

WELCOME ADDRESS*

SHRI RAJPAL, PROF. DR. RAO, DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a hearty welcome to this beautiful and planned city, Jaipur. This city is an illustration of the standard of town planning and architecture developed centuries ago in this part of the country. The city has a personality of its own and continues to find place on the itinerary of every foreign tourist visiting this country. Today this pink city of Jaipur, the metropolis of Rajasthan, also accords a warm welcome to you all. I am sure your stay in Jaipur will be pleasant and you will find congenial atmosphere for your deliberations.

We are fortunate that Dr. Sampurnanand, Rajpal of Rajasthan, in spite of many other demands on his time, has agreed to inaugurate this Conference. I am also extremely happy that Prof. Dr. V. K. R. V. Rao, Member of the Planning Commission, has been able to come to Jaipur and deliver the technical address to your Society at a time when he is extremely busy in the process of finalisation of the State plans and other very important activities of the Planning Commission. Besides, in our midst today there are many distinguished guests, eminent Scientists, Statisticians and Economists.

You are meeting here for your 17th Annual Session at an important and significant time when mid-term appraisal of the Third Five-Year Plan is being reviewed and the results of our national efforts under this Plan are being evaluated. This review and evaluation, though revealing certain discouraging results in certain sectors, but I am sure this ultimately would lead to strengthen further our efforts so that we can achieve our goal of raising the standard of living of our people through planned efforts. The importance of agricultural statistics in a country, where agriculture continues to be a way of life and constitutes the very back-bone of its economy needs hardly to be emphasised. When we are engaged to improve and reorganise our agriculture through successive plans, I consider the improvements in agricultural statistics

* Welcome Address by Shri Mathura Das Mathur, Minister, Planning and Statistics, Rajasthan, at the Seventeenth Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics, New Delhi, held at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on Friday, the 3rd January 1964.

essential for it. At times essential improvements have been hampered due to organisational conflicts which must be avoided in our endeavour to make available improved statistics.

We in our State have recently reorganised the organisational set-up with the primary object of improving the collection and processing of agricultural statistics. The Directorate of Economics and Statistics who has been entrusted the responsibility of organising this meeting of your Society at Jaipur on behalf of the State Government was set up in its present form only as late as 1956 and since then it has extended the scope of its activities into various spheres. It now co-ordinates statistics for the entire State and releases the data in its various publications particularly the *Annual Basic Statistics*, *Annual Statistical Abstract* and current statistics in its official organ, the *Quarterly Digest of Economics and Statistics*. It has published *Statistical Atlas* and is responsible to prepare progress reports of the plan on monthly, quarterly and annual basis. The plan progress reports have been published right from the First Five-Year Plan to the report for the year 1962-63. It has also prepared and published the State Income Estimates and various index numbers to measure the economic activities, i.e., the index numbers of agricultural production, the index numbers of wholesale prices and consumers' price indices. It conducts the Annual Survey of Industries, the results of which are published in the *Industrial Structure* of Rajasthan. In the field of agriculture, the primary work relating to the preparation of crop forecasts, the collection of statistics relating to acreage, rainfall, harvest prices, etc., has been entrusted to the Board of Revenue. Recently, the work relating to the crop cutting experiments for estimation of yield per acre which was hitherto entrusted to the Directorate of Agriculture was transferred to the Board of Revenue and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics was linked with the statistical section both in the Board of Revenue and the Department of Agriculture. The publication of entire statistical data is now the sole responsibility of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics. With this link, there has been an improvement both in the coverage and quality of agricultural statistics. I hope you may find time to study the organisational pattern adopted in this State. I am also confident that the workers in the Directorate of Economics and Statistics will immensely benefit themselves from the deliberations of this Conference and the contacts which they will establish with the various delegates.

You will agree with me that there are many shortcomings in the field of agricultural statistics to which I need not refer as they have been

elaborately dealt with in the various welcome and inaugural addresses delivered to your Society in the last few years and which need early remedy. I would also like to point out that we should continuously look for, in view of our limited resources of technical personnel particularly in this field, to avoid duplication wherever possible and make the best use of the available agencies rather than creating new ones. In this context I wish to refer you the wasteful effort of simultaneously carrying out two series of crop cutting experiments, one under the auspices of the State Government which gives you in time the yield estimates both at the District and State level and another under the auspices of the National Sample Survey Organisation which is supposed to provide estimates at the Central level and with increased efforts at best at the State level. One could appreciate the conduct of the two series if it was a research experiment to establish the reliability of one over the other but in that case such experiments should have been conducted for a limited period only. It is unfortunate that we are continuing both the series for a pretty long time without arriving at a decision and specially when we are so short both in trained men and material resources and we have such a vast field to cover the various gaps. Without prejudicing your mind in favour of one source or the other, I will only urge that early action is taken to discontinue one of the two series to conserve our resources and the series to be continued should be one which provides reliable estimates in any case at the district level and is capable of giving quick results at the time of finalisation of our forecasts.

In Rajasthan, we are at present engaged in enlarging the crop cutting experiments to provide us separate estimates for important crops for irrigated and unirrigated areas—within irrigated areas separately for canal irrigated and wells and tanks irrigated as well as unirrigated areas for areas of good rainfall and poor rainfall. This alone will enable us to establish the firm trends in agricultural productivity and would be able to measure the effects of various inputs. We have also carried out in this State, along with others, 4 rounds of surveys on improved agricultural practices. We are anxious that scientific techniques are employed in estimating the contribution of agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry to the State income.

Our State though has a glorious and historical past is now engaged in removing the stigma of backwardness, we have already succeeded in achieving self-sufficiency in our food requirements from a perennial deficit in the past through our planned efforts of the last decade. We

are endeavouring to provide irrigation from whatever source is available to our thirsty soil which is otherwise very productive, as can be seen from the study of the Gang canal track where irrigation was brought over three decades ago. With the completion of the mighty Rajasthan Canal Project, we anticipate to raise agricultural production worth over Rs. 100 crore a year. This shall be a sizeable contribution in wiping out the present food deficit of the country.

I am glad to know that your Society is arranging two symposia on 'Measurement of Agricultural Productivity' and 'Household Approach to Sample Surveys'. I would look forward to the instructive discussions. Your agenda is very interesting though very heavy. I have every hope that your deliberations will prove of great help to the Government in the task of improvement of agricultural statistics. I wish your deliberations a success and hope that you will carry pleasant memories of your stay at Jaipur. I once again offer you all a hearty welcome.