Rural development has been the prime objective since the very commencement of economic planning in the country. India began her march on the road of planned economic development in the year 1951. This path of planning has been accepted as the most effective instrument in transforming a static society into a dynamic order. The most pressing problem in the country today is of improving the economic and social conditions of a large number of people, who are living in rural areas by providing them proper employment. It may be stated that the socio-economic development of the Indian villages is of crucial significance in the framework of integrated growth and social justice. In order to benefit the poorest of the poor, in the early 70's, various programmes and schemes were framed so as to provide assistance to small and marginal farmers, agricultural labour, landless and economically shattered communities of rural sector.

Since independence, high priority has been given for emancipation of the poor with the clear-cut objective of reducing unemployment, creating self-employment opportunities and keeping a check over the migration of the rural population to urban sectors.

There is a great need for rural reconstruction today which is not a new concept. Several pioneering experiments have been made by many eminent experts in the country. Mahatama
Gandhi deeply acknowledged the problems of rural people and attempted an indigenous solution of the economic ills of rural India. He reminded that 'the soul of India lives in its villages and in rural reconstruction alone, lies its salvation.' Gandhiji also emphasized the role of Agricultural Sector in the overall strategy for maximizing employment and for making rural India self reliant. The post independence economic shortfalls are mainly related to the known realization of the aspect, of ensuring fair distribution of income and wealth, for raising the standard of living of the weaker section of the society, mainly in the rural areas. So far as the objective of securing a higher growth rate is concerned, the performance of the economy, at least in the generation of employment, is disappointing.

In the present context of Globalisation of Economy, the Economy of India is increasingly becoming a market driven economy. The state of affairs are such that unless micro entrepreneurial activities are not initiated in rural areas and finance is not properly channelized towards these activities, the rural poor will not be able to break the grinding cycle of poverty. In the present research work an attempt has been made to examine the direction and importance of rural finance in terms of generating self-employment through various schemes initiated by the Bank under study, which will offer the easiest method of empowering the rural poor, and how far the bank has been successful in generating additional self employment in Uttar Pradesh, with special reference to rural sector.
Uttar Pradesh Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank, a pioneer cooperative financial agency, was established in the country to provide long term lending. It was established on March 12, 1959 by the name of Uttar Pradesh State Cooperative Land Mortgage Bank, with 30 branches, undertaking long term financing to the farmers of the state. During the Last 51 years, the Bank has transformed itself to Uttar Pradesh State Cooperative Land Development Bank in the year 1964 and to Uttar Pradesh State Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank in 1989 and now finally rechristened in its present nomenclature of Uttar Pradesh Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank since 1994. The change of name suitably denotes the objectives of the Bank, which is the development of the total village through various schemes and programmes which will help in generating self employment and spirit of self reliance among the rural mass. Presently, loans are provided under various schemes of the Bank and various Government sponsored schemes.

The Bank under study has been one of the major agencies in ushering of Green Revolution in the State in the Seventies and is now concentrating its efforts towards bringing White and Blue Revolution by creating employment opportunities in rural areas. The steady increase in membership is a strong indicator of the confidence imposed by the beneficiaries in the Bank.

Before being embraced on the pleasant duty of acknowledging the help guidance and cooperation received from different quarters. Let me frankly admit that it would have been a difficult proposition for me to complete this research work
without the active and kind co-operation of those who directly or indirectly helped me in completion of this research work in different stages. While acknowledging the co-operation of all those, I hope to be excused by those whose names have been left out for sheer lack of space.

I am greatly indebted to my research supervisor Dr. Rajeev Shukla, Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, D.A-V.College, Kanpur, for his immense support and valuable guidance in carrying out this research work. It is indeed his encouragement and creative suggestions which helped me in completing my research work in time. I am also thankful to Mrs. Seema Shukla whose blessings and words of encouragement were always a source of inspiration to me to complete this work.

I would like to place on record my sincere thanks and indebtedness for the good wishes, guidance, encouragement and help received from my well wishers in completion of my study.

I must also express my sincere gratitude towards all the administrative staff at the Head Office of Uttar Pradesh Sahkari Gram Vikas Bank Ltd who never hesitated to offer their help in providing information and required data pertaining to the Bank whenever I approached.

I am sincerely thankful to Dr. Jagdish Gandhi, Manager, City Montessori School, Lucknow, and Mrs. Amita Chakravarty, for her immense help and valuable guidance in carrying out this work.
I am thankful to authorities of C.S.J.M. University, Kanpur who allowed me to submit this work and gave me assistance from time to time.

I am thankful to the authorities of different libraries specially, Tagore Library, University of Lucknow, State Planning Commission Library, U.P.Secretariat, and Vidhan Sabha Library, Lucknow. I am thankful to all my friends for their kind enquires on the progress of my work and their encouragement.

My special thanks are due to my colleagues Mr. Avinash Singh and Mr. G.D. Innes for their regular encouragement and valuable help.

Last, but not the least, I acknowledge with gratitude the encouragement and blessings of my parents and grand parents who inspired me at all stages of this work and always tried to keep my moral high. I also express my gratitude to my wife who took all pains to see that I got through this titanic task with a success.

Kanpur,
August, 2010.

(Agam Mishra)