INTRODUCTION

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was designed and set up in India in the late 1970s as a successor to special target group oriented programmes, which had been established to correct the distortions, and imbalances arising from the Green Revolution. The IRDP became basically a programme of productive asset transfer to below-poverty-line households. The issues of improving access of poor people to food stocks, through diffusion of purchasing power, expansion of wage employment, enforcement of minimum wage legislation, strengthening channels for subsidized food distribution to low income groups, and income transfers to sick and disabled people through various social security measures, were seen as directly relevant to the elimination of hunger which is the principal component of the concept of poverty alleviation programmes (Jain, 1986).

In India, rural development has always attracted attention of economists and social reformers. This is because 80% of the population resides in the rural areas and 72% areas and 72% of the workforce depends on agriculture and allied activities. The contribution of the rural sector to national income was of the order of approximately 60% at the time India achieved independence. In rural development, agriculture obviously has played a very important role. Agriculture development is no doubt basic too not only development of the rural areas but also to developed of the industrial sector.
In India, the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is the most important centrally initiated, target-group oriented official anti-poverty programme of the 1980-85 Five-Year Plan. It aims to raise the economic viability of poor households in self-employment oriented activities through (a) generating new assets or transferring existing ones to virtually assetless households, and (b) raising the productivity of the asset base by technology and/or skill upgradation, combined with efforts to improve access to credit, input and output markets (Sundaram and Tendulkar, 1985).

Several pioneering experiments have attempted by money eminent people in this country. Poet Tagore was the first to begin a planned programme of development for the villages through Shankiniketan but the real efforts on sympathetically understanding the rural problems and attempting an indigenous solution of the economic ills came from the Mahatma. It is he who always reminded us that the should of India lives in her villages and in rural reconstruction alone lies her salvation. The Government in its policy enunciations has decided to give the highest priority to Agriculture and rural development programmes. The role of small and cottage industries in the overall strategy for maximizing employment has been stressed as a part of area development schemes. The strategies for rural development have been changing over the years. In the fifties, the community development and national extension services blocks were started with the object of integrated development of rural areas. In the agricultural sector, however, nothing remarkable could be achieved in these community development blocks.
In the year 1959 a study was sponsored by the Ford Foundation on “India’s food crisis and steps to meet it”. This study emphasized the starting of emergency food production programmes and suggested solution of certain areas having perennial irrigation for intensive agricultural work. It also suggested extraordinary organizational and administrative measures to mobilize the nation to meet the challenge at prodairy enrage food to meet the requirements of a rapidly growing population. This report led to the setting up of Intensive Agricultural District Programmes (IADP) in seven selected districts in the country. A unfired agency was set up in each of these districts under the District Collector to coordinate the work of various functional experts, irrigation, cooperatives, distribution, storage, marketing etc. For this purpose, extension machinery was also suitably strengthened. The experiment was very successful and showed marked increase in consumption of fertilizers, use of improved implement and other inputs. The experience of IADP showed certain deficiencies in the frame for intensive development. The administrative boundaries of the district were a handicap in the scientific development and optional utilization of irrigation facilities. There were many officer developmental sectors ancillary to agriculture, which could not be touched. This led to setting up of table force on Integrated Rural Development (IRD) by the Planning Commission in October, 1971 in India, it was implemented in 1978 with the major objective of providing full employment through productive programmes to the rural poor (India, Ministry of Agril. New Delhi 1986).

Integrated Rural development of rural economy be exploiting to the optimum the local resources in men, material, land and water. It has to be mainly on the basis
of local initiative and drive. The Government should act as a catalyst to bring about this change but it is the intrinsic strength of the economy itself, which should support the services, the rising standards and sectoral economic activities. This concept brings out the importance of integrating all economic activities in consonant with the local resources. The vast untapped rural labour force is a liability, which has to be turned with assets by harnessing them in fruitful, and gainful employment full rural employment is the goal of IRD. The main elements in a rural situation as follows:

1. In agricultural sector, the emphasis has to be on land reforms, supply of inputs, soil conservation, water management, dairy farming, post harvest technology and harvesting of new derives of energy.

2. Cottage and small industries including Agro-Industries.

3. Education, Social education and cultural activities.

4. Health and family welfare including environmental improvement.

5. Social welfare programmes:

There is no doubt that diversification in the field of agriculture and allied activities holds a key to economic development of the rural areas through informal education the Indian farmers has acquired awareness to increase the productivity of land by use of modern technology and modern inputs. A massive programme of training for new crop rotations and efficient use of production inputs and availability of credit will be necessary for the farmer to reap the optimum advantages form his land and water resources with the ceiling as agricultural holdings, it is further necessary to emphasis the role of subsidiary occupations in the allied fields such as
dairy farming, poultry, piggery etc., assess around urban completes can benefit very much because of the vicinity at good markets. It has to be appreciated that with the present lend of expertise n the agricultural sectors as conveyed to our rural masses, it will be difficult to remove the poverty of a small and marginal famous unless he resorts to subsidiary production activities.

Mixed farming for small and marginal farmers is also important forestry has been considered a state prerogative. The common impression a that there is very little scope for forestry in the farmers holdings. The National Commission on Agriculture in its report on social forestry has pointed that trees can play a very big role in improving the economy of the farmer. Many varieties of trees which can be grown on field gunds can add substantially to the in case of the house hold the trees will be taking their sustenance from the levels in the ground for below the depths where crop roots draw their food. Thus land use is maximized.

The most important in this sector is water management and exploitation of water resources. It will be seen that any investment in creating more such assets will have quick return in the shape of increased productivity. An integrated area approach should provide for investments for the overall development of land and water resources by creating irrigational assets, by adopting soil conservation measures and schemes for land development.

It is also an important source of employment in the rural areas. Employment offered in this sector is after in the off-season for crop production and is therefore complementary to the employment in farm production. It is likely to benefit the under employed agricultural labour and weaker sections of the rural community. There is no
evenly spread opportunities for employment for the landless labourers, small and marginal farmers. They may be busy at the peak of agriculture season and have nothing to do in the off seasons. While it may not be diseredably to increase the number of people dependent on land, the investments in agriculture must provide full time employment to the under employed and increase productivity thus creating opportunities in the tertiary sectors for the unemployed and for further additions to the labour force.

Rural development has been one of the major objectives of the Indian Government over the last forty years. There have been many approaches, such as Community Development, Panchayati Raj and the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). The IRDP and its two other components: Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), as well as Jawahar Rozgar Yonja (JRY), aim at improving the lot of the rural masses. Although the declining trend in poverty is encouraging, it is far below the expectation when compared with the size of investment and efforts (Reddy et al, 1993).

In an integrated approach for rural development it is not really a question of piecing together the various economic programmes and allowing them to be executed compatmentally by one functionary or the other. This has been the have of governmental effort towards development sofar the execution of these plans had necessity to start at the micro level of a family in a village.

It will mean taking stock of its resources in men, material and then preparing an optimum production plan utilizing all those resources. For a typical small farmer
family, it will take into account the best crop rotation in the agro-climate situation, mixed farming, if there is abundance at labour in the family, cottage and small industries if the necessary skills can be developed in some of the members. In a typical situation total investment required for upgrading the economic standard of the family in consonance with their resources in men, material and land will be worked out. The short term requirements of credit will be met through cooperatives and capital investment for purchase of cattle, setting up of cottage and small industries through banks.

In the administrative of the programme of this complexity and dimension it will have to be decided if work should be taken up in all the villages simultaneously or selective approach be adopted.

The performance of the IRDP using the family-level data relating to the Second Concurrent Evaluation Survey conducted in 1987 by Indian research institutions on behalf of the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, and Government of India. The families were selected in 1985 with two entries for measures of income for each family for that year. One is for income 'as per record' and the other for income 'as assessed by the investigator' two years after the event. The programme will be satisfactory relative to the cost only if it is unlikely that alternative ways of helping the poor would be more cost effective. The measures of the performance of the IRDP are discussed, followed by an assessment of the performance of the programme. It is concluded that over a period of two years, the level of poverty amongst IRDP families declined by 22% with 7% of families
crossing the poverty line, the other two-thirds showing a substantial decline in their poverty levels and the remaining one-fourth becoming poorer (Paul, 1998).

The poverty alleviation programmes and rural development programmes implemented by the Government of India since the First 5-Year Plan. In spite of the progress achieved in the agricultural sector, the growth process has benefited the urban areas more than the rural areas. Even though there has been some reduction in the incidence of poverty in recent years, mainly due to the skewed process of development, there are considerable differentials in the extent of poverty reduction. In the Eastern and Central regions, which fell outside the coverage of the Green Revolution, poverty increased with the increasing pressure of population. The per capita per month expenditure on poverty alleviation programmes is also lowest in these regions. The main weakness of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), one of the major poverty alleviation programmes implemented throughout India, is the near absence of backward and forward linkages of the income-yielding assets created under the programme with the agricultural sector. Uniform allocation of outlays under IRDP per block and a long chain of intermediaries between the Government and the beneficiaries are the other weak points in the IRDP programme (Manrai, 1986).

**Azamgarh District of Uttar Pradesh**

Azamgarh in one of the undeveloped and backward district situated in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The district border touches with Balia in East, Faizabad, Sultanpur in West, Gorakhpur, Faizabad, Deoria in the North and Jaunpur and Gazipur districts are
in the South. Ghaghra river flows from the worth of Anamgarh and in the border of Gorakhpur district.

The total area of Azamgarh is about 5744 sq. km and there are 5628 villages, which are distributor in 29 development areas and 6 Tehsils.

The total population is about 35.44 lakhs according 1981 census. The population density is about 615 persons per sq. km. The economic status of the people is poorer due to low ratio of people to land. Due to poor economic conditions, farmers families are not able to exploit the land and resources of this area.

**IRDP in Azamgarh**

IRDP was started in 1979 in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. There was no considerable development upto 1979-80. In 1980-81 the project gained momentum and about 33074 persons got loan of Rs. 93.72 lakhs for different objectives. About 5 lakh per development area was directed to be distributed. It was satisfactory in 1981-82. About Rs. 122.74 lakh rupees were distributed among 15098 persons. It was projected to distribute about 130.12 lakhs in the year 1981-82. In year 1982-83, about 10320 persons were benefited with Rs. 98.88 lakhs. In opposite about Rs. 321.19 were given as loan through banks. The aim was to give Rs. 8 lakh per development area. The left over amount of the previous year was also merged with this years budget. In year 1983-84 about 20134 families were benefited, instead of projected 33020 families. Hence, about Rs. 218.14 lakhs were distributed instead of Rs. 236.37 lakhs. Banks distributed loans of about Rs. 460.96 lakhs inspite of this on year 1984-85, including the back log of previous year about 19230 families were benefited.
instead of projected 30286 families. About Rs. 232.85 lakhs were given as aid to them, which was earlier projected to Rs. 359.00 lakhs. Banks distributed loans of about Rs. 362.57 lakhs during this financial year.

So far upliftment of the economic condition, removal of poverty and unemployment, Government of India had started Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in this district and following objectives have been investigated:

1. To study the target and achievements schemes of the programme.

2. The analysis the procedure and adequacy of the programme execution in the area.

3. To assess the progressiveness of schemes resulting programme execution in the area.

4. To identify the problems faced by the officials and non-officials during the programme execution and obtaining benefits from the project respectively.

5. To find out the impact on Socio-economic condition of respondents.