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I am very happy to be with you in this Annual Meeting of the General Body of the Indian Institute of Public Administration. As the President of this Institute for the last two years, I have noted the multifarious directions in which the activities of this Institute continue to grow. Fifteen years back, this organisation was set up to provide a forum for exchange of ideas on various problems of public administration and to initiate meaningful discussion and purposive research. We find that these aspirations have been fulfilled to a large extent, if not completely. The IIPA has received recognition as a premier institution engaged in the pursuits of public administration not only at the national, but also at the international level. Our representatives has been intimately associated with the working of the Administrative Reforms Commission and with several international bodies. While this should be a matter of satisfaction to us, we cannot possibly rest on our oars. We have to continue to nurture these growth processes with sustained endeavour, so that in times to come, this institution becomes a

more forceful nucleus of research and study in the field of public administration.

While an institute of this type necessarily employs many methodologies, it is beyond doubt that its primacy will be retained or relinquished on the basis of its research output. Our country is passing through a dynamic period in which the values, norms, beliefs and ideals of society are undergoing rapid transformation. Public administration cannot remain immune from these powerful impulses and its concepts and techniques must develop the requisite mobility and thrust. New thinking and innovations are evident in practically all branches of administration. Such a situation demands that a body like this Institute maintains a high pitch of research activity and keeps itself abreast of the contemporary situation assuming the role of a change agent. I have noted with satisfaction that the Institute gave considerable research support to the Punjab Administrative Reforms and thereafter, to the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) which has been set up at the national level. The ARC has been generally appreciative of the work which we have done for them. Similarly, the completion of the research project on the study of "Evolution of the Constitution of India" and the publication of the five volumes which were released by the President of India, have been a landmark. Yet there are many more directions in which the Institute should seize the research initiative.

All of you are aware that recently we took a major step on the path of democratic socialism through the nationalisation of 14 scheduled banks. This step has been hailed throughout the country and the popular response and fervour among the masses is a living testimony of the hopes which it has aroused. Considerable follow-up work in organising a new structure in banking and in working out the precise details of their operations has yet to be done. I hope this Institute will take note of these developments and engage in research and analysis in this important sector.

Current year is the Gandhi Centenary Year. All over the world, celebrations have been held to recollect the teachings and precepts of this frail little man who, by his sheer moral force, unleashed tremendous forces of change and reconstruction. It is true that

considerable attention has been given in the past to certain aspects of Gandhian philosophy like its economic strategy, theory of social cohesion, approach to international accord and techniques of peaceful and non-violent struggle. His theory of 'conversion of heart'⁹ has also been the object of lively debate. One could not, perhaps, speak with the same assurance so far as Gandhian thought on political organisation and public administration is concerned. Not much has been done to rummage through his collected works and explore what structure of public administration he visualised and what image the public functionaries were expected to project in his political order. This is another direction of research in which the Institute could, in the current Gandhi Centenary Year, make a significant contribution and break fresh ground.

A full-fledged centre on Municipal Administration has come up in the Institute for training and research on the problems of urban local government. With growing urbanisation all round, this undoubtedly is an important field of study. However, there is an equally important field in which substantial administrative innovations have taken place and continuous experimentation is afoot. This relates to the concept of democratic decentralisation in rural local government, which is popularly known as Panchayati Raj. As we scan the country, we find that different patterns of Panchayati Raj have emerged in various States. While this variety of approach is welcome in a vast country like ours with healthy regional diversities, there is room for academic effort to explore the reasons for these variations and to ascertain the broad areas of agreement. Continuous research in the working of Panchayati Raj is essential and I hope that in times to come, we may have an equally well-developed centre on Rural Local Government. Over 70 per cent of our people live in villages and the real test of new techniques in the field of public administration will be the extent to which these large masses can be energised towards constructive endeavour. Sustained thinking is necessary in this direction.

Another area which deserves more attention is that of public sector undertakings. In years to come, the public sector is bound to expand in our country. We will have to make continuous efforts to improve the efficiency of these undertakings and they will have

to be proved as financially sound investments. They will also have to contribute to the plan effort of the country in a big way. This will imply critical appraisal of their management and production policies and programmes. There is considerable scope for taking up case studies in this important field. Research in this area can be of value not only for the new units in the public sector but also for those in private sector.

After research, the most important activity in which an institution of this type can engage is training. I have noted that gradually the emphasis in this Institute has shifted from teaching to training. This is a development in the right direction; while the various universities in the country can effectively take up the teaching of public administration, a specialised activity like training has to be undertaken at a place where considerable professional expertise is available. There was a time when it was believed that initial post-entry training was sufficient and all further learning had to take place on the job itself. With the multiplication of the administrative functions and the attendant specialisation, it is being increasingly realised that mid-career training in certain specialised fields is essential even for senior administrators. I am glad that the Institute is doing a pioneering work in organising short-term Executive Development Programmes in collaboration with the Training Division of the Ministry of Home Affairs. These courses on diverse subjects, like Budgeting and Financial Control, Techniques of Plan Formulation, Economic Decision-making, Social Welfare Administration, Performance Budgeting and Development Administration, I am sure, will go a long way to meet the urgent requirement of mid-career training. One important aspect in training is the education of trainers. Unless the personnel entrusted with training inculcate right attitudes and possess the requisite expertise, training can often become not only a wasteful enterprise but even a harmful one. In a parliamentary democracy, it is important that the public functionaries manifest right attitudes towards the citizens and the training institutions and their staff have a major role to play in this orientation. It is, therefore, welcome that early next year, the Institute is proposing to organise a course on the Training of Trainers.

Linked with training techniques is the problem of producing sufficient training material. I have noted that the IIPA Case Studies Programme, which had a modest beginning, has now matured and more than 60 case studies have been prepared on various subjects. The need to develop an indigenous case study programme is great because foreign case studies, though valuable academically, are not completely applicable to our conditions. This is another activity in the Institute which should continue to grow.

While training programmes are valuable for administrators up to a certain level, there are many people at the senior levels in government, universities, public enterprises and private industry, who because of their onerous preoccupations, cannot remain away from their jobs for a long time. Seminars and conferences are the only method to cater to this type of clientele. I am glad that recently the Institute organised two important conferences of this type. The Conference on Training held in February, which I had the pleasure to inaugurate, brought together on one forum the various training experts in the country—from the Ministries, State Governments, training institutions and other professional bodies. As it was the first conference of this type, its proceedings, which the Institute has published, will be useful for all practitioners of training. The other Conference on Personnel Administration held in August/September last and inaugurated by Asoka Mehta was another important gathering of experts who had assembled to discuss the implications of the ARC Report on Personnel Administration. I am quite sure that the proceedings of this Conference, which are yet to be published, will provide food for thought to all those who are grappling with this important and delicate subject.

I may also emphasise the importance of publications in the activities of a body like this Institute. While seminars, conferences and even research projects are of direct use to the actual participants, it is only the publication of the findings that reach a much bigger circle. I am glad that over a period of time, the Institute's Quarterly Journal has acquired a distinguished reputation and its special numbers have been particularly useful. I hope that notwithstanding the financial considerations, we shall be able to accelerate our publication effort and continuously feed the

universities, the government and other similar institutions with fresh material.

An Institute of Public Administration should be, as Paul Appleby said, a model of internal administration. We have not been oblivious of this problem and the Evaluation Committee under late Barve and the Implementation Committee under Lokanathan did useful work in suggesting improvements in the internal working of this Institute. I am glad that the Executive Council has recently constituted a Working Group to make recommendations on how the administration of the Institute can be streamlined. We expect that this group will give a comprehensive report covering all aspects of the internal administration of this Institute.

We obviously cannot sit back on our laurels, but have to continuously strive for greater efficiency, competence and effectiveness. It is fortune of our generation to be working in a period of swift transition where stagnant and stationary values were being discarded in favour of dynamic and resurgent ideals. We are passing through a revolution of rising expectations and every social unit has to work at optimum efficiency. There is no scope for slackening of effort. As in other spheres of human activity, so in public administration, we have to keep our concepts and techniques up-to-date and we can ill-afford to become out-dated or out-moded. In a highly competitive world of today to remain stationary would almost to slipping backwards.