



Dr. S. A. Srinivasa Murthy

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Camera /Sound: Prof. KP Jayasankar

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Mr. S.A. Srinivasa Murthy did his Dip. SSA specialising in Labour Welfare from TISS in ---. He has held several senior management positions, at ITI and Bosch, among others. After his retirement, he is active in civic affairs.



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AM: Mr. Srinivas Murthy, very happy to interview you. We want to take a trip with you down memory lane. So if we could go back to your student days...could you talk about how you decided to join TISS, and what was that initial experience of coming to TISS?

SM: Actually, I had never heard of TISS at that time. We were mostly in Mysore, old Mysore, the capital of Mysore state, and we studied in a college called, both my wife and I, in Maharaja's College, we studied there. And I did my honours in Social Philosophy. That was the subject. Then, after doing that, my parents died, I had no money to continue, so my Professor asked me whether I would like to continue, or I needed a job. I said I needed a job. Then he said there's a position as a lecturer in a place called Hassan in Mysore, whether I would like to go on. I said, I will join that. I went there and I had to teach logic, which I had only learned from the textbook when I was at the intermediate college i.e. pre-university, which I had to teach here. I was somehow managing for 1 year, going and studying, then my cousin was in Calcutta as the Chief Librarian of India in the National Libraries, as the first National Library of India. So, I went to visit him during the holidays. He asked me what I was doing. I told him. He said it's a temporary job, because of lots of reservation, that you will not get a permanent job, resign. I said I will resign, but then what will I do? He said, go to Tata Institute. So he knew about TISS. He knew Professor Kumarappa, JM Kumarappa. So, he wrote a letter to them, that I wanted to join, he asked me to send an application, and in the selection, they said I was selected.

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Then, I went there. First time, I was in Bombay. It was some new experience for me, because we were all brought up in a very protected atmosphere in Mysore, belonging to an upper middle class government job for my father. So, in that atmosphere, to be thrown open into Bombay...then we got down at Victoria Terminus, and then came to Andheri. And then, as I came out to go to Tata...it was in Ghodbunder Road, in a big bungalow. So, when I came out, some youngsters were standing there. They said, where are you going. I said, Tata...hire this Victoria, so I didn't know, I said okay. They said, he will take you. And then, we went there. And then they said, why did you come here in the institute, you should have gone to Nagpada. So, these people were already there as students. Prabhakar. So they wanted to...simple type of ragging I went through. Then we went there, then he said, yes, let's go to Nagpada, so again we had a Victoria arranged, came back, and then went to Andheri, Bombay Central, and then went to Nagpada. And then, later on, when I went to the institute, first time I heard about the activities at the institute. Otherwise, only because of my cousins statement that 'You must go to Tata', that I went there. In those days, in Mysore not many, only after I joined Tata, lot of people started applying from Mysore. Tata was known in Mysore city. But in Bangalore, there was awareness because another lady who studied with me was Sushila Appadurai. So she came from Bangalore. She was the daughter of a industry secretary of the government of Mysore in those days, so they knew about it, she also came along.

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We were two from...and those days, if I was understanding clearly, there used to be not more than two from each state, because I was told, the states were helping the institute. They were contributing some money. Mysore Maharaja used to contribute. As a matter of fact, the whole land that Tata Institute has got was donated by the Maharaja of Mysore. So two seats were there. So we had students from all over India. Very close friends we were...Kashmir...I've got a list of people like that. Made a list so that my batch...not completely, a number of...there was one Mr. Dutta ..MS Dutta...I don't know whether...he was teaching also, he was director of (), personal director. so he was with me from Assam. There were people from Bihar, there were people from Delhi, there were people from UP, from Cochin, from Ceylon...everywhere people were there. So it was an all India family and about 30 students or 25 students we were there, girls and boys. So, the first 6 months, the whole program was to shake us out of these inhibitions. Many of us, first time we were getting into a co-education institute. All these years in Mysore, for example, till we reached the degree stage, we had separate institutions both for men and women, separately. And when we came to that stage, those days, I'm talking in 48-49, some of the ladies were coming in Gosha. You know, what they call the Arasu family, Arasu is the ruling family. Those people who belong to that would come in a cart, completely covered with curtains and only in the college they come out...and they go and they sit and get in to the thing. And the Muslim women would come with the Purdah and all. That was the type of culture which was there. Even in some of the aristocratic houses, when you went there was a curtain. Women would not come out at all. Very highly educated....but still that sort of a concern was there.

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When we went to Bombay, it was a thing...they shake you out of all this. They had games, we had to roughly handle girls, pull them out, and they will pull you out. And that sort of thing. 6 months. After that we forgot who was a woman, who was a man. We were friends. And secondly, some of the students came from rural areas. So they couldn't mix...so that again was one of the focuses; to bring them into the mainstream. So all these took place. And, going through the books was not very important. And we never thought of the diploma; we were getting diploma at that time. Post graduate diploma, two and a half years. That never flashed into our minds, that we were working towards that goal. We just went there, and 6 months...and the professors were there. As a matter of fact Prof. Murthy, who was a specialist...because the first three semesters were all general. It had nothing to do with our specialization. Last two terms only specialization of personal management and labour welfare was there. Otherwise it was all general. And we had Profs like Dr. Bhuta. She used to teach us Child Psychology, and she had no children. And we had Dr. Gauri Banerjee. She used to teach us Family Social Work, and she was not married. But, they were experts in it. Supposing we students were standing outside talking, Mrs. Bhuta would come in, mainly...so she would treat us like children, "What basking like ducks...come in" ..so that was the type of thing. So in the institute, our relationship with the faculty was very informal. We had various professors...one of the professors who immediately we could strike a chord was Prof. Mehta. And in classes, he would criticize everything. He would criticize...those days he would call America Coca-Cola Civilization...right and left he would talk about how much we were going to be influenced with all these American concepts of Coca Cola and all that. And then he would talk about sex very openly, criticizing this...and religion. And some people still had a fundamental...like Paiwa..he was a senior officer in Ceylon.



Son-in- Law of a Minister there. He was also with us, and he would get wild, and he would have a quarrel and walk out of the class. That was the type of relationship that was there.

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Later on he would come back and get together and talk. And once, he comes out, he would be very very free and all that. And we had Prof. Murthy who was a very jovial man, cracking jokes and all those things...and his was a Ph.D..I think he did it in Bombay University, and his was Philosophy of War. And he was teaching us Labour Welfare and Personal Management. That he went to America...I think the Institute sent him, I don't know...and he acclimatized himself with all these things, personnel management...came back and gave us an excellent lead in this thing. We never knew what it was and he took us into this field of Personal Management and Labour Welfare which was very very new. Just in India that subject had not made an impact, because most of the things we were following were the American and the British...textbooks were also from there only, nothing new. So he gave an Indian interpretation to all these things, from what was actually in India, how we have to view these things. So, that was the lead he gave us in this field which has helped us a lot. But, as I told you, if you ask me whether academically I was very much benefited, I don't think there's so much of pure science put into this...it was all applied science, everything was applied social science that was there. And, those days, there was no question of thinking of getting my PhD...from the Tata Institute, going to PhD, very rarely people thought of Ph.D. We said, well, get a diploma, then go to a job. That was the way. And most of the people came for that purpose only. And after that, we had very nice experiences.



There are three things, one is the institute itself, as I told you now...I talked to you about teachers, the librarian...there is one Mr. Tripathi. He was a very reserved man and people would be hesitant to go to him very freely. But he had an assistant called Mrs. Rossell ...a Goan girl..her husband was a diver. Unfortunately, during that training he died...so we used to go to her for our problems in the library. We would not go to the librarian, but only to her...she was a very helpful person. And then, we had Hermesti who was our accounts person. Another Iyer who was there, then Mr. Kuchekar who was the Registrar of the institute, Dr. J.M. Kumarappa was another man who was very reserved. He was a specialist in Correctional Administration, Criminology, that sort of thing.

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And we had Dr. Lorenzo who used to teach us Statistics. And he would always come with a...very neatly dressed...and he was a bachelor, with his pipe he would come there. We had lots of visiting faculty, like Dr. Masani, Dr. Wahia, Dr. Marfatia...so they were all psychiatrists who would come and teach us. And there were...you know Mr. Punekar who would come and teach us about Public Relations. And another Punekar who used to teach us Industrial Relations. So, we had lot of knowledge from outside also coming apart from the full time faculty. And Gauri Banerjee...that was the beginning of Hospital Social Work at that time. You see, if it's fieldwork I am talking about, I was placed in Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital and that was the beginning of knowledge about Cancer. People didn't know much about cancer at that time.....in 1950. Patients would be brought from villages. They would be left outside the compound thinking that either



it's a contagious disease or they say that it's the supernatural..and they would be brought inside the hospital and they had to be taken care of. And I had patients, for example, my job there was to take care of a woman who came from Dharwad side, from a village. People had brought her, left her and gone. And she had cancer of the cervix, and bleeding was going on so any number of saris you get them...so my job was to provide saris. So I had to go as people for donations, bring saris. And there was another Muslim lady who had throat cancer. She had to only eat fruits. Very poor woman. And she was in Bhendi Bazaar, so my job was to go to her house, take fruits, give it to her and all that.

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And there was one Doctor there, a very famous doctor, Dr. Borges, he was a Goan, he became a Padmashri..a very top surgeon. He...everybody wanted to be operated by only Borges. So Borges would call me "Murthy, see, I've only two hands, I can't take care of all these things...there are others like Dr. Paymaster....so many are there, can't they go there," so my job was to convince the patients, "Look, the others are also as good as Dr. Borges, please give him some relief so that he can take only serious cases." And then, there was a patient, or a couple of patients. One was...for 13 years in the hospital, from one hospital to another hospital. And he had tried to commit suicide twice, thrice...so my job was to talk to him, console him...so these are the things that really...there was one Saroj Bhatia, my senior. She was the hospital social worker, she was my guide there...field work guide. After the session was over I came back to the institute. Then I got a call...see that lady who was a patient, she was cured, she had gone back, and one day she



came back with a pot of ghee to be given to me. So she said where is that gentleman, I brought ghee for him. So that was the reward I got. Actually, Ms. Taraporewala was our field guide at that time and we had the group work in Worli Chawls, the children were there and we had to do a lot of....playing with them and talking with them. Then we...I was also tagged to RT Toys, it was a toy manufacturing factory which employed mostly Parsi youth with problems. Mainly slight physical problems or this, you know, very different types. They were mostly employed by RT Toys. Dr. Mehta was in charge of that as a sort of a honorary director. So he would come and sit there, and then I heard him talking...he would call Naval Tata...from tomorrow I am not coming. I resign.

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And the next day, he would be there. He had a very....but very loved. And then I had field work in Umarkhadi remand home. It was attached to Umarkhadi Jail. Why I'm saying is...the program was so wide ranged that you were not confined to one area of career. You could go to any of these fields. I could have gone to the hospital to become a social worker or I could have gone into an NGO as a community social worker...or what I did was...the first job I got was a probation officer in a remand home, children's home. Though my specialization was Personal Management and Labour Welfare, the first job I took up was in the remand home attached to the Hyderabad Jail. I worked in Hyderabad. And my job there was whatever I learned in my field work in Umarkhadi remand home. So, as I told you it was not a program that said that alright this man is being taken in this particular channel. It was a very wide channel, you can pick up any



kind of job and come into that. So that was the fieldwork that we did. And many times it was more of a picnic in those days, going for fieldwork, because you had to get into a train or a bus, travel. And I did some work in Mukund Iron and Steel Works where I later on collected a lot of material for my thesis in Absenteeism in Industry...that was my thesis I wrote. And the excerpts of that were published in Indian Journal of Social Work. There was an Indian Council of Social Work those days. I don't know whether it continues now or no. And they were publishing a journal called Indian Journal of Social Work and they would sort of pick up this thesis and then publish the important aspects of this. So that was done in Mukund Iron and Steel Works. The personnel manager of which was a past student of Tata Institute, one Kumar was there. And actually my senior was Bajaj...Kamalnayan Bajaj and Rahul Bajaj. Rahul Bajaj's mother was my senior in the institute. And those days she would come in different cars. Beautiful cars she would come in. And if it was a blue car, all her sari, everything would be blue. She would come in a red car, everything would be red. And she was a great lover of tennis. She liked tennis. So we were a few tennis players, even now I play tennis in the morning. So we were a few of us who were tennis players. There was one Lasani...he was from UP. He was a good tennis player. So she would pick us up in her car, take us to different clubs and make us play. And she would bring good eatables, we would eat and come back.

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So, this thing happened and the other senior members...you know there was a student's union...Tata Institute Students Union. One year I became the president of the union and there



was a big political problem. And we were supposed to not involve ourselves in politics in those days. But we had a few friends like Sugato Dasgupta. He has written a book also on community welfare..he was my senior. And we had Mr. Dutta who was personnel director of Pfizer and retired. And later on he brought an NGO called The Sun. And that NGO would locate youngsters from different villages who needed a career. They would pick up such people, get them trained...either as a bus driver or a trailer or something and then get them jobs. Now, he developed Parkinson's disease after his retirement. Now he's in Calcutta. He left Bombay. I'm in touch with him even now, after so many years, still that feeling...he rings me up and is so happy to get a call...he can't talk and all those...so that goes on. And that is the type of relationship we built...we were living in the same hostel. And another very....experience was...you know, it was a two and a half years course. I had planned to go through the program with whatever money I had. But, after two years or so, all my money was exhausted, so I didn't know what to do. I said let me go home...because I couldn't pay the fees, I couldn't pay the hostel fees and all that, and then...I tried an experiment. I left the hostel, took up a room in Saat Bungalow, Versova, in a Sindhi refugee colony, and they were all sheds. And there, in one of the sheds, Rs. 10 a month, I took it on rent. So, I used to sit there and cook whatever I could and walk to the institute from Versova, go back....and of course, it was a sort of a thing, when many of my friends would come to go to Versova beach, and we would go in the evening, to Versova beach and come back. And lot of people would be there. But after that, I said let me give up this thing. So this Mr. Dutta who was a very close friend of mine and also, he was a favourite student of Dr. Mehta. He told Dr. Mehta, Murthy wants to quit. He said what happened...he said he has no money. He said alright...and then, I've not paid the fees...one day I got an attendant who came home...Pathak or Hari..Pathak was the driver, Hari, no Harry..the attendant came, 'Saab bulate hain'. I said, I've not



paid the fees, maybe they've asked to restitute me...I went there and then knocked...I went in. I found Dr. Mehta sitting there on the chair. Dr. Kumarappa had gone to America, so he said come in, sit down.

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...So I said, "Dr...you wanted me." "I wanted to know why you want to quit." I said "I have no money." He said, "do you think we're all dead, why didn't you come and talk to me?" I said, "This is my problem, how can I worry you." "No, no, no, you should have told me about it. If Dutta had not told me, I would not have known about it...come, sit down." He called, "Mr. Kuchekar, come here," so the Registrar came in. Earlier I had approached the Registrar. He had said all the freeships were exhausted, there was nothing to be offered. But when I...."He is going to have freeship." And then, he was opening a hostel in Versova..."Mr. Murthy will be Prefect in the hostel, he need not pay hostel fees," so he gave the order, and Kuchekar couldn't say anything he wanted. And then, I could continue my 6 months, and completely the program. So that was the attachment they had to the students, and we had that feeling.

AM: So, was the campus in Nagpada or in Andheri...or was it between the two places?

MSM: We were originally in Nagpada, then they started a new thing, they took a building in Versova. And in Versova, Saat Bungalow, there was a building which they took and many of the students were there, in Versova also...and myself, Mr. Dutta, and a few others were all transferred. And there was one Prof. Sridharan, Dr. Sridharan. He was...later on, he became the



director of the Madras School of Social Work, then he was in the US Educational Exchange in Delhi, and then he was in-charge of the Nehru Yuvakendra...and then he was the director of the institute here called National Institute of Social Sciences in Bangalore. He was a director...and then, about a year or two ago he died...he was a junior to Kala. And he was a very well known person in the field of social work, he and his wife. So we were all in Versova hostel. And I've seen Chopra, you know the film producer-director, senior man...he would be standing along with us in the bus queue with a camera hanging. At that time, he was still to make his grade. .

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So, there were lot of actors and actresses in that Versova area. And the hostel was situated on the...almost on the waters of the sea. There were rocks just behind the hostel. And if there was a heavy....the waves would come into our room, our books and all would get drenched. That was the thing...our room was facing the sea. Behind us was the sea. So, 2 floors to the hostel. We were in the first floor. Many youngsters, junior people were there in the ground floor. One night, thieves had come from the sea and they have entered the hostel from behind...and got into the hostel. They were lifting the suitcases...some of the fellows were afraid to open their mouth, they closed their thing, went to sleep and the thieves took away everything. After they left, these fellows got up...our things are gone...they know...so everything...these things had happened...they lost quite a bit of their money, everything was lost. So that was the Versova hostel where we stayed and all that.

AM: So the classes were in Andheri is it?

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MSM: Andheri...hostel only was Versova. Andheri...the same place where we continued. Earlier it was in Nagpada Neighbourhood House also...in 1936. But Prof (Madhu..) was asking me...Subroto Dasgupta in his book had said it seems 1937 it was started...but according to my inquiry that was '36, I don't know. And you know, the hostel itself was a very old building...about 4-5-6 storeys. It was a neighbourhood house for a church, and the Nagpada church, most of the time it would be under lock and key because of the conflict between the devotees there. There was friction about the ownership of the church. They would always keep it locked, otherwise there would be heavy quarrel. In between the church and our hostel there was a volleyball concrete ground and students would come and play. And Nagpada was a...the residence area of Jews were there, Christians were there, Muslims were there, a few Hindus were there. And Prof. Murthy was staying just behind the hostel in a quieter place. And the Nagpada neighbourhood had a lot of social activities going on..because it was what you would call a mixed group...and that was in 49-50...the partition thing was not completely gone. Suddenly there would be violence and murders in midnight. "Tauba, tauba, tauba...." somebody would have died. And we would hear it and come down and see it. That was the type of area. And Police Station....new Nagpada road was there and there was a police station. It was the busiest police station there. But that also made us adjust to a rough situation. It was part of the education we got from the institute. Go through all these things. And we had to get down from the floor...get dressed and come. As we were coming, somebody, you know those days, from top, they'll spit out paan, and our clothes would get dirty. We would go back, change our dress and come out.



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So these are the type of thing. Not like the campus now, everything is nicely arranged and all that. And, then, we used to get down and there was an Irani restaurant. Those days there were Irani restaurants...full of them. Get down the staircase from the third floor when we were in Nagpada, go to the Irani restaurant early morning, take a cup of tea, then go to Bombay Central from Byculla, catch a train, go to Andheri and get down at Andheri, get into a bus, go to the institute, and then same routine to come back. So it took almost 2 hours to go and come back. But that was fun. It hardened all of us and we could live under these circumstances, and now we can live under any circumstances. I can sleep on the platform and anything...so we have gone through that sort of a thing. So the institute really gave us that sort of a thing. So for example...if you want me to...I was thinking, "What does TISS mean?" I said, T stands for teamwork, the second I is involvement, and the S, Service Mindedness...putting us through all this fieldwork. Service mindedness was one of the things that was imbibed into us...and lastly, the other S is...it was a scientific approach. Earlier, whatever we did, maybe...my father was the President of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Those days, we had Gandhiji's that thing. So I used to go to the places where harijans used to stay. But all of that work was sentimental. But, at Tata Institute, it came with a professional approach. Today, when I do anything of social work, it is more of a profession, more objectively we all look at things. So that sort of sentimental approach was reduced. Not that sentiments are not there, but certainly, it can be put through professional social work. That also helped us, for example, in 60, we started the Karnataka, those days Mysore branch of Indian Institute of Personal Management. Now it's called NIPM, National Institute of Personal Management. So, we also started the Indian Association of Trained Social Workers at



that time. So, we also had a Karnataka branch of Indian Society of Organizational Behaviour. So, some of these activities, we gave () only because of the background that we could gain in Tata Institute. Even after this, I completed, and as I told you, what I try to look back is the institute itself, and then the hostel and then the fieldwork. I tried to give an idea of how all these things have affected me, my future. After my course...the thing that helped me get a job, in Children's Home and all that....subsequently because of my specialization...I was looking out for....I could not get a job earlier in my field of specialization, but subsequently, when I applied for a job in Indian Telephone Industries, that was just started as a public sector industry, that was in 1951 or so, when I was working in Hyderabad, I applied. There, in 1950-'52, the Factories Act was applied. It was extended to the states. Mysore was a Princely State. The Central Five Act was not directly applicable. Subsequently with a special notification, it was applied. And according to that act, every industry which has more than 300 should have a welfare officer. So that rule had to be followed. The ITI, Indian Telephone Industries, wanted to have one of their own officers, appointed officer. But the act also said he should have a qualification recognized by the government. So here, the course that he had undergone was not recognized.

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But, Tata Institute's course was a recognized course here. At that time, there was only one institute. Subsequently, so many institutes came. But there were short term programs. In Bombay itself, in Naigaon, Bombay Labour Management School or something. And in Calcutta, there was another school. They were giving short term programs, 9 months, 6 months...whereas ours



was a full time program. So, when I came for an interview, the institute's diploma was a great help. That's how I got it. And then, it has a prestige value. Even now, there are so many institutes and all that. But then when you talk of TISS, there is so much respect shown to the TISS. And a lot of students are there now, who have come out of TISS in Bangalore. We had tried to start an alumni association long ago, but somehow it didn't take off fully. Subsequently the younger generation has started it, but somehow generation gap has been there, and for something or the other it has not been one which has included old and new and all that. There is an association here, I think. Tata Institute alumni association. And another thing is, many of them are in different fields of specialization. Actually my niece was working with Medha Patkar and all that. Her name is Swati. She came from TISS 5-6 years ago, but her course is Psychiatric Social Work, so there are people from different things...coming together has not been of much...everybody is busy in his/her own activity, so we have not been able to form an alumni association. But in my own job where I was involved as a labour welfare and manager earlier in ITI, lot of welfare activities have come in. And even in the private sector...you see ITI was a public sector industry, I was there for nearly 15 years. Then I somehow wanted to change. Working in the same industry was not very much...I said I'm not....right from the start of the industry I was in it. So everything was built. The township was built, the systems were all placed in position. Everything was done. So I felt a little uncomfortable doing the same. Then I looked out for jobs in the private industry. Then Bosch offered me a job knowing that I was there. That was a passport for me to get in and also the institute's diploma. There they didn't believe in much of the labour welfare work that the public sector believes in; housing and all that. But there was a different approach. Lot of ideas that we had got in the Tata Institute has helped me to put in lot of projects on operation there. And today...generally in our field, we're all known. Kala, and



myself...if somebody says about in our area, but we've not gone beyond the state. And subsequently we've also been sharing my knowledge, things that I've achieved, things I've failed in, I share with people in different institutes of management.

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Till last 2-3 years I was doing it. Now I'm 85 almost, so I said let me..think. . Now I'm involved in the neighbourhood activity. We have a Residents Welfare Association. It so happens that you see a part there. It is a big football ground. The corporation here made an underpass here...they had a lot of debris. They brought and pushed the debris here and it became heaps of debris. So instead of a playground, I took it up. I wrote letters to the corporation, nothing happened. I wrote to the governor, nothing happened. I wrote to the chief justice, I wrote to Lokayukta, all this because of the Tata Institute thing which gave me that service mindedness. I wrote to everybody. Ultimately, I wrote to the Human Rights Commission, Karnataka Human Rights Commission. I said, "Look, if you consider fresh air and clean surrounding to live in, if they are fundamental rights of a human being, for a child which stays in this neighbourhood, please intervene...this is the problem." So they wrote to the corporation. Earlier to that, I published an article. The caption was "The Death Declaration of a Playground"...I published that one, and that I sent to the newspaper. They sent the reporter, they published this, then the Human Rights Commission came, they told the corporation, this is not acceptable, you must clear it. So they cleared it. Then, they made a park. So, all these things, maybe I would not have been able to do but for the



training that I had. And we also had a press club at that time in Tata Institute. So we were encouraged to write articles to the newspapers, so all these things happened.

AM: You know social and cultural life that you enjoyed in the institute...

MSM: We enacted dramas. There was one drama called Kavi Aur Kalpana scripted by Indu Vyas who was from Delhi, Tata Institute. So it is the story of beautiful sculptures. Very nice looking sculptures of young women all around. The poet goes there and sees all of that and imagines that they're all coming to life and start dancing. So, I was the Kavi at that time. My classmates, they were girls...some of them...there was one Konika Ray and all that, they were all dancers. And there was a dance presented by them. And we had an English drama. One was called The Refund. It is a well known drama. A student who has studied in an institution doesn't get a job, so he comes back to the institution and says, "Look, when I joined you, you said you were going to train me and I would get a good job. I have not got a job, refund all the money that I have given you." So, the staff is worried, management is worried, what to do. They say we have given you the best of education and you have done very well. He said no, when I go, people don't think that I have done well. You have given marks and you have sent me but I have not done well. So they say what to do about it. The teachers and the Principal, they have a discussion...and ultimately, they say, alright, we will give you another test of all the subjects, see how you do it. And if you do well that means we have taught you well. So, they give...he flunks everything, but they gave him 100 marks. Every teacher, even though his replies are all wrong...answers are all wrong...all the money...you have got very good marks, how do you say that you are not good. So, that's the type of...it's a lot of fun in that one. So that was one other thing.



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And there was another one called Body in a Bag. That's another drama. This...Refund...we enacted in Wilson College also. It was a public this thing...we went there, enacted a drama there. Then, this Body in a Bag, a ventriloquist comes and stays in a hotel. It is a French drama I think. He stays in a hotel. He has got a bag, and then he has gone out and the waiter of the hotel, room boy, just wants to know what is in there, and he sees a head and everything. He closes, comes back, that fellow has got a body in a bag. So, police comes, everybody comes, ultimately they find that he is a ventriloquist and he uses it toso this sort of a drama we had. Lot of cultural functions were there. And then we had a lot of group activities in the thing. The idea was to draw people into the this thing. And then we used to have this thing...you know we had people from Kashmir, from Assam...so everybody had to come in their natural attires...Kashmiri attires, Assamese attires...that sort of thing. So, we tried to find it a national integration, etc. This kept us busy. And...picnics, we used to go. Dr. Mehta, you have seen....we used to go there, seniors, juniors and all that. They didn't have that sort of a divide between the seniors and the juniors. Some of the seniors, juniors, we were all there working together. And since most of the people were in hostels there...there were day scholars also, who were living from Bombay...some of them could mix with us...otherwise they were slightly aloof. But this living together brought us closer together and we had lot of fun. You will see a lot of photographs, our picnic...where girls and boys, they go and all these things. And...otherwise...you know we didn't have a canteen. So, there was a shed, garage...car garage...it was a big compound...I don't know whether it belonged to Godrej or something...old bungalow...lot of greenery and all those things. And there was a garage at the back. That was the mess. And the girls used to have a hostel in the area itself. In the



institute itself they had a hostel. But boys had to come from other places. So, during the lunch hour, we had to go there. There was a lady, they called her Mummy. She was the mother-in-law of a Tata Institute graduate. She was running that mess, so she would...but some of us could not afford that much of money there. So, we would come out of the gate. Out of the gate there used to be a sitting bhaiyya. And that bhaiyya would be having chai or paan. So, we would take a piece of paan, take some chai, and go back. Only one night meal we would have. And during those days, in Bombay, they would give ration. You couldn't get rice and all those things...so when you go and buy...if you want to get rice or something, they will give you instead of that a piece of bread. And you know...dates. It's all part of the ration that we were getting. That we have to eat. And there was no full quantity of rice. That was because of thedays that was continuing.

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And...queuing was something that was there. But as youngsters, you know, it was a thrill for us...when the bus was moving...from...supposing it was coming from the institute...jumping out of the running bus was a thrill for us. So, that was the Bombay system we picked up in that place. Otherwise, life was full of activity. In the hostel also...midnight...we would come down at 1 o'clock. We had some fellow...Come ya, let's go...12:30, 1 o'clock let's go where...Sher-e-Punjab. So that was a sort of free type of life. Some of us got to know each other. And quite a few couples were classmates in Tata Institute. Though unlike now, they were all living separately. Still, coming in the institute closer, that developed into closer contact...they became



husband and wife. We know quite a few...like Shankar and then Pathak and then Kalla. Quite a few...and Sakhwalkar married a very senior man. So, it's an area which the institute...as I told you, it bounded our personality. Today what I am...maybe if I continued in a conventional college, my personality would have been not the same, it would have been entirely different...now it's very broad based. You don't get desperate. You know, you say alright, there's always a way out. That's what I always write. I have published two books of Kannada poems. One is called 'Look Beyond Yourself'. That's the Kannada poem. It contains a number of poems. The title of the book is Look Beyond Yourself, in Kannada. The latest that has been published is Inner Voice and Outer Voice. That's another one with poems. So whatever things come, I put it into language. So, many of these things, maybe I can trace it back to the life I spent in Bombay as a student in Tata Institute, as well as the environment outside the institute and the relation between teachers...it really is something. Though I was earlier a lecturer...I was very formal as a lecturer in those days. Used to have a distance between...except in sports. But there, you had a lot of freedom to ask things, and that sort of an attitude you could...so when I now handle class, I'm a different teacher than I was.

AM: If you look at the field of Personal Management Labour Welfare itself, very briefly could you say how it was...when you were a student it was probably a different kind of a...

MSM: There was nothing like that at the time...it was only Labour Welfare. That means, as I told you, it's a parental approach to the workers. See, you are a father, so you have to take care of your children and the workers are your children...and you know what is good for them. So give them what you think is good. Today, over a period, I say, it's not what I think is good for them. I must know what they think is good for them. Then, provide that sort of a service. So these things



were not there at the time, when I was there. And there were not many books written by Indian authors. Personal Management and Labour Welfare was not much heard of at all at that time. Even in the what do you say.. . Except a few industries which were managed by the Britishers. Most of them were managed by....I know ITC for example, were Kalla worked, was managed by the British people. And there were many American industries in those days. And, there, all the systems were followed according to the things that were happening in those countries. Here, the welfare officer's position was like a head clerk. He didn't have a status as a welfare officer. They were welfare officers like a hat rack where any hat could be thrown. You don't know whether it fits or not, you put it there in the rack. So any job which does not fall in any specified thing...not an accounts job, not a engineering..give it to a welfare officer. And welfare officer, his security also was not good. And somehow, the people thought of welfare officer as a general category person...if there is a taxi to be arranged ask the welfare officer. Even now, quite a few industries have it. That, you know, all these things are in the hands of the welfare officer. But only when institutes like for example a Tata Institute man, will not accept it. He says no...so he establishes a status or a position in his profession. That's what happened. When we came here, there was nothing. A man who was my boss in ITI was a...he had done MA in English or something. He was there because the managing director knew him, and this gentleman had worked somewhere in their department. He became the head of the personal department. But, after my going there, I created that department...and the personality of a personal officer...that had to be established...which was done. And this is slowly happening. Many of the TISS graduates go, or Xavier's people...because TISS has been the example right from the beginning. That was the first institute, and the others...many of the people who are teaching there are also products of TISS or they went to the other places. So that was one which



establishes the independence of the profession. It is not the mainstream. It is not an addition to the...it need not be the appendix...it is the main organ of the organization. That has been there.

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And...the Tata Institute by giving the knowledge and training people who are getting jobs...that has helped a lot of things. That is one thing that has happened. Secondly, the systems have been there. The...how...for example...when I joined Bosch. At that time it was not Bosch, it was called Motor Industries Company...MICO was Motor Industries Company. It was an Indian thing, but German investment...though German technicians were there, managing director was German. There, the same problem was there. If a German or somebody would just say...or a technical man, engineer would write a....'promote this man', he would be promoted. So, a Tata Institute man would say Why, Why should he be promoted? He would go back to the engineer...What makes you recommend? Are there no other persons who ought to be promoted? So he starts asking questions...so that man, thinking that Welfare Officer will carry on or Personal Officer will carry on whatever orders are given is slowly...is not there. Now, it's a full fledged independent department. The managing director asks, you know, so-and-so has asked this man to be given...do you think it should be done. He asks the personal Manager. The personal manager has come to a stage..when earlier he was thought of as the person who would bribe the union and that sort of a thing. Today, the personal manager is a person who is...he is a man who is a technician in his own area. The technicalities and other things he knows. And he is a part of the management process. So, there is a lot of improvement in the status of the....that again, there are



different levels at the institute. As I told you, the institutes like Tata Institute and all that, that level, the others are trying to reach and many of the institutes have come up to that level. For example Roshni Nilaya in Bangalore. But that again is a...as I told you, there, right from the beginning the person is trained as a personal manager. Even as they join, your specialization is almost starting...unlike here. So in our job, we bring in lot of inputs from other things we have learnt. For example from the hospital social work, we know what...for example, the situation is that, today...I've written some articles. One of them is HR. Now, nobody calls it personnel management. HR. HR means Human Resource. I say, a resource means what? Resource means something which we use to produce something. That is a resource. So, today human being is a resource. You use it to produce whatever you are producing. The wealth that you are producing. Now, when you have a machine, or when you have another resource, all our resources, like human being. When that machine becomes useless you scrap it. Now, human resource? So, always I raise the question. Do you scrap a human being? Because it so happens that while working he makes an accident. Whatever work he was doing, he loses his finger, you pay him compensation, alright...but he can't do the original job, because he is no longer a useful resource. You want to send him. So I try to do this...look, let us find jobs which are existing today where we want people to work...where the work can go on with this disability. Locate those jobs. Or if there is some special adjustments that have to be made so that you can enable this person to work in that job, you need not throw him out of the job.

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Can you keep him there. So this sort of a thinking....because now it has become...see human resource, as I told you, this is a concept of a resource. As long as it's useful, keep it otherwise, you are out. So HR, you can look at it as human relations. So, my relationship is there as long as you are useful to me, or my relationship could continue beyond that. The third one I say as Human Rights. Yes, this is my right to throw you. But is it not his right to see that he lives, his family and all that. And then, one more way you look at it. What about Human Rehabilitation? So when I talk about HR it is not only Human Resource. You have got all these other dynamics of human life. Let us look into all these things. All these thoughts come in mainly because, for example, what Mehta taught...somebody elsethose things will be just working in our mind. That let's look at it from another point of view. This is the point of view that we accept, but beyond that, can we do something. And we can innovate some of the things. For example, we had to see that people retired. Voluntarily, they go early. We offer voluntary retirement. So, there are two ways of doing it. Paying him, compensation and sending him...so we said, alright, let us also look at responsible....supposing a driver, I can get taxis now. See we had a petrol station inside the factory to maintain all the cars and trucks. So we said alright, why should we all have this...we told the driver, look, would you like to go, because we don't require. Now what we will do is not pay money...we will give you the car at a very concessional rate, you become the owner. Instead of us calling a taxi from outside, we will call you. We will give you business, and you will have the freedom to be useful to us, and also you can go. You can earn much more than what you do. So, with that sort of a thing, we try to bring in and reduce the strength. So, all these sort of innovations in these things are coming in, in the field of Personal Management. And today, unions are not as powerful as they used to be. So the management has to do both the jobs. How the union would have done it if they were strong. So how much you get them involved in



the decisions that you make. All these were things which we had discussed in our training programs. Now those thoughts are coming. Whatever is possible. Many of our students are doing this sort of a...thinking...rethinking or a out-of-the-box thinking about things that have to be done in this area. And some of us are writing books and sharing our knowledge with people who are there, and tell the youngsters, look you are coming here, keep these things also in mind. So, it has been a very, what shall I say, very rewarding experience of the time that I spent at the institute and later on also. So if you look back and say do you have any regrets. I say no, not much in this area. So Tata Institute has been a great help in this thing.

AM: On the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee if you were to say give one message or talk about the ISS in one sentence, what would you say...

MSM: I can only wish that along with the new expansions and new specializations that are coming in, the institute will still keep in mind the mission it accomplished in the olden days when it's focus was to make the students who go through this program a person who can contribute his knowledge, his energy, all these things, in many fields, not only in the field of his own specialization. So, secondly, this need not be confined to his own profession. It has to spread into other aspects of his life also, apart from his professional career where he has to ensure that by growing up, he brings up the name of Tata Institute. At the same time, he may not have had the opportunity to fulfill all his dreams as a product of the Tata Institute in the career that he might have chosen, that he might have got into, but there are many many avenues that are available to him where he could make use of his experience, his life in the Tata Institute. I hope that that could be achieved by the Tata Institute and let me say I'm very proud, and my children and my family are also very proud that I belong to Tata Institute.