WELCOME ADDRESS

BY

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Hon'ble Minister, Dr. Sukhatme, Dr. Kishen, Dr. Sen, Shri Choudhri, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen.

I have great pleasure this morning in extending to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of the Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute on the occasion of the 35th Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics. We are particularly grateful to our Hon'ble Minister who, in spite of his busy schedule, has made it possible to grace the occasion and to encourage us. When we first approached him, he showed considerable interest in the activities of the Society and readily agreed to inaugurate the Conference. This shows his keen interest in agricultural statistics and love for the Society. We heartily welcome him. As you all know, Dr. Sukhatme, the Executive President of the Society has been instrumental not only in the founding of this Society in 1947, but also in its development over the years. He is equally credited with the development of scientific technique of random sampling in crop-cutting surveys in forties when he was Statistical Adviser to the I.C.A.R. and was heading the Statistical Section which has since grown in the form of this full-fledged Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute. We are very grateful to him for his kind presence today. We also welcome Dr. K. Kishen, former Emeritus Scientist of the I.C.A.R., who is our Sessional President for this Conference and will be delivering the Technical Address on a topic in which he has made valuable contributions over several years. We are equally grateful to Dr. S. R. Sen and Shri S. C. Choudhri, Vice-Presidents of the Society for attending this function.

We express our gratitude to our Vice-President, Shri M. Hidayatullah and our Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi for conveying their best wishes for the success of the deliberations at this Conference. Dr. M. S. Swaminathan, President of the Society could not come today as he is just now busy in another important

meeting of the Planning Commission. He has asked me to convey his apologies to the Hon'ble Minister, members of the Society as well as other participants. He has also communicated a thought provoking message and best wishes for the success of the Conference. Dr. O. P. Gautam, Director-General of the I C.A.R. had very much wished to attend this function but due to Governing Body meeting of the I.C.A.R. being held today and at which he is presiding, he had to, reluctantly, regret his inability to come. He has kindly sent best wishes for the Conference's success.

Since this is the first visit of our Hon'ble Minister to this Institute, it may not be out of place to mention in brief about the development and activities of the Institute. Sir, this Institute started only as a small Statistical Section of the I.C.A.R. in 1930, During the last 50 years, it has grown in size and stature as well as in the spectrum of its research and academic activities mainly due to the outstanding leadership, untiring efforts and devotion to the cause of agricultural statistics of distinguished persons like Dr. P. V. Sukhatme, late Dr. V. G. Panse and several others. It is the premier Institute whose objective is to promote and conduct research and training in agricultural statistics in the country for improving the planning and evaluation of agricultural research and development. To achieve these objectives, it undertakes research in experimental designs, sampling methods, statistical genetics and computer programming. It also conducts post-graduate courses for training professional statisticians and in-service training for agricultural scientists. In addition, it renders advisory service to agricultural scientists in various institutes and universities and provides consultancy service for data processing.

The research and training activities of the Institute are organised in seven Divisions and one Cell. They are Division of :

Statistical Research in Crop Sciences ;
Crop Forecasting Methodology ;
Statistical Research in Animal Sciences ;
Sample Survey Methodology ;
Econometric Analysis ;
Training and Basic Research ;
Computer Science and Numerical Analysis ; and
Statistical Genetics Cell.

As I have already mentioned, the method of estimation of yield of principal crops through random crop-cutting surveys was evolved at this Institute by Dr. P. V. Sukhatme. This scientific method is being adopted not only in this country but also in other developing

countries. The Institute also evolved methodologies for estimation of total marine fish catch, livestock number and products, cost of production of food crops and cost of production of livestock products like milk, wool, poultry and egg.

The Institute has recently developed sampling methods for estimation of fruits and vegetable production in the country. It has also developed techniques for pre-harvest forecasting of yields of important crops and for estimating the incidence of agricultural drought with the help of time series data on rainfall and yield. Sampling and measurement techniques for estimation of incidence of pests and diseases and consequent losses in yield are being developed for high yielding varieties of paddy and wheat. The economic analysis of new agricultural strategy has led to the determination of yield gaps and identification of socio-economic constraints to higher yields. The Institute also carries out methodological investigation into high yielding varieties programmes for assessment of their performance in various agro-climatic regions. Surveys for developing a technique for studying the impact of milk supply schemes on the economy of milk-shed areas have recently been completed. Statistical research has been undertaken on the progeny testing and sire evaluation programmes for improvement of cattle and buffaloes as well as on selection indices in poultry.

While describing these research activities, it may be worthwhile to make it clear that this Institute does not attempt to evolve any high yielding varieties, improved agricultural practices, superior breeds of animals, What we attempt to do is to develop statistical techniques which could provide with a powerful means for efficient planning of observational and experimental programmes as well as unambiguous interpretation and summarisation of the resulting data. The impact of these techniques could be felt only when these are adopted in different States and research institutes of the country. We therefore, impress upon the scientists and administrators in different Central and State departments about the need for adopting these methodologies. The efforts made in this regard constitute, so to say, our extension activity.

The Institute organises a number of Training Courses in Agricultural Statistics such as Professional Statistician Certificate Course, Senior Certificate and Diploma Courses. In addition, the Institute conducts the courses leading to degrees of M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Agricultural Statistics in collaboration with the I.A.R.I.. From this year, we have also introduced a two-year Diploma Course in Computer Programming.

An important landmark in the development of this Institute is the installation of an electronic computer IBM 1620 in 1964. Subsequently, a more powerful computer, Burrough 4700, installed in 1977, has further given a boost to research activities in agricultural statistics. This system is also utilised for information storage and retrieval.

In the end, I, on my own behalf as well as on behalf of this Institute, extend once again a hearty welcome to all who have come from far and near to attend this Conference. I would now request the President to give his remarks.

Thank You.