

My Dear Colleagues,

All of us are dealing with a significant global challenge, the Coronavirus (Covid-19), which the World Health Organisation has declared as a global pandemic and UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres has described as the most challenging crisis since World War II. He said that we are confronting a pandemic that will bring a recession "that probably has no parallel in the recent past." According to me, Covid-19 is a test, a very tough test. It will not only test the strength of our governance, endurance of our society and the capacity of our economy but also individual will and perseverance. Questions of wrong and right are expected to bother us too. What is right and what is wrong? What can I expect from the organisation and what can the organisation expect from me? What can individuals expect from society and what can society expect from them? Should others make sacrifices for me and vice versa? Is it right to set an economic limit to fight this war? Understandably, there is a great sense of unease everywhere.

Such unprecedented situations call for tough decisions and the nation under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has embraced many measures, one of which is the current 21 days lockdown. This lockdown is for the greater good and well-being of the country and its citizens. There is a coordinated effort across all sections of the society to control and contain this pandemic. We, at Balmer Lawrie too, are taking all steps to combat this challenge which you have been intimated through various circulars issued by the HR Department. Safety of all and business continuity are our topmost priorities at this juncture. I would like to thank all of you for being patient, practicing social distancing and working from home to weather this crisis and helping our Company cope with this situation. Your commitment makes a big difference. I would like to particularly mention our frontline employees in offices / plants / CFSs / TCWs / ICPs, who under difficult circumstances, are working on emergency services during this lockdown period. I thank them for their commitment, which is highly critical at this moment to maintain business continuity. Their efforts in providing food, protective gears and ensuring health and hygiene at the workplace is highly appreciative. It is our priority to support them in this important endeavour.

I would also like to reassure you that as a Company we are resilient. Over the course of 153 years, we have witnessed and mastered many challenging moments and I am confident that we will overcome this one too. This is a time to put that extra effort and go that extra mile. I know it is not easy as all of us are also managing challenging personal and family situations. However, we have to contribute our bit to sail through this crisis successfully. Our Company has contributed Rs 1,28,25,899.00 (Rupees One crore, twenty-eight lakh, twenty-five thousand and eight hundred and ninety-nine) to the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. Balmer Lawrie allocated Rs 1 crore from its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Fund and the rest of the amount was voluntary contribution of one day's salary by the employees of the Company. I thank each one of you for this noble gesture.

We have to be prepared for difficult times ahead as disruption in regular economic activity is obvious. The economy is expected to be passing through extremely challenging times and we need to work even harder towards its reconstruction. As the lockdown gets withdrawn gradually in due course, we all have to gear up for restoration of our businesses and economic activity. Our businesses have been adversely impacted due to Covid-19. Hence, it's time we proactively identify the imminent challenges and work towards mitigation of those on a war footing basis. Delay in addressing our problems at the right time with the right set of interventions may worsen the situation and any kind of action at a later date may be ineffective. I believe that incremental efforts from all business entities, banks and commercial establishments along with policy interventions would have a multiplier effect on the economy and help in its restoration. I reiterate we must be proactive in our actions to contribute

effectively in this restoration work and thereby ensure sustenance and growth of our businesses and the organisation.

I call upon each one of you at Balmer Lawrie to proactively come forward, leave aside all differences, work together in unison, walk that extra mile and help each other to tide over this challenging period. Let's be flexible, accommodative and reduce avoidable expenses through use of technology, efficient work practices, proper planning and elimination of wasteful activities. As every employee strives to restore and grow the businesses, let's acknowledge the fact that any inaction or indifferent and negative attitude at our end may dampen the spirit of this coordinated effort. We as responsible employees should refrain from such acts, which may be detrimental for the organisation and eventually for all of us.

We have stepped into the new Financial Year 2020-21 and we all must make all out efforts to ensure that we have a great year for all the SBUs. I wish for good health and well-being of all Balmer Lawriens, their families and loved ones. Let us all together fight this challenge with unified effort and may we emerge successful! Stay safe and ensure safety and well-being of others!

Regards,

Prabal Basu  
Chairman & Managing Director