

Speech by Shri J.R.D. Tata at the
foundation stone laying ceremony

Mr. J.R.D. Tata:

Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Chief Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen, this is my brief but very pleasant duty today to welcome you all and to thank you for responding to our invitation to attend this function. I am particularly happy to thank the Prime Minister and to extend to him a very warm welcome on this occasion and to thank him for sparing the time and the energy, burdened as we know they are, to come here, speak to us and lay the foundation stone for the new building of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. I feel that Indian science is very fortunate indeed that the Prime Minister of India should be one who has appreciated so deeply and fully the importance and vital role of scientific research in the development and the future of our country. Not only has he given very great personal thought and attention to the problem, but he has personally initiated and has carried through a vast programme of scientific development in the country. I feel that all directly and indirectly concerned with science in India owe a deep sense of gratitude to the Prime Minister and through him to the Government of India for the magnificent support and leadership in fact that they have given to science and scientific research to the cause of scientific research in this country since independence. The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research has a particular sense of gratitude to the Prime Minister and to the Government of India for the support and assistance that it has received during the last seven or eight years. The Atomic Energy Commission has recognised this Institute as the sole or the principal centre for undertaking fundamental research for the Commission. Through the Commission and for this purpose

large grants have been made to the Institute both on capital account and on recurring account. Thanks to the special interest taken in the matter for instance, by the Prime Minister, we were able to obtain this very fine and valuable site. Considering that the site is right in the middle of the military area, you will appreciate that unless the military authorities had been good enough to see the value and the importance of the work that was going to be done here they might not have relished the idea of releasing such a valuable plot and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Defence Ministry and the military authorities for their cooperation in the matter. We are expressing thanks to the Government of India and I would like, if I may, to single out for special thanks our good friend, the pilot, irrepressible, irreplaceable and fortunately indestructible, Dr. Bhatnagar. Apart from the Prime Minister, I do not think that there can be a single man in the country who has done so much to foster and build up scientific research in this country. The chain of great laboratories which stalks the land today, they are witness to his patience and inexhaustible drive and energy. As the member of the Council, the Government member of the Council of this Institute also Dr. Bhatnagar has rendered science most helpful service through this Institute. We are all very grateful to him. Before now requesting the Chief Minister to take charge of the proceedings, I would like to tell him how happy we are to see him among us today, to welcome and thank him for agreeing to preside at the function. Whatever disagreement we may have occasionally on some matters, we have our respect and our affection and through you, Sir, I would like also to thank the Government of Bombay for their unstinting support right from the beginning of this Institution. It may not be known to some that the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research was actually

founded as a joint enterprise, shall we say, by the Government of Bombay and the Tata Trust and the Government of Bombay has continued throughout to bear their share of the cost both on capital and recurring account and to be represented most usefully on the Council of the Institute. Considering the very heavy and pressing demands that are made on the financial resources of Provincial Government, I feel that it shows a considerable vision and enlightenment **atleast** on this subject on their part to support, to spare funds year after year for promoting fundamental research from which there cannot be, as you know, a return - quick return. We are most thankful to the Government of Bombay for their support and cooperation they have given us. I am now requesting the Chief Minister to preside at the function. May I wish everyone here a happy new year?