CHAPTER - I

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Rural development is the most crucial issue faced by many third world countries. Experiments in this field have been going on in many countries and now a consensus is emerging as to what constitutes rural development. It has come to be accepted that rural development is the socio-economic development of the poor people in the villages. Planned efforts for education and motivating them are absolutely necessary. The immediate task of the rural development programmes is to help them to cross the poverty line. The poor people must be offered viable economic activities to earn their living and to become self-reliant. In this context, financing institutions, which can offer credit facilities on easy terms have an important role to play. If the credit institutions have foresight and vision and are prepared to mould their systems to the needs of the rural people much can be achieved by them. Though credit forms the basis even today the development-oriented financial assistance of banking system has not reached the macro-level effectively.

Inspite of the tremendous growth in the number of branches, particularly in the rural areas, and a sizeable growth in manpower, the rural activities more or less remained almost untouched by the commercial banks. This has contributed to the failure of the anti-poverty programmes. This has led to the
criticism "we have rural branches and not rural bankers". What is needed is a different culture and separate organisation specially tuned to the rural culture and needs of the rural masses. IRDP implemented by banks yielded benefits to the rural poor of the district. Banks can help rural poor to reap quicker and higher benefits in a better way.

Rural development has now come to be realised as sine qua non of national development and social welfare. The problem is not merely one of development of rural areas but of the development of the rural communities, to dispel ignorance and poverty. In short, every rural family should have reasonable share in the generation of GNP (Gross National Product) and increasing per capita income.

Traditionally, banking throughout the world focussed its attention on serving the needs of big business and industrialists. The universal realization in recent years that banks have to play an important role in the development process of a country has brought about a complete reorientation in their operational policies. Banks are now required to enter into new areas and sectors which are hitherto treated as non-banking activities. In this changed context, massive spread of banking has helped in mobilizing untapped resources for developmental activity. With the emphasis on opening branches in rural and
semi-urban areas, banking activity has been taken to remote corners of the country. In an underdeveloped country like India, rapid rural development is a pre-requisite for any progress. To achieve this aspect the role of banking system is crucial. Keeping this in mind a critical analysis has been made on the role of commercial banks and rural development.

During 1969 certain policy measures were imposed on the functioning of the banks to regulate the credit flow into the sectors which were accorded priorities in the developmental plans. The social controls were introduced in 1967 and certain sectors (agriculture, small scale industries, retail trade and business) were considered as "priority sectors". This was the first positive step aimed at increasing the flow of credit to agriculture. Though agricultural development is not synonymous with rural development, the farmer could be a prime mover in rural development.

The nationalisation of 14 major commercial banks in July, 1969 paved the way for bringing about dramatic changes in the operations of banks. One of the changes ushered in immediately was the operation of bank branches and their geographical dispersion. The banks were directed to open a large number of rural branches. They did this hesitantly at first, then in great haste, when the inevitability of this situation was recognised. During the short span of six years (1969-1975)
they have opened branches in the rural areas. Then during the next five years (1975-1981) they have built up a network of branches in the hitherto unbanked centres. They were required to open four rural branches in order to get a licence for a metropolitan and an urban branch.¹ This was a strategic move which got the banks entrenched in the rural economy. The allotment of the districts to various banks under the Lead Bank Scheme (LBS) and the assignment of responsibility of identifying unbanked centres largely contributed to the process of rural branch expansion.

The Government's desire to ensure the utilisation of the resources mobilised by the banks for rural development was made explicit through policy directive (credit-deposit ratio of banks in rural and semi-urban areas). More vigorous manifestation of the need for resource utilisation was reflected in the policy goals enunciated in the formulation of "District Credit Plans". This was a bold experiment in credit planning at the district level, based on the resource endowment and the developmental needs of the districts. The credit need of all the sectors of the districts economy would be assessed in the district credit plan.

Among the lending operations adopted by the banks, the two operations which had direct bearing on rural development were the 'Village Adoption Scheme' (VAS) and the DIR (Differential Interest Rates) lendings. The VAS when initiated was considered conceptually as an integral programme of rural development. It however, turn out to be a programme where coverage of village were given more importance than the coverage of the firm families in the adopted villages lending to the weaker sections of the society in the villages under the concessional rates of interest (4 per cent) was a laudable programme introduced in 1972. This programme brought the bank into direct interactions with the weaker sections in the rural areas more intensively than any programme in the past. Operationally, the involvement of commercial banks in the life of the various strata of the rural economy began through this programme. The multi-agency approach to the problem of rural credit was accepted in 1969 itself.

MULTI-AGENCY APPROACH

Not satisfied with the performance on the commercial banks and co-operatives, the need for sponsoring more institutions was felt at different times. Thus, a National Commission on Agriculture (NCA) recommended the establishment of 'Farmers Service Societies (FSS)' by both the co-operatives and

the commercial banks in 1971. This agency was set up with a view to provide the whole package of inputs including credit under one roof to the marginal and small farmers. The banks have set up the FSS in those states where the co-operative lobby did not object to the bank's entry into this domain. Another attempt made in the hybridisation of the co-operatives and commercial banks was the scheme of giving up the weaker co-operatives to the commercial banks in India.

Yet another measure through which the banks were committed to rural development was the establishment of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs). Under the RRBs Act of 1976, banks were asked to sponsor the Regional Rural Banks through capital participation and other support measures. Selecting districts having the concentration of small and marginal farmers, these banks were established in different parts of the country. They were structured to be Rural Development Banks.

The 20-point Economic Programme (PEP) envisaged by Smt. Indira Gandhi introduced during 1976, the commercial banks role in extending credit to the freed bonded labourers besides the other weaker sections was clearly pin-pointed. The target groups were specified, procedural formalities were simplified and concessional lending was prescribed.

DISTRIBUTION INDUSTRIES CENTRE AND BANK

Mention also be made of the establishment of the District Industries Centres (DIC) which are intended to foster the development of rural industries. The credit manager of DIC is a bank official on deputation (it has even today continued because of lack of substitute from the State Government, for the period of one or two or three years). The DIC is expected to help the development of tiny sector and the village artisans. The non-farm activities in the rural economy are to be the concern of this agency.

A major structural innovation in the industrial policy is the creation of a single agency known as District Industries Centres (DIC) to deal with all requirements of small and village industries.

The DIC programme has been formulated so as to provide all services and support to the small village industries sector under a single roof at pre-investment, investment and post-investment stages. The DICs are expected to undertake investigation of the district including its resources raw-materials, supply of machinery and equipment, effective management for credit facilities, marketing and quality control, research extension and entrepreneurial training. Each DIC is to be manned by a General Manager, assisted by seven functional
managers to provide assistance in economic investigation, machinery and equipments, research, training credit, marketing and rural artisans and industrial programmes.

The credit manager to be provided by lead bank of the district, would maintain close liaison between banking network and DICs. The DICs will be under the administrative control of the director of industries in the state and monitored by the Development Commissioner, (Small Scale Industries) at the national level. The DICs will work as a catalyst for village development of the decentralised sector and provide support and services under one roof, this objective will not be achieved unless there is proper linkage and close co-ordination between the various developmental agencies at the central and state levels. The national organisation like KVIC (Khadi and Village Industries Commission), Handloom Board, Handicraft Board, Silk Board, Coir Board, are extensively involved in the programme of developing the decentralised industrial sector. Instructions have been issued that wherever these organisations have their own specific programme, there should be close matching of DICs with such programmes so that there is no duplication of efforts. DICs are required to supplement their efforts by initiating similar programmes in other areas. The implementation of various employment-oriented programmes launched by the KVIC at the district level or block levels is also linked with DICs. With a
view to having close co-ordination with DICs, the All-India Handicrafts Board has issued instructions to field institutions to utilise DIC machinery as also to advice DICs regarding introduction of handicraft-oriented programmes, wherever these have not been introduced by them so far by providing credit facilities to handicraft artisans. The DICs are expected to prepare block-wise action plans separately for artisan-based activities, tiny and small scale units.

**BANK AND IRDP**

Credit is one of the pre-requisite factors for the implementation of IRDP programmes. Non-institutional agencies and co-operative credit institutions have played an almost insignificant role in providing credit. As a last resort, the commercial banks were nationalised with a view to providing credit to all classes and sectors of the economy. After nationalisation of commercial banks, the financial activities of these banks have shifted from class to mass-banking and the credit has become production-oriented rather than security-oriented. These financial institutions are entrusted to finance the activities of IRDP and provide short-term loans for agricultural operations and inputs, medium-term loans for purchase of equipments such as electric motors, oil engines, and long-term loan for the purchase of durable assets. Further, they provide financial assistance for allied agriculture activities
such as dairy, fisheries, milch animals, animal rearing under IRDP, etc. Banks prepare banking plans after assessing the bankability of the various schemes prepared by the DRDAs (District Rural Development Agencies) for the benefit of the IRDP beneficiaries, credit support for all viable economic activities is ensured by allocating responsibility for providing such finance among the financial institutions operating in the area. In their lead as well as non-lead districts, banks have to take up their due share under the banking plans and extend credit to the identified families for pursuit of viable economic activities with a view to effectively assisting them to cross the poverty line. The involvement of bank personnel in identification of the families selection of economically viable activities and the adoption of cluster approach in lending are expected to help their implementation by ensuring that the IRDP plans are fully integrated with district credit plans.

Consistent with the gradual shift of emphasis from budgetary resources to institutional funds for financing self-employment programmes designed to generate adequate surpluses, only 25 to $33\frac{1}{3}$ percent of (50 percent of SC and STs) investment plan for IRDP will be from the Government's budgetary resources, while the remaining $66\frac{2}{3}$ to 75 percent (50 percent for SC and STs) will be financed by banks.
Since the strategy is based on identification of economically viable and technically feasible activities for each of the identified beneficiaries and the bulk of the assistance is expected to be provided by way of institutional credit, the success of the programme would depend largely on the availability of adequate credit support. Under the programme, 15 million families, out of which 20 percent will be from scheduled caste and tribes, are to be assisted over the five year period and bank finance involved is of the order of ₹3,000.00 crores. Taking into consideration the massive nature of the programme, the additional load on the banking system is expected to be considerable.

Further, even assuming that only one loan is to be granted to each family, credit assistance to 15 million households will result in 15 million new accounts. Even if a third of these accounts are taken care of by co-operative banks, commercial banks will have to extend credit to at least two-thirds of the beneficiary families or 10 million new accounts. Under IRDP, over and above the 129.8 lakhs account relating to priority sector advances of public sector banks at the end of 1980, the additional task of servicing 100 lakh new beneficiaries pertaining to agriculture and allied activities, small and village industries and small business will present a formidable challenge to commercial banks. 5

In order to discharge their obligations, commercial banks, will therefore, have to strengthen their branch network to rural areas as well as deploy and train additional staff to assist in this work.

The process of rural orientation of the banks is a continuous process, and it has to be so because of the huge dimension of the problems of rural development in India. These changes related to a massive extension of banking facilities to rural and unbanked centres, a shift from "class" to "mass" banking, orientation of the banking policy of the banks increasingly in favour of the unprivileged sections of the community; and involvement of the banks in the process of planning and development at the grass-root level.

**LEAD BANK AND IRDP**

Economic development of a country calls for balanced growth of banking and even distribution of credit between different regions. With a view to achieving this objective, the Reserve Bank of India, evolved the Lead Bank Scheme (LBS) in December, 1969, under which all the districts in the Indian Union excepting greater Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi, Chandigarh and Goa, were allotted to the State Bank of India group and the public and private sector banks, after taking into consideration
factors such as the resource-base of the banks concerned, contiguity of the districts.  

Though the Lead Bank Scheme was originally conceived as a means of minimising the regional disparities in the availability of banking facilities, the scope and contents were enlarged from time to time. Since its inception there have been different stages in the development of the Lead Bank Scheme. The emphasis in the first stage was on impressionistic surveys of the districts allotted and to identify growth centres where branches could be opened in the beginning. The first phase was thus confined to branch expansion in the lead districts. The second stage began with the formation of "District Consultative Committees" (DCCs) and "State Level Bankers Committees" (SLBC) to sort out and find solutions to the common problems encountered by the bankers and to bring out an effective co-ordination between banks and Government agencies involved in the implementation of the scheme. The third stage commenced with the preparation of credit plans taking the credit gaps of the districts into account. These credit plans have been prepared with the same objectives as those of the national development plan in which the removal of unemployment and under-employment; improvement in the standard of living of the poorest and weakest sections of the population and meeting the basic needs of poor are important.

Credit disbursements are made by the different bank branches as per the direction of lead bank and the provisions of the credit plans. In the fourth stage, the emphasis was on the compilation of district level banking statistics and the review of the implementation of credit plans. In the fifth and final stage, the Reserve Bank of India, set up a separate cell known as "Rural Planning and Credit Cell" to supervise and guide the banks in the preparation of district credit plans.

Though the lead bank has to play vital role in the development of banking and credit deployment in the district allocated to it, it is not expected to have a monopoly of banking business in those districts. The lead bank has to act as a consortium leader and elicit the co-operation of other banks operating in the district in mobilising deposits, assessing and meeting the actual and potential credit needs. In addition to mitigating the regional imbalances in the availability of banking facilities and distribution of credit, the scheme is instrumental in promoting a collective effort for the economic development of a district.

More recently, the prime task for which the lead banks have to devote considerable time, efforts and attention has been the formulation of District Credit Plans (DCPs)/Annual Action Plans (AAPs) so as to achieve the national objective of
particularly reaching the priority sectors and more so the weaker sections within the priority sector. In priority sector, particularly agriculture, lead bank provided assistance for irrigation, short-term finance for meeting cultivation expenses, the mechanisation of agriculture, credit to organise markets, assistance for allied activities (dairy, poultry, piggery, sheep-rearing) technical assistance to farmers.

The Reserve Bank of India has advised all lead banks to take up the preparation of banking plans for the implementation of IRDP which has been extended to all the blocks in the country since October, 1980. Banking plans, as credit counterparts of the IRDP, are essential for identifying the financial resources available and the purposes for which institutional credit support be needed. They are drawn upto cover all the activities to be undertaken under IRDP every year. The various schemes covered in such plans are to be included in the Annual Action Plans (AAPs), of lead banks for every year, with the outlay earmarked for the programme shown separately. The banking plan of each block should clearly specify the schemes under each sector so that the purposes eligible for refinance can be straight away taken up by NABARD (National Agricultural Bank and Rural Development) for sanction. NABARD will treat the banking plan itself as the scheme and sanction refinance to the

participating banks in respect of the term loans given for agriculture and allied activities.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCIAL BANK

Inter, Intra institutional and departmental co-operation has to be solicited in order to get infrastructural facilities but that alone should not deter the bankers in lending credit in deserving cases. There are certain areas where banks should promote and extend liberal finance to achieve all round rural development, namely, research laboratories for experimental farms, extension services for supplies and inputs, training programmes (beneficiaries and staff), setting up of service centres (soil testing, supplying inputs, implements) trade or service centres and inputs (for processing, storing, marketing), agro-industrial complexes, rural industrial estates or industries, gobar gas plants, afforestation, soil conservation and land development programmes, rural electrification, health, education services and village water supply programmes.

BLENDING OF SOCIAL BANKING WITH COMMERCIAL BANKING

In rural areas, they should instead of spreading everywhere without creating any impact on rural society, concentrates on improving the income of farmers and artisans by using their skill and time. Bank should also see that the agricultural produce gets a fair price. Allied professions have to be encouraged by bankers to exploit the aptitude and skill of villagers. It is evident from the above fact that an effort is
being made to about a true blending of social banking with sound commercial banking. It has been recognised that mere growth without distributive justice cannot be the goal of development process. All segments of the society should be made to be active partners in the development process. Development is not, just about factories, roads, dams. Development is basically about people. The goal is the people's material, cultural and spiritual fulfilment. The human factor, the human context, is of supreme value. Banks must pay attention to those aspects.

The foregoing discussion highlights the need for the upliftment of rural people in the country. The magnitude of rural mass makes it difficult for the Government alone to render effective service in the field of rural development. Welfare programmes need to be provided by the Government agencies, voluntary agencies and also by financial institutions. The successful operations depend mainly on the role of financial agencies, especially commercial banks. In the present context, banking industry must increasingly address itself to the needs of the society and of its people and play a developmental role instead of handling credit as it traditionally did. In accomplishing this idea successfully, banks have to shoulder sometimes conflicting responsibilities of making the Government monetary policy a success; and safeguarding the interests of the depositors.
OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main focus of the study is on the income generation from the activities financed and how far it had enabled the beneficiaries to cross the poverty line. Efforts were made to analyse, in greater detail of the various activities pursued by the beneficiaries and to assess the income generating capacity of these activities in the districts. While assessing the incremental income, data was collected from the various government agencies, providing backward and forward linkages and how far this had contributed to the income generation. Besides, the asset and liability patterns in the pre and post IRDP assistance periods were also carefully analysed to see how far incremental income was utilised for acquiring additional business and non-business assets or for repaying old loans and thus reducing liability. Consumption pattern in the pre and post assistance periods were also studied to assess how far IRDP assistance had resulted - in the improvement in living standards. Recovery performance was studied not merely to ascertain the recovery percentages in the district, but also to understand the reasons for the differences therein, against the background of income generation from the various activities financed, diversion of incremental income for acquisition of assets or reduction in liability. In short, apart from assessing how far the beneficiaries had been able to cross the poverty line with IRDP assistance, efforts were also made to ascertain the lines of
activities into which economic assistance had been fruitfully
cchanneled from the point of view of the poor and conditions
necessary for the success of these activities, so as to
facilitate future planning in this behalf by bankers as well as
government agencies.

HYPOTHESES

After analysing the various social benefits offered by
the Commercial Bank in mitigating economic ills, the following
hypothesis are summed up :

1. Commercial Banking is an important infrastructure for
economic development of the rural areas and through
them of the entire national economy :

2. Commercial banks through its rural branch network have
reached the rural masses and it has helped in reducing
rural indebtedness :

3. Commercial banks have succeeded in developing
entrepreneurship among the rural masses :

4. Commercial banks have become a very useful component
in the totality of rural credit structure :
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The methodology for the study comprises collection of data both from primary and secondary sources. Personal contact with concerned individuals and agencies will form the basis for primary data. Questionnaires will be prepared for this purpose to collect first-hand information. Such field studies along with collection of information from secondary sources like reports and other published materials shall be the basis for the proposed research work.

**IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study will be useful for both Government and the public. Although there are by now sufficient published materials on the subject, we feel it might be worth while to contribute a small treatise on the subject. The findings and the suggestion to be incorporated on the study, it is hoped, will benefit the banks and the agencies involved in rural development programme.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Rural development is a long-term process, dynamic, diverse and demanding an integrative decentralised approach. The concept has undergone several changes according to given environment, policy priorities and institutional treatment. Several government and non-government evaluative studies have highlighted the necessity to strengthen the base of the programme.
Assuming a short-run or least integrated solution to the long-term perspective, apathy of the implementing agencies and the sheer gigantic nature of the problem, all have contributed to the low performance of the programmes, especially in qualitative terms.

No doubt, in recent years, some scholars have tried to present some empirical evidence with regard to rural development through their published micro-studies. However, these micro-studies, more or less, are sectoral in approach. Special mention may be made of: Swaminathan, M.S. (Concept 1982), Deogaonkar, S.G. (Concept 1977), Seetharamu (Ashosh 1980), Singhvi, Singh and Yadav (Abhinav 1980), Prasad, A. (Associated 1976), Pandey and Sodhi (Sriram Centre 1981), United Nations Asian and Pacific Development Institute (Concept 1980), Mishra, S.N. (Concept 1980), Kuldip Mathur (Concept 1980) and Mishra (II PA, 1982).

After going through some of the published works mentioned above, we find that each of them deal with some particular problem and some specific schemes with regard to rural development. They hardly provide any integrated conceptual framework, on the basis of which, the Government may design its future strategy to achieve the desired goal. The present study makes a clear departure from the researches taken up in the past.
and will help the future researchers in getting a complete picture of all the schemes of integrated Rural Development Programmes operating at the present moment in a composite form at a place.

According to a recent evaluation, (Jyoti Kumar, Mittal 1987), much attention has to be given to the development of secondary tertiary sectors in the rural system so as to contain the population exodus to unproductive systems. Each region, backward, developing and developed has to grow within the specific sector or across so as to bring in a balanced technological base for development.

The present study presents an overall picture of schemes operating at the present moment with the main objectives to improve the socio-economic conditions of the downtrodden section of our rural society.

There are some scholars who have tried to diagnose the Integrated development in a positive way. Mr. M. Thaha and Om Prakash, in their book "Integrated Rural Development - India", they have accepted the scheme lately. In their study they have shown the shortfall in the status of North East Region, where banking infrastructure is very poor. This has affected credit flow adversely in this region. Due to shortage of staff, there
has also been delays in the disposal of loan applications and lack of supervision and follow-up action. Insistance on security by the banks has also resulted in the execution of the poorer among the target group.

The "Guidelines on IRD plan formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation" which is prepared by centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific; this document was then circulated to relevant agencies of CIRDAP member countries for discussions. A week-long workshop was later held in Comilla. Sixteen officials designed by seven member countries attended the workshop. Two of the authors of the draft manual were present as "Resource persons". The workshop analysed various aspects of the document, exchanged country experienced and recommended that the revised document should be fitted as "Guidelines on IRD plan formulation implementation monitoring and evaluation".

Of the eleven member countries of CIRDAP, seven (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Laos and Vietnam) are classified as low income, three (Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia) as middle income and one (Malaysia) as upper middle income country (World Bank - 1986).
I.C. Dhingra "Rural Economics (1984) who has analysis of the various agreements on IRDP and recent developments in Indian Rural economy.

Mr. L.M. Bhole in his book "Financial Institutes and Markets" (1993) explained the liabilities of commercial banks in implementation of IRDP in a positive way. Commercial banks finance in inevitable in IRDP.

Mr. Radhakamal Mukherjee, the Rural Economy of India, 1926 who felt that an all round development of rural life is possible only when improvement schemes are considered and inaugurated, not separately but as parts of a systematic programme of regional reconstruction. A forward policy of rural and agricultural improvement has been envisaged which he believe will offer a corrective to the present disorganisation of village life and production.

Dr. B.P. Tyagi (1993) in his book Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, who admits that the development of the Rural Sector in general and agriculture in particular, has engaged the attention of planners right from the advent of planning. He appreciate the Union Finance Minister who has presented the IRDP programme before the Central Budget for 1996-97 and who felt that an effective attack on rural poverty
and under development can only be planned in the frame work of an integrated programme of rural development based on detailed knowledge of local needs, resource endorsements and potentialities.

Vasant Desai (1988) "Rural Development" Vol-I to VI issues and problems, who systematically examines the problem of rural development in India and pleads for the accelerated and integrated development of rural areas, which is essential for a balanced growth of the India economy.

Mr. P.C. Pandey, R.S. Jalal (1991) in "Rural Development in India" according to them alleviation of poverty continues to be a welfare dream, atleast for the downtrodden and unattended rural workers. This large clump of the issues need proper understanding and adequate analysis. Bank, co-operatives and other social institutions together can function more effectively to ensure the credit flows and optimum utilisation of capital in rural areas.

Dr. C.S. Raju (1989) "Management of Rural Development" who emphasised the rural development means development of all areas. Agriculture, livestock, animal husbandry, dairying and milk supply, fisheries, forestry, rural electrification, rural water supply, rural roads, rural
transport, rural housing, rural health, marketing, village and
small scale industries processing etc. These broad group of rural
economic sectors have various sub groups of sectors which have
also been emphasised.

Mr. C.R. Khotari, 1989 "Strategy for Rural Development" according to him almost all development programmes/
strategies adopted so far have been expenditure oriented and
have, therefore, failed to make a long and lasting impact on the
economy. There have been of exclusive reliance on the official
machinery to combat the complex problem of rural development.
There has been no adequate effort to co-ordinated official
intervention with the efforts of many Non-Governmental
Organisations (NGOs) that are reportedly doing useful work.
Several lacunae remains with rural development administration
with regard to its responsiveness socio-economic justice and
trickling down effect.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it may be said that the commercial bank
has displayed a remarkable flexibility to adjust to the changing
environment. The banks which were essentially urban oriented,
have extended their operations to the country side and emerged as
a catalyst of growth in general and promoters of development and
upliftment of the rural areas in particular.
The increased role of banks is that each branch in rural and semi urban areas has assigned a specific number of villages for meeting their total credit requirement. This process is going on and it is hoped that the commercial banking system has again emerge very successful in contributing its small amount to the weaker among the weak, towards the upliftment of the rural poor.