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## Introducing: The Photonics Society of India

Did you know that some of the best work done in photonics in Asia is carried out in India? Are you aware that one of the best institutes in the country is located down south – in Cochin – known as the International School of Photonics at Cochin University of Science and Technology.

It is in this very institute that the Photonics Society of India (PSI) was founded in 2000, which also administers the society. The PSI is a professional organization of people, institutions and companies working with photonics in India.

The PSI has some very distinguished gentlemen at the helm. Professor P. Radhakrishnan, International School of Photonics, is its president. He is assisted by Dr. Reji Philip, vice president, and associate professor, Optics Group, Raman Research Institute, Bangalore. Professor V. P. N. Nampoori, International School of Photonics, is general secretary.

The PSI's main objective is to create a network of researchers, scientists, educators and industrialists who take part in photonics-related programs in India. The society's annual general body meeting is held every year on Feb. 28.

It was indeed a pleasure meeting up with Dr. Reji Philip at Bangalore's prestigious Raman Research Institute, located in Sadashivanagar. For those who are not so well aware of the Raman Research Institute, it was founded in 1948 by the late Nobel laureate Sir C.V. Raman with funds from private sources. The main activity of the institute was basic research in selected areas of physics, which were of particular interest to professor Raman. Currently, the main areas of research are astronomy and astrophysics, liquid crystals, theoretical physics and optics.

Dr. Philip noted: "The PSI was started with the intention of spreading photonics in India through seminars, conferences and research work. The society currently has approximately 150 members. The PSI has an annual photonics event/meeting at the International School of Photonics."

He added that the International School of Photonics itself was started in 1994. It was split off from the physics department of Cochin University of Science and Technology.

Dr. Regi's team is involved in multiple projects, some of which I hope to be able to share with you once I receive the green light from him. I was also privileged to participate in a guided tour of some of the awesome labs at the Raman Research Institute and to meet some of the researchers doing their projects.

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Time permitting, I also hope to travel to Cochin sometime later and to bring a firsthand report of the International School of Photonics.

Pradeep

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