INTRODUCTION

The present study looks into the role of Print Media in economic development in general and rural development in particular in Indian context. The need for such enquiry has become over-riding in the context of the fact that the contribution of knowledge as an input, other than conventional capital and labour is been increasingly recognized. Little work has so far been done to understand the role of Print Media in pushing the frontier of knowledge to the benefit of the population living in rural area.

One can identify three major components of Print Media - Newspapers, Magazines and Books. The present paper attempted to capture the role of Print Media on the basis of comparative study in two Blocks, developed Habra One in 24 Parganas (North) and underdeveloped Balarampur in Purulia District in the State of West Bengal. The study was conducted in the month of January 1986.

The design of the comparative study was made in order to highlight the status of Print Media in two different situations.

About the design of the present study was rather successful in capturing the role of newspapers in two different situations. However the other two components of the Print Media could not be studied as much in detail as the author wanted. An important problem in capturing the role of Books and Magazines was the total absence of reading habits of Books and Magazines in underdeveloped Balarampur in the context of high level of illiteracy as well as absense of library net work in rural areas.
In view of the above situation the present study has focused on the newspaper component of Print Media in pursing its research objective. The thesis begins with the concept in Chapter One in order to highlight the importance of individuals attitudes and motivations in developmental process. Chapter Two briefly describes the connection between Print Media and development. Chapter Three provides an overview of rural economic scenario in the State of West Bengal as a backgrounder to empirical studies conducted in Habra Block One and Balarampur Block.

As prelude to understand the role of Print Media in rural development Chapter Four presents a scenario of under-development in the context of Balarampur Block of Purulia District of West Bengal. The chapter also covers a brief description of development in the context of Habra One of 24 Parganas (North).

A comparative profile of daily newspaper reading in Habra and Balarampur Blocks have been provided in Chapter Five. This chapter helps highlight the psyche of newspaper readers in developed and under-developed conditions. An independent study of contribution of newspapers to rural development has been made in Chapter Six with reference to the coverage of rural development news in five newspapers during a given period of Jan 86 to June 1986 to have a critical assessment of the news types published in this newspapers. In Chapter Seven an attempt has been made to evaluate the findings of the field study conducted in developed and under-developed areas with regards to readers preference for news types. The thesis concludes with a policy overview of the present status of newspapers in rural development process. The Chapter Eight identifies the support system that can be developed for an improved role of Print Media, particularly local print media in rural development.
CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT
AND ITS INDIAN CONTEXT

Development means a process of certain forces within in system through which the existing system changes over a given time towards a desired direction. Therefore, by the term economic development we mean, a process through which the existing economic condition of a country changes and it is reflected through the change in the real national income. In doing so, the forces themselves change over time and again and ultimately there is a growth of real national income as expressed through the volume of aggregate physical output within a definite period of time. In other way, the economic development of a country may also be reflected by the per-capita real income which is expressed by aggregate real national income divided among its population.

In reality, it is understood that the fruits of the development can reach the people only when the equality in the distribution of income is ensured with a rise in the aggregate real income, raising the general standard of living of the people. So a mere growth of an economy in quantitative term without social justice can not bring true development to a country.
By the word social justice we mean, distributive justice in broad egalitarian socio-economic order, where every human being carefully develops his or her potential irrespective of his or her birth and irrespective of hereditary and social status. Some scholars defined the development by mere growth of income ignoring the distributional aspect of the income. Thus overlooking serious course quences of concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. History says that the development of social, cultural and other aspects of human life together can only be achieved when a better economic condition and better standard of living for the people are ensured. During the development process, the social institutions exert no small influence of human economic activities which they mould the individual's attitudes and motivations. For example, with economic development not only the rigidity of the caste-system loosens and but the resultant value system puts emphasis on efficiency and productivity of an individual with the process of development. The change in economic condition generates changes in the cultural environment. The economic development of a country also needs the development in social and cultural sphere. Social framework remains undeveloped if the fruits of the economic development does not reach the mass. Only with the changes in attitudes and motivations, new wants and desire can develop and which will in turn increase economic activities. An all round development is possible only when economic development becomes both a cause and effect of human values and attitudes. The family structures, the religious benefits, the social rigidities which are the essential contingents of the social structure, undergo changes with the process of economic development. In this context the perspective of development should originate in rural sphere for the overall development of the man.