

# Presidential address at the 17th AICEME delivered by Prof. R. K. Chakraborti

We are very fast approaching the end of the 20th century and entering a new era. The whole world is passing through an economic crisis. One often hears about crushing of share markets in one country after another. Basically, apart from food grain productions, all are mostly engaged in producing consumer goods and some are in armament manufacturing. For all these items produced one is to find market. Indiscriminate production of such things, irrespective of the need of mankind and survival, creates artificial condition of crisis in different countries.

In India, one has to be very careful and not to follow the same path as is the practice in some advanced countries. Firstly, one has to make a detailed study of the needs of people. Food, shelter, clothing, health care and education are the primary concern. Requirement of total foodgrain to feed the populace are to be ascertained along with the total cultivable land including dry farming. Then yield per acre per year minus the food grains to be consumed by each farming family and agricultural non-farming family will give us number of families that can be sustained on cultivable land. Taking a figure of 40 to 50 per cent of population engaged comfortably on

land, the rest is to be taken out and employed in other fields.

Secondly, the number of dwelling houses that will be required for total population (both in urban and rural areas) on the basis of a minimum space per person or per family of 4 to 5 have to be calculated. Type of construction, building materials requirement are to be ascertained. In the same manner a thorough study is to be made to find man-power requirement in transport including manufacturing of vehicles, roads and bridges to be built so that proper rail and road connections can be made even to the remotest part of the country.

It is estimated that at the end of Seventh Plan period unemployment will be to the tune of 20 million. It will be practically impossible for the economy to grow at the rate at which this can be absorbed. It is suggested by some organisations that diversified enterprenurial activities in such sectors as building and construction, road transport, irrigation and extensive dairy farming and poultry projects could be taken to generate gainful employment, in a basically agricultural economy. A proper forward looking man-power planning and Human Resource Development can only save our country from future famine and starvation and provide gainful employment for all.