Socio-economic development of a developing country like India is difficult to achieve unless the villages where majority of the population resides are developed in all respects. But unfortunately, the villages still continue to be a land of poverty although some development of the rural areas has taken place consequent upon the launching of Community development programme in post-independence period. This was the first rural development programme in India since independence. But the Community Development programme was not successful because it could not enlist the support of the rural masses. This programme was administratively conceived and, as such, its failure led to evaluate the role of bureaucracy in any developmental plan because bureaucracy plays a pivotal role in any scheme of development. The plans of development work, the programmes and methods for implementing the programmes all emanate from the bureaucrats.
Administration is a matter of judgement and discretion and it is for the administrator to decide what adaptation and adjustment is necessary in a given situation. To achieve rural development, urban-oriented administration should yield place to an increasing emphasis on rural development administration. Growth in population and the consequent problem of per capita land shrinkage has necessitated a more concentrated attention to the task of managing rural economy more efficiently, not only in the sense of increasing agricultural production but also in the sense of occupational diversification. Along with the problem of per capita land shrinkage is that of poverty. To remove poverty of the rural poor, the Government of West Bengal most effectively implemented the land reforms measures by distributing vested lands among the bargadars, share-croppers and agricultural labourers etc. Even financial help was given to these people so that they might purchase inputs for agricultural production. It has been observed that land reform beneficiaries cannot work properly because of the lack of proper implements for cultivation. They should be provided with the essential rudimentary
implements for cultivation. This is the minimum to start with. There has to be simultaneous efforts for subsidiary income generation for giving them viable economic strength and power for holding out against landlord-cum-money lenders. This involves a shift in emphasis from the current attempt of developing "bankable" schemes to a combination of schemes where each taken by itself is not viable but taken as a group and adapted simultaneously, a family can be put on a self-sustaining basis. The aim of the Administration in the context of rural development should be to identify each beneficiary family, provide them with a package of schemes relating to agricultural and allied activities and create conditions for such farmers to generate adequate surplus on a continuing basis. The administrators should remember that they should "administer the plans and programmes and not the people" if rural development is to be achieved.

It has been found on analysis of facts that to an administrator acutely conscious of the "art of possible" but who is also a dedicated and
resourceful user of the administrative instruments for combating poverty, operational issues are more important than theoretical policy formulation. In a few cases it has been shown that Panchayat Samities in Burdwan district of West Bengal could not forward "eligible cases" under IRDP to the bank for the year 1980-81 and 1981-82 due to misunderstanding of the concepts of "target group", "viable and technically sound schemes", etc. In such cases, the Administration from the district to the block level should educate the people's representatives. Project Officer, DRDA along with the Lead Bank officer should hold group discussion in certain camps of the rural areas. On the spot sanction of the schemes would reduce the time lag for fructification of the schemes of the rural poor.

Experience has shown that the "percolation effect" of technology-cum-urban oriented development had only a marginal impact on the standard of living of the rural poor and the "green revolution" resorted to in Burdwan district in the sixties of this century has bypassed the poorer section with
practically no effect on their purchasing power and consumption level. Here arises the necessity of promoting the socio-economic well-being of agricultural labourers, marginal and small farmers and other weaker sections of the rural population. This includes provision and strengthening of infrastructure in rural areas, provision of institutional finance, and special attention to backward areas and groups (i.e. tribals). The main task of rural development administration is to translate all these objectives into achievement. Thus officers along with their implementation machinery should administer the programmes of rural development and not the people as law and order and other aspects of regulatory administration will have its place depending upon the time and situation.

Another factor to which administration should pay attention is the wide use of technological input. This has been most conspicuous in the agricultural development of Burdwan district following the introduction of IADP in 1962-63 resulting in agricultural production far exceeding
the target in 1976. But many "generalist" administrators may not be interested in activating the people to use qualitative inputs for increasing production both in the agricultural and industrial sectors concerning small-scale and village industries. If properly trained in "Development Management", these generalist administrators may show a level of grasp of technological details almost that of a specialist. So the Government should re-orient the Administration to meet the growing needs of the rural people. This is necessary because very few well-planned and concerted attempts have so far been made to ameliorate the standard of living of the rural poor. In West Bengal, as in other states, various schemes under IRDP have been sponsored by the Panchayat Samities of respective Block Development Offices under the auspices of the Government of India. This is second major attempt to uplift directly, the living condition of the rural poor, in West Bengal, the first such attempt being the land reforms measures introduced effectively in West Bengal after Left Front Government assumed power in June, 1977. But NREP and IRDP programmes introduced very recently by the Government could not be expected to improve the living condition of the poorest of the
poor because they were reduced to mere subsidy giving programmes and considerable time was consumed to approve the schemes found "economically viable" and "technically sound" by the banks. Simplification of the procedure by the banks and administrators would really benefit the target group", comprising the weaker and backward sections of the rural population. Such "target-group-oriented" programmes are necessary because the gains of the development programmes e.g. IADP, CADP, RWP, FWP etc. undertaken so far were enjoyed by the vested class of the villages and not by the common masses which is highly required in a democratic set-up.

Democracy requires for its sustenance and flourishment a well-planned and well-co-ordinated approach to the development of the rural poor. Political democracy, it should be noted, cannot exist without economic democracy. And the success of economic democracy calls for an integrated approach to the problem of development. The Administration should realise that plans adapted on a piece-meal basis could not bring an all-round development of the people. Thus urban development cannot be promoted to the utter neglect of rural development. On the contrary,
rural development is the prior necessity, for the villages provide raw materials for the development of the industries. The moot point here is that rural development is an impending necessity in a planned economy. Thus rural development requires priority in a planning process, first, because urban or industrial development is possible only through the supply of raw materials by the villages and secondly, because majority of the people lives in the villages. The outlook of the bureaucrats should undergo a change because they belong to the upper strata of society. Generally, they view everything from their own class outlook. This goes against the interest of the rural poor. If the bureaucrats think that they are ones among the common people, they will really feel the needs and aspirations of the rural masses and act accordingly. A rural-development-oriented training programme can instil such an outlook among the administrators. Moreover, the administrators generally place too much emphasis upon legal procedure and tend to act within the bounds of law. This often hampers developmental works. They must weigh between the practical necessity and legal procedure. Where practi-
cal necessity dictates that legal restrictions should be overcome the administrators should act in that direction. Their service condition should be such that they are given this sort of latitude. They should have daily contact with the rural masses. Generally, what happens is that the Government officials living in the towns seldom pay visits to the rural areas. They generally assess the problems of the people on the desk of their office instead of going to the fields. A common blame against the bureaucrats is that a barrier still prevails between them and the village people. The bureaucrats are well-educated urban gentleman who are known to the village people as "Babus". They have a sneering attitude at the half-fed and half-clad rural masses and do not like to mix up with them. So also the village people maintain a distance from the Government officials and think themselves as ignorant and incapable of having any contact with the officials. This sort of barrier should be removed, first, by intensive rural development training programmes of both the Government officials and the
rural people or their elected representatives if rural development is to be achieved.

Thus a spirit of "co-operation" with the common people and "co-ordination" among different departments of Government should be fostered among the administrators if upliftment of the standard of living of the rural poor is to be achieved within a short time. As quantitative criteria like production and productivity have a vital bearing on "performance" in Rural Development Administration, the "management" approach is of more direct relevance here. Some deficiencies in development administration as noticed are stated below:

1) Development programmes have often been marked by a fragmented and compartmentalised approach in policy formulation on the one hand and inflexible one-way system of implementation on the other.

2) Inadequate planning resulting in duplication, wastage, compliance with formal instructions and indifference to the evaluation of the rural development programmes.
by the conspicuous absence of proper Evaluation and Monitoring Cell in the district have told upon the economic prosperity of the poorest of the poor.

3) Defective and inadequate supervision over the work of VLWS by the B.D.Os. or his subordinate officers have also impeded the rural development work.

Co-ordination will not be an efficacious instrument to improve implementation machinery if these deficiencies are not removed in terms of a well-designed management system. The members of the Panchayati raj bodies and blocklevel administrative personnel should undertake rural development management training at Government cost to administer the rural development programmes most efficiently and promptly. The poorest section will definitely stand benefited if these methods are adapted. The most important point to note is that any plan for rural development should come primarily from the rural poor or atleast planning for rural development should be done by involving the rural poor in an organised manner. Rural development through
the poor is a process of assisting primarily the rural poor in order to increase production in agriculture and allied activities and in rural industry and to maintain a certain balance between their agricultural and industrial development. The rural poor, it is reiterated, include landless agricultural labourers, bargadars, small and marginal farmers and poor artisans. In West Bengal, 3-tier Panchayat bodies have co-operated with the administration in the distribution of ceiling surplus land among the land-poor peasants and in protecting the justified interests of agricultural labourers by increasing their wage rates. The Panchayati bodies, specially the Panchayat Samiti, have been made an integral part of the administrative machinery of rural development in West Bengal.