

CONVOCATION ADDRESS

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I am very happy to be with you today to address the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. I have always admired the pioneering work the Institute has been doing in the field of social work. This work is indeed of historical importance. No wonder that the Institute has received international recognition and therefore the students can well be proud of this Institution.

Social activity is not new to India, nor is the community organisation a new discovery or a recent invention. It has a glorious tradition of social reformers and social welfare activity. In the past the villages were simple. Consequently, the social welfare needs were fewer, simpler and easier to meet. With the advent of industrialisation in India, and the impact of other socio-economic factors on the villages, social problems became more complex. Continuous technical changes, new forms of communications, increased educational, vocational and social mobility, and changing codes of conduct are all giving rise to conflicting and confusing problems that require new methods of approach.

It is realised that these complex problems should be solved on a comprehensive and scientific basis, and the development of the social sciences has made it possible to study, analyse and solve these problems on scientific lines.

India is on the right side of the road of progress in the field of economic development. In fact, India is one of the few countries where the policies of social welfare and economic development are closely

identified. A satisfying life for all, better standards of living, and security against all hazards of life form the vital part of our social welfare philosophy. The identity of these social objectives with economic policies has created new horizons both for social work and economic development.

In a developing country like India, the social scientists and social workers have to put an emphasis on the development of human resources to accelerate the pace of economic progress, thereby bringing co-relation between the material resources and human resources. They will also have to bring about a change for the better in the social attitudes to convert the sense of need into a keen desire for self-improvement. Social worker's concern for people is of utmost importance. The social worker can bring special skill in motivating people to use their capacities in working towards goals which they themselves have identified. Social scientists and workers can develop a technique of translating various needs and problems of individual into practical solutions by means of specific skills, enabling the individual to utilise both his own and community resources to the maximum advantage.

It is an ambitious programme of economic development to which we have set ourselves. We have experienced that the economic development, especially industrialisation, creates complex and baffling social problems in its wake. Social scientists will have to find answers for these complex problems, so that social measures could be taken to avoid

them. All this will have to be done in the concrete framework of democracy, based on social justice. In this process, we cannot afford to neglect the welfare of the weaker section of the society or an under-developed part of the country without jeopardising the principle of social equality. Special attention will also have to be provided to the welfare of rural community and labour community, women and children, physically handicapped and mentally retarded, the under-privileged and juvenile delinquents, destitute beggars and fallen women, to help them secure gainful employment and opportunity for self-improvement. All these social services need trained and dedicated social workers in large numbers. Training in social work, therefore is an important part of the implementation

of a broad-based social welfare programme. I am sure this Institute will provide more and more social workers in the service of nation.

I congratulate you on having successfully completed the thorough training in this famous Institute. You have attained knowledge of social sciences and experience of field work. You are now well equipped with the necessary knowledge and skill for your future career. I do not want to make any formal suggestions but I wish you to do your work with a sense of devotion, and missionary zeal. Perhaps you may meet obstacles in your way or meet with disappointments at times, but keep your spirit high. I am sure your unflinching devotion and hard work will bring you success. I wish you all good luck.