

## Address by Sri S. Basu

President for the year 1969.

Colonel Vijn, Mr. P. C. Bose. Mr. S. Bandopadhyaya, Dr. J. N. Basu, Mr. A. C. Sen, Mr. A. K. Sen, Members of the Association and friends, I am grateful to you all for the honour you have conferred on me, in accepting me, as your President for the year 1969.

It is an honour far beyond my expectations, and one which carries with it responsibilities far greater than my poor power can bear singly, particularly in this year of the Golden Jubilee of this Association. For adequate fulfilment, I shall need your continued assistance, co-operation and sympathy together with your generous indulgence towards my numerous untold shortcomings,

As you know, this Association has been struggling for existence and recognition ever since its inception fifty years ago. It is indeed a miracle that it has lasted so long, without monetary assistance, without official recognition, without offering any inducement or providing any direct benefit for our members. and in spite of what appears to me like perverse obstruction and sinister vilification by more fortunate rival organisations, It will be our endeavour to bring about a healthier state of affairs by correct approach and procedure.

Looking back on our past progress, whatever we may have to grieve about or to regret, we still have the satisfaction of reflecting that though no official recognition has been granted to us and through no official mention has been made of any suggestion contained in our Journal, yet almost every suggestion for action made in it has been actually carried out officially. Of these the following are notable :--

1. Apprenticeship training facilities.
2. Research stations establishment,
3. National Planning and use of Hydraulic resources,
4. Calcutta's Water Supply, storm-water and sewage disposal,
5. Sea training for Marine Engineering apprentices,
6. Experimental Tanks for ship model testing,
7. Shipbuilding yard establishment,
8. Study of Naval Architecture,
9. Inland waterways transport improvement,

10. Defence Craft construction,
11. Air raid Precaution,
12. Locomotive manufacture,
13. Steel Production,
14. Tool Steel manufacture,
15. Heavy Maehinery manufacture,
16. Community development,
17. Calcutta's slum clearance and town-planning improvement,
18. Nuclear power for peaceful purposes,
19. Hooghly River deepening and training,
20. Automatic Telephone,
21. Railway Electrification.

We have therefore no cause for grudge or grievance on any such ground that none of our suggestions have been taken up,

It may, of course, be possible that some or all of these esteemable works have been taken up by the Authorities concerned independently of any suggestion made by us. But, since all publications were under strict scrutiny ( to guard against seditious matter) it is certain that some, atleast of our suggestions, if not all, have been duly noticed and have exerted their desired influence.

This confirms me in my long held opinion born of wishful thinking that the 'recognition' that we crave and clamour for will come not so much by favour and patronage of any august personage or any of the authorities capable of granting such 'Recognition', as by the compulsive and inherent recognition that will follow from the authoritative and influential articles contained in our publications and the public activities and technical contribution of our members, I refer particularly to such articles as are found worthy of reproduction and quotation,

There have been criticisms about the manner in which our members have been selected and about the rank or academic qualifications of some of our founder and present members, But it is to be noticed that in no case has the selection been wrongly placed, Save and except a very few unfortunate ones, almost every one has attained the rank that was expected of him, Among our members are some who have filled the position of Chief Engineers of various concerns, such as, The Calcutta Corporation, Calcutta Improvement Trust, Government Department and Chairmanship of other sister Institutions, Some have even become members of the Legislative Assembly,

It is easy to look down upon us for our shortcomings, But our achievements should not therefore be lost sight of,

At this moment, while we talk of ourselves, and review our progress, my mind is drawn back and overwhelmed by the memory of those of our founder members whom death has taken away from us ; Past Presidents, Rai Bahadur A. N. Das, Rai Bahadur G. C. Das. Dr, B N. Dey, Mr. J. N. Das Gupta, Mr. K. M. Mookerjee, and Mr. J. C. Ganguli. Ordinary Members, Mr. R. K. Ganguli, Mr. K. C. Biswas and Mr. N. N. Sen. How hard they worked and how much time they had devoted selflessly for the uplift of the Association for no personal benefit to themselves, I noted with wonder and admiration. Their example is truly worthy of emulation ;

In their time the Association was full of life ; and its aims and objects were advanced rapidly. But in our time it is sad to note that we are in the midst of a cynical world where it is thought that to work for no personal gain is childish folly ; and few care to devote their time and energy to an Association such as ours, where no personal benefit or advancement is discernible, and our progress has therefore become somewhat sluggish. However, I am heartened to find among us still some of our elder enthusiastic members, who in spite of having reached the top of their profession and achieved eminence in other spheres of activity, have continued their generous interest in the affairs of this Association, and some newer, younger members who are emulating their elders.

With their help under the guidance of our esteemed Past-President Col. H. C. Vijn it has been possible for the retiring Committee of this Association to organise last year an "All India Engineers Conference" which was blessed with messages of good wishes for its success from the President and Vice-President of India and was inaugurated by the Governor of the State of West Bengal and aroused great interest. For this the Convenor of the Conference, Sri H. Kothari had much single-handed work to do ; and he deserves our appreciation and thanks.

Looking to the future, I have great hopes that our activities will increase with the times, that response to our call for more conferences will improve and efforts will be set on foot for improvement of the lot of engineers and employment opportunities will increase. There is much engineering that is yet to be done for the welfare of the country and the world. There is much planning that is yet to be done and projects to be studied. It is for the engineers to set their minds on these and to develop schemes convincing enough for the financiers and the Government to provide the funds for these. This can best be done by papers read and discussed in this Association and published in its Journal.

We have before us the effects of the past three 'Five-Year Plans' for analysis and study and the urge to improve the future Plans. The need to apply the methods of engineering to increase and improve agricultural produce is apparent ; the recession due to nonplacement of orders for railway wagons, the need to establish more shipyards to

produce the ships required to import our necessary food and goods in short-supply and to export our foreign exchange earning produce is yet to be fully realised. Our Association is fully conscious of these, as the publications in our Journal will show.

With all these objects before us there is to my mind no real cause for unemployment of engineers except the fear of those who have the money to spend and the hesitancy of those who have the authority to spend but will not spend lest the accountants declare the expenditure a financial "loss" and they suffer criticism accordingly. Often, however, such "loss" in one department of Government contributes to overall gain in several departments and the country's industries by the wealth they produce, the jobs they create and the employment they give, and these are followed by accumulation of funds through insurance premia and saving in relief funds no longer required. An overall view of accounting is therefore called for.

I trust that engineers of our Association will continue to contribute their knowledge for the uplifting of mankind in their usual selfless manner and be blessed with due respect and sympathy.

My thanks to you all.

**Joint Council of Professional Engineering  
Institutions.**

Invites your suggestions for the coming conference.  
Please communicate with the convenor.

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