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Dear Friends,

The past several months have been testing times for all of us and we may expect that during the several months ahead we will continue to face varying levels of restrictions that would push the return to full normalcy even further. In the light of this situation, as you are aware, the biennial meeting of SPSI, which was to be held in IIT Guwahati in December 2020, has been postponed. The conference will be held in IIT, Guwahati, as planned, but the exact date will be finalized sometime early next year.

In the meantime, it was decided that online options could be explored. Professor Anil Kumar took the initiative to organize a series of weekly webinars, starting sometime in April; several excellent talks were delivered online by polymer scientists from across the world and India; these were well received and attended. I had an opportunity to attend most of them and enjoyed them very much. In particular, I was delighted to get to know the fine work going on in various laboratories across India.

The month of July saw two special half-a-day symposia during Saturday mornings that celebrated the achievements of women polymer scientists in our country; speakers from both academia and industry participated in these. An excellent selection of speakers both senior and younger speakers, including some students, delivered fine talks and made our Saturday mornings exciting. In addition to these special symposia, the entire month of July saw women speakers deliver talks on Tuesday afternoons, as earlier. The last of the talk will be coming Tuesday (July 30, 2020); with this last talk, the webinar series will see a break for now.



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At this stage, I would like to congratulate and thank Professor Anil Kumar for having championed this webinar series and also the special mini-symposia; a fine initiative, and a well-received one. I would also like to request the chapter presidents of the various chapters to consider organizing such online events that would keep the activity of the society alive in these challenging times; the format is something that they could decide. Special topic mini-symposium of one or half-a-day is one possibility.

The executive committee also decided that the two awards, namely M Santappa Award and Kishore Memorial Award, would be selected before the year-end. Soon an announcement seeking nominations would be made; I would like to urge you to nominate deserving researchers for each of these awards. We will also have another award to recognize outstanding applied research; an announcement of this will also soon follow.

In closing, let me wish you all safe and healthy months ahead.

With warm regards,

S. Ramakrishnan

President, SPSI

July 24, 2020.