

Minutes of the General Body Meeting of the Society for Polymer Science, India (SPSI) held on December 19, 2018 (1800 hrs) at CV. Raman Auditorium, Lecture Hall Complex, Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune.

Prof. S. Ramakrishnan, President of the Society for Polymer Science, India, called the meeting to order at 18:00 hrs.

A two minutes silence was observed in reverence to Prof. Mushi Santappa, one of the doyens of Indian Polymer Science, who passed away on February 26, 2017. Professor Santappa was one of the founders of a professional society for polymer scientists which he nurtured at Chennai prior to the unification of multiple societies to form the Society of Polymer Science-India (SPSI).

The Office Bearers present on the dais were:

1. Prof. S. Ramakrishnan, President
2. Prof. Anil Kumar, Secretary
3. Dr. C.V. Avadhani, Treasurer
4. Dr. S. Sivaram, Past President
5. Prof. M. Jayakannan, Convenor, SPSI-Macro2018
6. Dr. Prakash P. Wadgaonkar, Co-Convenor, SPSI-Macro2018

Prof. Ramakrishnan, President, SPSI, chaired the meeting and welcomed the members. He offered his congratulations to the SPSI Pune Chapter for their outstanding success in hosting SPSI-Macro2018. The collaborative efforts between IISER, NCL and Pune University, spearheaded by the conference chair, Professor Jayakannan, was applauded. He appreciated the outstanding arrangements, excellent scientific program and professional facilities provided to the delegates during the 4-day long conference. To ensure the long-term growth and sustenance of the Society, he said it that it was essential to enrol more Life Members; this requires a special drive and effort. He observed that over the years, SPSI Macro Symposia has seen increasing participation from the Industry which was heartening. He said the time was right to initiate enrolment of Corporate Membership to the Society, so that industry could also get actively engaged with the activities of the Society.

Through the initiative of the members, two Award Lectures, namely Sivaram Endowment Lecture and Palit Memorial Lecture were recently set up and the first of this series of lectures were delivered in the previous SPSI-MACRO meeting in Thiruvananthapuram. During this meeting, two renowned Scientists delivered these lectures: Professor Nikos Hadjichristidis, Professor, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia, delivered the Sivaram Endowment Lecture and Professor Chi Wu, Professor, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, delivered the Palit Memorial Lecture. The President appreciated the efforts of the organizing committee for their selection of outstanding researchers to deliver these named lectures and hoped that the Society will continue to bring the best researchers from across the world, in future conferences too.

Two other important awards presented by SPSI are the Professor M. Santappa Award and Professor Kaushal Kishore award; the Santappa Award this year was given to Prof. Tarun Kumar Mandal, Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Kolkata, while two younger colleagues, Professor Priyadarsi De from Indian Institute for Science Education and Research (IISER), Kolkata, and Dr E Bhoje Gowd from the National Institute of Interdisciplinary Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram, were selected for the Kaushal Kishore Award. The President congratulated all the awardees on behalf of the Society.

The General Body discussed and debated the following points and some key decisions were taken:

1. Minutes of the General Body meeting held during the GBM of the Society for Polymer Science, India, held on January 09, 2017 at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, were confirmed.
2. Prof. Anil Kumar, Secretary, presented the various activities of the Society and requested more active participation of the various Chapters at the national and local level. He requested the Chapters to become more active, enrol more members and provide a report of their activities to the HQ so that these can be put up on the SPSI webpage.
3. Dr. C.V. Avadhani, Treasurer, presented a brief report of the audited accounts of the Society. He requested all the Chapters to send in their Annual Statement of Accounts to the HQ before March 31, each year. This is essential in order to have the accounts audited and any tax liabilities reconciled.
4. He reported that:
 - i) the Society has been filing Income Tax Returns for the last 3 years; thanks to the cooperation from all the Chapters.
 - ii) the Society has been granted 12 A status, i.e., it is now registered with the Income Tax Department
 - iii) the Society is awaiting the final decision on the 80G (Tax Exemptions) status from the Income Tax Department.

- iv) the Society has been granted the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act (FCRA) by the Government of India. The society can now attract contributions in foreign currency. He, however, stated that good governance as well as stricter tax compliance will be required.
5. The unique conference 'logo' designed by the Pune team for SPSI-MACRO2018 was much appreciated; hence, it was felt that we could retain this as the logo for all future SPSI MACRO conferences, except that the year of the conference would be changed.
 6. To ease and unify the process of becoming an SPSI member, a web-based online Life Membership Form would be soon developed. Prospective members could fill up the details on-line and enrol themselves as members following the payment of the membership fees; the process of payment could also be made on-line. This would make the process easy, paperless and a permanent record would be automatically generated. Details of this new process would be soon worked out and notified to all members and highlighted on the SPSI webpage.
 7. The lifetime Membership fee was fixed decades ago and it was felt that this needed to be revised. The proposal to raise the Life Membership fee from the present Rs. 2100 to Rs. 5000 was unanimously accepted. Although, it was felt that the membership fee could be raised starting January 01, 2019, it was felt the current fee could be held for a short duration (say till March 31, 2019) as a part of the membership drive.
 8. Corporate Membership for Industry: This issue was discussed at length. In principle, it was felt that three levels of Corporate Membership could be introduced with a subscription of Rs. 5 lakhs, Rs. 3 lakhs and Rs. 2 lakhs. It was felt that the benefits to corporate members need to be discussed and enunciated clearly prior to arriving at a final decision; for this, the President will set up a core committee, which will come up with recommendations in this regard.
 9. The proposal from Professor Vimal Katiyar to hold the next SPSI-Macro in IIT, Guwahati in December 2020 was approved; the exact date will be soon finalized and notified. The meeting will be bringing together multiple institutions in the Northeast, such as Tezpur University, Dibrugarh University, Guwahati University, NEIST, Central University, Shillong, etc., to plan and organize the conference. Professor Katiyar will stay in touch with the HQ during the early stages of the planning and finalization.
 10. Prof. M. Sarojadevi, Anna University, expressed a desire to host SPSI- Macro2022. The GB recorded this request. Members from Kolkata and Hyderabad also expressed interest in hosting future meetings. A final decision regarding the venue of 2022 meeting will be taken in the next GBM to be held in Guwahati in 2020.
 11. Life Membership / Corporate Membership subscription would be held in trust by the SPSI HQ and a fixed deposit would be opened in the Bank. All Chapters should transfer the money collected on account of Life Memberships to the HQ.
 12. An Excel file of all life members, Chapter-wise will be uploaded on the web site
 13. All local Chapters at the end of the financial year should provide the statement of account (along with copy of the updated passbook indicating the transactions) to the HQ for final auditing.
 14. A list of the current Executive Committee Members of the SPSI is attached herewith. These members will continue to hold office till the SPSI Macro 2020 meeting scheduled to be held at Guwahati. Action will be taken by the President to hold the election of new office bearers by October 2020, so that the new Executive Committee can assume office in December 2020.

The meeting ended with a Vote of thanks by the Chair.