CHAPTER – VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Summary
Migration is a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence by an individual or group of people. It is a phenomenon as old as the history of mankind. Migration has been enormously influential in determining the changes in the socio-cultural landscape of man.

The present study has been devoted to the causes and consequences of tribal migration in the district of Malda, West Bengal, India. The study aims at finding out the stress and strains at the place of origin of migration as well as at the destination. The mode and patterns of migration, especially group migration, by the tribal people of Malda have also been studied with a view to understand the physical and the socio-economic forces leading to migration. It is also the objective of the present study to throw light on the environmental parameters, inter alia, responsible for tribal migration in Malda. Policies adopted by the Govt. and the relevant strategies that could be taken-up to reorient the patterns of tribal migration have also been put forward in the present study.

The district of Malda has an area of 3,733 sq. km. It has a total population of 26,37,030 persons as per the Census record of India, 1991 where as in 2001 it is 32,90,160 persons of which males and females are 16,89,409 and 16,00,751 respectively. There are 1,71,326 persons belonging to scheduled tribes in Malda district as per the 1991 census record. The tribal people of the district consist of the Santal, Oraon, Kharwar, Kora, Munda, Malpahariya, Mahali, etc. They are basically floating settlers migrating from one place to another in search of land and employment.

The district of Malda lies between 24°40'20" to 25°32'08" north latitude and 88°28'10" to 87°45'50" east longitude. It is bounded on the south by the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal and the river Ganga; on
the north by the districts of Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur in West Bengal and Purnea in Bihar. On the east it is partly bounded by the district of Dakshin Dinajpur in West Bengal and the district of Rajsahi in Bangladesh. The western boundary is formed partly by the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal and Santal Parganas in Bihar.

There are 821 villages out of the 1644 inhabited villages in Malda where the tribal people have been found to have concentrated. The blocks of Gajole, Bamangola, Habibpur and Old Malda in Malda district account for maximum concentration of tribal villages.

The tribal people as noted above undergo intra-district, inter-district, inter-state and international migration having a percentage share of 15.49, 2.04, 1.90 and 3.91 respectively.

Moreover, there are rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban tribal migration having the percentage share of 87.48, 6.21, 3.06 and 3.25 respectively between 1981 and 1991. Rural to rural migration is most dominant among the tribal people followed by rural to urban migration.

The pattern of male-female migration indicates that rural to rural migration by tribal women is maximum.

There are a number of reasons for migration of the tribal people under study. These include marriage, job opportunities, business, education and so on. Natural calamity like flood also causes migration.

In so far as the age-sex distributions of migrants are concerned, tribal people between the age groups of 15 to 29 and 30 to 44 migrate in maximum numbers. Females of these age groups, however, top the list. The tribal male migrants between the age of 30 to 44 years become mostly susceptible to migration, while marriage is a primary reason behind female migration, economic reasons appear to be fundamental to the migration of male tribal population.
The tribal people are fundamentally very laborious which is why they are more preferred as agricultural labourers on in such other areas where hard physical labour is desired by the employers. It is however unfortunate that inspite of the hard toil they put up, the tribal migrants earn very paltry sum per month. As a result, they remain poor as ever. Rural indebtedness is one of the main reasons of tribal migration, but due to their ill pay they remain bonded as long as they live.

To alleviate the social and economic distress steps have been taken by the appropriate authorities of the administration at the district and at the state levels. There are programmes of self-employment (TRYSEM), rural development (IRDP), development of Women and Children (DWCRA), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Rural Sanitation Programme (RSP), Million well schemes (MWS), etc.

Inspite of these, the tribal people of Malda remain mostly ill nourished, illiterate and ill clad with low level of productivity. As a result, further decentralization of the programmes and extensive mobilization of local resources is required with a view to check the out-migration of the tribal people of the area under study.

Chapter – I of the present study deals with the aims and objectives of the present study, builds the hypothesis for testing in subsequent chapters, reviews the past works related to migration and introduces the study area. Chapter – II is devoted to database and methodology. The sampling techniques, collection of secondary and primary level data, variables adopted in the study etc. have been explained here. Chapter – III describes the geo-environment of the tribes of Malda district which is fundamentally responsible for their migration. Chapter – IV looks into the tribal population of Malda in detail. The various communities of tribes, their demographic features, patterns of their spatial distribution and the role of urbanization, inter alia, have been discussed. Chapter – V & VI address the salient features of tribal migration and the causes and consequences of tribal migration respectively highlighting the patterns of rural – rural, rural –
urban, urban – rural and other allied types of migration. Moreover, distribution of migration, nature of migrant labour force, as well as the subject of age-specific migrant workers have been dealt with here to comprehend the cause and effect of migration. Chapter – VII traces the emerging trends in tribal migration, policies adopted for the upliftment of the tribal people and strategies required to be taken up for sustainable development of the tribal folks of Malda. The concluding notes incorporated at the end of this chapter epitomize the subject at hand from a holistic point of view. It is felt that the present study would help the planners and the academicians in their own way.

7.2 Conclusion

The analysis of survey data on tribal migration from the sample villages of the district of Malda shows that tribal migrants are overwhelmingly young workers and proportion of illiterates among them is higher than the literates. This tells us that both in an out-migration to and from this area deplete the rural tribal community of young persons. There has not been a significant change in industrial occupational composition of the tribal migrants. Initially, the major activity of the tribal migrants prior to migration was agriculture while after migration they are mainly engaged in the same profession with a little inclination towards joining tertiary activities in the urban areas in the district. Occupationally, though they still remain predominantly unskilled agricultural labourers in the rural areas. This shows that migration has not been totally helpful in reducing the dependence on agriculture and also did not help in the diversification of occupation in rural areas in the distinct of Malda.

It is clear that this study has revealed a number of points. The most notable being the massive amount of internal migration which has taken place in all the blocks of the district of Malda. The significance of this situation is indicated by the relatively better opportunities and facilities. Tribal population belonging to the age group of 15-44 years has been observed to be the most migratory tribal group and the proportion is higher among the males than the females.
Spatial distribution of migrants shows two distinct directions of movements, viz. the urban areas and the rural areas of the district. It is also observed that step migration is non-existent and most of the migrants arrive at their destination in one move from their residence, i.e. the county side. The relatives, middlemen, friends and the co-villagers are the major source of information about their employment. This finding indicates that the phenomenon of chain migration is initiated by people who have migrated and send back information about job opportunities to the potential migrants back home. The in or out migration from rural areas to other areas by the tribal migrants are, therefore, the function of decision based on their own information network.

The scenario of population movement shows that there is a regional shift of population movement in Malda district. In the past, the dominant direction within the district was from the west towards the east along the Rajmahal Hills of Jharkhand state whereas currently it is directed from the district to the southern districts of Bengal, viz. Bardhaman, Birbhum and also to the states of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. In other words, the tribal people are moving from areas of poor resource base to relatively affluent areas. This is true for inter-district or inter-state migration. In so far the intra-district migration is concerned, the tribal migration tends to move from unfertile hilly tract to undulating the Barind areas. From this prospective it is evident that there has been a continuity in population movement from the historic times to the present. The continuity in tribal population movement also is an expression of population-resource relationship.

Religion constitutes one of the most important cultural contexts that govern the behaviour of its adherents. Religion is a major source of values particularly in a traditional society that governs the normative behaviour including human migration through religious sanctions. This is equally true for the tribal migration of Malda.

It may further be pointed out here that rural out-migration of this tribal people does not seem to offer a reliable strategy for rural economic
development in so far as Malda district is concerned. Alternative approaches aimed at harnessing the rural tribal population resource, particularly for rural area development in Malda may perhaps be explored.

Most of the tribal people in the district of Malda are facing several diseases. The incidence of diseases occurs among the young and adult population. The diseases cause chronic ill health, decrease the working capacity and reduce the life expectancy. Diseases also severely affect the health of women during the child bearing age, increase the hazards of pregnancy and mortality. In fact, most of the children of the district do not even live to reach the age of five years, particularly female children. Health is closely related, as it were, with the availability of safe drinking water. The causes of many diseases like cholera, typhoid, dysentery, etc. have drastically cut down the chances of improvement in the quality of life. In the rural areas, wells, tanks and rivers are the main sources of drinking water, from where animals also get their supply of water. Domestic activities are also performed at these places, which result in the contamination of water. It is also observed from the Disaster Management map of Malda district prepared by NATMO that the entire district suffers from the problems of arsenic contaminated water.

To overcome the problems efforts must be directed toward the sustainable development of the tribal migrants of Malda. This sustainable development is the new buzzword in the environment circles. It is generally taken to mean improving the quality of human life within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystem. Social forestry may be a vital thrust area because the tribal people have an affinity toward forests. Forests not only give them food, fodder and fuel, minor forest products sustain their income also. It has been observed that sales of minor forest products account for as much as 30 per cent of the total earnings of the tribal people. Hence, there is an interface between conservation oriented and economy based needs of forests. It is the social forestry programme which in the best way can achieve the both within a single frame of work providing protection,
conservation and development of forests and associated resources on the one hand as well as the needs of the agrarian and tribal people on the other.

Thus it can be concluded that social forestry is a concept, which aims at ensuring or providing ecological, economic and social security to the people, particularly to the tribal rural mass and those downtrodden, who live below the poverty line. It would involve the beneficiaries right from the planning stage to the harvesting stage. It would ensure mixed production systems of wood, fiber, fodder, grasses, fruits and other raw materials for self-consumption and cottage industry and the surplus for sale. If the social forestry programme meets with success, then no tribal people of the district would move out from the place of origin to other places for search of employment as better employment opportunity would be created within the district and also within the close reach of the migrants.

Social forestry programmes would help generate employment for the rural poor. Un-skilled or semi-skilled labourers can be engaged in nursery works, sowing, preparation of beds, weeding, watering, hoeing and plantation works like pit digging, fencing and planting, etc. By generating employment, social forestry would check migration of rural tribal population to the towns. It would provide employment to the landless tribal people and would generate additional income to the tribal rural population.

Education occupies an important place in the scheme of tribal development. It is not only a basic need for the development of tribal communities, but is also essential for effective safeguard at the time when the simple tribal community comes in contact with more complex social and economic systems. Education received priority in the scheme of tribal development, therefore, during different plan periods.

Literacy among the tribals of the district today is very low and the progress in this area is slow. It has also been noticed that literacy programmes, in vogue, have not brought sufficient relief to these downtrodden tribal communities from the clutches of poverty, rather these have created a barrier between the literate and the non-literate tribal
migrants. To set aside this disparity among the tribal communities, it is felt that education can act as a positive catalytic agent and to achieve this objective, there is a strong need for adult education. This is also the reason why the programme for adult education in the country places a high priority on enrolment of the tribals. The adult education programme for the tribals, therefore, should be planned in a way different from that of the non-tribal society. The education system should be modified according to the local situation and environment. This should be action oriented rather than pedagogic. This requires to be flexible according to the need of time and situation and a concurrent evaluation process should be in-built in the programme. The whole education system can be divided into two parts; (1) pre-mass education and (2) mass education. The pre-mass education would include the acquisition of literacy through tribal scripts, if available. It should be organized during the slack season of the year when the tribal working force generally remains out of primary occupation. After the completion of pre-mass education, the learners would join the mass education phase of the programme. One of the main objectives of this education is to enable the tribal community to know the nature of the new contact which is being conferred on them subsequent spread of administrative reforms and establishment of new economic activities would help the tribal people of the district to stop migration from their place of origin.

It is said that beggary is the outcome of extreme poverty. Poverty is a comparative term, emergence of which is associated with a negative consumption scale and declining standard of living in the society. Population pressure and unequal distribution of resource in relation to production is the root cause of poverty in the present tribal situation in Malda. As a result, poverty hinders social development and leads to social disorganization. This social disorganization has two notable trends in so far as the tribal migrants of Malda are concerned, viz.
1. The values and ethics of the tribal people have, to a great extent, changed under the spell of poverty. Economic distress has generated the force to repel from the normal way of life. Naturally, crime increases in them.

2. On the other hand, tribal people in course of their struggle for existence gradually loss all aspiration and hope. They become lazy and dependent on other's mercy.

Thus, on one hand a section of manpower is wasted, and on the other hand, another section of people gets disenchanted and moribund. Both are harmful for any society: national loss for the country as a whole.

Rural tribal poverty, therefore, needs to be evaluated for social justice and development. The United Nations Conference on Human Settlement held at Vancouver, Canada, May-June, 1976 recommended that the developing countries are required to improve social justice where the majority of the world population reside. This can be done by enlarging employment opportunities, extending public services and through these means improving the level of living and enhancing the quality of life. Rural development is the driving force of the entire development process and it lies at the heart of national development. Rural development does not mean mere development of rural areas, it means the development of rural people to dispel ignorance and poverty and to assert the process of creating self-reliant and self-sustaining healthy modern communities. Rural development thus involves, (1) improvement in the living standards of subsistence level population; (2) ensuring mass participation in developmental activities and (3) making the development process self-sustaining.

The majority of the tribal population of Malda district belongs to weaker sections. The socio-economic conditions of these neglected sections of the rural tribal population are very distressing. They are born, bred and buried in poverty. Unfortunately, even the birth of child, a matter of family delight, generally ends up in borrowing money from moneylenders to perform the birth ceremonies. So with the birth of a child, the seed of
economic downfall is sown. Children go naked and without proper nourishment. They begin their married life with a burden of heavy debts on their shoulders. They die almost pamper and the death ceremonies too, are celebrated with borrowed money. Their poverty has been a sure road to their serfdom. Being a member of the neglected section of the society, they cannot reach the higher authority. There is none to hear their grievances. Thus, the socio-economic condition of the tribal migrants of the district of Malda is a matter of agony. It is due to this reason they need financial assistance to raise their standard of living from the financial institutions with discrimination.

On the basis of the analysis given above, the major findings are as follows:

i. Tribal migrants of Malda are poor.
ii. Tribal migrants are hungry.
iii. Tribal migrants are poverty stricken.
iv. Tribal migrants are landless.
v. Tribal migrants are distressed by other factors both natural and man-made such as flood, drought, political crisis or instability.
vi. Tribal migrants are mostly illiterate.
vi. Tribal migrants are debt ridden.
VIII. Tribal migrants are compelled to move to other areas in search of work.
IX. Tribal migrants are compelled to take shelter in unhygienic condition.
x. Mobility helps them to survive.
xi. Mobility/Migration is nothing but the safety valve for their survival.
XII. Very little occupational mobility occurs.
XIII. Debt decreases with migration but still they remain burdened considerably with debt.
XIV. Literacy level remains low among the tribal migrants.
xv. Socio-economic status virtually remains at the same low-level at destinations.
xvi. There is little scope for vertical social and economic mobility.
xvii. Though migration is necessary for their survival, yet it does not seem to help them to be elevated to higher occupation level/productive level.
xviii. Tribal migrants need to be gainfully employed. So that they can improve their levels of living and can also contribute to the national production.
xix. There is a genuine need to help the tribal migrants of Malda.

7.3 Strategies for Upliftment for Tribal Migrants

There is an urgent need to do something to help the tribal migrants of Malda. There must be a proper and fuller utilization of manpower resources through which gainful employment can be generated contributing to the growth of national wealth. Since independence various strategies have been adopted at the national level for safeguarding the interests of the Scheduled Tribes of the country. Attempts have been made to protect them from social and economic injustice and for bridging the existing gaps and inequalities between different sectors of population and thereby accelerating the process of national integration.

It was accepted from the very beginning that the socio-economic situation in some tribal areas varies widely with the rest of India and it was thought worthwhile to specify some areas as Scheduled areas as per the fifth schedule of the Constitution. Special attention was paid for the development of Scheduled Tribes in the successive plan periods. The ad-hoc provision which was made in the early fifties under these obligatory provisions; was replaced by regular provision for development of Scheduled Tribes distinctly under the Welfare of Backward Classes Sector both under the State and the Central Plans. During the 1st Five-year plan, Rs.17.37 crores were provided for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. The fund was distributed sector-wise. The sectoral schemes fell into three broad categories (a) Education, (b)
Economic upliftment and (c) Health, Housing and other schemes. Of the total Rs.17.37 crores, education received Rs.5.10 (23.36%), economic upliftment Rs.8.46 (48.70%) and health and housing etc. Rs.3.81 crores (21.93%) respectively while in the 4th Five year plan, the total outlay was 84.20 crores of which education, economic uplift and health and housing etc. were allocated 37.41, 50.18 and 12.41 per cent of the plan outlay respectively. In the 5th Five year plan (1974-79) the total plan outlay was 39,322 crores of which 3.01 per cent was for the Tribal Development Programmes. The investment on tribal development has increased but it has not kept pace in proportion to the total plan outlays. At the end of the 4th Five year plan, a review committee was set up under the chairmanship of Shri U. N. Dhebar and it was pointed out that many of the evils to which tribals were subjected were still there. Indebtedness, land alienation, bonded labour system and cunning operations of the moneylenders – contractors and traders were in vogue. In 1972, a review committee was again set up under the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare to examine the whole situation for the purpose of evolving a new strategy for development of tribal areas. A new strategy was thus adopted during the Fifth Year Plan to eliminate exploitation in all forms and at the same time to augment the level of financial investment to strengthen the economy of the tribal communities.

The Planning Commission suggested preparation of Tribal Sub-Plans in respect of each state comprising viable Project Areas termed as Integrated Tribal Development Projects. The objective of the sub-plan was to draw up a broad outline for physical inputs, outlays, legislative and administrative frame for the over all development of the tribal folk residing in that area. But in West Bengal there is only three police stations where concentration of tribal population is more than 50 per cent of the total population. More than 97 per cent of the tribal population of the State does not come under the purview of criteria adopted for defining such tribal area. In view of the situation in West Bengal, the Planning Commission adopted separate approach for demarcating the tribal areas of the State. A mouza or a group of mouzas having 50 per cent tribal population and with contiguity in
boundaries were then considered for constitution of a unit for Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP). Under these criteria the district of Malda is also one of the 12 districts of the state of West Bengal selected for this purpose. There are two ITDP areas in Malda district covering 346 mouzas.

7.4 Planning

It is an incontrovertible fact that the majority of tribal people of Malda district dwell in the rural areas. In fact, about 99.11 per cent, i.e. 169,807 persons of the total 171,326 of the total tribal population are believed to be rural dwellers while the remaining 0.89% are resident in urban centres. In rural areas per capita income is very low, as a result of their low productivity. The low level of productivity originates mainly from poor infrastructures, poor transportation, poor road network, uninhabitable shelter with no electricity and water and other amenities. The tribal migrants of Malda earn less than Rs.287.16 per capita per month. Thus, they live below the poverty line. They are also poor because they lack most of the basic necessities of modern life such as medical care, better education, better clothing, modern shelter, piped-borne water system etc. In other words these groups of people live below the subsistence or poverty line. These people die very quickly when they are sick, because of the non-availability of modern transportation to bring them to the hospital, as most hospitals are located in far-away urban centres. In fact, of the total 15 blocks, there are 9 hospitals in the district, of which 3 are situated, in English bazaar Municipality. The tribal people are also uneducated as because there are not enough primary and secondary schools for them where they may send their children. The people lack the basic machineries for agricultural work and so they are required to depend on animals for agriculture. Because of their low energy for physical work, their productivity is also low, hence their income is low and the cycle of poverty for the rural people becomes a vicious one and hence they are in abject poverty and eventual penury.

The reality as stated above for ages created developmental problem, and as a result there is high rate of tribal migration from poor place of origin
to better prosperous rural areas or to urban areas, to escape from dullness, drudgery, and the monotony of the rural areas and to come to enjoy the better socio-economic, political, cultural and educational facilities that are provided in the place of destination but absent in the rural areas.

Under the circumstances, the broad strategies for accelerating rural development and stop unwanted migration of tribal population are given below:

1. increasing productivity in agriculture and allied sectors;
2. decentralized programme implementation system;
3. extensive mobilization of local resources;
4. increasing per capita income of vulnerable sections of rural population by providing effective occupation through rural development programmes covering primary, secondary and tertiary sectors;
5. to accelerate skill, and to expand the primary technological base among the tribal people;
6. to develop adequate backward and forward linkages with reference to places of origin and destination;
7. to generate gainful employment in secondary and tertiary sectors during the lean agriculture seasons.

In the Indian context, it can be mentioned here that the first efforts at rural upliftment were made through the introduction of Community Development Programme in the 1950s to ensure popular participation in rural development. The second plan continued to give emphasis on community development programmes. The same was continued during the 3rd. plan also. During the 4th. and 5th. Plan periods the question of distributive justice came up prominently.

During the 6th Plan the government of India adopted a two-pronged strategy to deal with the problem of poverty. The 7th Plan laid emphasis on accelerated agricultural growth, increased productivity of various agricultural commodities, development of waste lands, improvement of dry land agriculture, adoption of special machineries to increase and expand
irrigation facilities, as well as raise income and productivity of people lying below poverty line. The 8th. plan also promoted the development through voluntary sector. This helped flexibility and effective implementation of programmes. The local community was made responsible for the development work. The 9th plan approach paper adopted by the National Development Council on 16th. January, 1997 envisaged a seven per cent growth rate on gross domestic product aided by rural development.

The rural development programmes for poverty alleviation in the Malda district are being implemented through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA). The district authorities have started implementation of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in this direction. The objective of the programme is to help the poor families to be elevated above the poverty line by taking up self-employment opportunities. The focus of the programme is to assist the poorest of the poor particularly the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and the rural artisans to become self-sufficient. Financial assistance is, therefore, given to such activities like poultry farming, milch cattle raising, tailoring shop, cane and bamboo craft shops, goat rearing etc.

Another important programme is Training of Rural Youths for Self Employment (TRYSEM). The objective of the programme is to provide technical skills to rural youth from families below poverty line to enable them to take up self-employment in the broad field of agriculture and allied activities. The target groups are comprised of rural youths between the age of 18-35 from the families living below poverty line.

The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) is directed to strengthen the women in poverty alleviation programme. The aim is to raise the income levels of women of poor households so as to enable their organized participation in social development towards economic self-reliance. The aim is to improve women’s access to basic services of health, education, childcare, nutrition, water and sanitation.
The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1989 by merging the then NREP and RLEGP to generate additional gainful employment for the un-employed and under-employed men and women in rural areas. Another important objective is to create sustained employment by strengthening rural economic infrastructure and assets and improvement in the overall quality of life in rural areas. Construction of roads, footpath, bridle path, community hall, village water tanks, land development etc. have been taken up under the scheme.

The Government of India has also started a programme after the name of Late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi. The name of the programme is Indira Awaas Yojana. The objective is to provide shelters to scheduled tribes. 10 per cent of the total allocation at the national level under JRY have been earmarked for this programme.

On 2nd October, 1993, new scheme has been introduced, called Employment Assurance Schemes (EAS), in the rural areas. The scheme provides employment for a period of 100 days for unskilled manual work to the rural poor adults above 18 years and below 60 years of age needing employment during the lean agricultural season.

There is another centrally sponsored scheme popularly known as Rural Sanitation Programme. The objective is to familiarize rural population with sanitation facilities. The people living below the poverty line have been identified for the programme with a view to create awareness and promotion of health education. The programme also seeks to eradicate manual scavenging by converting all existing dry latrines at an early date.

The Million Well Scheme (MWS) with an objective to provide open irrigation wells free of cost to poor and marginal farmers belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes has also been given effect in this district. 20 per cent of the total resources under JRY have been earmarked for implementation of MWS.
Another scheme called Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans was launched on 1st. July, 1992, with the objective to enable the rural artisans to improve the quality of their products, increase their production and income and to ensure better quality of life. Under the scheme all traditional rural artisans from different categories living below poverty line are being covered. This scheme is a part of IRDP, the DRDA being the nodal agency, the average cost of each tool kit have been fixed at Rs.2000.00 of which artisans have to pay 10 per cent and the remaining 90 per cent is subsidy from the Government of India.

The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India has formulated a centrally sponsored Rural Housing Scheme. The objective is to provide housing for persons below poverty line and persons belonging to weaker sections of society.

The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) has been included in the Central Budget for 1995-96 and it has came into force from August, 15, 1995. There are three main benefits, viz.;

1. National Old age pension scheme of Rs.75.00 per month per beneficiary;
2. National family benefit scheme of Rs.5000.00 to each bereaved household in case of death due to natural or accidental death of the primary bread earner of the family.
3. This is a centrally sponsored scheme to extend 100 per cent central assistance to the states.

The NSAP includes National Maternity Benefit Scheme. This benefit would provide a lump sum cash assistance to women of households below poverty line subject to certain conditions.

7.5 Suggestions

a. Infra-structural facilities should be developed and the present facilities should be strengthen. For development of any area, these play a crucial role. By undertaking more works under JRY, roads
to interior parts of the district under study can be developed, as is the case in the rural areas in many states.

b. With the implementation of the 73rd Amendment, Panchayati Raj bodies have been operating in the district. A close liaison with the Panchayat Raj bodies will activate the implementation of rural development programmes.

c. Lack of awareness among the beneficiaries of the rural development programme is an impediment in the implementation of programme, especially in the rural areas.

d. There should be a detailed project report containing studies on potential resources and guidelines for sustainable development. The report would have to be proposed from Panchayat level for better evaluation of resources and it should chart out the course of development in Panchayat. For example, if the major part of the area of the Panchayat is covered by an irrigation project, the strategy should be to intensify agriculture for raising two or more crops by suitable input investments consistent with socio-cultural background of the people. On the other hand, if irrigation is absent and the terrain is not unduly rugged, attention might have to be directed to cultivation of coarser grains, cash crops and the development of related agro-industries. In a still different case, if the major part of the area of the Panchayat is characterized by rolling topography, horticulture may be the answer.

e. As the tribal people have a co-operative bent of mind, co-operative movement and Gramdan movement needs to be accelerated in tribal areas. These are also imperative because ownership rights of land among the tribals are awfully insecure. Moreover, this is the proper time when co-operatives can be organized among the tribals for harnessing their potentials of large-scale production.
f. It is also observed that the tribal people cannot be resettled in agriculture unless some surplus non-tribal people are re-diverted from agriculture and are re-settled in non-farm occupations. Otherwise, tribal economy cannot prosper. There is also plenty of scope for starting small-scale industries in this region on the basis of present availability of forest products. If the concerned technology is simple the tribal people can operate the machines efficiently and effectively. These would usher the tribal population of Malda to desired level of sustainable development.