CHAPTER IX

SOCID-CULTURAL-INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEX

The social aspect of economic development is a vast subject by itself as the process involves deep and far-reaching changes in the entire social order. In this study, however, the analysis will be confined to only those aspects which have direct bearing on agricultural development. A few typical social institutions and ideas have been selected for indicating the manner in which the social system has to be tuned to the pace of agricultural transformation. It should be mentioned that the peasants in Assam, as in most of the underdeveloped regions of the tropical world, have been working under the following socio-cultural constraints.

9.1 FAMILY

The family is the basic unit of the rural society in Assam. The social organisation of agriculture has been stamped by the characteristics of the family system. The joint or extended family has a distinctly inhibiting effect on many of the factors affecting agricultural development: initiative, enterprise, mobility, savings, risk-taking, even willingness to work more for a higher price. In a joint family the production and
consumption are familialistic. The peasant family system bears the fundamental traits of subsistence economy. The male head of the family exerts absolute power over its members. He has the right and authority to be the ruler, the educator, the entrepreneur, and the manager of the family establishment. In the joint peasant family, the necessity to save or acquire assets is reduced, since the family provides insurance for dependents and security for old age out of current production. The orphan, the handicapped, the widow, the old, and the deserted receive shelter and maintenance under the system. Mobility is limited, both spatially and occupationally. If it is the duty of the son to remain in his father's house, he can shift from agriculture to other sectors only when he is freed of his filial obligations after his father's death; he may still be unable to shift if he is encumbered by dependents. An unmarried son may leave temporarily for work in city or town or elsewhere, but he is bound to return. In a joint family, the fruits of an individual's additional effort are shared even by those who do not make such effort. So, there is hardly any incentive to individual effort under this system. The joint family system discourages capital accumulation and encourages stay-at-home habits rendering immobility of labour. However, in the recent period, forces of modern life are weakening the joint family system. Spread of education and development of communication and transport have opened new
opportunities for individual initiative and the more enterprising members of the joint family leave it to seek an independent career for themselves. The gradual dissolution of the system seems inevitable. But it is not without hazards. The 'peers' of the families will leave the village to the urban centres, and the village will be left with the 'laggards', if the erosion of joint family system is not accompanied with agricultural development and creation of a congenial socio-economic environment in the rural areas. Inequality among the people also will be widened to a great extent. A blantant individualism will grow and leave the weak and needy to their fate. The spirit of mutual help and cooperation will disappear from the society rendering the needy ones of the family without any social security.

9.2 LAW OF INHERITANCE

The laws of inheritance and succession are governed by the social institution of joint family in rural societies. The institution of property ownership has passed through three evolutionary stages: group or communal property as is found in the tribal districts of Assam, inalienable and joint family property, and individual private property as are found among the peasants of the plains of the state.

The effects of the right to inheritance and succession are manifold. The inheritor may not be the most competent person
to preserve and develop the property. As a result, the property may deteriorate. Automatic transfer of ownership discourages the innovating spirit in the minds of the inheritors. The Hindu Law of Inheritance as also the Muslim law in practice ensure equal distribution of ownership of whatever small share of land is available among all the sons and thus tend to create a rural society consisting of independent and self-respecting peasant proprietors but with little scope for capital accumulation, large scale enterprise and high rate of saving. The most dangerous effects of the law of inheritance are the excessive subdivision and fragmentation of land holdings rendering them uneconomic. In Assam, the holdings are already too small and fragmented, and on the other hand, the pressure of population on land is also tremendously increasing. Therefore, these two problems, subdivision and fragmentation of land holding, have posed an antithesis to the development of agriculture in this state. The evil has already eroded the agrarian economy. In 1954, the average size of holdings in Assam was 2.15 hectares¹ and then it decreased to only 1.47 hectares in 1970. It was found in the field study that even the sons who are in non-agricultural occupations, are also not debarred of their shares of paternal land at equal proportions with their cultivating brothers. This condition is a great social injustice and economic disincentive to

¹ Goswami, P.C., 1963, op.cit., p. 50
the cultivating brothers. Such a state of affairs also indicates
that agricultural operations for the vast majority of peasants
cannot give them opportunities for full utilization of the
available human and animal power, not even for subsistence, let
alone maximisation of returns. Thus the law of inheritance is
responsible for the creation of unfavourable scattered tiny
plots of agricultural land and the process appears to be never-
ending.

9.3 RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE

Religion is another important social factor affecting
economic growth and development, particularly in peasant economy.
About 73 per cent of the total population in Assam are Hindus
and 25 per cent are Muslims. The religious composition of the
peasants largely follow this pattern. Both the religious groups
have fatalistic attitude towards life believing predetermination
of the existing order by the Supreme Power and hence take it to
be sacred. Irrational religious belief and attitude discourage
the spirit of enquiry and experimental and scientific outlook
among the members of the society hindering technological improve-
ment and creating lack of dynamism in all economic activities.

Faith, mystery, superstitions, taboos and resignation
dominate the minds of the peasants. The process of economic
transformation may be held up for a long time by the static
nature of a religion. It is difficult for the economy to grow vis-à-vis such a resistance. This is particularly true in case of an underdeveloped region like Assam. The Hindu peasants are greatly affected by a variety of religious rituals and beliefs. Their hard-earned agricultural commodities and the little amount of money received by selling crops, which would otherwise be necessary for fulfilling their hunger, are easily spent on religious rituals and festivals. Moreover, a large number of holy days prohibiting ploughing and other agricultural works as can be seen in the Hindu calendars and almanacs has reduced the working days, sometimes in the peak season of the agricultural activities. If a member of the family dies, the cultivators refrain from any kind of works for about a month and during the marriage ceremony also they do not work for a week or so. Thus religion adversely affects the efficiency and utilization of family labour of the Hindu peasants. Though there is no such a variety of rituals and religious ceremonies among the Muslim peasants, the one month's fasting during the lunar month of 'Ramzan', makes them idle, sometimes in the peak agricultural season. Litigation for lands and women is not infrequent among the immigrant Muslim peasants. Often such peasants are seen to spend lavishly for a suit in the court against his rival and thus become poor to poorer. In spite of the basic differences between Hinduism and Islam, one common thread of idea affecting the working efficiency of the people is
that they teach them to cultivate anti-materialistic and anti-productive outlook and to be passive against exploitation and injustice.

9.4 CASTE SYSTEM

The social institution of caste in the Hindu society stems from religious sanction of division of labour. A settled subsistence agricultural economy nourishes and maintains caste-groups in the village set-up. The whole course of one's social and domestic relations in rural Assam is determined irrevocably by birth. Caste in its crude form introduces inequality as the guiding principle in social relationship hindering socio-economic change. It largely determines the function, status, available socio-economic opportunities as well as handicaps for an individual. The caste system has developed a social structure which looks like a hierarchical pyramid with a mass of untouchables at its base and a small stratum of elite, the Brahmans, at its apex. There is a close relation between caste and indebtedness and credit in the rural areas. Generally, the lower castes are hereditary debtors, while the higher castes are mainly creditors. It is found that land ownership is frequently concentrated in the higher caste families. Enterprise, labour and capital are owned and supplied by different castes isolated from each other. Caste barriers prevent the combination of factors of production.
Low caste implies a low standard of living which acts as a dis-incentive to effort and innovation. People of higher castes are disinclined towards certain occupations followed by the lower castes, leading to overcrowding of the people of higher castes in certain occupations, which results in lowering down of their standard of living as well. In this way, the advancement of both the upper and lower castes is kept retarded and as a result, the overall development of the economy also becomes stunted.

In contrast, the Muslim community is not divided into caste-group. There are, of course, only two groups - 'Shia' and 'Shunni'. But the Muslim community is not affected much by this division except a pedantic controversy regarding the tenets of the last prophet of Islam.

As in other states of India, there is a large number of castes in Assam. But caste restriction is comparatively less rigid here due to the social reform of Sri Shankar Deva, a Vaishnavite religious preacher of the Fifteenth Century A.D. The 1961 and 1971 Census Reports did not mention the demographic figures of different castes. However, the proportions of people belonging to high castes (non-backward persons), intermediate castes (backward persons) and low castes (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes), can be assumed on the basis of caste classification of the 1951 census. It may be estimated that among the Hindus, 61.13 per cent belong to high castes, 23.45 per cent to intermediate castes, 10.14 per cent to scheduled tribes, and
5.28 per cent to scheduled castes people.

In caste hierarchy, Brahmins are followed by the Genaks, Kayasthas, Kalitas, Kots and Vaishyas. Of these, Kalitas are the most numerous. Between the higher and the lower castes, there are several intermediate castes and sub-castes of various numerical strength. The caste structure could not be analysed in the absence of demographic data on different castes. However, the census statistics of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes reveal, though in a vague way, the ill effects of caste system on socio-economic condition in the state. The districtwise distribution of these two groups of people in percentages to the total population in the respective district is shown in table 9.1.

The total population of scheduled castes is about 9 lakhs and that of scheduled tribes is 16 lakhs with their literacy accounting for 25.79 per cent and 20.67 per cent respectively as against 26.14 per cent of the total population.

The percentage of urban people among the scheduled castes is 9.39 and that of scheduled tribes is merely 0.89 compared to 8.82 per cent in case of all people. The percentage of workers among the scheduled castes is 28.18. Agricultural workers among them account for 67 per cent and agricultural labourers, 13.50 per cent of the total working population, both of which are higher than those of the general population. The corresponding figures for the scheduled tribes are 92.44 and 7.13.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Scheduled Caste population as % of total population</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe population as % of total population</th>
<th>Total Scheduled population as % of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goalpara</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>19.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamrup</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td>16.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrang</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>10.69</td>
<td>15.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowgong</td>
<td>9.95</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>17.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibsagar</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>11.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakhimpur</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>28.78</td>
<td>34.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dibrugarh</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>8.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.A.</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>55.37</td>
<td>57.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.C.Hills</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>69.15</td>
<td>70.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gachar</td>
<td>12.19</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>13.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assam</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.24</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.99</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Census of India, 1971)

From the table 9.2, the scheduled castes appear to be comparatively better off economically. But in reality this is not so. Because, in the field study made by this author, it was observed that landlessness forces the people belonging to the scheduled castes to find alternative occupations like fishing, pottery-making, gold-smithy, blacksmithy, cloth-washing, carpentry, handloom and to work as wage labourers in agriculture or small household industries, all of which are not generally done by the
higher caste land-owning people.

The economic condition of the scheduled tribes is obviously distressing. These people are still subsisting on their own produces from the soil. The Government's various measures have not been successful in ameliorating the socio-economic condition of these people.

Table 9.2

OCCUPATIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION, 1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes of people</th>
<th>Total workers as % of total population</th>
<th>Primary sector (% of total workers)</th>
<th>Secondary sector (% of total workers)</th>
<th>Tertiary sector (% of total workers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All people</td>
<td>27.96</td>
<td>77.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>18.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>28.18</td>
<td>74.14</td>
<td>8.39</td>
<td>17.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>25.44</td>
<td>93.07</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>5.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source - Census of India, 1971)

According to a Census of the Assam Government Employees carried on by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, 7 per cent of the total State Government employees belong to the
scheduled castes, 2 per cent to the scheduled tribes (Hills), 5 per cent to the scheduled tribes (Plains), while the other backward classes account for 31 per cent. The remaining 55 per cent belong to the higher castes alone. Occupational association of the different castes is still persisting, indicating lack of socio-economic mobility of the ruralites.

The economic condition in general and peasant agriculture in particular are being affected by the caste structure, not only by the customs and traditions of the lower castes, but also those of the higher castes. For example, the Brahmin peasants being interdicted of ploughing do not till their own land even when they starve and are left with no prospect for alternative jobs. The literacy rate is high among them, as a result of pressing need to get jobs in the tertiary sectors. The womenfolk of all high caste population, constituting about 48 per cent of the total high caste population are not allowed to work outside the household compound, particularly in Lower Assam, where the Brahmins and the Kalitas predominate (80.68 and 72.85 per cent of the total population of Kamrup and Goalpara respectively are non-backward according to 1951 census).

The participation of women force in agriculture is very low in case of higher castes than in the lower castes and tribal

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population.

From the table 9.3, it is evident that there is a negative correlation between percentage of women in agriculture and the percentage of higher castes.

Table 9.3

CORRELATION BETWEEN HIGHER CASTE POPULATION AND WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL OPERATION, 1951.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Higher caste population</th>
<th>Women Farm Worker as % of total Farm Worker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goalpara</td>
<td>72.85</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamrup</td>
<td>80.68</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrang</td>
<td>64.11</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowgong</td>
<td>77.76</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sibsagar</td>
<td>40.17</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakhimpur &amp; Dibrugarh</td>
<td>31.19</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cachar</td>
<td>64.63</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.A. &amp; N.C.Hills</td>
<td>20.27</td>
<td>13.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source - Census of India, 1951).

In an industrially backward state where opportunities other than agriculture and manual labour are almost absent, most of the higher caste people are forced to remain idle, being unemployed or under-employed. In a poor economic structure, education becomes a curse rather than a boon. As a result,
standard of living of the higher caste population also does not rise and most of the educated higher caste people become parasitic on poor agricultural resources.

The redeeming feature is that during the last Five Year Plans, the breaking away of occupational association of castes is being started along with the spread of education, development of transport and communication, other tertiary services and urbanisation. So far the Muslims are concerned, their low standard of living and poverty may be accounted for the fact that majority of them are landless peasants and illiteracy is conspicuous among them.

9.5 CLASS STRUCTURE

Where social position is governed by a fixed caste system limiting occupational mobility, it is difficult to develop in the individuals of a society, the will to economise for social advancement. Particularly in non-socialist countries, economic development depends upon open class structure and is significantly helped by the existence of a strong middle class.3

In pre-British Assamese society, there was practically no middle class standing between the nobility and the peasantry. The Assamese society was constituted by landlords and peasants. They did not change radically overnight with the introduction of foreign rule

and capitalism. Despite monetization of the economy, it remained almost at the level of semi-tribal, semi-feudal agrarian society as before. Since 80 per cent of all lands was settled directly with the peasants, the big landlords had only limited opportunities of exploiting the tenants except in some parts of Goalpara district and Karimganj subdivision of the Cachar district, where permanent settlement was in existence during the British rule. Rural households, traditionally differentiated according to the number of ploughs each operated, were grouped into four categories as followed: (i) Uttam (Superior), i.e. those with three or more ploughs each; (ii) Madhyam (Middle), i.e. those with two ploughs each; (iii) Samanya (Small), i.e. those with one plough each; (iv) Prakrit ( Inferior), i.e. the ploughless who worked with a borrowed plough ('marakiya') or bondsmen or slaves. The four groups recognised on the basis of the number of ploughs possessed, differed each other not only by their relation to the means of production, but also by their role in the social organization of labour and consequently by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. But

by counting the number of ploughs alone, their different places
in the historically determined system of production could not
be adequately brought out.\(^5\)

The big landholders — 'La-Khirajdar' and 'Nisf-Khiraj-
dar' — held altogether not less than 1.50 lakh hectares of land
with privileged tenures.\(^6\) They enjoyed a status that permitted
their participation only in supervision of cultivation, but not
in actual agricultural operations. This distinguished them from
the man of peasantry. Secondly, they leased out substantial
quantities of land, because of concentration of landholding into
their hands. Rent receipt formed an important element of their
total household income.

\(^5\) Ibid., Citing Lenin, V.I., 1965, A Great Beginning, Collected
Works, 29, Moscow, p. 421.

\(^6\) The system of land tenure prevailing in the temporarily
settled areas of Assam is called 'Baiyatwari'. The land
settled for peasant agriculture under this system is held
directly under the state in three different sub-systems:
'La-Khiraj', 'Nisf-Khiraj', and 'Khiraj' (both periodic and
annual 'Khiraj'). 'La-Khiraj' means revenue free estates
granted by the former rulers of Assam for religious, chari-
table or other purposes to the priests or royal servants
and which were recognised by the British Administration
after they are confirmed by the Special Commission under
Bengal Regulation II of 1826. The owners of such estates
were called 'La-Khirajdar'. 'Nisf-Khiraj' or half-revenue
paying estates or distinguished from 'Khiraj' or full
revenue paying estates, formed a special class of tenure
which is to be found only in Assam. The Nisf-Khirajdars
were generally the manager of a temple (called 'Daler') or
the highest priest (called 'Gosain') of some religious
institutions or might be the persons ('Palk') performing
special duties in a temple. — Sarma, S.C., 1956, A Survey
of the Rural Economic Conditions in Nongpoh, Dept. Of Econo-
The small landholders could not always be easily and clearly distinguished from the rich peasants. Both participated in agricultural operations and both employed labour, free or bonded. But they can be roughly distinguished by their caste origins, bearing a relation with the degree of their participation in actual agricultural operations.

On the basis of the above considerations, the 'Uttam' category could be broadly classified into two classes - (i) the landlords and (ii) the big peasants. The 'Madhyam' category was an unstable transitory peasant group constantly moving out of it upward or downward.

The 'Samanya' or small category was constituted by the bulk of the peasantry — both self-employed owner-cultivator and tenant household, each operating with only one plough. The proportion of land under ordinary crop cultivation by tenants was as high as 25 per cent in Kamrup, but not below 7 per cent in any of the other districts. The small peasant households carried on cultivation on the basis of family labour and met extra labour requirements by resorting to the traditional method of inter-household labour co-operation. They could or did rarely hire in, but occasionally women and children of the poorer households did hire out themselves on a casual basis.

The landless and ploughless category was constituted by bonded agricultural labour of several types engaged in the
service of the landlords and the rich peasants. In the past many in this category were liberated slaves (under the Act of 1843) and their descendants.

The class structure of the Assamese society as outlined above, was basically a continuation of what had existed before the British rule. The process of colonisation, aimed at extracting as much resources as possible, needed restructuring of this society and monetising of its economy. It was in that process that the Assamese middle class consisting of businessmen, professionals and salaried employees, was born from within the given class structure of the old society. The privileged high castes landowners, other big landowners and those peasants who exploited labour or combined crafts and trading activities with agriculture, constituted the potential seed-bed for a new middle class. But their emergence was very slow because of such factors as —— (1) lack of capital accumulation, (2) competition from more competent non-Assamese traders already in the field, (3) their intense attachment to land, etc. Peasant and artisan traders of Kamrup and boat-owning fishermen, who were increasingly taking to trade until and during the early years of the British rule, gradually lost their standing in the face of the competition from non-Assamese traders. Profession and new job opportunities were also almost exclusively monopolized by the outsiders. Moreover, small budget provisions and lack of concrete effort in the
field of education kept the local people backward.

However, an Assamese middle class, consisting of 'Mauzadars' (land revenue collecting Commission Agents of the Government) and 'Mandas' (surveyors and revenue assessors), lawyers, doctors, teachers, officers and clerks, and literate tea garden employees did emerge. This class had its roots mostly in the landed gentry and continued to maintain landed interests. However, it was business profits, fees from profession, and salaries, and not rent or agricultural produce that constituted their major sources of surplus income. Many of them invested such surplus income on trade and plantations. Western education facilitated entry to this new middle class. Those who lacked both land and education lagged behind. People of high castes with a medium of pre-British educational background made best use of such a situation.

The Assamese middle class could be divided broadly into two groups—(i) bourgeois and (ii) petty-bourgeois. Assamese planters, traders and owners of business units with employed wage-labour and representing market relations—belonged to the former class. The big professionals and high salaried Government servants can also be included in this class. They together represented the emerging capitalist relations of production, although with limitations within the given colonial system. They also shared a common Anglicised culture relevant to
these relations. The other section of the middle class, sharing the same culture, included the intelligentsia — students, primary and secondary school teachers, low income government functionaries, office clerks, small lawyers and petty traders. The Assamese middle class had also practically no industrial production base, and, therefore, its capitalist core was structurally very weak⁷.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the Assamese class structure was created partly by the interaction of social and economic forces and partly by the services required to be rendered to the political regimes in different periods. Caste system, Western education, religion and above all the royal patronage helped a small group of people to rise on the socio-economic ladder. Moreover, through legal measures, the British rulers created a multi-tier structure of tenantry with many unproductive intermediaries like Zamindars, Jotedars, Mausadars and Privileged Baiyats between the Government and the actual tillers of the soil in order to suit their own interest of colonial exploitation of the state. The vast majority of the rural people sank to the bottom of ignorance and poverty within the subsistence economy.

After Independence, the democratic Government adopted several measures to abolish the feudal intermediaries and to confer security to the tenants so that the economic stability of

⁷ Guha, A., ibid.
the peasantry could be ensured for overall development of agrarian economy. With the help of various Land Reform Acts passed by the Government, the peasant class structure of pre-British and British legacy in the rural Assam is starting to be transformed into only three distinct classes, viz. (i) Land-owning peasants (Owner-operators); (ii) Share-cropping tenants; and (iii) Leasehold tenants.

The creation of the peasant proprietorship is the result of political ideology pursued by the democratic Government in India. Since the small landholder peasants constitute the bulk of the voters, the political power of the ruling party in India depends to a great extent on the votes of the peasants. Moreover, the distribution of land among the landless and poor peasants can save ruling power from the explosion of the volcano of unemployment problem by engaging a vast majority of the alarmingly increasing people in the unorganised sector of economy which can blunt their consciousness to revolt. Unlike the communist countries, India did not venture to nationalise the landed properties of the nation, since election politics could not allow them to do so. Thus the social structure in Assam, as elsewhere in India, is not the natural evolution, but the creation of political ideologies adopted by the ruling classes without any consideration of sound economic principle and social justice. Very recently Green Revolution through technological innovation in
agriculture has been ushered in some parts of the country in order to accelerate the growth rate for feeding the poverty-striken millions. Assam has been lagging far behind the other parts of India in this respect, though the State Government has been trying to do something within its limited resources. Bank loans and other modern inputs are offered to the peasants so that they can innovate their agricultural technology (see Chapters XI and XII). Transport and marketing are also provided so that the peasants can commercialize their agricultural production (see Chapter XIII). As a result of the introduction of money economy into the rural sector during the planning periods on the one hand, and the creation of marginal and infra-marginal peasants with small, fragmented, and uneconomic land holding on the other, quite a new phenomenon is beginning to appear in the field of agriculture against sound economic norms: the benefits of the Government's innovative measures have begun to accrue to the more prosperous landowners and the technical change in agriculture is resulting in greater income inequality and polarisation of social classes into large farmers and landless agricultural labourers. The transitory small peasant group in between these two categories is going to be perished sooner or later and must seek either alternative occupations if available or join the labour market of the capitalist farmers and factory entrepreneurs. Thus it seems that the Government policy is self-contradictory.
Technological innovation is an economic measure, and the creation of small peasant proprietorship is its antithesis. They cannot go together. In the face of strong capitalist economic forces, the weaker pre-capitalist (peasant) mode of production cannot survive in spite of State patronage. Without Government's subsidy at the cost of huge amount of scarce money from the public exchequer, small individual peasant farming can never be made economically efficient with modern technology. Since economic and political powers are concentrated in a small group and as a result, factor markets are highly imperfect, many members of the rural community have restricted access to the means of production, and this affects the methods of cultivation that are used and the efficiency of the system. Green Revolution with a handful privileged farmers adopting capitalist mode of production is a measure only for increasing overall agricultural productivity and national output of agricultural produces, but surely not for establishing social justice. On the other hand, the creation of peasantry with millions of small cultivators who are deprived of easy access to the modern factors of production except a small insured operational holding, is a measure for establishing social justice only temporarily and is surely neither an economic measure nor a measure for lasting social justice.