

Item No. 43.6 Address by the President, IIPA

Shri Krishan Kant, President, IIPA, thanked IIPA members for his election as President of IIPA which, according to him, is a position of distinguished lineage of men of exceptional stature like

Pandit Nehru, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda and many others. In his address, Shri Krishan Kant complimented IIPA for its efforts over the years to achieve the goals set for it by Pandit Nehru for raising standard of administration through focussed organised thinking and conducting studies on issues pertaining to efficacy, pace of administrative procedures and systemic ability to solve difficult and urgent problems warranting quick decisions.

Shri Krishan Kant then referred to Pandit Nehru's concern for effective government. Making a mention of the contradiction between World Bank's drive for "less government" and the thrust of ILO and WHO for greater interventionist role of government, he stressed that "the true test of government is its sensitivity to the people's needs and moods, its accountability and its ability to deliver services efficiently, promptly and economically, and its effectiveness in terms of achieving these objectives".

Conceding that evolving tests of government effectiveness is a promising area of research and investigation, Shri Krishan Kant emphasised that besides internal decision-making processes, "the nature and contours of the society itself are equally important" in this regard. He illustrated his point with findings of Robert Putnum's study on Government in Italy, which, despite being united by common history, religion, culture, language and administrative system, presents a total contrast between its north – where administration is very efficient and sensitive to people's needs, and its south—where administration is corrupt, slothful and insensitive to people's needs, owing to the presence of a large social capital in the north and its relative deficiency in the south. Shri Krishan Kant observed that Putnum's study shows that traversing a unidimensional approach of administrative reforms may not necessarily bring corresponding rewards.

Shri Krishan Kant observed that to become effective, the society must do two things : (i) guide itself away from traditional groupings of caste, *jati*, tribes, etc., and (ii) encourage development of network of societal institutions "involving as large a proportion of citizenry as possible to facilitate interaction amongst citizens to create conditions for the state to become more accountable, sensitive and efficient – in one word effective".

Referring to current scenario of Indian politics, he observed that due to capitalising on "traditional and archaic divisions in the

society, even imparting it a certain respectability, Indian administration tends to become insensitive to its responsibilities to the society" and "in that sense works in tandem with today's politics". Thereby it has caused "a widespread feeling that politics and administration today come in way of the achievement of critical and desirable goals, like universal primary education and availability of clean drinking water". He further observed that growing corruption is "the single biggest source of policy failures which, in turn, results in the system losing credibility and alienating itself from the civil society".

Referring to other failures and problems facing the country, Shri Krishan Kant observed that the reason is not shortage of resources but of will as we do not need foreign money or technology to universalise primary education or provide drinking water to all. "Viable smaller self-governing communities, the bone and marrow of any civil society, can help achieve these goals." He, therefore, emphasised the need to activate and empower local bodies and smaller self-growing communities to generate the national will.

Mentioning about social capital development in the country, Shri Krishan Kant underlined the need to encourage movements like cooperatives, neighbourhood societies, thrift and saving groups, urban and rural banking and women's groups, and enhancing governmental effectiveness as its direct reward. He observed that for creation of such social capital, the administration in India can and should play a crucial role by becoming a facilitator.

Finally quoting Pandit Nehru, Shri Krishan Kant stated that in the highly complex society of today, the integrating aspect of administrator's role has become very important and he must, therefore, keep himself fully informed not only of the developments in the social community he serves but also of those in the world.

The President of the Institute departed after his address and Shri S.B. Chavan, Chairman, IIPA took the Chair for some time. Since he too had other commitments, Prof. M.V. Mathur, Vice-President, IIPA, presided over the meeting thereafter.