CONCLUSION:

Ever since India attained independence, there has been a continuous emphasis on the socio-economic development of the people of villages. Almost every aspect related to socio-economic development of rural areas has received attention of the planners and policy makers and a number of projects and programmes have been taken up plan after plan.

The basic aim of rural development programme is to improve the socio-economic life of the vast number of rural people who live below the poverty line.

The First Five Year Plan (1951) recommended in favour of the establishment of development blocks comprising of 50 to 60 villages with population of 25,000 to 30,000 people. The Development Blocks in India were setup with the inception of community development programme in 1952. Since then the development blocks have been treated as primary units of rural development responsible for infrastructural development of rural areas. Socio-economic development of rural areas mostly depends on the sincere working of the development blocks.

To examine the role and functioning of the development blocks in this regard, the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division had been selected for study.

The study revealed that the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division had implemented various schemes and projects under different rural development programmes introduced by the government from time to time, yet poverty still exists in the villages of Golaghat sub-division. To find out the actual state of affairs regarding implementation of the schemes and the resultant development achieved by the blocks of Golaghat sub-division, a survey of 30 villages under the blocks of Golaghat sub-division was taken. This selection of villages was made based on random sampling. 600 respondents, 100 from each development block had been interviewed for this purpose.
The study indicated that over a period of 10 years from 1991 to 2001, not much development works had been done in the surveyed villages. The desired impact, with which the development schemes and projects were taken, was not seen. More precisely a lot more endeavor have to be made in these villages to achieve the required socio-economic development. In the surveyed villages it was noticed that a very few people had improved their economic position but majority of them were deprived of getting the benefit of rural development programme and improve their economic condition.

A close examination of the implementation of RDPs in 30 sample villages proved that no expected achievement had been made by the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division. Numbers of constraints, which hamper in the rural development process under the blocks of Golaghat sub-division, have been brought out by the study.

**Corruption:**

Corruption in rural development administration has become a serious problem today. Almost daily, we read in the daily newspapers about a number of cases related to corruption prevailing among the bureaucrats. Public funds disbursed in large amounts under various programmes of rural development have been very often embezzled. Corruption exists in the form of bribe taking or 'cut' at the district and lower level. At the lower level, local politicians and some unscrupulous individuals have been successful in diverting the various schemes to their own pecuniary advantage. The development blocks of Golaghat sub-division are not free from corruption. 20 % of the respondents of the sampled villages reported that in order to get the benefit of rural development schemes they had to give bribe to the block officials or to the local leader. It was also found that those who were not able to give bribe, they were deprived of getting the benefit.

It was also reported by the respondents that some house allotted to the poor were sold to those, who could offer money to the local leaders.

It was also found that some beneficiaries got only 14 pieces of tin sheets and 6 concrete posts in the name of IAY houses.
About 50% of the benefited beneficiaries reported that the bank officials also misappropriated a portion of loans and subsidies distributed to the poor.

The respondents of surveyed villages reported that 4/5 of the fund allotted to the poor filled the coffers of the corrupt politicians and civil servants.

Thus, corruption caused a serious problem in rural development process under the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division.

The beneficiaries had to pay gratification fee or commission to get the loan and other relevant documents cleared. Such corrupt practices in sanctioning of loan and benefit offering to the poor have been posing a serious threat to the effective implementation of the schemes under the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division.

**Politcization of bureaucracy:**

Politicization of bureaucracy is one of the important problems that are affecting the rural development. The development blocks of Golaghat sub-division are also not far away from this constraint. 25% of the respondents of the sampled villages reported that in identification of beneficiaries the block officials came under the influence of political leaders. The political leader always pressurized them for their favorite persons and their favorite jurisdiction. It was also reported by some of the beneficiaries that lists of the beneficiaries were prepared by the B.D.O. under the influence of local political leaders of those particular areas. Therefore, those people, who were related to and associated with these political leaders, were selected as beneficiaries even they may not be below the poverty line. Partiality was done in sanction of loan and subsidy. That is why overall development was not seen in those villages

**Wrong selection of projects:**

An appropriate selection of project is the key to the success of RDPs. However, the respondents reported that projects were often sanctioned in a most cursory manner without considering the thoughts, aptitude or skill of the proposed beneficiaries. Similarly, some schemes were sanctioned without looking into the past and future linkage or ignoring the general rule of demand and
supply. Therefore, not much positive achievement has been made by the blocks of Golaghat sub-division.

**Defective procedure of sanctioning of loan and subsidy:**

All the respondents reported that the procedure of sanctioning loan and subsidy was complicated and time consuming. An application had to pass through various stages. They had to go to the office many times for getting loan and subsidy. The poor farmers and the wage labourers, who had to earn their livelihood by working the whole day, were required to chase the bureaucrats with their application through all stages and they had to incur some proportional expenses as well. The respondents reported that those who could not do all these were deprived of getting the benefits of rural development programmes.

It was also reported that the amount of loans and subsidy was inadequate. Moreover, the beneficiaries had to pay gratification fee or commission to get loan and other relevant document cleared. Such corrupt practices in sanctioning loan and subsidy have been posing a serious threat to the effective implementation of the rural development schemes at the grass root levels.

**Lack of transparency:**

During the time of interviewed 90% of the respondents reported that there was lack of transparency in the selection procedure of beneficiaries and sanctioning loan and subsidies to the beneficiaries under various schemes and programmes of rural development. They were kept in the shadowed side of the implementation of the rural development programmes.

The bureaucrats adopted a closed system and secrecy was given undue importance which made the people skeptical about their behaviour and turned them non-co-operative.

**Inadequacy of funds:**

Finance is the life and blood of every rural development programme. It is sure that without adequate funds, rural development programmes cannot be successfully implemented.

If local bodies are to play significant role in socio-economic development, they need adequate fund. The BDOs of the Golaghat sub-division reported that
the fund allotted to the blocks for various schemes were not sufficient to cover all the deserving beneficiaries.

The respondents also reported that the loan and subsidy distributed to them by the blocks in order to take various income generating schemes and projects were not sufficient. Therefore, they had to stop the schemes uncompleted. As a result, they could not raise their economic status.

The members of the DWCRA groups formed by the blocks for the purpose of self-employment reported that the revolving fund of Rs 10,000.00 to Rs 15,000.00 to each group consisting of 10 to 15 members was not sufficient to run a scheme to the end. As a result, they had to stop the scheme.

The respondents also reported that in order to get a power tiller, they had to pay 50% of the cost of the power tiller to the block officials. As they were not able to fulfill this condition, they were deprived of getting the benefit of power tiller. Those who could fulfill this condition, they were able to get the benefit of power tiller.

The study revealed that JRY/JGSY wage rates were low as compared to the locally prevailing wage rates. The respondents reported that mere an employment for 75 to 100 days could not make them cross the poverty line.

It was also reported by the beneficiaries that food grains were given to them as part of their wages under JRY/JGSY at the rate of 5 Kg. of food grains per man a day. However, they did not prefer the food grains because of the poor quality. It creates a lot of confusion among the implementing authorities and the beneficiaries. The authorities also reported that they had to sell the undistributed food grains at a cheaper rate. As a result they had to give a poor amount of wage to the workers.

Thus, inadequacy of fund created many problems in the implementation of rural development programmes.

**Operational guidelines were not followed:**

It was found that the operational guidelines issued by the government of India for implementation of rural development programmes were not followed by the development blocks under study. For example, the manual of JRY/JGSY has
a provision that the block should have complete inventory of assets created under
the programme giving details of the date of start and date of completion of the
project, cost involved, benefit obtained, employment generated and other
relevant particulars. Signboards should be put near the works, giving these
details. Photographic records of the work may also be kept at the various stages of
implementation before start, during implantation and after completion.
However, during the period of survey nowhere such information was found
written.

Lack of Maintenance of muster rolls:

Under the programme JRY/JGSY, muster rolls should be maintained for
every work separately, showing the details of wages paid to workers. The muster
rolls for all works should have been entered, showing the details of Scheduled
Castes/Schedule Tribes/women and others, who had been provided employment.
To prevent non-payment or under payment of wages or any manipulation of
muster rolls, muster rolls should be maintained in bound forms and all its pages
must be numbered. Muster roll copies should be placed before every Gram
Sabha. In addition, it shall be made available for public when demanded.
However, the respondents reported that the block officials in implementing the
schemes under JRY/JGSY had maintained no such muster rolls. This was one of
the main constraints for which development was far from satisfactory in Golaghat
Sub-division.

Lack of Technical Experts:

Another predicament in rural development revealed by the study was the
lack of technical experts. As the rural development functions are technical, there
should be technical experts in order to hold a strict vigil on the rural development
programmes. While implementing the various rural development programmes in
rural areas, there is need of some technical experts to see all sides of development
functions. It is the first responsibility of the Government to produce some
technicians for rural development activities. However, at the time of interviewing
the beneficiaries, they reported that there were no such technical experts in rural
areas to see all sides of development functions. Due to the lack of technical
experts, the rural development programmes are not properly implemented in rural areas.

**Lack of Monitoring the Rural Development Activities and follow-up action in various projects:**

During the study, it had been noticed that there was lack of adequate monitoring and follow-up action in many projects of rural development. According to the manual of IRDP, the follow-up action on the projects was to be made through the implementation of Vikas Patrikas and two copies of this document were to be prepared, of which one was to be given to the beneficiary family and other was to be kept at the block headquarters. These Vikas Patrikas were to be kept up-to-date regarding the availability and the health of project. The respondents reported that after the assistance was given to them, no attempt was made to assess the benefit accruing by them.

In the absence of follow-up visits mainly by the officials, the beneficiaries could not develop their projects up to satisfaction.

**Loan recovery problems:**

While interviewing the beneficiaries, it was found that some beneficiaries were defaulters of loan. The reason behind it as reported by the beneficiaries was that the repayment of installment had been fixed without taking into consideration the repayment capacity of the beneficiaries. As they could not repay the loan with the interest to the authority, were deprived of getting the supplementary loan and subsidy. Therefore, the poor beneficiaries could not improve their economic condition to cross the poverty line.

**Lack of co-ordination among the development departments and between the departments and blocks:**

Another important bottleneck, giving rise to poor implementation of rural development programmes under the blocks of Golaghat sub-division revealed by the study was the inadequate vertical and horizontal co-ordination and integration among the various development departments and between the departments and the blocks.
Rural development is a co-operative effort of various development departments of the government and the implementing agencies. Therefore, co-ordination among the various departments and between the departments and the blocks is very much essential. While interviewing the BDO's of the Golaghat sub-division, it was reported by them that there was lack of co-ordination between the various development blocks.

Problems of Surveying:

Before implementation of any scheme and distribution of loan and subsidy to the beneficiaries, household survey should be made by the block officials to identify the poor, but it was found that the villages which were situated in remote corners and where there was no communication system at all, were not surveyed by the concerning authority. It was found that some villages were flooded in rainy season. The respondents of these villages reported that the block officials never visited their villages for any kind of survey.

As a result, the people of those localities did not come into the scene and were out of benefit from the various rural development programmes implemented by the blocks of Golaghat sub-division during the period of study.

The respondents of other villages also reported that the block officials did not visit their houses for survey. At the same time, the respondents complained that the block official visited the houses of rural 'elites' only.

Delegation problems:

It was also a problem of rural development process revealed by the study. Delegation means the distribution of power and functions by the higher authority to the lower authority. The role of the lower level functionaries in implementing the rural development schemes and projects is very essential because they can asses the potentialities and capabilities of the participants for whom the programmes are meant.

However, it was reported by the lower level functionaries that the higher authority did not want to delegate power to them for implementation.

Under the rural development programmes, since 1952 the development blocks had been accepted as the unit of planning and implementation. It was desired that the block level planning would accelerate the process of
decentralization, speedup development and make the programmes responsive to
the local needs. However, in practice, it was found that the schemes and projects
implemented by the development blocks were prepared by the District Rural
Development Agency without proper involvement of block level functionaries,
and the people's representatives were bye- passed.

Instead of planning the programmes by the block level functionaries, they
were imposed on them by the upper level authorities. This created doubts among
them and they did not try to implement the programmes under the plan with
sincerity and devotion. They had to works under the direction given by the higher
authority. It was found that the field level personnel, who play a very important
role in the success of RDP's, were not motivated to work. Insufficient financial
and administrative powers delegated to them often led to their resenment
resulting in delayed execution and proper implementation of various rural
development programmes.

Lack of proper maintenance of assets:

During the period of survey, it was found that after creating various assets
under different rural development schemes, no further steps had been taken for
maintenance. Assets like tube well, clubs and some community halls were found
in damaged conditions.

Lack of Marketing facilities:

Market is one of the important ingredients of rural development. In rural
areas, different types of small scale and cottage industries grow and develop.
Sufficient quantity of raw materials and other equipments necessary for the
production could be made available through the establishment of markets.
However, it was found that the market facilities in the sampled villages were
inadequate to the needs of the people. Interviewing some of the prospective
beneficiaries, it was found that the most of the beneficiaries found the problems
of marketing products. The goods produced by the beneficiaries were to be sold at
a less profitable rate.

The agricultural products also necessitate large market. As there are no
such market facilities, the people of the villages had to carry their products to the
distant markets situated in urban areas causing wastage of time and money.
Thus, it was found that some weekly bazaars were held at a distance of 5 to 8 KM from some of the villages. However, these weekly bazaars were not sufficient to sell their products. Most of the respondents reported that the block authorities of Golaghat sub-division did not give much emphasis on the establishment of markets in rural areas.

**Dubious Method of selection and wrong identification:**

The selection procedure of beneficiaries under the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division was found to be faulty during the period of study. During the time of interview 80% of the respondents reported that the beneficiaries were selected neither by holding house to house surveys by VLWs, nor in open meetings of the Gram Sabha as prescribed. Only the interested and informed people apply for the benefit. Thus, most of the deserved people were deprived of the benefits of the development schemes. Some beneficiaries of rural development schemes were found to be above poverty line. A large percentage of the people below poverty line for whom the schemes were formulated could not be seen anywhere in the periphery of the schemes. The identification of the poor itself posed as a serious problem. Many, who were not regarded as poor according to the prescribed official standards succeeded in getting themselves categorized as poor and thus availed of the various advantages, including loan and subsidy from the government. Thus, the majority of the poor section deprived of getting the benefits of rural development programmes.

**Lack of initiative of the people:**

The study revealed that only a very few people of the surveyed villages, had been improved their economic condition but majority of them failed to utilize the benefit of rural development schemes implemented by the blocks. This is because of lack initiative of the village people. The data and information collected through interview indicated that the reaction of farmers and agricultural labours towards rural development administration is one of the alienations. The response of the illiterate people to most of the questions regarding rural development was "Don't know". This shows the ignorance of the villagers towards rural development administration. The attitude of most of the villagers toward rural development
administration was found to be negative. Throughout the study, lack of confidence of the villagers in the administration was revealed.

Thus, it could be presumed that because of lack of initiative of the village people, a large section of the poor were far away from getting the benefits of rural development programmes.

**Wrong Utilization of Subsidy:**

The study revealed that some of the beneficiaries had wrongly utilized the loan and subsidy distributed by the block authority in order to take income generating schemes. It was also found that some beneficiaries utilized the loan in some non-productive activities like birthday and marriage ceremonies of their children. As a result, they could not improve their economic condition.

**Involvement of Contractors:**

Contractors are not permitted to be engaged for execution of any works in the guidelines of the programmes JRY/JGSY. No brokers or any such intermediate agency should be employed for executing works under the programme so that the full benefit of the wages to be paid should reach the workers and the cost of the works should not involve any commission charges payable to such contractors, middleman or intermediate agency.

Similarly, no involvement of contractor is allowed in the construction of IAY houses. If any case of construction through contractor comes to notice, Government of India will recover the allocation made to the state for IAY houses. Moreover, the Government departments or organization should not also construct the houses granted by IAY. However, they can give technical assistance or arrange the coordinated supply of raw materials such as cement, brick and steel rods, etc. The houses are to be constructed by the ultimate occupiers of the house. However, it could be seen that the guidelines laid down by the government were not followed.

During the period of survey, it was found that the houses constructed under IAY were of very poor quality. The respondents reported that the block officials with the help of contractors constructed houses. As the contractors are profit oriented, they compromised the quality for profit margin. Similarly, school buildings, community centres, roads, culverts etc were also found to be of very
poor quality constructed under JRY/JGSY by the contractors. Thus, involvement of contractors in implementing the programmes deprived the beneficiaries from getting the full benefit of rural development programmes.

**Lack of People's Participation:**

For proper implementation of various rural development programmes, people's participation is the most important pre-condition. Without people's participation no programme could be fruitful. In the preparation of policies and implementation of schemes, people's participation is inevitable. The opinion of the people, concerned with the development programmes should be taken into account. Before implementing any scheme, both expert and commoners should be consulted.

However, the study revealed that the people's involvement was missing in the identification of beneficiaries. The same was seen in the formulation and implementation of the rural development schemes and policies under the blocks of Golaghat sub-division. All the respondents reported that the formulation and implementation of rural development programmes was completely dependant on the central or state governments. The opinion of the people concerned for whom the programmes were taken, were not taken into account both in decision making and implementing processes of rural development programmes.

Regarding, the sharing of benefit the study revealed that 63.3% people of the surveyed villages were deprived of the benefit of development programmes introduced by the government.

During the time of interview, it was also found that some beneficiaries did not show interest in participating in rural development programmes. Although majority of the beneficiaries were willing to be involved in both decision-making and implementing processes of rural development schemes and projects, the concerned authority did not provide them this opportunity.

Thus, lack of involvement of common masses in decision-making and implementing processes of rural development results in the negation in expected development in rural areas.
Lack of awareness among the rural people:

The study revealed that majority of the people in some villages of remote corner were not aware of various rural development programmes introduced by the government. It was also found that some illiterate persons were kept ignorant of many development programmes. As a result, they were deprived of getting the benefit of rural development programmes. Thus, the lack of awareness of the rural people was responsible for poor participation in rural development and sharing the benefits of rural development schemes.

Communication Gap between authority and the villages people

For successful implementation of rural development programmes and development of rural areas, communication between authority and local people is very much essential. However, in the sampled villages most of the respondents (80%) reported that there was no communication between implementing agencies and the rural people.

It was found that most of the illiterate (50%) hesitated to come towards to the authority in order to get the benefit of rural development schemes and projects.

Twenty percent of the respondents reported that as they had to be busy in earning their livelihood, they could not afford sufficient time to the meet the block authorities and talk to them.

About 20% of the respondents reported that some opportunists of the villages came into close contact with the authority and managed to get the benefit of most of the schemes. This biasedness had depressed the people. As a result, they were reluctant to come forward to the authority to get benefit. The rural development authority failed to create a workable condition among the rural people. They were not ready to come forward and talk to the people about the benefit of the schemes and projects.

Thus, communication gap found between the authority and the people lowered the extent of people’s participation in rural development administration.
Lack of people's Motivation:

For successful implementation of any rural development programme, motivation of the rural people is very much essential. The higher authority should motivate the rural people before implementing any scheme in their locality because motivated mass participate actively. For successful operation of rural development programme, people's desire is always required. Before initiating any scheme, the local people should be consulted, about what type of scheme is viable in their locality? However, the respondents reported that without motivating them, the authority initiated some schemes in their locality. Some of the respondents even did not know the programmes, which were already implemented by the authority. The respondents reported that no sincere efforts were made to link the programme with the requirement of the villages and the skills available in the villages. As a result, the beneficiaries could not succeed in running various projects. Thus; lack of people's motivation also hampered the progress of works at certain times.

Illiteracy of the people:

A general survey of 30 sample villages under the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division revealed that about 30% people of these villages were illiterate. Illiteracy gives rise to ignorance and causes degradation of self-belief. Most of the illiterate people hesitated to approach the authority to take part in various schemes under taken by the government. It was also found that 7.5% of the interviewed respondents did not know about the schemes implemented by the blocks. Some of the benefited beneficiaries could not properly utilize the money also. To deceive the illiterates was very easy for the corrupted block officials and other local leaders. Thus, mass illiteracy leading to wide ignorance in the villages caused a serious problem in people's participation in rural development administration.

Lack of Social Audit:

In order to ensure social control of the programme JRY / JGSY and other programmes, meetings of the Gram Sabha shall be held quarterly at a fixed date, time and place to consider the issues regarding the planning, execution,
monitoring and supervision of the works under the rural development programmes. These meetings shall be open to all members of the village community, who shall be free to raise any issue regarding the implementation of the programmes. The Gram Sabha should also be kept informed about the progress of the implementation of the programmes and all other related issues.

However, the study revealed that no such the meetings of the Gram Sabha were held under the development blocks of Golaghat sub-division. The block officials did all these only. This was one of the main reasons for which the desired goal of rural development programmes and people's participation in rural development programmes remained very different for the rural people of Golaghat sub-division.

**Lack of adequate and proper education of the rural masses:**

The most important constraint of the rural development revealed by the study is the lack of adequate education of the rural masses. Rural development was viewed from economic aspect for fighting rural poverty and increasing per capita income. However, without equal emphasis on human resource development through proper and adequate education, cultural, social and political development and development of health and hygiene, genuine and sustaining growth even in the economy cannot be achieved. There is the prime necessity of practical education for the rural population for changing their psychology, to make them aware of their own problem and the ways and means for their solution. It is also equally essential to motivate the masses for involvement through active participation in the development activities. Though conditions for people's participation have been created through Panchayati Raj System, without sound educational background of rural masses, the system is bound to face a great set back.

However, during the period of study, it was observed that no attempt was made to educate the rural masses under various rural development programmes introduced by government plan after plan.
CONSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST STUDY PERIOD:

Rural development was an important commitment of the national freedom movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi who advocated self-help and mutual co-operation on the part of the villages. To Gandhi RDPs should be people's programmes.

The constitution of India, being the fundamental document of the land may itself influence the shape, content and strategy of rural development. However, it was not a serious consideration with the framers of the constitution. Though the constitution was influenced in its functioning by the society, the aspect of rural development was overlooked.

However, India is acclaimed as the land of villages, the Directive Principles of State Policy enumerated in the Part IV of the Indian constitution contains just about two references bearing on rural development in India.

Article 40 of the Constitution commits the state to organize Village Panchayats and endow them with adequate powers and authority to enable them to function as a unit of self-government.

Article 48 relates specially to agriculture and animal husbandry and states that; the state shall endeavor to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall in particular take steps for preserving and improving the breeds and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other farm animals.

The constitution of India itself failed to envisage an integrated administration in which apart from centre and the states, there are elected bodies, which control the permanent services of the district and lower levels. Democracy at the centre and the state levels, bureaucracy at all the lower levels is the essence of Indian polity as spelt out in the constitution. The fact is that in the actual work of the constitution, the centre made increasing encroachment in to the rights and power of the states. This trend reached its high water marks in the 42nd amendment of the constitution. Through the rural development is the direct responsibility of the state, all the projects and programmes are prepared by the
central government. There is no chance for the poor and illiterate majority in decision-making process even at the local levels. With such a centralized administration as its core, Panchayats were envisaged in the constitution. It is therefore, neither the bureaucrats nor the politicians at the state level are prepared to decentralize whatever powers have been conferred on the state under the constitution.

Until 1993, the constitution of India was completely silent about people’s participation in rural development but until and unless participation of rural people is ensured, rural development is not possible. Lack of people’s participation has led to the de-empowerment of participants. Thus, it has run contrary to the objective of rural development.

It because of this of continuous demand has been made for people’s participation in decision-making and leadership role. This demand has finally led to the constitution, under its recent 73rd and 74th Amendment for providing mandatory provision for participation of woman, ST, SC in deliberation of local self-government. By reserving 33.3% seats, these amendments have empowered the women and weaker sections to participate in decision-making process.

The 73rd constitutional amendments Act 1992 provides for decentralized administration through local self-governing units at the district, intermediary and village levels. Panchayati Raj intuitions are the prime instruments of decentralization at the grass root level. They act as vehicles in carrying back to the people the powers that really belong to them. They ensured self-governance though directly elected people’s representatives and provide a forum for direct participation of people themselves in Gram Sabha.

Since Panchayati Raj institutions have entrusted with the specific responsibilities for preparing plan and implementing various schemes for economic development and social justice including 29 subjects mentioned in the Eleventh Schedule of the constitution of India, the representatives would have to play a major role in development administration.

In accordance with the provision of 73rd constitutional amendment all the states enacted fresh legislation or have amended the existing acts. Although most
of the states have observed the mandatory provisions of the amendment, the concept of popular participation within the framework of democratic decentralization hardly been operationalized, while providing powers and functions to those bodies. It is evident that psychological barrier have yet to be cleared as far as acceptance of decentralization as the basis of overall administration and political structure is concerned.

No attempt has been made to restructure the administrative set up keeping the provision of 29 items relating to Panchayati Raj institution in most of the states.

The people of Assam are not able to get benefit much from the new Panchayati Raj experiment mainly because of delay in election and commencing the new process. The lack of appropriate number of voluntary organizations and disturbed political scenario and natural calamities like flood have been responsible for the poor implementation of rural development schemes.

The state wheel controls the village level functionaries through DRDA and block level functionaries. The bureaucrats do not want to be subordinated by the panchayats leaders and created obstacles in the smooth working of these bodies. The state level organizations try to show that they have more power in implementing the rural development programmes.

For successful implementation of rural development programmes, the role of the lower level functionaries is very important because they are to assess the potentialities and capabilities of the participants for whom the programmes are meant. However, in actual practice, these grass root level functionaries are not involved in the formulation of rural development programmes rather plans are imposed by the upper level authorities. This trend creates doubts and they do not try to implement the programmes with sincerity and devotion.

The Assam Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, has changed the situation in rural development administration. With the transfer of subjects as provided in 11 scheduled, funds are also seen to be transferred to the panchayats to some extent. In this new situation, there is ample chance for people's participation in rural development administration.
It is important that the concept of transfer of power from the bureaucrats to the people under new Panchayati Raj needs wide publicity for people’s direct involvement as well as for successful implementation of rural development programmes at grassroots’ levels. More recently, it is seen that some NGOs have come forward to give wide publicity of the transfer of powers and funds to the representatives of the people. In addition, they have arranged awareness camps and workshops frequently in the nook and corners of the villages. NGOs are now playing a vital role in developing a sense of consciousness among the people by educating them in this regard. NGOs are in a better position to organize people in a better way to grab the opportunity now provided by the constitution of India for actual transfer of power from government to the people, who must determine their own destinies and the destiny of the action.

Although, the present Panchayati Raj system is an excellent system for people’s participation in decision making process of rural development schemes, this system is not fully successful in Assam in general and Golaghat sub division in particular due to low literacy level, lack of awareness of the rural people, poverty and general apathy of the rural people.

Thus, there has been overall inadequacy of socio- economic development of rural people of Assam in general and Golaghat in particular.

Hence, it can be concluded that the various rural development programmes can be made effective only when the problems faced by the beneficiaries can be removed from the rural development administration.

Based on the experiences brought out by the study, some important suggestions can be offered to make the rural development schemes and policies effective to uplift the socio – economic condition of the rural people.

Corruption is the root cause of poor socio- economic development in rural areas. Therefore, strict vigilance should be kept upon the implementing agencies. Separate machinery should be instituted exclusively for supervision and to check corruption, which are seen every level of rural development administration. Instead of protecting the corruption and getting money from the corrupts, the only method to be adopted is to punish them by recovering ill-gotten money. This requires the greatest political and judicial will, which is lacking. A high degree of
morality of all concerned is the last resort to uproot the corruption from the rural development administration.

Politicization of bureaucracy is appeared as a strong obstacle in the path of rural development there fore the bureaucrats should remained neutral in all aspects of rural development. Particularly the block officials should be given free hand in performing his duties. The local MLA and MP should be refrained from undue interference on the implementation of rural rural development programmes. The local party leaders should not be given opportunity to interfere the system.

Selection of schemes should be aptitude, skill and resource based of the beneficiaries, which will make the beneficiaries defiantly participate in rural development programmes with full commitment. Before implementing any schemes, the implementing agencies should consult the rural people about what type of schemes is preferable in their locality to solve the problems that they have been facing.

During the time of interview all, the respondents reported that the procedure of sanctioning loan and subsidy was cumbersome and time consuming. The rural poor, who had to be busy with earning their bread, could not get sufficient time in coming close contact with the authority to get the benefit. Therefore, easy method of sanctioning loan and subsidy should be followed by the authority, so that; the poor people can take the loan and subsidy without any harassment and coming many times to the block.

Muster rolls should be maintained for each work separately showing the details of wages paid to the works. Muster roll copies duly certified by the President of G.P. should be placed before Gram Sabha. It should also be made available for public at demand. This will help in maintaining transparency in rural development works.

Social Audit is an urgent necessity to remove the corruption in rural development administration. In order to ensure social control, meeting of the Gram Sabha should be held at a regular interval at a fixed date, time and place to consider issues regarding the planning, execution, monitoring and supervision of the works. These meetings should be open to all members of the village
committee. The Gram Sabha should also be kept informed about the programme of the implementation of the programme and other related issues.

As the BDOs of Golaghat sub division reported that the fund allotted to them for implementing various schemes was not sufficient to meet the demands of the deserving people, therefore, fund should be allotted according to needs of the people.

The implementing authorities should follow operational guidelines, issued by the government. Otherwise rural development programme could not be made effective. Involvement of contactor should also be strictly prohibited and full benefit should be given to the beneficiaries.

As the rural development functions are technical, the government should creat some technicians to see all sides of development functions in rural areas. Otherwise, it is impossible to have desired development in rural areas.

The study revealed in the absence of monitoring and followup actions in many projects of rural development the poor illiterates couldnot develop their projects up to the satisfactory level. Therefore, monitoring and follow up visit should be given by the officials frequently to see the progress of the projects taken by the beneficiaries. An assessment of benefit acquiring by them should be made. Inaddition, full nourishment should be given to the beneficiaries for sustaining growth and development.

It was found that people’s apathy stands as the obstacle in the path of rural development in rural areas. Most of the villagers have no confidence on the result of the RDPs. The authority must project the benefits and the future prospective of the schemes, so that the rural people will be attracted to it.

The loan recovery problem stands as an obstacle in the path of rural development revealed by the study. At the time of interview, some willful defaulters were found. Because of misuse of fund, they could not repay the loan to the authority. Therefore, proper supervision over the use of the loan till completion can be the effective device for checking the mounting overdues. Complete separate machinery should be instituted for supervision and recovery of loan in each panchayat under the development blocks. Moreover, immediate action should be taken against the willfull defaulters of loan. In addition,
reimbursement of the installment should be fixed based on the repayment capacity of the beneficiaries.

Another important bottleneck, giving rise to poor implementation of rural development programmes under the blocks of Golaghat sub-division revealed by the study was the inadequate vertical and horizontal co-ordination and integration among the various development departments and between the departments and the blocks.

Rural development is a co-operative effort of various development departments of the government and the implementing agencies. Therefore, co-ordination among the various departments and between the departments and the development blocks should be established, which is lacking.

The remote villages, usually ignored by the block authorities should be surveyed and bring them into the periphery of rural development. The block officials should visit house to house for survey instead of visiting the rural elites only.

Sufficient financial and administrative power should be delegated to the lower level functionaries so that they can perform their function with any delay.

Further steps should be taken by the authorities for proper maintenance of assets like tube wells, Community hall, and clubs, which were found in damaged conditions in the surveyed villages of Golaghat sub-division.

Lack of marketing facility has become a major constraint in rural development. Therefore, market facility has to be developed in rural areas. Survey and study of local market to understand the products demands, ascertaining the changing needs of the customers is necessary. Village markets have to be setup at suitable places to position the products of the Self Help Groups and other beneficiaries. Construction of permanent pucca sheds, along with the storage facility/ godowns should be taken up. Linkage of these markets to the metropolitan cities, export markets have to be developed through private channels and industrial enterprises and export houses. Intermediate aggregate mechanism like producer co-operatives and marketing agencies could facilitate the transaction between dispersed producers and industrial enterprises/ export houses.
By doing so, the economic position of the rural people could be developed up to the satisfactory level.

Identification of beneficiaries is one of the most important problems encountered in anti-poverty programmes in rural development administration. The list of the poorest prepared for providing benefit does not always comprise the poor only. It is estimated that nearly 10 percent of the beneficiaries come from the better off families. Therefore, identification of beneficiaries should be proper. The beneficiaries should be identified in the open meeting of Gram sabha. The meeting should be held in the presence of majority of the villagers, elected members of panchayats, bank officials and government officials including BDO in order to remove biasness. The morality of the BDO is the prime necessity in this regard.

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The study revealed that ignorance of the rural people about the schemes and policies, introduced by the government stands as an important obstacle in the path of rural development. Therefore, the rural people should be kept aware of the schemes and policies along with the amount granted by the government. The authority should arrange awareness camps and workshops in every nook and corner of the villages, before implementing any schemes. Mass media like T.V, Radio, and Newspaper should take necessary steps in this regard. More particularly, the NGOs should come forward to make the rural people aware of the benefit of the programmes introduced by the government.

It is seen that in an unequal society like ours, a minority of rich and powerful villagers have shared the large portion of benefits of rural development schemes and majority i.e. the poor section has always been deprived of getting the benefits, because the poor individual cannot speak out their rights and problems to the authority. Therefore, practical education should be given to the poor illiterates to make themselves mentally prepared to be aware of their own problems and also ways and means for their solution. More emphasis should be
given by the concerned authority to stop the intruding nature of the village elites. The authority should be careful enough in this regard, so that the actual poor are to be benefited by the rural development schemes and programmes.

The study revealed that lack of people's participation in decision-making process of rural development administration is also responsible for poor implementation of rural development programmes. Therefore, rural people should be motivated to take active part in the decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of RDPs. The VLWs are to be motivated to take active part in implementation of RDPs in their respective areas.

Communication gap between the authority and the rural people should be minimized as to the possible extent. The authority must know the sentiments of the rural people. The government should bring back the confidence of the rural people towards rural development authorities. The rural development officials should changed their behaviour and try to bring the rural people to the mainstream of rural development administration.

Though the Assam Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, made the provision of delegating power from the bureaucrats to the people yet, the people of Assam, particularly the rural people of Golaghat did not get much benefit from this Act. Therefore, full benefits should be given to the rural people by transferring the power of decision-making in 29 subjects as mentioned in the 73rd amendment Act 1994. Otherwise rural development is not possible. To do this, it is necessary to restructure the administrative machineries. Controls of the bureaucrats upon the PRIs should be removed.

The rural poor specially the beneficiaries should be given training for proper and effective use of assets and money provided under various schemes. Training should be imparted to the unemployed youths of the village to learn to be self-employed under different schemes.

No contractor should be engaged for execution of any of the work under rural development programmes. The full benefit of wages to be paid should reach the works and cost of the works should not involve any commission charges payable to such contractors, middlemen or intermediate agency.
It can be said that in present Indian rural scenario, development can be possible only through modernizing the villages. Modernization here means introduction of modern technical education with sound understanding at different levels. Rural people should be made aware of their present and future needs, provided them the opportunities for objective thinking with future vision, creation of rational outlook make them politically conscious in democratic values to actively participate in PRIs and to be involved in implementing the various development schemes, to introduce scientific methods in agriculture. The rural people have to modernize the domestic small-scale industries like handloom, pottery, basketry, carpentry, establishing animal and diary farms, poultry farms, sericulture farms, fisheries, horticulture farms, medical plant farms, bee keeping and other projects on scientific basis for self-employment.

For such an endeavor, rural people will have to be guided by governmental and non-governmental organizations. More and more the educated youths with zeal to revolutionize the whole process have to take the leading part.

The NGOs should come forward with full commitment in this regard. The NGOs should also make the illiterate rural masses conscious of their children's education, which is being neglected most.

Until and unless rural education is revolutionised and prepared the village children from initial stages to make them competent to face the future tough world, they will have to remain confined in their villages being unemployed. Only a band of educated rural youth with dedication can guide the rural people in right direction to materialize the development schemes in real sense.