceasing journey of being recognized now and again under the wide array of legislations encasing the Indian corporates.

As we achieve new feats, spring open new doors of opportunity every now and then, make our presence

acknowledged in Regulatory corridors, the first recognition and the day of the same attains far greater significance for all times to come.

The Practising Company Secretaries over the past few years have donned the hats of Insolvency Professionals and Registered Valuers, apart from the regular activities of secretarial audit, certification and representation. Further so, arbitration and mediation, is an area we are gradually treading into...

The most recent recognition of ICSI-Institute of Social Auditors by SEBI as an SRO for regulating the profession of Social Auditors has given us another moment of grandeur to prove our mettle and live up to the faith placed by the Regulatory Authorities in this profession. It is for this thought that the theme for this month's edition has been chosen to be "PCS : Pursuing Excellence" – celebrating & honouring the 36 good years of doing the same.

As the Company Secretaries across the nation will celebrate the 36th PCS Day in full fervour, we are all set to welcome you at the 25th National Conference of Practising Company Secretaries in the land of good governance - the land of Lord Ram – Ayodhya. And while the registrations for physically attending the Conference are formally closed, I extend my warmest welcome to all of you to join us virtually as and when the registration window is opened and make this event a much grander success !

MSME AND START-UP CONNECT – STRENGTHENING GRASSROOTS

If yoga is our teaching to the world, at a micro level, touching one life at a time; at a macro level, for a Viksit Bharat of tomorrow, the roots of the economy must be strengthened today. The smaller enterprises have caught fancy of the government, not only because of the impactful presence in employment numbers and upliftment of social status, but for the strength accorded to the economic structure and of the country. Contributing nearly 33% to the GDP numbers, the ways and manners in which these enterprises add to the economics of the country by enhancing the export numbers and playing the roles of perfect value chain partners for multi-million-dollar companies, are quite exemplary.

Needless to say, both MSME and the start-ups are the foundations of a better skilled and better employee. India of tomorrow – a 'sashakt' Bharat requires that these statistics extend to 40%, in the times to follow.

In such a scenario, it is befitting that due care is taken to strengthen the governance framework of these entities to render them effective and sustainable. As an Institute pursuing its mission, "to develop high calibre professionals facilitating good Corporate Governance", with great

diligence, it was thought fit that an initiative was launched with dedicated focus towards building capacities of the professionals entrusted with the task of ensuring good governance – the Company Secretaries. The Institute of Company Secretaries of India, in an attempt to fortify the knowledge and skill base of its members regarding the finer nuances of MSME and Start-up processes, the incentive schemes rolled out from time to time, both by the Central Government and State Governments; is hosting a dedicated event under the ages of 'ICSI MSME and Start-Up Connect' jointly with the District Industries Centres (DICs).

Initially, the event is being conducted at 30 locations across the four regions of the country. Having been part of two such events at Ahmedabad and Bhopal and having deliberated upon the role of Company Secretaries in MSME, I feel enthralled on the vastness of opportunity held by these enterprises, howsoever, small in size.

It was a matter of great delight to be joined by Shri Mukesh Kumar, IAS, Principal Secretary, Higher & Technical Education, Department of Education, Government of Gujarat as Chief Guest at Ahmedabad in the presence of Shri M. Nagarajan, IAS, Collector, Mehsana, Shri. R. D. Barhatt, Joint Commissioner of Industries, Government of Gujarat and Shri Hiranmay Mahanta, CEO, i-Hub. The MSME & Startup Connect event in Bhopal was marked by the gracious presence of Shri Navneet Goel, Ex Principal Chief Commissioner of CGST and Central Excise, Kolkata Zone along with Mr. Pankaj Dubey, Joint Director, Department of MSME, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh and other Experts in MSMEs and Start-ups in Bhopal. The extensive deliberations in both these locations have given a fair idea of the success of this initiative and achievement of its intended purpose.

The Institute having signed its first MoU with the Department of MSMEs & Textiles in West Bengal intends to sign many more MoUs with various State MSME departments so as to build synergies with these departments and support MSMEs in their growth journey. My heartiest gratitude to all the DICs, Ministries and Departments of MSME, our Speakers and Experts for rendering success to our efforts and sharing their expectations, knowledge, and insights with our members.

ESG CONCLAVE : ATTAINING SUSTAINABILITY PROFESSIONALLY

If governance is a keynote player in building resilience and sustainability, a sustainability driven approach is what inspires corporates to pursue good compliance and good governance with diligence. And in that essence, it is inevitable for companies intending to stay around for long to not ignore the concerns of environment and the demands of society.

Where on one hand, the concept of ESG is being imbibed in the non-financial reporting frameworks, yet there stays a growing need for transparency and accountability. Modern day stakeholders are looking out for not quantified data in copious amounts, but a dedicated attempt on the part of companies to share the activities and their short-term and long-term impacts in deep detail.

Such empathetic reporting, keeping the truthfulness intact requisites professional erudite and understanding – not only of the applicable laws, reporting frameworks and reporting requirements but also of stakeholder expectations.

In view of the need to build the necessary capacities and capabilities of Governance Professionals – the ICSI had launched the ESG Conclave – a dedicated platform for raising deliberation on the dynamic business landscapes, altering shareholder expectations and regulatory scenarios with the focal point being ‘sustainability’.

I am glad to share that each deliberation at every panel discussion across nearly 10 locations in the presence of the Past Presidents, Sustainability & ESG experts and my fellow Council Colleagues has paved the way for exploring potential opportunities for professionals in this era of global transformation.

MEETINGS AND VISITATIONS – MEETING THE KNOWLEDGE HUNGRY, VISITING THE LAND OF TEMPLES

Usually, the meetings forming part of this section is an account purely of the various dignitaries with whom our Institute has the honour of having *tete-a-tetes*; but this time, it is a tad bit different.

If the Kolkata Convocation at the beginning of the month gave me a peep into the thought, ideologies and energies of the youth on the Eastern side, the SIRC convocation at Kochi was not different – the added highlight being the presence of Justice Mr. S. Siri Jagan, Former Judge, High Court of Kerala & Acting Vice Chancellor, The National University of Advanced Legal Studies, Kochi as the Chief Guest.

युवा स्यात् साधु युवाध्यायकः। आशिष्ठो दृढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः।

(Youth must be Excellent – Excellent Learner – Disciplined – Firm – Strong) - *Taittiriya Upanishad*

Both the convocations – EIRC & SIRC, have played the role of reiterating the fact that the youth of ICSI is aligned with this thought shared in our ancient scriptures and it is these ceremonies that have cemented the trust placed in the future torchbearers of governance and brand ambassadors of the Institute and the profession.

In an attempt to carry forward our vision “*to be a global leader in promoting good corporate governance*”, our global initiatives are always pursued with great passion and gusto. The success of the 17th International Professional Development & Fellowship Program (IPFDP), from 28 May 2024 to 4 June 2024, in Vietnam and Cambodia on the theme ‘Charting the course of Sustainable Development’ is a result of this very enthusiasm which is equally shared by our members. I am extremely thankful to Mr. Subhash Prasad Gupta, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India, Hanoi, Vietnam for presiding over the International Conference as Chief Guest. Each and every deliberation, whether being hosted over business breakfast tables or the ones hosted as Panel discussions has left a deep-rooted impact on our thoughts giving us plenty of food for contemplation.

DEFLATING CLIMATE CRISIS – ONE TREE AT A TIME

A look back into the days passed by and it is a realization that Sustainability has been a constant topic of deliberation – a theme for discussion. But as they say, “Actions speak louder than words”. If June is the month of witnessing the extremities of heat, it is also the time which requires maximum shade.

The fact that the World Environment Day is celebrated on 5th of June each year gives the moment to ideate ways in which the impact of climate change can be reduced. And what better way to contribute than to plant a tree and pursue its growth as a personal responsibility.

While these words might seem as a sagely preaching, but the altering dynamics of climate and environment globally have given us a fair idea of what the future holds in its garb for us and the upcoming generations unless actions are initiated to stem the rot by all of us working in concert.

As a professional responsible for making corporate actions sustainable, let us all imbibe the thought in our individual actions as well and leave the world a much better place. Giving the hashtag #Generation restoration, as the United Nation aptly puts it,

“We cannot turn back time, but we can grow forests, revive water sources, and bring back soils. We are the generation that can make peace with land.”

Happy reading !!!

Yours Sincerely



CS B. Narasimhan
President, ICSI