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**From the President's Desk**



Dear Colleagues,

Greetings! Let us first recall how with your support and active participation the 8th National Symposium (NSC) at Bombay became- like previous NSCs - a big success. We record our deep appreciation for the efforts of our Bombay colleagues. As decided by the General Body, the 9th NSC will be held at Delhi during February 2-4, 2007. I hope to see you there and in the mean time we send our best wishes to the colleagues at Delhi.

We had all felt for sometime that one year is too long a time to wait for our meetings and we decided at Bombay that between the NSCs at least one mid-year meeting should be organized. This has now taken concrete shape and the first such meeting is scheduled on July 13, 2006 at Chennai. We thank our colleagues there and look forward to be with them soon.

A CRSI-RSC joint workshop was held at Bombay preceding the 8th NSC with limited participation. Based on the feedback received CRSI and RSC have decided to have the first joint symposium on February 1, 2007 in Delhi. Another good news on the international front is that the first issue of 'Chemistry - An Asian Journal' is about to be out. As you know this journal, published by Wiley-VCH, has a few major Chemical Societies of Asia as partners of which CRSI is one.

Each year the first week of August is very special to us. The Local Chapters hold their meetings during this period celebrating chemistry through lectures and demonstrations held in university departments, colleges and schools. I earnestly urge all the Local Chapters to augment this activity for spreading the message of chemistry and CRSI. For this year's meetings it is good time to start planning now. I also urge you to act at the Local Chapter level to bring in many more new Life Memberships for CRSI.

Lastly I call upon you for ideas and suggestions. Please write. Thank you.

With best wishes

## Announcement: First mid-year meeting and the 9<sup>th</sup> CRSI National Symposium in Chemistry

A mid-year symposium of CRSI will be held at IIT Madras, Chennai on July 13, 2006. Members may contact G. Sundararajan (chemconf@iitm.ac.in) of the Department of Chemistry for further information (additional information is available at <http://chem.iitm.ac.in/CRSI/index.htm>).

The next Annual meeting of the CRSI and the ninth National Symposium will be held at the University of Delhi, during February 2-4, 2007. The first circular will soon be available. For further details please contact V.S. Parmar ([virparmar@yahoo.co.in](mailto:virparmar@yahoo.co.in)), Convener, Department of Chemistry, University of Delhi.

## Minutes of the General Body Meeting of CRSI held at Mumbai on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2006 at IIT Mumbai

A. Chakravorty, President of CRSI, chaired the meeting, with about 150 members attending the meeting. U. Maitra welcomed the members of the Society and this was followed by the confirmation of minutes of the last meeting held at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore on July 8, 2005. S. Chandrasekaran highlighted the various activities of the Society and requested the members to induct more chemical researchers into the Society. There is a considerable increase in the life membership. He thanked the organizers of the 7<sup>th</sup> CRSI NSC for donating Rs. 1.5 Lakhs towards the corpus fund of CRSI. He mentioned about the launching of the Chemistry – an Asian Journal, and the RSC-EPSRC-CRSI workshop. He informed about the Raman-Mizushima lecture by M. Tasumi.



The President presented the CRSI medals-2005 to the awardees. The CRSI gold medals for lifetime achievement in chemical sciences were presented to A.V. Rama Rao and S. Ranganathan. The CRSI silver medals were presented to K. Bhattacharyya and G. Vijay Nair. The CRSI bronze medals were presented to J.B. Baruah, S. Bhattacharya, A.K. Chakraborti, A. Chandra, A. Kamal, S. Muthusamy, A.K. Nandi, A.K. Tyagi, M.

Vairamani and S. Verma. Two Young Scientist awards were given to R.B. Sunoj and Anindya Dutta. The CRSI bronze medalists-2005 & 2004, C. Chakravorty & C. Pulla Rao, respectively, also received the medal from the President.

The President brought to the general body the various items discussed in the Council. It was decided to organize a one-day RSC-CRSI symposium on Feb 1, 2007, a day before the 9<sup>th</sup> CRSI symposium. The President announced that the Honorary Fellowship of CRSI for the year 2006-07 has been conferred on the following scientists from abroad - A. Vasella (ETH, Zurich) and M. Jensen (Max-Planck Institute, Stuttgart).

The President remarked that the CRSI has received a few invitations from the members for hosting the next CRSI meetings and the Council has accepted the invitation from Delhi University to host the 9<sup>th</sup> CRSI National Symposium during February 2-4, 2007 under the convenorship of V.S. Parmar of the Chemistry Department of Delhi University. He also mentioned that the 10<sup>th</sup> CRSI symposium would be held during February 1-3, 2008 in Bangalore. The members were informed that the title of the meeting henceforth would be "CRSI National Symposium". CRSI is still being managed through voluntary efforts. As the activity expands, a more permanent setup will be needed. The registration fee for life members was suggested to be Rs.500/-.

The President and the members thanked Department of Chemistry, IIT Bombay for the excellent arrangements and organization of the symposium.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

## Highlights of the 8<sup>th</sup> CRSI National Symposium in Chemistry

The 8th National Symposium in Chemistry was organized by Department of Chemistry, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, under the convenorship of A.Q. Contractor during Feb 2-4, 2006. The symposium was well attended by participants from Indian academia, institutes, universities, colleges as well as a significant representation from foreign scientists. The symposium was inaugurated by A. Misra, Director, IIT-Bombay, who extended a warm welcome to all delegates. Other than scientific session comprising primarily of medal lectures, NSC-8 boasted of several "named" award lectures viz. Fourth Prof. C.N.R. Rao Award Lecture, Prof. A. Chakravorty Award Lecture, Mizushima-Raman Lecture, IIT-Bombay Distinguished Lecture Series. A mini-symposium on nanoscience and nanotechnology was also held during NSC-8.

In the Presidential lecture A. Chakravorty dwelt on discovery, isolation and chemistry of Rhenium in



particular reference to atom economy reactions in his presidential address. The audience deeply appreciated lucid and scholarly presentation "On Rhenium", which encompassed historical aspects as well as possibility of performing interesting chemical reactions. M.L. Klein delivered the fourth C.N.R. Rao lecture. He touched upon topics ranging from simulation of super acids, computational studies of bifunctional enzymes to the reliability of force fields. H.W. Roesky discussed about the excitement in Aluminum chemistry and its ability to act simultaneously as a Lewis acid and a base. Interesting structures for Al(I) insertion into acetylene and other reagents was presented. C. Chakravorty in her bronze medal address talked about anomalous properties of network-forming and tetrahedral liquids. A. Chandra elaborated upon hydrogen bond dynamics as a cooperative effect. C.P. Rao demonstrated selective metal ion binding to carbohydrate-calixarene hybrid

molecules through fluorescence titrations. S. Bhattacharya informed the audience about ruthenium complexes of thiosemicarbazone ligands with an emphasis on the role of steric constraints on chelate ring formation. S. Verma proposed that certain conserved sequences in aggregating proteins may act as initiators of the agglomeration process taking the



example of prion protein. A.K. Chakravorty outlined new chemoselective methods for the synthesis of new compounds with anti-leishmanial activity. C.N.R. Rao delivered a public lecture for the benefit of school and college students titled as "A Celebration of Chemistry". He highlighted the birth of modern chemistry followed by exciting themes in chemical research such as high  $T_c$  superconductivity and nanoscience. He exhorted young minds to appreciate the virtues of chemistry and to get actively involved with this discipline.

The second day was kick-started by M. Tasumi who delivered the Mizushima-Raman lecture on present and future of Raman spectroscopy. He drew contrasting pictures of scientific careers of Mizushima and Raman leading to landmark discoveries. A historical account of the Raman effect and its growth during 20<sup>th</sup> century was highlighted. A.K. Nandi showed DNA templated conformational changes in poly(o-methoxyaniline) by the help of many analytical techniques. J. Barua dwelt upon supramolecular chemistry of phthalimide derivatives. M. Vairamani discussed about diastereomer formation in the gas phase via soft desorption techniques and determination of proton affinities by mass spectroscopy. These medal talks were followed by IIT-Bombay distinguished lecture series where H.F. Schaeffer III talked about computational studies of DNA lesions and the effect of microsolvation on electron affinity. K. Yoshihara provided a dramatic evidence of

UV-induced mist/ice formation from ambient air. It was suggested that this approach might have possible application in generating artificial rain. The afternoon session saw S. Muthusamy discussing application of rhodium carbenoids for the synthesis of terpenoids and alkaloids. A.K. Tyagi dwelt upon anomalous thermal expansion in framework solids, while A. Kamal talked about novel pyridobenzodiazepine skeleton and its biological activities. The evening session was witness to nostalgic journeys from the past to the present in two life-time achievement gold-medal addresses by A.V. Rama Rao who described his 40 year long journey of organic chemical research at NCL and IICT. S. Ranganathan touched upon various research areas his group worked for over three decades by taking an example from all the areas, followed by elaboration of the problem.

The third and final day began with a mini-symposium on nanoscience and nanotechnology. K. Wieghardt illustrated that formal oxidation number of a metal ion and the spectroscopic oxidation number may not be always the same. H. Alper discussed application of rhodium zwitterions in hydroformylation reactions and dendrimer based nanoparticles as robust and recyclable catalysts. Silver medal lectures by K. Bhattacharya dealt with ultrafast dynamics of biological systems taking the examples of glutaminyl t-RNA synthetase and cytochrome C organization. V. Nair elaborated on the utility of zwitterions in C-C and C-heteroatom bond formation in context of multicomponent reactions.



K. Vijaymohan reported the room temperature synthesis of Ag nanoparticles exploiting interfacial

chemistry routes. The electronic properties of the newly synthesized particles were compared with Au and Rh nanoclusters of similar size. V.R. Rao presented progress made by a multidisciplinary team at IIT-Bombay towards the development of bio-sensors for cardiac applications.

During this symposium, three school/college chemistry teachers from Mumbai were given CRSI 'Best Teacher' Awards. In addition to medal and award lecture, significant attractions of NSC-8 were two high quality poster sessions which had over 200 posters. Six prizes were given away for selected posters including the first Prof. B.G. Maiya poster prize in the area of bioinorganic chemistry.

### News Items

CRSI past president G. Mehta has made a donation to CRSI. Two poster awards will be instituted from 2007 from the interest accrued from this contribution.

### CRSI Honorary Fellows, 2006-07

M. Jansen from Germany and A. Vasella from Switzerland are the new Honorary Fellows of CRSI.

### Local Chapter Meetings, 2005

Several meetings were organized by the local chapters during the Chemistry week (first week of August, 2005). During the same time in 2006 again a number of local chapter meetings have been planned.

### New Membership

For membership applications please write to: S. Chandrasekaran, Department of Organic Chemistry, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore 560 012, Tel: 080-2293-2404; Fax: 080-2360-0529; Email: [crsi@crsi.org.in](mailto:crsi@crsi.org.in). The membership application can also be downloaded (pdf format) from the website. Annual Membership fee Rs. 200, Life membership fee: Rs. 2000.

The Chemical Research Society of India has been granted with effect from 26/01/99 the status of *Wholly Charitable Trust* (certified under section 12A(a) of the Income Tax Act of 1961).