Development, generally speaking, refers to transformation of society in a planned or desired direction to achieve certain societal goals. The entire world is divided by and large into under-developed, developing and developed countries. However, it does not mean that a country develops in all respects in the same proportion. A country may have more of political development but less of economic development. History shows that economic development precedes other developments, but there are instances showing that a large number of countries accord preference to their political freedom in relation to economic development.

Economic development has been taken as a basic process by the Marxist as well as the non-Marxist scholars. We have referred to the notions of development as propounded by the non-Marxists like Adam Smith, Ricardo etc. The main emphasis of this school is on maximization of profit, competition, division of labour and specialization in management and growth of economy. The Marxist scholars, on the other hand, have emphasised the role of historical forces in the economic development as
most fundamental. Marx considers economic relations as basic structure, and all other aspects such as state, government, religion and family etc. as super-structures. Like the non-Marxists, Marxists do not give emphasis to the role of psychology and diffusion of innovations.

There are several differences among the scholars with regard to the understanding of the process of development. These differences exist, by and large, due to the differences in their theoretical and ideological dispositions. The non-Marxist view implies that in a free market certain innovations take place which ultimately result in a competitive situation leading to economic development. Such a thinking puts emphasis on 'freedom', 'competition', and 'achievement' in the developed Western countries. This also implies, according to them, an advocacy for a liberal democratic way of life for economic success. However, this view is not shared by the Marxist scholars. Marxist scholars look at the process of economic development in terms of exploitation of the wage-earners, their suppression and accumulative surplus value in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Gunnar Myrdal feels that the countries of Asia should have a theory of "development" and "modernization" which would
be rooted into the analysis of their social and cultural institutions. According to Myrdal, there are certain basic institutions prevalent in the countries of Asia, which have hindered their economic growth. Explanations of economic development formulated on the basis of the experience of Western society are therefore not quite convincing. In a way Myrdal discards both "liberal" thinking and "deterministic" explanations of the non-Marxists and the Marxists, respectively, in regard to India and other countries of Asia. His main emphasis is on the understanding of specific institutions and infrastructural mechanisms in the process of development of the countries like India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Some explanations of development in the Indian context have been formulated by some scholars. These explanations can generally be grouped into four broad categories, namely, Weberian, Marxian, institutionalist and diffusionist. The Weberians perceive religious ethics or ideas, and not the economic and other resources as the determinant factor in bringing about economic progress. The Weberian view regarding capitalist development in India can be classified into two parts; the one which
highlights on the societal aspects hindering capitalist development; and the second puts emphasis on acceleration of capitalistic development.

The Marxian explanation of development puts a lot of premium on the economic aspect ignoring other aspects of development. Their premise is built upon the simple assumption that other forms of development automatically emanate from economic development. In India's rural context, the Marxian explanation of development is based on the analysis of the 'mode of production', which has been a bone of contention among the social scientists. The important reason behind this controversy is that the Indian colonial economy has given rise to combined social structures, wherein, side by side, a weak capitalist mode of production has evolved interlocked with a non-capitalist mode of production in agriculture. Another view of development is that Indian agriculture can be characterised today by the co-existence of the pre-capitalist relations of production and the capitalist mode of production. The third view is that the mode of production in Indian agriculture is predominantly capitalist in nature.
The central idea behind the institutional approach is that the problem of development does not exclusively fall in the realm of economics alone. In the institutional approach caste system, joint family, religion and some other cultural factors are seen as obstacles in the path of development. Development is, thus, a relative phenomenon.

The diffusionist approach to development looks at it as the consequence of diffusion of technological innovations and cultural elements from the developed to the underdeveloped countries. The assumption behind this approach is that the underdeveloped societies lack requisite knowledge, skills, organizations, values, technology and capital for accelerating the process of development.

In the contemporary world, the ideology of development has assumed great importance and universal acceptance. There are several perspectives of economic development related with different ideologies, i.e. Gandhian, Marxian and Capitalistic etc. These ideological elements (aspects of non-material culture) spread from one country to another. India has preferred a "mixed" approach.
In the context of diffusion of material culture in Indian rural society, the acceptance of technology in the countryside is significant. The application of science and technology has influenced the mode of production. But the diffusion confined to some sections has brought prosperity to a few privileged ones and this has further added to the concentration of economic and political power.

Rural development has acquired a special significance in the countries of the Third World. After achieving Independence, these countries have launched several programmes of rural development with a view to transform the social and economic fabric of its countryside. Thus, rural development incorporates interaction between economic, social and political processes. The developmental programmes aim at the expansion of community's productive power and a milieu for equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for upliftment of the people. Among the programmes of rural reconstruction, the Community Development Programmes and the Panchayati Raj have acquired a special impetus. Various measures and strategies have been adopted under the plans of rural
development for economic development and self-sustained growth of village community.

For understanding the patterns of development and change, it is imperative to examine the various approaches in the Indian context. These approaches are: (i) the "transformation" approach; and (ii) the improvement approach. The "transformation" approach refers to a radical change in the existing system in terms of distributive processes, production techniques and socio-legal reforms. It implies implementation of radical land reforms. The abolition of Zamindari, Jagirdari and various other measures might be considered as an evidence of the initial application of this approach. However, later on such measures were not continued.

The 'improvement' approach implies change within the existing rural social system. The emphasis is primarily on improving productivity and organization of production with a view to help the farmers through various developmental schemes. The "improvement" approach incorporates a set of proposals for organizational changes at the village level to bring about attitudinal and motivational changes among the village people. The
Community Development Programme and the Panchayati Raj are two such schemes which were implemented keeping in view this objective.

In agrarian societies, land is the main source of livelihood, and hence also a source of wealth and power signifying the socio-economic and political relationships among various sections of society. The traditional land tenure systems referred to land relations in the rural society. Thus, the redistribution of land holdings through land reforms brings about a change in the social structure and pins hope for building a new social and economic order. All sections, though differentially, have been affected positively or negatively by land reforms and other policies of rural development.

Land reforms have directly influenced rural development. Since no land tenure systems could exist in isolation, it should be viewed in the historical context of development and change, specially in a country like India where existence of vast regional variations with a variety of land tenure systems have their roots in social and political diversities.
In Uttar Pradesh, during the pre-independence period, there were three land tenure systems. They were, namely, the Zamindari, Mahalwari and Ryotwari. The Zamindari system existed in the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, and the Ryotwari system was in practice in western Uttar Pradesh. The main thrust of the Mahalwari system was to recognise the joint character of the village community and common right in land. The British had officially recognised three types of villages, i.e. Zamindari, Pattidari and Bhaichara. The Zamindari village was either under the control of a single landlord or it was controlled by several zamindars. The basis of Pattidari was a person's share in inheritance, which in case of Bhaichara system was shared jointly by co-owners.

All these three forms of land tenure had created a complex agrarian structure in Uttar Pradesh and thus gave rise to a number of complicated problems. Zamindars usually had no direct connection with self-cultivation. They did not cultivate their lands themselves. The entire land was cultivated by the tenants, who had to pay usually high rents. They were too poor to make any substantial improvement on the lands they cultivated.
In regard to Ryotwari tracts, there had been a steady increase of rent receivers resulting into the emergence of substantial number of cultivating tenants.

To conclude, the most obvious limitation of these systems was that landlords and the intermediaries extracted the benefit of the rise in agricultural prices, and of the improvements effected either by the tenants or by the government. Thus, a large proportion of produce from land in the form of rent was appropriated by the middlemen who were interposed between the actual cultivator and the state.

The Uttar Pradesh Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act was passed in 1951. This act created three types of land tenures: bhumidhari, sirdari and asami. These were comparable to some extent with the owners, hereditary tenants and statutory tenants. Adhivasi tenure was devised as a transitional category to take care of tenants of sir. Since the time of Zamindari abolition a number of other measures have been introduced obviously in order to make land reforms quite effective in restructuring the existing land relations. But in spite of all these efforts, the state has not achieved much success.
Various measures adopted to effect a change in the traditional agrarian structure aimed at the reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality. But apart from lip service, it seems that not much attention has been given to these measures in the state. However, it will not be correct to conclude that the impact of land reforms has been the same in all the regions, nor it has been of an even nature on all the sections of society. The impact of land reforms not only varied between the states, but also within regions, sub-regions, districts and even within villages.

We can say that the diversity of Indian social structure is very closely related with diverse land tenure systems. These together have minimised the effects of land reforms to a large extent. No uniform legislative mechanisms regarding land reforms could be effective because of these diverse patterns. Legislations appropriate to historical background, land tenure systems, social structure of the area, nature of cultivation and infrastructures could ensure desirable results to a considerable extent.

In India planning is crucial for development and development cannot be even thought of without planning
because through planning different states, regions and districts and blocks are tied to each other as one nation. For a proper understanding of the process of development in a district, it is imperative to view it from the perspective of the planning for development of a given state. Along with other developmental measures, the process of planning has given a new direction to the economy of Uttar Pradesh.

A comparison of per capita income and standards of living of the people makes it clear that there is considerable gap between the two. The state government, through its plans of development, has failed to bridge the gap between the national average and the state's per capita income. The gap even in the per capita income of the agricultural and the non-agricultural population is quite noticeable in the state.

The government of Uttar Pradesh through its plans of rural development has adopted several measures to reduce social and economic inequalities among various sections of society and to speed up the utilization of both human and material resources. The efforts were directed mainly to raise food production, industrial products, power generation, levels of education, health
facilities etc. Efforts have been made to rejuvenate cooperative societies, and improve means of transport, communications and electrification. All these efforts have brought about significant changes in the state since Independence.

In spite of all these changes, the effects of these programmes have been rather uneven. The programmes have failed to achieve its objectives to a large extent. The major benefits have gone to substantial landowners. The landless agricultural workers and small farmers have derived inconsequential benefits from these programmes.

The inegalitarian character of the agrarian structure is rooted partly into its history and partly today it is due to uneven effects of the developmental programmes. Prior to the abolition of landlordism, land belonged to the upper castes, particularly the Rajputs.

There was a close inter-relation between land ownership and caste hierarchy. Agrarian relations were marked by inequalities in terms of variations in the ownership of land. A small number of landlords from the "entrenched castes" owned most of the village land
while a large number of small peasants had to depend for their existence on small holdings. And at the bottom, there existed a vast majority of the landless agricultural labourers whose socio-economic conditions were even worse and pitiable. The landowners invariably belonged to the traditional upper caste groups; the tenants to the intermediate castes; and the agricultural labourers to the "untouchable" and other lower castes.

Various programmes of land reforms which could have led to a radical change in the agrarian structure and ushered in some distributive justice had failed to bring about the required change. The abolition of the Zamindari system could not do much in narrowing down the gap between various social groups. There has not been much change in the traditional situation. A substantial part of land is still in the possession of the upper castes. Ahirs and Kurmis who constitute the bulk of peasantry, have been largely benefitted from the land reforms. The other middle and lower-middle castes have been benefitted marginally. The enforcement of legislations to distribute land among the Scheduled Castes could hardly achieve any tangible results. Landlessness still prevails as a major problem among the Scheduled Castes.
Among the various measures adopted under the plans of rural development, the Community Development Programme and the Panchayati Raj have special impetus. The Panchayati Raj aimed at democratization of power with a view to restructure the social and economic fabric in the village community. As a result of this move the rural people today more conscious about distribution of resources and access to opportunities for their betterment. The Panchayati Raj institutions have had two objectives: (i) to take up the task of economic development at the village level; and (ii) to create a network of institutions connecting the village with block, district, state and the nation.

With the introduction of Panchayati Raj and other programmes of rural development, social and political structure in contemporary India has been passing through a period of transition. Simultaneously other factors, for example, representation in Panchayati Raj institutions, rising pressure for distribution of economic benefits and facilities, interaction between economic development and political charge and the emergence of a new form of elites have brought about a shift in the rural setting. The
new elite have given a direction to social change which has reinforced their position in the post-independence period.

Political power in the rural areas is still controlled by the upper castes. The dominant upper castes, particularly Brahmins and Rajputs, continue to wield political power. The well off middle castes, specially, Ahirs and Kurmis, are making considerable efforts to share power with the upper castes. Other middle and lower-middle castes and the Scheduled Castes do not have a considerable role in the village affairs. The Scheduled Castes, in spite of their strong numerical strength, have the least political influence.

Land is still important source of economic and political power in the rural areas. The concentration of land in the hands of Rajputs and Brahmins has resulted into asymmetrical relations and suppression of the landless and weaker sections. Along with a sizeable number of leaders with big landholdings, a group of village influentials even with smaller landholdings have emerged on the rural political scene. These leaders are generally from among the dominant upper castes and the entrenched middle castes.
These articulate village influentials have acquired the traits and styles of modern leaders, and have created a support base for themselves, their families and caste groups.

In the rural context, education is gradually becoming a decisive factor in status-determination. It, however, works in conjunction with other factors like caste, class and occupation. A change has been observed in the educational background of new leadership. More educated leaders are being elected to the positions of power. Villager's expectations from these leaders have led to the emergence of such situations. Their expectation is based on the thinking that the educated representatives would serve them more effectively in comparison to those who are less educated.

The Government has introduced several schemes for the modernization of agriculture for increasing agricultural production. The introduction of improved variety of crops, chemical fertilizers, agricultural implements, irrigational facilities have opened up a wide arena of economic opportunities for the farmers. Our data regarding the caste-wise distribution of loans and subsidies make it
clear that it has generally been utilised by the dominant and entrenched castes. The weaker sections of the society have so far not been able to take much advantage of the developmental programmes. In the rural areas, the distribution of loans shows that well-off sections have more repaying capacity, hence they have availed the facility. The dominant castes have made the maximum use of such benefits. Though the percentage share of Brahmins and Rajputs in the recent years has declined, yet they continue to derive more advantage than other sections. Among the backward castes, Ahirs and Kurmis are major beneficiaries. There is an increase in recent years in the percentage share of Harijans in the loans for developmental programmes. This has been possible because of the provision of the loans exclusively for the poor and weaker sections of society.

This study of Koilasa Block in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh indicates that the processes of economic and political development have largely remained confined to the upper strata of the society. The whole infrastructure of local institutions, in dispersing the
"funds and facilities" under the programmes of rural development, have shown a tendency to benefit a group of individuals from the dominant upper castes whose main task has been to utilize the mutually reinforcing factors of economic and political change. There are, however, perceptible indications of change in these processes forcing some weakening of such concentration in favour of the well-off middle castes. The impact of development plans in helping the "poor and the underprivileged" has, so far, been of inconsequential result. The built-in structural and socio-economic inequalities in our social system could be blamed for the unevenness of the developmental process. In order to make such process of "cumulative inequalities" ineffective, both the social structure with its system of distribution of socio-economic resources and the plans of rural development need basic transformation in restructuring the social and economic relationship in the society.