The Present Thesis Entitled “Micro Level Rural Development in West Bengal - A Case Study of Birbhum District”, is a product of independent field study covering a high as 1100 families distributed among twenty villages of four blocks of Birbhum District. The main objective of my thesis is to study micro-level rural development in West Bengal. The study has gained significance in the backdrop of rural development scenario of West Bengal because West Bengal is, the only state where the institution of Panchayati raj System is very successful. In addition, the Land Reforms for the purpose of Rural development is a significant aspect of rural development in West Bengal. In this background I have initiated my study.

The thesis primarily highlights the rural development scenario in Birbhum district and correlates, the associated with it. As over 90% of the population are dependent on agriculture and related activities, the study on rural development gained prominence. As regard to rural development, my analysis and interpretation restricts to agriculture and related activities only. In rural development, agriculture plays the most significant role. In this regard the role of Panchayati-raj Institution is also equally important along with agriculture. Present study also involves a critical evaluation of the role of Panchayat in rural development of Birbhum district. The unit of the study has been chosen as village and for the purpose of research, twenty villages spread over four blocks, out of nineteen blocks of Birbhum district has been selected. Among twenty villages a sample of 1100 house holds are being chosen, which accounts for 6881 house holds, which constitutes above 15% of the total house hold of these villages. For evaluating micro-level rural development, due emphasis has been given to agricultural infrastructure, crop cultivation, horticulture, and Land Reforms are also being included.

My present Study revealed the fact that there is a gradual improvement in agricultural development. I analysed that, upliftment of socio-economic condition and even tourism industry of the district is dependent on agricultural development. But it is also found that though agriculture is prime occupation of majority of the population of the district, but there is gradual shifting of workers from primary to tertiary sector. Floods and droughts are the major problems of the district. Moreover irrigation facilities are inadequate and agricultural procedures are not scientific and sustainable. It is also observed that though panchayat is taking keen initiative in rural development, it needs
more to do for the purpose. The present research is a pioneering work in the field of rural development for the district of Birbhum, which is basically a rural district. Here lies the importance of the present work. It is also true, that all aspects of rural development are not being studied in detail, and requires further investigation.

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Signature