CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem :

The Community Development Programmes (CDP) is an integrated rural reconstruction welfare scheme undertaken by the Government of India. The purpose of this scheme is to ensure comprehensive development of the rural areas, the people as well as to bring about qualitative change in the standard of living. The Community Development Programme has greater bearing in sustainable improvement of social and economic conditions of the people in the rural areas. In the Indian scenario, this programme approaches at initiating pragmatic development programmes in the field of agriculture, education, health, animal husbandry, sanitation and cottage industries at the grassroots level. More than 70% of Indian people live in village. But the rural masses are still in the trap of marginality despite having 65 years of development efforts of the Govt. of India. The Panchayati Raj Institutions are already functioning in
decentralised and democratic manner to empower the common people politically, improving the living standard economically. The 73rd Constitution Amendment Act added an unprecedented dimension in empowering rural people and ensuring economic development by decentralizing sufficient power to the local bodies with added phillip to resource mobilization. But experiences reveal that even this new dispensation is yet to bring about positive results in this direction. The successful implementation of the proposed programmes depends largely upon the active participation of the people and the government. The Government of India is aiming at the implementation of the developmental schemes in the name of Community Development Programme through the newly constituted Panchayati Raj Institutions. The CDP is based on the assumption that social and economic development schemes would not be successful unless the village people were convinced of the need of participating activities in the development schemes. Theoretically the basic objective of the CDP is to make the rural people as development Participants. Development is a recurring theme in the vocabulary of the third world countries. The leaders used every platform, legislature, executive decision making, popular addresses and International forum to articulate their concept of development. Development is not mere modernization. It is basically intended to bring in a desired change in various sectors of social life, extending its effects to larger social areas, and at the same time taking roots in the
national soil so as to make the whole process of change indigenous and legitimizied.

Politically, it introduces structural differentiation and a drive for developing their capabilities. Administratively, it calls for a functional specialization and need for professional efficacy. Economically, it directs its efforts for an increase in the gross net product and aims to improve the standard of living. Socially, it encourages secondary structure and strives to vitalize these structures through social mobilization. Participative association of people in the process of development is strengthened by social context of development. Mahatma Gandhi interested a people centered process of development with mobilization and organization of community forces. The aim was the mobilize people and make them aware of the process of change, to politicize the machinery and make it responsive to the needs of the community. (SAJOSPS : 2006 : Page 47)

The concept of community development based in the developed countries is not similar with the developing countries. Because the developed countries used it for both rural and urban areas, whereas the developing countries used it only in the rural areas. However, the concept of CDP of the present form is mainly an American concept. But no effort was made by the Indian state to decentralise powers to the grassroots level in rural India until “Balvantrai Mehta Committee Report”. The B. M. Committee recommended for setting up three-tier Panchayati Raj in our country to
ensure people’s participation in the process of development. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was in fact, the first in post-colonial India to raise the issue of democratic decentralization for development as a means for working people’s initiative and mobilizing their voluntary and spontaneous participation. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was accepted by National Development Council in 1959. But there are certain difficulties in PRIs which suffered from initiating development process since its implementation.

In 1977 the Janata Dal came to power and the Janata Government appointed the Asok Mehta Committee to review the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions. The most significant recommendation of the Committee is for the creation of two-tier system of Panchayatiraj Institutions. One remarkable feature of the Asok Mehta Committee recommendation was that it emphasized the political parties to participate in Panchayatiraj Institutions affairs. Again the Committee also suggested to provide for reserved constituencies for the SCs and STs. Interestingly Asok Mehta Committee observed that Panchayati Raj Institutions were exclusively dominated and controlled by the socio-economically advanced sections of the society and it appears that Panchayati Raj Institutions of India function marginally and largely fail to fulfil popular expectations.

Possibly because of such loopholes in the administration, the Govt. Of India was hurry to give it a new dimension. Hence the first half of
1993 witnessed a flurry of activities at the level of Central Government aimed at remedying this dismal situation. As is indicated, the Govt. of India passed 73rd constitutional amendment bill which brought about a new innovation in the grassroots level but also for entrusting them with a greater role in decision making and development functions in matters of their immediate concern. Significantly the Act seeks to make Panchayats not only as instruments of rural development and decentralized planning but also as institutions of self Government. However, after a gap of 14 years, in Assam Congress (I) Govt. hold Panchayat election in Feb/1992. To keep conformity with national pattern, Assam Panchayati Raj Bill 1994 was passed by the Govt. of Assam in March 1994. Following the new dispensation again Panchayat elections were held in March 2001 and election were fought completely on party basis. The new arrangements should have reduced the burden of the Government and increase the responsibilities of the people. But still the development process in the Panchayat level has not been spearheaded and up to the popular expectations.

So it would be our sincere endeavour to closely look into the entire programme of community development and its practical role in rural reconstruction to look into it intensively, as to how the community development project represent the grassroot universe and how rural society is reflected into PRIs and how the different rural social groups like SCs, STs women, Muslims and the Minority Communities are getting the shares
of development. We feel it necessary to make an empirical investigation into the impact of the CDP in the rural areas and to observe the implementation of the various programmes for the rural milieu.

1.2 Brief profile of Barhampur Block:

The proposed research in an attempt to understand the development scheme of PRI’s under CDP operating in Assam with special reference to Barhampur Block under Nowgong district and 15 km away from the district headquarter Nagaon subdivision. The area under the Barhampur block is full of human and natural resources, but despite the available resources the block area remains totally backward in all aspects of development. There are 18 block, in Nowgong district and Barhampur is one of them. The block contains, one Anchalic Panchayat, 11 Gaon Panchayats and 84 villages. The total area of the block is 124 sq. KM, while the number of population is 68,604, according to 2001 census. The number of male is 35241, while female population is 33358. As per the 2001 census the ST population is 2412 while the SC population is 3257. The block areas are equally inhabited by Muslims, Tribals, SC, ST, Tea garden labourers and the caste Hindu Assamiyas.

The block is a border of Karbi Anglong district, where the worse situation have sometimes been occurred. The people under the block is politically very conscious. So the present study of community develop-
ment in Barhampur block under Nagaon district assumed importance. The Govt. of India has laid a special emphasis on Community Development Programmes. But in true sense the programme did not able to win the heart of the rural masses in bringing about a total revolution for change among the rural people. It is therefore felt that a micro level study on Community Development Programmes would be most appropriate to re-examine its impact on rural social change. Hence the present empirical study of, community development on Rural Reconstruction with special reference to Barhampur Block in Nowgong district has been undertaken to fulfill the gap of our understanding on the role of the Central Government sponsored programme of Rural Development and their consequent impact on rural society.

1.3 Theoretical Approach and Inter-Disciplinary Relevance:

The proposed study of community development is mainly sociological in nature. The approach is in fact developmental with a Politico-sociological dimension. It is also interdisciplinary in orientation and has direct relevance to political sociology, political science, Economics and Anthropology. The study has tried to fill in the gap of our understanding regarding the role of community development programmes through the grassroot decentralize democracy. Here we have taken up a participatory democratic theoretical position in connection with the present policy
of democratic decentralisation of Political, administrative and economic power. We will examine the participation & share of people in the developmental process through the twin process of local self-government and Community Development Programmes in the light of the theory of participatory democracy. It is expected that the proposed study will help to discover the original or the first hand knowledge on rural development. Here, we will undertake the study in terms of some of the leading theories like democratic decentralization and rural leadership to make it logical and comprehensive as well as an effort to examine the theory and practice of democratic decentralization, and participant development in an empirical setting based in Assam. Define the concept “development” more change and locate it as means of social change in rural area.

1.4 Review of Literature:

The literature available on rural development relating to various aspects of Panchayati Raj Institutions is quite extensive. After independence Panchayati Raj Institutions have been playing a significant role to facilitate people’s participation and involvement in the attainment of development in the living conditions of the people within the socio-economic and political context of an area. Panchayati Raj is a historical and revolutionary step in the area of participatory democracy for development administration and has always attracted the attention of scholars both in In-
dia and abroad, academicians, political leaders, bureaucrats and researchers. The literature available on the topics relevant to the present research can be classified into two broad categories as (i) theoretical studies and (ii) empirical studies of the participation of the people through Panchayati Raj Institutions in the rural development programmes.

Mehta B. (1957) emphasizes peoples participation in the development projects. In its study report after visiting community development projects at different levels the author observed that decentralization of democratic institutions is an effort to shift decision centres closer to the people to enable their participation and to put the bureaucracy under local popular control. (Mehta 1957)

Rajni Kothari (1960) states that without a change in power relationship between the centre and the state, Indian democracy is bound to run into a deadlock and sooner or later flounder. Decentralisation is the only way of ensuring radical change through the democratic process and not in violation of it. (Kothari 1960)

S.R. Maheswari (1996) in his book “Local Government in India” made a specific context on the programme of community development. The author stated that the community development programme is certainly new but the idea underlying it, is not new to this country. As a mother of fact the idea is as old as the Vedas and was probably a notable feature of the Mohenjodaro civilization. He pointed out that the present form of com-
Community development programme is an American concept. (Maheswari 1996)

Mathur P.C. (1972) has carried out a study on bureaucratic response to development in Rajasthan state, found that Panchayati Raj and community development were the two bold steps in bringing democracy and development to the doorsteps of the rural people. But unfortunately the bureaucratic response to change and progress was not up to expectations. Hence bureaucratization of CDP has made it feeble to some extent according to Mathur. (Mathur 1972)

B.L. Mathur's (1975) book 'Rural Development and Co-operation' says that Rural development may be used to refer to processes of change in rural societies. Rural development is a multidimensional view connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improving the quality of life of rural poor. (Mathur 1975)

World Bank (1975) stated that a National programme of rural development should include a mix of activities including projects to raise agricultural output, create new employment, improve health and education, expand communications and improving housing. The nature and content of any development programme or project will reflect the political, social and economic circumstances of the particular country or region. (World Bank 1975)

and Strategy; has stated that some piecemeal programmes or projects on rural development are brought to the people in the rural areas and these are in many cases not consistent with their need structure. The adhocism in the planning of these programmes and half backed implementation strategies have raised the basic issue of what is required to be developed in these areas. This brings in conceptualizing rural development. *(Prasad 1977)*

Srivastava K. (1977) conducted a study to explore women and Panchayat Raj at Garhwal, Uttar Pradesh. He found that women elected members of the panchayat played a decision making role for the solution of local problems through various community development programmes. *(Srivastava, 1977)*

A book "Rural Development and Social Change in India" (1983) written by S. S. Thekkamalai has made an attempt to trace out the changing political system in rural India which can be observed in various types of changes particularly in development programmes. The book is a significant contribution to the study of village leadership. *(Thekkamalai, 1983)*

V. V. Rao and Niru Hazarika (1983) In the specific context of Assam, we find important contributions towards the growth development, administration and functions of the rural self Governments in the state.

Harichandran’s (1983) book “Panchayati Raj and Rural Develop-
ment" has studied Panchayati Raj with main objective of evaluating the role of these bodies in rural development with particular reference of Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that Panchayati Raj bodies enjoyed delegated powers and functions. Resources were inadequate to meet the responsibilities. Panchayati Raj bodies could be the instruments of rural developments only if they are provided with adequate resources. (Harichandran, 1983)

An empirical study was conducted by A. Bose (1986) of the movement for people's planning process in Midnapore District of West Bengal. The author has emphasised that the starting point of decentralization from the bottom should be the village and the framing of rural development plans should start with listing by villagers themselves. (Bose, 1986)

E. D. Setty (1994) in his book "Effective Strategies for Rural Development" stated that rural development is a generic concept subsuming several fields of development that fall under economic development, democratic growth and social injustice. The book emphasises that the planners, organizers, the administrators and the field workers have to take care of and be sensitive in understanding people, their needs and problems and working with them for their advancement and welfare. (Setty, 1994)

Madan Mohan (1995) in his book "Rural Development Administration" has focused on various crucial issues of rural development admin-
istration in India. This book also provide some very important information regarding sustainable rural development, empowering and functioning of Gram Sabhos. (Mohan 1995)

R.C. Rout and K.S. Singh (1995) in the book “Panchayati Raj in India” observed that in ancient time, the village enjoyed perfect autonomy and were governed by panchayat, a body of five leading men of the village. In those panchayats, the administration of village were put in and the panchayats used to decide civil as well as criminal cases. They were also responsible for cleanliness of the village, the upkeep of the roads, management of village temples, etc. During the Muslim Rule in India, the village Panchayat system remained unchanged, because the Muslim rulers cared more for urban areas. They introduced a new system of appointing ‘Kotwal’ who was responsible for the city administration or in place of the territorial Panchayats. (Rout And Singh, 1995)

Hans Raj (1997) Indian Political System observed that in the past states, during Hindu period as long as the villages paid the taxes, the state did not interfere in their working and thus the villages enjoyed considerable autonomy. The same position continued under Muslim as well. But the British rulers in India wanted to change the situation. Instead of decentralization, they followed the policy of centralization but found that unsuitable for India. During freedom struggle in India Mahatma Gandhi assured the people that in free India Panchayats will get back their lost
power and glory. (*Raj, 1997*)

S.N. Mishra (1998), in his article “Five Years of New Panchayat Raj System: A Review” has drawn attention towards certain basic and practical weaknesses of Panchayati Raj on the basis of its activities during the last five years in the country. He has also made some suggestions for the effective functioning of Panchayati Raj in India. (*Mishra, 1998*)

M. Pal (1998), in his article “Panchayats is Election Manifestos” has analysed comparatively the election manifestos of almost all the national and regional parties during the Eleventh Lok Sabha elections. He categorically denied that no other political party than the left parties are serious about decentralization of the powers to Panchayati Raj in the real sense. (*Pal, 1998*)

P. Dutta’s (1998) book “Major Issues in Development Debate: Lesson in Empowerment from India” is a collection of essays on grassroots development in India which has discussed issues on decentralization of powers and function and empowerment of people at the macro level in general and West Bengal in particular at the micro level.

The author has rigorously analysed the data relating to socio-economic features of the Gram Panchayat population, villager’s perception as well as leaders perception about the working of the system, people’s initiative and resource mobilisation etc. The study has revealed some of the anomalies in the working of the Panchayat system in West Bengal.
The author also discuss the concept and reality of sustainable development with reference to the Indian scenario and rural development which began after independence. The author also suggested women participation in the Panchayat Raj System and gave importance on education and universalisation of primary education. (Dutta, 1998)

M.P. Dube and Nunni Pädalia (2002), “Democratic Decentralization and Panchayati Raj in India” pointed out that democratic decentralization is the method of making democracy real through Panchayati Raj Institutions. The 73rd amendment is a historic step to revitalize the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. (Dube and Padalia, 2002)

S. Baluchamy (2004) in his book Panchayati Raj Institutions stated that the Panchayati Raj System in India has came into existence through a long process of evolution. The Panchayati Raj Institutions began to be gradually democratized in structure and were empowered to undertake increasing duties and responsibilities for local affairs, including civil services. This book is an indepth study of Panchayati Raj Institutions in one of the districts (Dindigul) of Tamilnadu, India. The study focuses on knowledge of the Panchayati Raj system, opinion of the adequacy of devolution of powers, resources, decision making etc, attitude and support of the state Government, nature and role of elected representatives to their work, qualities of leadership and their influence on the functioning of Panchayati Raj system. (Baluchamy, 2004)
A.K. Sharma’s (2004) book “Bureaucracy and Decentralisation is one of the most important contributions to the growing body of literature on bureaucracy and decentralization. The book examines the process through which public bureaucracies adjust their style and substances as they brace up to meet the challenges of decentralization. In the book the author has suggested various suggestions for the reforms bureaneray. (Sharma, 2004)

A book “Rejuvenating Panchayati Raj” (2006) written by Bhupen Sarma has made an attempt to understand how and why Gandhiji constructed the notion of self sufficient village republics emphasizing panchayats. This book emphasizes that the renewed concern for panchayats as instrumentality of democratic decentralization written a new liberal perspective has resulted in the seventy-third amendment of the constitution. (Sarma, 2006)

Hariprasad Chhetris (2007) “Panchayati Raj System and Development Planning” is a study that carried out to the functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institution in Sikkim particularly after passing of the 73rd Amendment Act, 1992. The book provides a platform for sharing the author’s experiences about functioning and faults of the PRIs. These experiences can prove useful for rural leaders while managing fiscal resources or taking decisions with for reaching and lasting consequences on the life of the villagers. The author made an attempt to study the struc-
ture and functioning of Panchayati Raj in the state of Sikkim with special references to empowerment of women, devolution of powers, participation of weaker sections of people in the developmental process, resource mobilization by the Gram Panchayats, the extent of autonomy enjoyed by the Gram Panchayats, state of benefits from developmental schemes and the role of bureaucracy etc. (Chhetri, 2007)

M. Aslam (2007) in his book “Panchayati Raj in India” stated that impartial social and economic development gets accelerated when common people identify themselves as active partners in the process of development. Though we feel proud of our achievements and development in various fields, but large majority of our people in the rural area still not active participants in the process of development. The primary reason for this imbalances is that the grassroots level democratic institutions do not have any significant role in determining the directions of development. The revival of the Panchayati Raj Institutions through the 73rd Amendment of the constitution of India was to correct this imbalance and to endow PRIs with the strength and prestige associated with self governance structures sanctified by the constitution itself. (Aslam, 2007)

A.K. Rostogi (2007) in his book “Rural Development Strategy” stated that in the process of rural development rural society as a whole moves from one step of the economic ladder to the next step ahead, thereby en-
hancing its social and economic status. A target group the rural poor has been identified for programmes of rural development. (Rostogi, 2007)

Sonit Kr. Bhuyan (2008) in his book “Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development” stated that in India where majority of the population live in rural area, the development of rural economy is a must for overall economic development of the country. Poverty and inequality are the two major issues which affect the path of development of our country specially in rural areas. The poverty alleviation has become one of the major objectives of Indian planning since the inception of First Five Year Plan in 1951. Accordingly a number of schemes and programmes have been introduced for alleviation of poverty during all the successive plan periods. (Bhuyan, 2008)

P.C. Swain’s (2008) book “Panchayati Raj” has examined in detail the process of present work of Panchayati Raj in the tribal situation of Arunachal Pradesh and examines the problem of adjustment of modern Panchayati Raj Institutions into an indigenous tribal framework. The author has made an effort to establish the gap between the indigenous tribal traditions and modern political process, adversely affects the pattern of relationship among the key Panchayat functionaries thereby determining the working of Panchayat system. (Swain, 2008)

katar Singh (2009) in his book Rural Development Principles, Policies and management stated that the major initial moving forces in com-
Community development was Prime Minister Jawaharal Nehru’s interest in the programmes. Nehru felt that one of India’s most important undeveloped resources was the people living in its some 6,00,000 villages. Nehru saw in community development the way to involve the village people in building a new India. He visualized that through their involvement in self-help oriented programmes would come the development of the people and people’s institutions, both of which are essential ingredients in moving India towards one of its most clearly stated objectives, that is, developing India into a viable democracy. (Singh, 2009)

J.K. Das (2009) has brought out a most unique and significant empirical research work entitled “Social Base of Grass-roots politics in Assam” which made an attempt to analyse the social bases of Panchayati Raj Institutions after the 73rd constitutional Amendment Act. He made an attempt to fillup the vacuum of our knowledge regarding the sociological appraisal of grass-roots politics in Assam. The author has grouped some very pertinent issues through an inquiry of social background features of the representatives of panchayats of a specific universe based in Assam for a broader understanding and generalization of grass-roots governance. The book deals with intensively the Panchayati Raj Institutions of Assam with a special reference to the district of Kamrup from a sociological perspective. (Das, 2009)

ral Development" stated that community Development as a concept, can be applied both to rural as well as urban setting. The book primarily deals with different dimensions of rural development with special reference to India. The book also gives various information of schemes of central and state governments for different target groups gives better understanding of rural development activities of Government. *(William and Charistopher, 2011)*

In the specific context of Assam Padma Lochan Bhuyan in his Ph. D. Thesis, "A study of the Community Development Programme on Rural Development" in Golaghat district of Assam stated that community development is a process for changing the traditional way of life. Again it is a method by which people can be assisted to develop themselves and for the welfare of the rural poor. The ‘Development’ and ‘Democracy’ both have a closed relationship. The value of democracy could be judged only when the people will get an opportunity to participate in the development process. The rural Development programme for development of rural poor was started in 1958. For last 37 years the Government has been launching various types of programme from multipurpose approach to integrated Rural Development approach. But the result of these approaches is not satisfactory due to loopholes of the implementing agencies.

In the thesis it was stated that the New Panchayati Raj Institution...
and the Jawahar Roger Yojana are an effort of the government to disseminate the democracy at the grassroot level. In India a series of programme have been implemented to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural areas and to ameliorate the condition of the poorest of the poor. The people oriented government function, often called community revolution, has its impact on Rural Development. Inspite of various measures from community Development to Integrated Rural Development, it has been seen that the rich become the richer and the poor become poorer. It has happened mainly, due to the faulty implementation of the programme at the grassroot level. Because the real benefits could not reach the target group or larger section of the society. Finally the author stated that the community development is a movement for progress of the country as a whole. (Bhuyan, 1998)

In this section some important articles, speeches and statements regarding Panchayati Raj Institutions which are gathered and appeared in different Journals and News Papers have been reviewed. These may be extremely valuable and referential information for the present research.

Mahi pal has stated in his Article 'Panchayati Raj and Rural Governance" stated that, 73rd amendment Act for all practical purposes may be considered as a part of the central Act. There are no two opinions about the fact that the central Act gave birth to the third generation of panchayats in India. The main lacuna of this act, however is that instead of clearly
specifying the functions and powers of panchayats, it has left it to the discretion of state governments. It is clear from the Article 243 G which says that the legislature of a state may, by law, endow the panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government. Such law may also contain provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon panchayats at the appropriate level subject to such conditions as may be specified therein with respect to (a) the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice, (b) the implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule.

It is however not mandatory on the part of the state government to implement this because the word 'may' is used in five times in this Article. It implies that power sharing with panchayats depends on the political leadership at the state level. He pointed out that in West Bengal where panchayat elections have been held since the 1970's even before the amendment because the political party in power had the political will to deepen decentralised democracy. (Pal, 2004)

Mathew in his article “Panchayati Raj and Rural Governance: Who cares for Economics” stated that the demand for decentralization or “Panchayati Raj” in India emerged in the context of the vigour and enthusiasm demonstrated by the Indian masses soon after independence. The
community development programme of the 1950's was an effort to channelise such enthusiasm. But the purpose of decentralization was not very clear in the 1950's and is still an unsettled issue.

He observed that in a society with significant economic inequality among the people, social aspirations diverge among different classes of people. Within about a decade it has been shown that these different aspirations can by no means be fulfilled under the early forms of decentralization. This disillusionment coupled with the so called ‘crisis of planning’ which was a reflection of the crisis in the macro economy of the country, following a constellation of economic events such as devaluation of the rupee, Chinese war, etc. proved that, everything was not well with governance in the country. He adds that a firefighting approach to address this—disillusionment was reflected in the cosmetic efforts in economic policy formulation between mid 1960’s and mid 1980’s the targeted programmes in agriculture and industry, the growth pole concept the redistribution with growth strategy, Integrated Rural Development Programme etc. The failure of the system to tackle the basic issues of development was undisputably proved by the end 1980’s. It was this failure that promoted an embracing of Globalisation and Liberalisation policies in the country. The Panchayati Raj Act 1992, irrespective of what it claims to be should be seen against this background. (Mathew, 2004)

Mehrotra in his article “Making Panchayats Accountable” argues that
while democratic institutions and democratic practice are important for good governance the latter is not guaranteed by the former in the context of Panchayati Raj Institutions strengthening people’s participation in the Gram Sabha is a critical prerequisite for making panchayats accountable to people.

This paper argues that Gram Panchayat should be accountable to the Gram Sabha in this context and the process of making panchayats accountable should be the business of Gram Sabha. *(Vaddirajn and Mehrotra, 2004)*

Dev has examined some important indications relating to rural India in the pre and post liberalization periods and finds the Rural India is not ‘Shining’ in his article “How to make Rural India Shining”. To make rural development more broad based and balanced, investment, technology and appropriate institution are needed. To make Rural India ‘Shine’ this paper has suggested 10 (ten) important areas viz. employment, increase in public investments, agriculture sector, water management, rural institutional reforms, Rural non-farm sector, Health and Education, Reduction in regional, Personal and Gender disparities, PURA model and basic services, decentralization and Governance where policy attention is needed in order to make Rural India ‘Shine’. India cannot ‘Shine’ Without the ‘Shining’ of rural India. He adds that the President of India APJ Abdul Kalam has been advocating implementation of the scheme PURA–
(Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas). PURA is a scheme to enhance physical, economic, knowledge, social and electronic connectivity in rural areas. The Union cabinet has recently approved the PURA scheme. This scheme should be taken up seriously throughout India. Generally the performance of many basic services like drinking water, health, education, sanitation, electricity, transport are weak in rural areas. Effectiveness of these services have to be improved by a rights based and participatory approach. The demand to improve the performance of these basic services should come from the people. \textit{(Dev, 2004)}

Shah has stated that the proposed employment guarantee programme will generate work for the poorest, it is also an opportunity to revive public investment in agriculture, tackle the prevailing environmental crisis that is gripping rural India and galvanise the Panchayat Raj Institutions. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) (2004) is a historic step and historic opportunity for socio-economic transformation in Rural India. \textit{(Shah, 2004)}

Vaidyanathan in his article has stated that the protagonists of the National Employment Guarantee scheme do favour entrusting the programme to panchayats and incorporating provisions to this end in the National Law. But this aspect is not articulated as strongly and emphatically in the public debate on the subject as on issues relating to scale and coverage. The campaign for a wider and better founded National Employment Guar-
anteed Scheme (NEGS) must be combined with a campaign to generate strong public opinion and mobilize elected Panchayatedars all over the country to bring pressure on the central and state governments to strengthen Democratic Panchayats and empower them to plan and implement all local development programmes. (Vaidyanathan, 2005)

Sumathi and Sudarsen makes an attempt to understand the working of the Panchayat system under the constitutionally guaranteed system. The case study of pappapatti village in Madurai district of Tamilnadu where dalits elected as Panchayat presidents are not allowed to function. This study began by following the dynamics of elections for the post of Panchayat president in pappapatti from October 1996 to April 2005. It illustrates the implementation or non-implementation of the process of transfer of local Governance to the local dalit community. (Sumathi and Sudarsen, 2005)

Phatak and Petel in the Article "Would Decentralisation have made a difference"? stated that the decentralisation to local administration and run by individuals more clearly answerable for their local performance, rather than being run by ministers who have state-wide responsibilities and constituencies. This article describes current planning procedures, and looks at a Canadian alternative based on public participation, consensus building and a devolution of local planning to local authorities. They pointed out that at the level of the state Government the Urban de-
velopment is not handled by a single department. There are separate de­
partments of housing, water supply and sanitation, industries and envi­
ronment, all of which have some role to play in terms of how cities func­
tion. This brings us to the concluding question. Are there any alternative
ways of planning the city and governing it? And how would the response
to a disaster such as the recent one have been different. The key to this is
a decentralised form of Government that allows a participatory process
of planning and concursos-based collaboration amongst various units of
governance. (Phatak and Patel, 2005)

Health indicators in India may have seen substantial improvements
in recent decades but quality and affordable health care services con­
tinue to elude the poor. Government provided health services only par­
tially meet the needs of the rural and urban poor in the informal sector
and making equitable and affordable medical care accessible to this seg­
ment remains a challenge. So far the better interests of the common people,
the community based health insurance (CBHI) schemes could provide for
other decentralized agencies of governances such as Panchayati Raj In­
stitutions. (Acharya And Rausom, 2005)

Pannaik has studied the participation of elected representatives be­
longing to weaker sections in the functioning of four Gram panchayats in
Orissa’s ‘Dhenkanal District’, in order to observe the extent to which nu­
merical representation has been successful in the actual exercise of power
by these sections, It finds that elected representatives were not able to properly calculate group specific interests or to exercise their own judgment in Panchayat decision making thus bringing into question the very notion of representation of marginalized groups through affirmative action. The representatives in a majority of cases were answerable to the elites of the village and remained under their control rather than exhibiting any accountability to citizens at large. Affirmative action thus, has not ensured the effective representation of disadvantaged groups in the Panchayat with respect to the participation of elected members, their responsiveness to citizens, interests and accountability in local governments. (Patnaik, 2005)

Rao reviews finding from a research project on the political economy of Indian Gram Panchayayts in four states in South India. This paper also examines how the functioning of the Panchayat system mandated by the 73rd amendment to the constitution has had an impact on the economic status of villages and the households within them. The survey covering 522 villages in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamilnadu. The decentralization experience of these four states shows significant variation, Karnataka was one of the pioneers of the Panchayat movement and was the first Indians state to mandate regular Panchayat elections. Fiscal decentralization has advanced the most in Kerala, with 40 percent of state expenditure allocated by panchayats. Kerala panchayats are character-
ized by high levels of villager participation and regular villagers meetings. Andhra Pradesh took a different route and, till recently, sought to energies a political alternative to the Panchayat system— the Janmabhoomi programme. Finally Tamil Nadu continues to have relatively weak Gram Panchayats with limited devolution of policy powers. (Besley, Pande and Rao, 2007)

It has also been argued that Community Development programme raised immense expectations. But there was a lack of enthusiasm among people in the community development programme because of the non-association of the people, particularly the disadvantaged rural poor and their representatives in the planning and execution of development schemes meant for them. The people were not sufficiently motivated and there was a lack of strong commitment to the interests of the people among the inadequately trained development workers. As a result dependence of the people on the Government for material resources continued and self help did not take roots at the expected level. (Editorial The Hindu, 1994)

In an article, George Mathew feels that the people’s plan in Kerala, a unique programme to strengthen decentralization through the local bodies has become an integral part of the people’s lives. A. World Bank Mission which visited Kerala state recently writes that Kerala’s decentralization programme is probably the largest of its kind in the world.
Three million people (10 percent of the state’s population) taken part. This is an innovative and a courageous new approach to rural development and local governance. It reflects a profound commitment to a total change in which the government governs to empower disadvantaged groups to voice their demands and to make institutions responsible and accountable to them. Ensuring the maximum participation of the people to discuss local development problems and governance issues is the hallmark of the movement. The people’s plan has several unique features, the autonomy granted to the local bodies to determine their priorities being the most important. (Editorial The Hindu, 1999)

In Tamil Nadu several panchayats in this state are in serious financial crisis. Local body says that they are not able to meet even the administrative and maintenance expenses, including payment of bills to the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board. Many development schemes could not take off due to paucity of funds and they have sought early release of funds from the state. (The Hindu, 1999)

The Eleventh Finance Commission has given enough viable proposals to enhance the Financial capacity of the panchayats. The commission has come to the conclusion that 73rd constitutional amendment has not significantly altered the functional domain of the Panchayats at various tiers. The Finance Commission found that Panchayat accounts and their audit were deplorable. The database was poor and no reliable data was avail-
able on finance, budget needs and development functions. (Editorial, The Hindu, 2000)

Though, there are some methodological and theoretical limitations of the studies under review, they undoubtedly provided significant insights into the structure and functioning of Community Development Projects through the aegis of PRIs and other statutory bodies and instrumentalities in rural reconstruction and development in different parts of India. These studies have helped us to understand the role of CDPs in shaping and moulding rural societies and the nature of financial decentralisation to the grassroots in the present neo-liberal democratic setup.

From the review of published and unpublished literatures as well as from the information that we have till now, no attempt has been made to study the role of CDPs in Barhampur block under Noajigong district of Assam from a Political Sociology approach. We propose to fill this vacuum in our knowledge and take-up a study of Community Development performance and its role in the qualitative Transformation of rural societies in Assam. We shall keep in mind the limitations and strength of the earlier studies conducted at different fields or states and do our best to make our study meaningful and relevant.

1.5 Significance of the study:

The Significance of this study has two important dimensions.
1. The study would be essentially an empirical research based on field work. Here both primary and secondary sources of date have been taken into consideration.

2. The study has tried to understand that the community development is basically a project devised for the grass-roots people and by the people. The study tries to unravel the myth and reality of peoples participation in the developmental process in the selected universe. assumes importance in the sense that it is essentially an empirical and intensive work on rural development through the bureaucratic organs of Govt. meant for the rural people. The study would be analytical where independent critical judgments will be made that may be helpful for initiating development efforts on the part of the Govt. policy makers, planners and administrators. It may also be helpful for the scholars to undertake similar research in some other empirical settings of the state of Assam to scrutinise rigorously the theory and empirical reality of rural development in our decentralized democracy.

1.6 Objectives:

The following objectives have been taken up in the proposed research.

a. To present a historical background of the District of Nowgong in general and the Barhmapur Block area in particular. along with the his-
torical growth of CDPs in Assam.

b. To assess the inflow of capital of rural development under the auspices of the CDPs.

c. To analyze the trends of development and the schemes undertaken in the area under the Block initiative through the CDPs during 10th Five Years Plan (2002-2007).

d. To look into the role of the panchayats in rural upliftment under CDPs and to identify the major beneficiaries in terms of social groups.

e. To explore the role of the government in directing and activating the community development programmes: The Role of the NGO’s.

1.7 Hypothesis:

In order to achieve these objectives we have tentatively developed the following hypothesis—

(a) The CDP failed to fulfill popular expectations of the rural areas because of inefficient handling of the programmes by the Government office bearers including the lowly qualified and inefficient panchayat leadership.

(b) The administration of the community development programmes concentrated almost wholly in the hands of bureaucrats and hence it suffers from acute red-tapism, nepotism and corruption, that ted participatory democracy a mockery.
(c) The defective and distorted operational mechanism makes democratic decentralization of financial power through CDP a failure and hence it makes a serious problem for the policy makers to fulfill the basic objective of participatory democracy.

(d) The role of the PRIs in translating the CDP into reality is not positive at all for rural upliftment since panchayats have suffered from party political wrangling and the actual beneficiaries are deprived of getting their begotted share of the development process, which once again supplement the failure of the objectives participatory democracy.

1.8 Methodology:

The main purpose of the present research work is to study the Role of Community Development Programmes in Rural Reconstruction during 10th five year plan (2002-2007) under the Barhampur Block of Nagaon dist. and to study the Panchayati Raj institutions as to how far they are functioning as instrument of participatory democracy (grassroot democracy) for development. For this purpose the data have been generated through extensive field work and collecting primary data we have used survey technology and put questions at the panchayat level. The questions contained in the schedule were related to the socio-economic background of the villagers, grassroots level participation, decision making process, role of Gram Panchayat, schemes of rural development, alloc-
tion of fund, utilization of fund, role of political party, peoples cooperation, role of panchayat leaders and local MLA's in relation to the Panchayat Raj institution in connection with the Rural development process. Along with formal questions or discussion contained in the questionnaire, informal discussions with other persons were of immense help.

We have also followed survey method to collect new facts on how the different communities SCs, STs, Minorities, including women's benefited by the community Development Programmes. Primary data have been collected through interview schedule comprising of questions.

The secondary data for the present study were collected from Block Development offices, various books, journals, party literature, pamphlets, newspapers, unpublished Ph.D thesis, official records and reports available at the offices of state Research centre, Gauhati, Zila parishad, Nagaon, Gauhati University Library, Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati, and Directorate level offices of the government, to support the views expressed by the respondents interviewed during field work. The data collected from both the primary source (field work) and secondary sources were qualitatively analysed in the thesis.

The present research work has been carried out in 11 Gaon Panchayat area under the Barhampur Block and so the findings can be generalised to the entire Block at the micro level. A total of 220 beneficiaries were
interviewed because the perception of the villagers regarding the func-
tioning of Gram Panchayat was found to be quite necessary. The villag-
ers were found to be more or less co-operative and provided a lot of
information but only after being convinced of the academic purpose of
the interview.

During a year long thrust in the field work, we have to face many
problems and difficulties in the interview process since the village people
are all the time busy in their personal preoccupations. Therefore, it is
extremely difficult to meet them in fixed date and time. Hence, more than
one visit was necessary for the researcher. Some officials and the elected
representative respondents were lukewarm in their response. As regards
to non-officials, in most of the cases, they were not available at their
residences or at their office. A considerable number of the beneficiaries
and elected representatives in the first instance were reluctant to disclose
necessary information, however, after repeated efforts, a large number of
beneficiaries extended their full cooperation in taking up the interview.

1.9 Some Conceptual Clarifications:

There are some concepts, which have been frequently used for un-
derstanding of the empirical materials on the Community Development
Programmes. The following are clarification of some key concepts used
in the Thesis.

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1.9.1 DEVELOPMENT:

Development is a process of growth in the direction of modernity especially towards nation building and socio-economic progress. The aim of development should be to enrich the quality of life, of all (Goel and Kumar, 2004). Development is used in numerous contexts. In all these contexts it denotes change in some sense or a state that has, normally been attained through some noticeable change. Again the term 'development' is being used in many ways in different quarters. The world development has become a catchword and is causing more confusion because of various interpretations given by different authors. According to Macdonald (1981), it has become easier to say what is not development than to say what development is. Bertrand (1972 : 233) feels that different meanings have been given to the word 'development' based on intellectual experience, social background and political purpose. The concept of development has been used in various aspects such as, sustainable development, participatory development, appropriate technology, basic needs, and gender-sensitive development etc. Moreover Development is less an economic and more a political and much more a social phenomenon. It is not development but development with social justice that is the main concern of the Third world Countries. Here in the present context we mean by the word development in sustainable sense and a process which ensures socio-economic development of the subaltern sec-

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tions of the rural areas by government programmes.

1.9.2 Concept of Participatory Democracy

Theorists of participatory democracy try to assimilate the ideals of direct democracy responsive and active citizenry, participation and quality in the modern states. The idea of participatory democracy is manifest in the works of Poulantzaz, Pateman and Macpherson for they draw insights from both liberal and Marxist traditions (Held 1987: 263). The concept of democracy implies that ultimate authority of governance should rest with the people. When this idea is sought to be implemented through the mechanism of representative democracy, it is possible that the people may become inactive after electing their representatives till the next general elections (See for details Aube 2003: 444). Besides, when the size of democratic community expands geographically and it includes a large population with a variety of composition in terms of race, religion, language and culture, the distance between the people and their representatives is likely to widen. Hence in order to stop that kind of erosion of democracy the concept of participatory democracy and its implementation seems most relevant in modern times. The expounder of elitist and pluralist theory of democracy including Robert Dahl and Schumpeter view modern democracy as primarily the rule of politicians in which ordinary citizens play a marginal role and argue that running of government and
formulating public policies are the task of professional politicians. But the concept of participatory democracy repudiates this model and views that political participation denotes the active involvement of people and groups in the governmental processes effecting their lives. Pateman (1970) favours direct participation and control over immediate local bodies complemented by party and interest group competition in governmental affairs which can realistically advance the principles of participatory democracy (Pateman, ibid : 404). The author points out that if individuals have an opportunity to directly participate in decision-making at the local level, they can achieve real control over the course of their everyday life (Pateman, ibid : 404). When citizens themselves play an active role in the process of formulation and implementation of public policies and decisions, their activity is called political participation in a democracy. The modern champions of participatory democracy argue that representative democracy gives only scanty opportunity to its citizens for participation in the decision – making process. Under the present system people have little knowledge about political problems, voters are indifferent to voting, representatives are averse to public accountability and corruption and abuse of power are rampant in the whole administration. If people get better opportunities of political participation, they will be inclined to discuss public issues elaborately, keep strict watch or the activities of politicians, and they shall be able to prevent the corruption.
and abuse of power (Gauba: op.cit: 447).

In modern larger states the objectives of participatory democracy are sought to be achieved through (i) Decentralisation of administration in which many decisions are left to local communities as in the case of expansion of panchayati Raj in our country and (ii) Extensive use of referendum as in Switzerland and practically in Australia. Thus, it a method of combining some features of direct democracy with representative democracy. Hence, participatory democracy sought to bridge the gap between leaders and the people by encouraging man participation in the welfare programme and making leaders responsive to the sentiments of local people.

We have adopted this theoretical position in analyzing the role of the twin processes of the PRIs and the CDPs in rural reconstruction. The PRIs and the CDPs are the best forms and statutory instruments through which participatory democracy can be transformed into reality through the policy of democratic decentralization and political, administrative and economic empowerment of the local people can be ensured.

1.9.3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND Community Development Programmes:

Community Development has been variously described as a process of change from old ways of life of Rural Community to new and progres-
sive one, as a method by which people can be helped to develop their own capacity and resources, as a programme for accomplishing certain activities in certain fields and as a movement with certain ideological background. 'Community Development is a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community with the active participation and on the initiative of the Community,' (Dayal, 1960 : 4). According to the Planning Commission of India, 'Community Development is the method and the rural extension the agency through which the five year plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages, (Government of India, 1951 : 223). For undertaking this new programme, the Government of India entered into an operational agreement with Government of the U. S. A. under Technical Co-operation Programme Agreement. Under this Agreement, 55 Community Development Projects were started on 2nd Oct, 1952, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, (Tyagi, 2000 : 438). According to S. K. Dey, the then Minister of Community Development and Panchayati Raj stated—'Community Development is a war against hunger, disease and ignorance. Thus he said that.' The war began on 2nd October, 1952. The war aim was to establish the "right to live" for men. It was directed against the triple enemies—hunger, disease and ignorance. (Dey, 1951 : 6). The aim of Community Development Programme is not merely to provide ample food, clothing and shelter, health and sanitation facilities in villages, but more impor-
tant than the immediate material improvement is the change in outlook of people, instilling in them an ambition for a richer and fuller life and developing the capacities of the individual so that he can master matter for himself.

So Community Development aims at the development of the community with the active participation of the people—it includes initiative, involvement, Sharing, etc. The people's involvement from initiation to implementation is expected to take place. The community development as a problem-solving approach, attempts to solve the problems of the people. The Community Development Programme in India was started in October 1952 on a nation-wide-scale. At a later stage the Panchayat Raj Programme was enunciated on the basis of the recommendations of the Mehta Committee as a measures of Democratic Decentralisation. Now the entire nation has come under the Community Development Programmes. A community development Programme is a conscious effort to bring about an all-round development in living standards of rural population. In other words, it is a plan of prosperity for the millions. The Government provides the necessary incentive by way of financial and technical assistance to the rural population, but the major part of execution is to be accomplished by the rural folk themselves. It is basically and substantially a project of the people, for the people and by the people. The intention is not to neglect the rest of the country, but to make sure of the
success by making a small beginning in a concentrated manner in comparatively smaller areas and then spread out to the rest of the country. Basically, this is the concept of the Community Development Programme (Maheshwari, 1996 : 45).

1.9.4. Democratic Decentralisation:

Democratic decentralisation associates people with the local administration and recognizes the right of the people to initiate and execute the policy decision in an autonomous manner. In fact, democratic decentralization is a political ideal and the local Self-Government is the applied form of this ideal. As a political structure democracy signifies a system in which every citizen takes part in the day-to-day affairs of the state. The concept of Democratic Decentralisation follows the principle of popular government by involving people directly in Administration. Democratic can be real when it maximises the amount of popular participation. Democracy Decentralisation aims at the largest possible participation of the people in carrying out the affairs of the government. The local communities are the best judges of their problems as they only can devise suitable ways and means for their solution. A centralized authority cannot play this role. Democratic Decentralisation is the method of making democracy real economically and politically through Panchayati Raj Institutions.
Decentralisation leads and give birth to 'transfer of power'. Rajni Kothari says that the transfer of power by itself cannot arrest the distortion of the development process. It is required to change the social context substantially. The rural poor, dispossessed, innocent and illiterate persons of the village are affected much by the widespread exploitation, hardship and inhuman condition prevailing in the society (Kothari, 1960). He writes "I believe it is possible to use these instruments, for inherent in them is a transfer of power to lower level. But it is also incumbent upon those who do this to see that this transfer of power to lower levels in fact becomes a transfer to the people..." (Kothari, 1960).

Democratic decentralization has a number of merits. One of the most important arguments in favour of decentralization is that it helps meeting the needs of the poor. If development is understood in terms of alleviation of poverty, inequality and material deprivation it must engage the involvement and mobilization of the poor. Decentralisation enables the rural poor to participate in politics and local level participation has been found to be effective in eradicating poverty.

Secondly, the central planning hardly meets the local needs. There is a variety in local situations. Decentralisation provides a mechanism which is capable of accommodation varieties encountered from place to place.

Thirdly, modernization may produce social disorganization and po-
litical instability. This has been the practice in many developing countries (Dutta, 1993 : 145).

The UN document entitled Decentralisation for National and Local Development argues that "The people will have a better understanding of what the government proposes. Through this understanding they would be more likely to adopt new ideas and practices, use the services offered, contribute their own effort and resources to the programme, give vitality to new institutions and make constructive adjustments in their lives that may be necessitated by the initial changes proposed thus making the changes enduring (U.N. Report, 1959).

Democratice decentralization in post colonial countries is not an end in itself. It is a political concept which aims at widening the area of people's participation, authority and autonomy through dispersion or devolution of power to people's representative organization from the top levels to the lowest levels. Participation in local government gives the people the real taste of democracy, increases their democratic consciousness, and educates them about their role and responsibilities as citizens. Participation by the people also helps the government identity priorities and take more meaningful decisions.

1.9.5 Rural Reconstruction:

Before Independence, the lot of the villages was very miserable, al-
though at least eighty percent of Indians lived in villages. Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian leaders laid great stress on the necessity for rural uplift and reconstruction.

As time passed, the government and people of India began to take more and more interest in improving the lot of villages. New roads were built. Dispensaries, hospitals, schools and milk collection centers were established. In many villages, community halls were also set up. Of late, the Panchayat system in the villages has been strengthened.

Villages in certain states like Punjab and Haryanan and Gujrat have reached a considerable level of development as compared to their condition in pre-Independent India. In these states, most of the villages are electricfied. They are connected with major cities with link roads. They have good arrangement for drinking water, drainage, milk collection, etc.

They have primary, high and secondary schools, dispensaries, community and Panchayat halls, etc. But the lot of many villages in certain other States, particularly the poor ones, such as Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Assam etc. is not quite up to the mark.

In the early decade after Independence, agricultural produce in India was very small. Thanks to the Green Revolution, this condition changed for the better. Now farmers began to get sufficient remuneration for their crops. The installation of tube wells also helped in irrigation and in increasing the produce.

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Added to these were better crop-yielding seeds researched by agricultural universities, insecticide, fertilizers, etc. Free electricity and water were also provided to the farmers in some States. Still, there is a dire need for establishing agro-based cottage industries in villagers to enable the villagers, especially farmers, to augment their income and also to keep busy. The level of literacy should be raised in villages to rescue the villagers from the evils of drinking, drug-taking, litigation, etc. They should also be told about the importance of small families. Much still needs to be done for the uplift of villages in most of the States in India.

1.9.6. Panchayat Raj and Panchayati Raj Institutions:

Panchayats are an ancient form of local Government based on the idea that when five (panch) elders come together, God will present. The word Panchayat possibly indicates that the number of those who originally constituted the council was five; but there is no evidence that this number was adhered to with regularity. The term has almost completely lost its numerical connotation and means only an association of people for doing administrative or judicial work. Traditionally, Panchayati Raj has been looked at as an institutional means for providing services and facilities. But in the new context it is meant for not only services and facilities but also growth with equality (Palanithurai, 2003: 17).

In the cherished dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and other nationalist
leaders, India could attain 'Ram Rajya' by returning to some of the golden traditions of ancient India and reviving the indigenous institution more suited to the Indian culture. Gandhi was convinced that village Panchayats have enormous potentialities organization based on grassroot democracy, mutual cooperation and voluntary efforts. He was firm "the greater the power of Panchayats, the better for the people." (Tyagi, 2000 : 457).

Thus on attaining independence, the establishment of Panchayat Raj was accepted by the nation as a goal. In the Constitution of India, Article 40 in the "Directive Principles of State Policy" says : "The State shall take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable to function as units of local Self-Government." Almost all the state's were quick to introduce the Panchayati Raj as per the "Directive Principles." Today after 73rd Amendment Act, Panchayat Raj is mandatory for all over the country for successful implementation of Democratic Decentralisation in Rural areas.

Panchayati Raj Institution means, the institutions of Panchayats like-Gaon Panchayat, Anchalik Panchayat and Zila Parishad, through which the objectives of Panchayati Raj for the strengthening the grassroot democracy and rural development have been achieved. Hence, in the thesis we have exclusively used this term to mean the statutorily decentralized political agency of local self-government operating in the Indian state of Assam.
1.9.7. Leadership:

'Leader' literally means a person who leads or has the capacity to lead. The persons who occupy formal positions of strategic importance for introducing new values in the community may be called leaders. He must work with driving force for change and progress in the community. The leader exercises the power of a society, of a group, the government or an institution for a common cause. The leader is one who has power and authority (Majumdar, 1967). The individuals who are the leaders in an organization regarded collectivity. The activity of leading a group of people or an organization or the ability to do this the leadership involves-'Establishing a clear vision', sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision and coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders. A leader steps up in times of crisis, and is able to think and act creatively in difficult situations.

Leaders and Community Development Programmes:

Community Development needs for its leadership positions persons with zeal, time and energy for participations in the programmes combined with a command over the different groups of the village community. They must work with driving force for change and progress in the community. They must be full of vigour, able to communicate effectively with indi-
viduals and groups. They can create unity in the group, apart from these leaders, experts and specialists in agriculture and other fields have a prominent place in implementing the programmes for social change (Thekkamalai, 1983:23).

Thus the concept of leadership is not concerned only with the power, position or authority or decision making capability which one acquired in a democratic or other ways. It is concerned with the role performance according to the needs of the society or community. In the present study, the representatives (members, and presidents) who have occupied positions in the decision making body namely, the PRIs and performed their role in meeting the needs of the society and the community have been considered as leaders.

1.9.8. N. G. O's:

An NGO is an independent, flexible, democratic, secular, non-profit people's organization working for and assisting in the empowerment of economically and socially marginalized groups (Goel and Kumar, 2004). The human welfare cannot be achieved only by the government organizations as it proved beyond doubt that there is a need for an agency, other than the government, to meet all the obligations and responsibilities of the government in promoting human welfare. (William and Charistopher; 2011:126). Below are some of the important goals, in
terms of NGOs working for rural development have been enumerated by Reddy (1977).

(a) To help the people themselves in their endeavors to progress.
(b) To promote the growth of inherent potential among the people.
(c) To initiate a process of participatory development.
(d) To bring about social justice for the poor and create awareness about their right and duties.
(e) To promote growth in social, economic and political aspects of life of the rural people.

1.10 Schemes of Chapters:

I. Introduction.

II. Community Development Programme through Ages: A review.

III. The role of Community Development Programmes and Motivation of leadership and Quantitative change in Barhampur Block.


V. Social base and popular feedback on the Community Development Programmes.

VI. Conclusion and Summary.

The chapterwise brief analysis may be indicated below.

The first introductory chapter consists of importance of study, Brief
profile of Barhampur Block, theoretical approach and interdisciplinary relevance, review of literature, significance of the study, objective, hypothesis, methodology and scheme of chapters.

The second chapter presents Community Development programmes through Ages. Here we would deal with a review of community development programme at the International and National level.

The third chapter deals with the role of Community Development Programme in rural reconstruction of Barhampur Block. This Chapter contains of secondary data deals with analysis of the quantitative changes of the community development programme in Barhampur Block which covers— IAY operation plan (2002-2007), allocation of fund and achievement under SGRY, SGSY, PMGY and other schemes under Barhampur Block.

The fourth chapter with the role of NGOs. This chapter mostly contains the various schemes implemented through various agencies, department like DRDA, State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRD), Panchayat and rural development and Block Development offices. This chapter displays the activities and progress of various works in Tabular form.

Chapter fifth deals with the Role of Community Development Programmes in village community and collecting of primary data preparation of questionnaires. The survey method has been chosen for the
present study in different levels—Panchayat levels, household level, beneficiaries of Community Development Programme. The survey was concerned mainly with the following nature as it is indicated in the different table—Beneficiaries family income, Castegroup, religion, housing pattern, origin of family, schemes taken under SGRY, SGSY, IAY, PMGY, Allocation of fund, implementation of the scheme, opinion of the beneficiaries, Role of state Govts. utilization of fund, local MLA’s role, people’s co-operation with the development process.

Finally the last chapter draws the conclusions and summarizes the study from it. We also propose to present necessary suggestions to improve the conditions of village community, on the basis of our findings.

LIMITATIONS:

The present research relies mostly upon primary data i.e., the data collected through interview schedule. It was supplemented with the secondary materials available on the subject. But it is very difficult to give a real picture of the grassroots politics. We admit that the data may not be fully accurate and authentic as well. But we have accepted the data supplied to us by the beneficiaries, panchayat representatives and the Block Development offices and analyzed them in the thesis. Moreover, it is not possible to prove the authenticity of these data. It should also be noted that the results of this study might not be similar to that of its earlier and
later research study. However, in spite of limitations we have stated that our study will throw lights on the social foundation of grassroots politics in Assam.