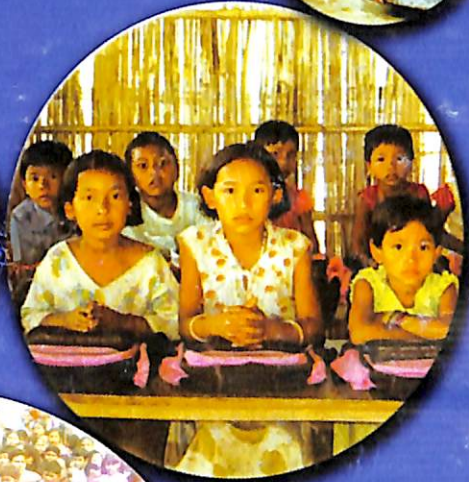


**POVERTY ITS' IMPACT ON EDUCATION
AND SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITION
OF SC AND ST COMMUNITIES
IN SARUKHETRI
AND PAKABETBARI BLOCK
OF BARPETA DISTRICT, ASSAM**



DR. PHUNU DAS

**POVERTY – ITS' IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND SOCIO- ECONOMIC
CONDITION OF SC AND ST COMMUNITIES IN SARUKHETRI AND
PAKABETBARI BLOCK OF BARPETA DISTRICT, ASSAM : *Written*
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PREFACE

The Assam Institute of Research for Tribals and Scheduled Castes, Guwahati under the aegis of Ministry of Tribal affairs, Government of India and Government of Assam have been providing grants-in-aid to authors for publication of books written on different aspects of Tribals and Scheduled Castes people of Assam. The scheme is basically known as 'Grants-in-aid for Literary Works for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' The scheme has been made successful by the scholars and the authors of the State for their literary Contributions. As a part of this popular scheme, the book on **POVERTY – ITS' IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND SOCIO- ECONOMIC CONDITION OF SC AND ST COMMUNITIES IN SARUKHETRI AND PAKABETBARI BLOCK OF BARPETA DISTRICT, ASSAM** by Dr. Phunu Das has been sponsored by the Institute for publication. It is expected that the book will provide interest to the readers and fulfill their needs to some extent. We look forward for comments and suggestion from the readers.

I am grateful to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, and Welfare of Plain Tribes and Backward Classes Department of Government of Assam for providing financial Assistance for implementation of the scheme.

I also offer my thanks to the officers and staff of this Directorate for their help and co-operation.

In fine, I like to extend my thanks to M/s. Bohnanman Printers, Guwahati for their help and co-operation in bringing out the book.

Dated Guwahati
The 2nd September. 2013



(Shri D. Sarma, ACS)
Director,
Assam Institute of Research for
Tribals and Scheduled Castes,
Guwahati-22

PREFACE

About two thirds of Indian's more than 1 billion people live in rural areas and almost 170 million of them are poor. Poverty is deepest among SC and ST in the country's rural areas. India's poorest people's 50% of members of STs and 40% of people in SCs. High level of illiteracy, inadequate health care and extremely limited access to social services are common among the poor rural people.

Since Independence of the country, every effort has been made by the National Government throughout the country to solve the various problems of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and tried to provide necessary safeguards in protecting their rights and but still today these peoples have suffered from extreme social and economic backwardness and living under poverty. They not have been able to get the minimum of food, shelter and clothing. The percentages of people who are benefited by Government schemes are so negligible. It is also always reported by our newspaper that wherever the Harijans rise up to the occasion to protect their, the non- Harijans reward them in the form of drilling, burning and other types of atrocities. At the sometimes, the country witnessed quite often anti - reservation agitations. Thus, the opportunities for the rural SCs and STs are denied. Therefore, the investigator has felt important to study the problems of SCs and STs and impact of poverty on socio- economic conditions of SCs and STs in the Barpeta District.

DR. PHUNU DAS.

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CHAPTER -I INTRODUCTION

"Poverty is the worst form of violence."

MAHATMA GANDHI.

Poverty is an extreme form of chronic deprivation of human needs for the sustenance of his life. It is a complex phenomenon in its content and scope. It is intrinsically related to the existing socio-economic structures and is influenced by the economic and social policies. It may also be defined as the quality or state of being or indigent; want or scarcity of means subsistence, indigence, to need. Poverty -

- Deprives people of their security and well-being;
- Deprives people not only of safe water and adequate food, clothing and shelter, but also education and healthcare;
- Takes away people's rights, and their freedom, dignity and peace of mind;
- Puts people's lives in danger and robs them of their future.

Poverty is a peculiar problem with which the various countries of the world, particularly the third world have been suffering. It is a situation where a section of the society, having no fault of their own, is denied of ever basic necessities of life. In a real sense, in a country or a region, where a big chunk of the population is deprived of even minimum amenities of life for very long periods, the country or the region will then suffer from a vicious circle of poverty. Thus, in its broad sense poverty can be termed as a situation where a section of the population fails to reach a certain minimum consumption standard.

Poverty is one of the main problems which have attracted attention of sociologists and economists. It indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a living standard adequate for his physical and mental efficiency. It is a situation people want to escape. It gives rise to a feeling of a discrepancy between what one has and what one should have. The term poverty is a relative concept. It is very difficult to draw a demarcation line between affluence and poverty. According to Adam Smith - Man is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessaries, the conveniences and the amusements of human life.

Since 1972 poverty has been defined on basis of the money required to buy food worth 2100 calories in urban areas and 2400 calories in rural areas. As of 2010, more than 37% of India's population of 1.35 billion still

lives below the poverty line. More than 22% of the entire rural population and 15% of the urban population of India exists in this difficult physical and financial predicament. In June, 2012 a government committee headed by NC Saxena estimated 50% Indians were poor as against Planning Commission's 2006 figure of 28.5%. Even after more than 50 years of Independence India still has the world's largest number of poor people in a single country. Of its nearly 1 billion inhabitants, an estimated 260.3 million are below the poverty line, of which 193.2 million are in the rural areas and 67.1 million are in urban areas. More than 75% of poor people reside in villages. Poverty level is not uniform across India. The poverty level is below 10% in states like Delhi, Goa, and Punjab etc whereas it is below 50% in Bihar (43) and Orissa (47). It is between 30-40% in Northeastern states of Assam, Tripura, and Meghalaya and in Southern states of Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

Poverty is one of the major problems in India. It is the root cause of many socio-economic problems including population explosion, unemployment, and child labour and rising graph of crimes. Poverty alleviation should be the main target of the nation so as to make it a prosperous and developed country. Thus, poverty elimination is a matter of fundamental importance.

According to 2010 data from the United Nations Development Programme, an estimated 37.2% of Indians live below the country's national poverty line. A 2010 report by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) states that 8 Indian states have more poor than 26 poorest African nations combined which totals to more than 410 million poor in the poorest African countries. In 2011, World Bank stated, 32.7% of the total Indian people fall below the international poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day (PPP) while 68.7% live on less than US\$ 2 per day.

According to a new poverty Development Goals Report, as many as 320 million people in India and China are expected to come out of extreme poverty in the next four years, while India's poverty rate is projected to drop to 22% in 2015. The report also indicates that in Southern Asia, however, only India, where the poverty rate is projected to fall from 51% in 1990 to about 22% in 2015, is on track to cut poverty in half by the 2015 target date.

MEANING AND DEFINITION OF POVERTY:

Poverty is one of the main problems which have attracted attention of sociologists and economists. It indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a living standard adequate for his physical and mental efficiency. It is a situation where people want to escape. It gives rise to a feeling of a discrepancy between what one has and what one should have. Poverty implies a condition in which a person finds him unable to maintain a living standard

adequate for his physical and mental efficiency. He even fails to meet his basic requirements. Poverty is in fact a relative concept. It is very difficult to draw a demarcation line between affluence and poverty. According to Adam Smith, "Man is rich or poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessaries, the conveniences and the amusements of human life." Poverty makes education, balanced diet, health care facilities, etc. inaccessible. Obviously, all these deprivations immensely affect the personality development of a person, thus creating wide gaps between haves and have-nots.

Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfill ever its basic necessities of life. When a substantial segment of a society is deprived of the minimum level of living and continues at a bare subsistence level, that society is said to be plagued with mass poverty. Poverty is in fortunately not an economic abstraction, it is a human condition. It is a despair, grief and pain. It is admitted by all that poverty is a great curse on humanity; it is not only distressing but also demoralizing. A poor man is a disgrace in society and the cause of social humiliation himself. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in his book "Poverty and Economic development" argued - "The poor is neither an economic class, nor convenient categories to use for analyzing social and economic movements". He again says that, "it is not sufficient to know how many poor people there are, but how exactly poor they are".

According to David Sills, poverty has always had several, not entirely separable meanings and is always defined in terms of conventions of the society in which it occurs.

R.R. Singh (1980) says, in its economic sense, poverty is defined as a state where in an individual cannot satisfy his minimum wants for healthy living in a given social environment.

P. Townsend (1942) defines that "Poverty may be regarded as a general form of relative deprivation which is the effect of the misdistribution of resources."

Kurien (1970) considered poverty as a "socio-economic phenomenon whereby the resources available to a society are used to satisfy the wants of the few, while money do not have even their basic needs met." Again he says that it is essentially a "social phenomenon and only secondarily a material or physical phenomenon".

Martien Rein (1953) has defined "poverty as subsistence, inequality and externality." Subsistence is concerned with the minimum provision needed to maintain health and working capacity. Inequality is concerned

with relative position of the income groups to each other. Externality is concerned with the rest of the society rather than in terms of the needs of the poor.

The concept of conceptualization and measurement of poverty is too complex a phenomenon cutting across myriad of economic, social, cultural political and psychological factors (Sharma, 1990). Poverty as a concept is closely related to income inequality. Given the average income with level, a higher level of inequality will tend to be associated with a higher level of poverty (Sen, 1990).

Poverty has also been identified with deficiency in the total level of living which includes not only food for energy requirements but also balanced diet needed for health and other components of basic needs, essential for human existence at the tolerable level (Rao, 1977).

CONCEPT OF POVERTY

Poverty is a socio-economic phenomenon whose concept and contents vary from country to country. In human terms, it means little to eat and wear and in economic terms, it is the inability to attain a minimum standard of living according to World Development Report 1990. Poverty persists under conditions where human resources are undervalued. The poor is poor because they have no assets, no land, no live stock, no houses and after, no education. Their only assets are time and labour.

The writing of ancient religious thinkers, moralists and scriptures of the Theological states has highlighted the concept of poverty in a definite form. They viewed poverty as an act of God – a curse on the sinners for their vices. This view has now, Oscars Lewis (1966) regarded as “culture” or more accurately a “sub-culture” of poverty. Hyman Rodman (1963) regarded as “Lower class value stretch” or “distinctiveness” of the poor.

The sociologists of the 19th century had made epoch – making surveys of the poorer London and New York cities and considers poverty in terms of “want” and deprivation”. Modern sociologists are of opinion poverty as stratification. According to them poverty is a wider issue of inequality – social, political and economic. But economists are stress more on economic aspects and viewed poverty as an economic phenomenon- in sufficiency of income or command over recourses. It has also been as nutritional deficiency or malnutrition, or problem of want and deprivation.

The united Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has remarked that poverty is absolute depreciation; the current widely accepted standard defines poverty as living on less than \$ 2 per day and extreme poverty as living on less than \$ 1 per day. When people do not have the basic necessities – the food, the shelter, the clothing – that they need to lead a reasonable life, they are living in poverty.

CULTURE OF POVERTY:

It is the oldest one. It originated in the religious writings and institutions of theological states and flourished in the writings of anthropologists. The chief exponent of this thesis, Oscars Lewis, apparently coined the term “culture of poverty”. Accordingly, he says that it is a way of life that develops among some of the poor in a society characterized by-

1. Cash economy, wage labour production for profit.
2. Persistently high rate of unemployment and under employment for skilled labour.
3. Low wages.
4. The failure to provide social, political and economic organizations for the poor by the voluntary organization or the Government.

Lewis describes this culture in 70 interrelated social, economic and psychological traits which he admits may vary with variations in the family, society and other situations. But Herbert J. Gans opines that the “culture view” of social change has wrongly interpreted by anthropologists and neglects the “situational view of change”. He also pointed out that cultural factors that are functional to one group may be dysfunctional to another.

In Indian scene also the “cultural thesis of poverty has no relevance, even if we were to accept it on its face value. Some of the key traits of the “culture” such as “lower-class value” “low level of aspiration” or absence of class consciousness”, organization or unions”, absence of class or caste system” are not to be found in India.

POVERTY AS A SOCIAL STRATIFICATION:

Poverty has been considered by many sociologists as a social stratification. Miller and Roby consider economic status to be the long run basic issue of poverty, followed by education and social mobility. Rossi and Blum opine that the three major dimensions of poverty –

- a. class defined as distinctive value patterns and differential associations,
- b. distribution of resources and income and
- c. distribution of prestige i.e. occupation, income and education.

POVERTY AS ECONOMIC INEQUALITY:

Economists viewing poverty in terms of -

1. Economic inequality.
2. Nutritional deficiency malnutrition.
3. Deficiency of basic minimum needs and
4. Insufficiency of income to meet socially accepted minimum needs.

An economic concept of poverty generally involves a cut-off point/norm which is commonly known as poverty line.

POVERTY AS AN ABSOLUTE ONE:

Poverty in an absolute sense has been defined in various terms of food, clothing, shelter, education, health and security conditions. Absolute poverty is often known as subsistence poverty. It is usually measured by pricing the basic necessities of life and drawing a poverty line in terms of that price. In broadened sense absolute poverty includes basic cultural needs. Drewnowski and Scott include education, security, leisure and recreation in their category of basic cultural needs.

POVERTY AS WANT AND DEPRIVATION:

In an absolute sense poverty has also been defined as "lack of basic necessities of life" or as a "problem of want and deprivation. Dudley Jackson (1972) opines that a man needs flows of consumption of food stuffs and services from stocks such as housing, clothing, education and health which are very essential for smooth social functioning. If he does not have flows, the problem is of want, while the problem of failure of stocks is deprivation.

POVERTY FROM SOCIO-CULTURAL DIMENSIONS:-

Poverty has its socio-cultural dimensions too. Materially poor person may also suffer from lack of recognition, belongingness, achievement and opportunities which have a direct and indirect impact on individual personality and society. Saberwal opines that poor is poor because he is not competent to protect his socio-political and economic interests. Similarly, Shamugam found that most of the anti-social activities are committed by people of lower economic strata.

POVERTY IN INDIA AND ASSAM:-

Poverty in India is wide spread with the nation estimated to have one of the largest concentrations of poor people in the world and housing a third of the world's poor. The World Bank estimates that 456 million Indians (42% of the total Indian population) now live under the global poverty line of \$ 1.25 per a day. This means that a third of the global poor now reside in India. However, this also represents a significant decline in Poverty from 60% in 1981 to 42% in 2005.

The percentage of poor in 2004-05 was 21.8% of the country's population. This came down to 20.4% in 2005-06. The reduction in the poverty ratio in 1.4% points which is almost double of the trend observed between 1993-94 and 2004-05. This is mainly because of the high growth rate said K. L. Datta, an advisor of the planning commission.

India's poverty levels have declined by more than seven percentage points in five years, according to government data released on Monday, but the country's northeast has become more impoverished. The figures from the influential Planning Commission used new household consumer expenditure methods to calculate that poverty levels fell from 37.2 percent in 2004-05 to 29.8 percent in 2009-10. The decline was sharpest in rural areas, where the poverty ratio fell from about 42 percent in 2004-05 to just fewer than 34 percent in 2009-10.

Although several states saw their poverty ratios plummet by more than ten percentage points, a number of states in India's remote northeast experienced a rise in poverty levels. "In Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland, poverty in 2009-10 has increased," the commission said in a statement.

Even big States such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh registered only a marginal decline in poverty ratio, particularly in the rural areas, whereas States such as Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Uttarakhand saw about 10 per cent at (53.5 per cent), Chhattisgarh (48.7 per cent), Manipur (47.1 per cent), Jharkhand (39.1), Assam (37.9 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh (37.7 percent decline in poverty over the past years. One of the most astonishing revelations is that poverty has actually gone up in the North-Eastern States of Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland.

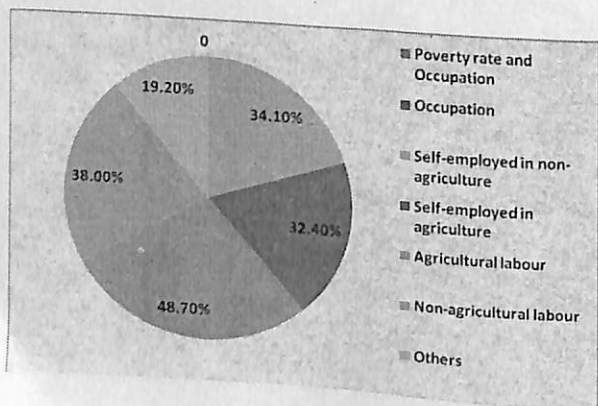
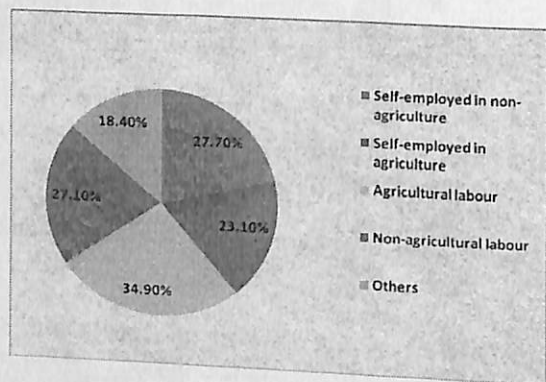
Indian Government has decided to include access to education and health facilities as also availability of clear drinking water while determining the levels of deprivation in the country. This new definition will be applied in the next survey. Indians poor will now be defined on the basis of access to six basic amenities in addition to the amount of food they consume. In the new system, poverty would be measured with reference to basic facilities like quality education, good health's sectors and clean drinking water availability. Therefore, as we define it that a person in India if he or she has a monthly per capita expenditure that is less than Rs 840 and does not have access to drinking water, proper shelter, sanitation, quality of secondary education or an all weather road with public transport be regarded as poverty. The centre has now decide to defined poverty as deprivation by including access to facilities like education, health, infrastructure, clean equipment and benefit for women and children.

In the new system, poverty would be measured with reference to basic facilities like quality education; good health sectors and clean drinking water availability said Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chair Person of the Planning Commission. Ahluwalia said 97% of students who enroll at the

primary level drop out by the time they reach the level by higher education. And 65% drop out by the time they reach the secondary level.

Poverty rate and Occupation		
Occupation	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled tribes
Self-employed in non- agriculture	27.7%	34.1%
Self-employed in agriculture	23.1%	32.4%
Agricultural labour	34.9%	48.7%
Non-agricultural labour	27.1%	38.0%
Others	18.4%	19.2%

Source: 55th round (1999/2000) of the consumer expenditure survey of the NSS.

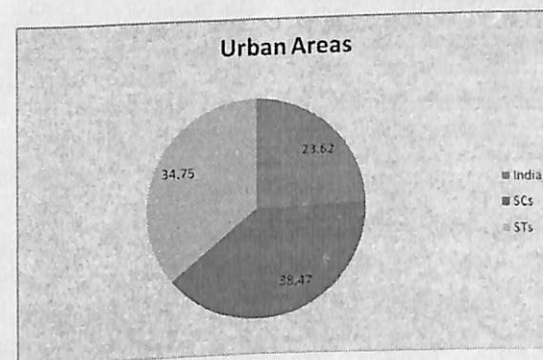
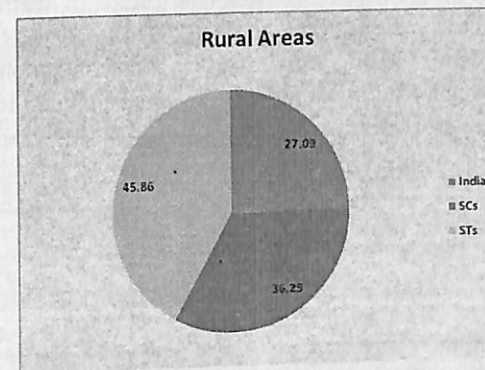


High level poverty in India is its history under British rule. Large population, low literacy, societal structure including the caste system and role of women, dependence on agricultural and the economic policies adopted after Independence are some of the salient factors.

Since 1950s, Indian Government and non-governmental organizations have initiated several programmes to alleviate poverty, including subsidizing food and other necessities, increased access to loans, improving agricultural techniques and price supports, and promoting education and family planning. These measures have helped to eliminate famines, cut absolute poverty levels by more than half, and reduced illiteracy and malnutrition.

Population below poverty line %	India	SCs	STs
Rural Areas	27.09	36.25	5.86
Urban Areas	23.62	38.47	4.75

Source: National Sample Survey Organization, 1999-2000.



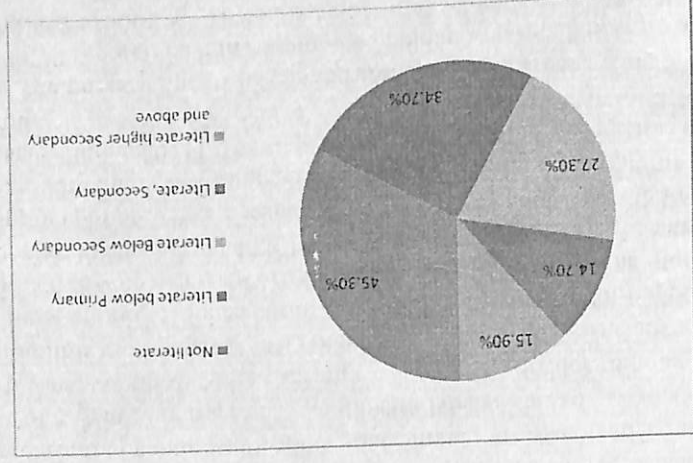
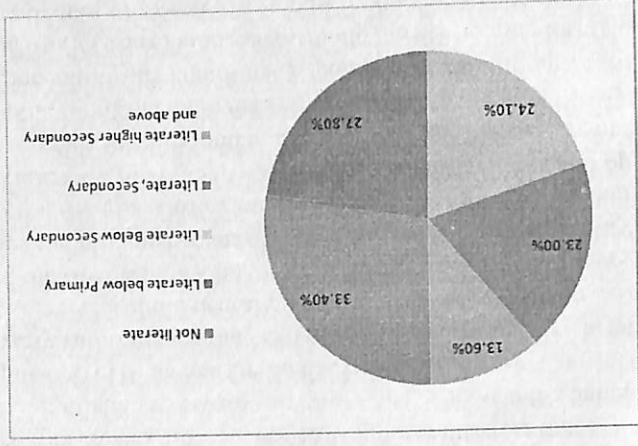
Despite significant economic progress, one fourth of the nation's population earns less than the Government specified poverty threshold of 12 rupees per day. In 1993-94 rural India had 50% people living below poverty and urban area had 31.8%. The country as a whole had 45.3% people below the poverty line. A 2007 report by the state run National Commission for Enterprises in unorganized sector found that 77% of the Indians or 836 million people lived on less than 20 rupees per day. India has a higher rate of malnutrition among children under the age 3 (46% in the year 2007) than any other country in the world.

According to the New York Times, an estimated 42.5% of the children in India suffer from malnutrition in India. The World Bank, citing estimates made by the World Health Organization, states that about 49% of the World's underweight children, 34% of the World's stunted children and 46% of the world's wasted children live in India.

According to Indian Government Committee constituted to estimate poverty, nearly 38% of population (380 million) is poor. The committee headed by S.D. Tendulkar has used a different methodology to reach at the current figure. It has taken into consideration indicators for health, education, sanitation, nutrition and income as per National Sample Survey Organization survey of 2004-05. Suresh Tendulkar, former chairman of National Statistical Commission states that 4 out of 10 people in rural areas in India are poor. Accordingly, the poverty line for rural India would work out to Rs. 446.68 (41.8%) while for urban areas it would be 578.8 (25.7%).

Poverty rates and Education		
Level of Education	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe
Not illiterate	33.4%	45.3%
Literate below Primary	27.8%	34.7%
Literate below Secondary	24.1%	27.3%
Literate, Secondary	23.0%	14.7%
Literate higher Secondary and above	13.6%	15.9%

Source : 55th round (1999/2000) of the consumer expenditure survey of the NSS.



Later, in 2007, a different version rendered by the Arun Sengupta Committee said that 77% of India's population was living below poverty line. Accordingly, the current estimates state that the number of poor in India approximately 297 million.

Now, Poverty is reducing but it is still a major issue. The issue of poverty within India has remained a prevalent concern. People in India are unable to meet the basic standards and according to Government estimates in 2007 there were nearly 220.1 million of the entire rural population and 15% of the urban population have been suffering from physical and financial

predicament. Financial resources as well as wealth are very uneven in India – this disparity creates different poverty ratios for different states. For example, state like Punjab has very low poverty ratios. On the other hand, 40-50% of the population in Bihar and Orissa live below the poverty line. Specific reason for poverty varies in the urban and rural factors are responsible for poverty in the rural areas of India. Rural population primarily depends on agriculture and depends on the monsoon season. Inadequate rain and improper irrigation facilities can obviously cause low production which can amplify the effects of poverty. Also the caste system still prevails in India and people from the lower castes are often deprived of a number of facilities and opportunities which compels them to remain in poverty. Again, increasing number of the city population is the main reason for poverty in the urban areas of India. A major portion of this additional population of rural families from villages migrate to cities due to in search of employment opportunities. There are also high incidences of poverty in flood-prone areas such as Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

As compared to other North-Eastern States, Poverty appears to be largely rural in nature and heavily concentrated in Assam and Tripura. The State of Assam comprises of 27 administrative districts and is situated in the North-East corner of India. Except for a narrow corridor running through the foothills of Himalayas that connects the state with West Bengal, Assam is almost entirely isolated from India. The state has a total population of 2,66,55,528 with a density of 340 person per square K.M. The literacy rate is comparatively high at 64.28.1 with males constituting 71.93% and females comprising of 56.03%. (census of India, 2001) The literacy rate in 73.18% along with males constituting 78.81% and females comprising of 67.27% (census of India, 2011). The state economy is primarily based on agriculture and oil.

The poverty line of Assam in rural and urban areas is Rs 365.43 and Rs 343.99 respectively. In Assam, the population living below poverty line is 36.09% (2000) of the total population, which is remarkably high as compared to the All India Percentage of 26.10%. In comparison to 40.86% in the year 1993-94 the poverty in the state has reduced significantly. According to the 2001, Human/Development Report Statistics, the variation in the percentage of rural population living below poverty line is much higher than those in the areas with 40.04% of the rural and 7.47% of the urban population who live below poverty line level. The poverty in this state is especially concentrated in the rural locations. According to the official sources, in Assam 10 lakh, 80 thousand people are still living below poverty line.

With the increases in the size of population, growth of in inequality of income and increased price level, the degree of poverty in Assam started to increase as the number of occupations could not grow satisfactorily. To know the extent of poverty, it is essential to know the findings of researchers like Dandekar and Rath, Minhas and other. Dandekar and Rath in their study "Poverty in India has estimated from the MSS consumer expenditure data 1960-61 that about 48% of Assam's population was living below the poverty line on the basis of minimum nutritional needs.

The Seventh Finance commission in its estimate of poverty in 1978, for the period of 1970-71, made a different attempt where it added the per capita private monthly consumption expenditure to the per capita monthly expenditure of the State Government on health, education, sanitation, social welfare etc to find out the per capita monthly expenditure level. The modified per capita expenditure was referred to an "Augmented Poverty Line". As a result, the number of person below the poverty line as per this augmented poverty line in Assam much smaller due to higher per capita public expenditure of the state on infrastructure.

The National Sample Survey in its 38 round of the period January – December, 1983 has remixed the private consumption expenditure per head per month from Rs 20 at 1960-61 prices to Rs 100 for locating the poverty line in Assam in the year 1983. As per this revised norm of the poverty level, it was found that 45% of the rural people of Assam and 33% of its urban people were living below poverty line in the year 1983.

Planning Commission constituted an Expert Group in September 1989 to estimate the incidence of poverty. As per this Planning Commission's Expert Group Report, submitted in July 1993, it is revealed that the number of persons lying below the poverty line in Assam was 89.6 Lakh which was 39.3% of the total population of the state in 1987-88, a figure was almost similar to all India percentage.

The recent estimate of poverty has been made by the Planning Commission on the basis of NSSO data for the year 1999-2000. Some of the key results of the 55th Round of the Household Consumer Expenditure Survey of the National Sample Survey organization (NSSO) covering the period July 1999 to June 2000, have now become available showing a very significant decline in Poverty. On the basis of this NSSO data, 1999-2000, the percentage of population living below the poverty line (BPL) in Assam was 36.09% as compared to that of 6.16% in Punjab, 8.74% in Haryana, 31.15% in Uttar Pradesh etc.

As per all India Rural Development Report, 1999, the states like Bihar and Assam have shown rise in poverty proportions. Accordingly, the report

observed that the percentage of BPL population in Bihar grew from 53.63% in 1987-88 to 58.21% in 1993-94 while in Assam the poverty ratio was 45.01% in 1993-94 as compared to 39.35% in 1987-88.

Another estimate of poverty in Assam was prepared in connection with the implementation of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) introduced by the previous U.F. Government also exposed the grim condition of the people of Assam. Even, though the successive state Government have been making repeated commitments to alleviate poverty in the state, yet still more than 40% of the total population of the state are still living below the poverty line.

SATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since obtaining Independence in 1947 strenuous efforts by centre and the states have been made to uplift the Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities in all aspects of their lives. A very large number of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes continue to be socially and educationally backward and are languishing at the bottom of the social and economic pyramid. While there has been a reduction in the percentage of population below poverty line in the case of both Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, the incidence of poverty is still very high. Most of the Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe families do not own land or other productive assets. They constitute bulk of agricultural landless workers, construction workers and workers in the unorganized sector. For centuries together, the Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities of India have lived in isolation away from civilization and preserved their cultural uniqueness. Poverty, ignorance, lack of options in employment opportunities and non-existence of organizations which can fight for their rights, facilitates the continuance of age old exploitation.

In Assam, the total population of the Scheduled castes is 2, 66, 5, 5528 constituting 6.85% of the total population of Assam who suffered from extreme social, educational and economic backwardness. With a few except all of them have also been for centuries victims of untouchability. They are regarded as weakest section of the society although at an advanced stage of development. These people are also victims of frequent incident of atrocities and harassment due to prevalence of caste prejudices.

Similarly, the tribal communities are also regarded as the weakest section of the society. As per 2001 census total Scheduled tribes population of the state of Assam is 33, 08,575 lakhs comprising 12.41% of the total population. They are most oppressed and exploited sections of our society.

It was then in the wake of the Indian political reforms during Thirties that these depressed classes got an effective opportunity of ventilating their grievances against the social injustices from which they were suffering and social tyrannies to which they had been subjected. But the real emancipation of the depressed masses through provision of equality of opportunity became the preamble of planning in the Independent India. This has necessitated in enshrining in the Constitution. Article 46 of the Constitution states that. "The state shall promote, with special care, the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled castes and Schedule tribes and shall protect them social injustice the entire 5th and all forms of social exploitation". Article 330, 332,335,338 to 342 and 6th Schedules of the constitution deal with special provisions for implementation of the objectives set forth in Article 46.

The UPA Government has set six principles for governance. One of them is "To provide for full equality of opportunity, particularly in education and employment for Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, OBCs and religious minorities." Besides, the National Common Minimum programme (NCMP) of the UPA Government contains certain provisions aimed at the welfare and empowerment of these communities.

The Government of Assam had also taken some steps and measures for the upliftment of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes' people. For example, the Assam State Development Corporation for ST in June, 1975, the Assam Rural Indebtedness Relief Act 1975, the Assam Institute of Research. For Tribals and Scheduled Castes in the year 1977, legislation called the "Assam Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes Reservation of posts at vacancies Act, 1978 with effect from 1st July, 1979 were constituted. Besides several Draft Annual plans were taken for allocating necessary funds for SCs and STs .During the Annual Plan 2004-2005, an amount of Rs. 183.52 lakhs; during 2005-06, an amount of 183.00 lakhs; and for the annual 2006-07, an amount of Rs. 201.00 lakhs were allocated for welfare of SCs and STs under Article 275(1) of the Constitution of India.

In spite of these special efforts made by the central as well as state Governments, the socio-economic condition of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes is not improved as expected. Still they are worst suffering, depressed and socio-economically backward.

It is in the above background, the present study was taken to lime – light the socio-economic condition of the people of Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribes communities and how poverty compels them to remain backward, suppressed and discouraging to go ahead.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

In view of the above reflections, the following objectives were taken under consideration.

1. To study the impact of poverty on socio-economic condition of scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities.
2. To study the impact of poverty on education/ and of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities.
3. To study the present condition of Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities towards standard of life.
4. To assess the level of employment, occupational pattern and income-expenditure level of Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities.
5. To suggest some concrete measure for improving the education, socio-economic and standard of life of Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes communities.

METHODOLOGY:

The part of the methodology mainly deals with collection of data and methods applied for the study.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected with the help of interview schedules. A self-structured questionnaire for educated and uneducated, married and unmarried between the age group 15-50 years were applied for collecting relevant data. Further, to have detailed information, field work and observation has been carried out in the selected area. Two separate interview schedule were taken-one for the families and another for the villages. Besides these primary sources, a variety of other secondary sources were also tapped. Whatever published research documents available in the various libraries were consulted. Data both published and unpublished were also gathered wherever necessary from the Government Department, such as the Director of Social Welfare, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Block Development officer, Census Hand Books, District Gazatters etc. Similarly, an informal discussion with B.D.O. (Block Development officers) Panchayat members, Gram Sewak, Village head and social workers involved in different welfare activities were also taken into consideration.

SAMPLE SELECTION:

In the present study, simple Random sampling method was used. There are three stages in which sampling process is carried out. The first is selection of district, the second stage consist selection of village and the third stage consists of selection of households of the villages.

Regarding the selection of district, out of 27 districts of Assam, Barpeta district is selected due to the fact that there is no particular studies conducted for Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes communities. Although they constitute a major part of the District only a study was done on Eri-culture as a remedy of Rural Poverty in Assam: A micro level study in Barpeta conducted by Dr. Utpal Kumar and Das Manjit, in the year 2007.

There are 11 blocks in the district. Out of 11 blocks, namely two blocks i.e. Sarukhetri and Pakabetbari blocks were selected. In that Block also, there is no evidence in conducting any research activity although both Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities are highly concentrated in the area.

The second stage is of selection of villages. The Sarukhetri and Pakabetbari Blocks consisted of 64 and 65 villages respectively. Out of these villages, heavy concentration of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes villages were selected for the present study. A total of 16 villages – 8 villages from Sarukhetri and 8 villages from Pakabetbari were selected for the purpose. On the other hand, regarding households selection, only Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes households were selected. A total of 200 households – 100 from Scheduled castes and 100 from Scheduled tribe households were selected for the present study.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

In Barpeta District as per 2001 census, percentage of SC population is 5.70% and ST population is 7.48%. The total SC literate people is 62.96% and total ST literate is 60.87%.

There are 8 constituencies in Barpeta District. Under Barpeta constituency, there are namely two blocks i.e. Barpeta and Bhawanipur block. In Chenga constituency, there are also two blocks i.e. Chenga block and Gomophulbari block. In Baghbar constituency, Mandia block; in Jania constituency, Rupshi block and part of the Mandia block. In Sorobhog constituency, Gobardhana block, Chakchaka block; in Bhawanipur constituency, Bhawanipur block and in Patacharkuchi constituency, Bajali block and part of the Baghmara block (others parts of the block are occupied by Baska District), in Sarukhetri constituency, Sarukhetri block, Pakabetbari block and part of the Barpeta are included. It may be noted here that since 1977 Sarukhetri constituency was considered only "Scheduled Caste constituency". It was after delimitation that Sarukhetri constituency was converted into general constituency.

As Scheduled Caste and Scheduled tribe communities are concentrated in the area of Sarukhetri and Pakabetbari block, so the present study is mainly

concerned with the two blocks only. The above blocks show a great failure in socio-economic condition and educational facilities among the people of both communities. The educational, social and economic deprivation of these groups is common and unifying characteristic, each group also has its own particular problem that distinguishes it from the others. On the above lime-light, the present study was conducted and these particular blocks were selected.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

This study is limited in scope on the following counts. One of the major handicaps of this study is that it was not undertaken on the basis of any theoretical framework. It was designed and executed primarily as an exercise in the collection of data about the households and villagers belonging to Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes.

Secondly, it does not provide a historical background of the Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes who live in the district.

Thirdly, another limitation stems from the technical problems related to the selecting of the samples. It was not possible to cover all the villages and households existing in the district. So the study includes 200 from SC families and 100 from ST families only, out of 16 villages of Sarukhetri block and Pakabetbari block, 200 samples were taken under the study. Thus, the present study was mainly concerned with Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribe communities only.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY:

The entire study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter i.e. introductory chapter presents the concept of the poverty, objectives, hypothesis, methodology, sample selection, significance of the study and limitation of the study.

The socio-economic profile of the District and the study area is discussed in the second chapter.

A review of related literature is presented in the third chapter.

Chapter fourth explains the pattern of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes life style, occupation, pattern of employment, determinants of poverty, factors influencing on their standard of life etc. (Analysis of primary data are given).

The major findings of the study are high highlighted in chapter fifth.

The sixth chapter deals with some remedial measures for the improvement of scheduled tribes communities with a concluding remark.

CHAPTER – 2

A BRIEF PROFILE OF BARPETA DISTRICT AND STUDY AREA:

The district of Barpeta covers an area of 3245 sq. Kms. It is bounded on the North by Bhutan, on the east of Nalbari District, on the South by Brahmaputra River and on the west by Bongaigaon District. The district headquarters town, Barpeta, located at the distance of 145 kms from Guwahati, is the traditional home of Vaishnavite art and culture.

History:

Barpeta was a sub-division of undivided Kamrup District till recent past. The district of Kamrup originally formed part of the kingdom of Kamrupa, which at one time is said to have included part of North-eastern Bengal and the whole of the Brahmaputra valley. This area was ruled by several dynasties including the Ahoms. Bhutan war of 1864 was one of the very eventful historical past of Kamrup which had resulted in the occupation of Dewangiri.

POPULATION:

Barpeta district (বৰপেটা জিলা) is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. The district headquarters are located at Barpeta. The district occupies an area of 3245 km² and has a population of 1,642,420 (as of 2001) comprising of 1,52,0333 of rural person and 1, 26,868 of urban person respectively. The district comprises of 50.19% rural poverty and 7.02% of urban poverty. According to the 2011 census Barpeta district has a population of 1,693,190. The district has a population density of 632 inhabitants per square kilometre (1,640 /sq mi). Its population growth rate over the decade 2001–2011 was 21.4%. According to 2001 census, Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes population in the district are 93861 people and 123266 people respectively.

LANGUAGE:

Main language spoken in the district is Assamese.

GEOGRAPHY AND PHYSICAL FEATURES:

North of the Brahmaputra, the district falls roughly into three natural divisions namely the tracts near the river, the central plain and the Kachari Duars near the Bhutan Hills. Some hills also break the reverie area just

north of the river. The territory was originally more or less marshy and was subject to inundation during the rains. There are no high mountains in the district but small hills can be found almost everywhere. The marshy portions of the district have now been cleared by immigrants and they produce jute and rice. In the midst of miles and miles, fields of waving paddy can be seen groves of bamboos, betel trees and other fruit trees. These groves which look like jungle islands in the midst of fields actually conceal the houses of cultivators.

RIVERS, CANALS AND WATERWAYS:

The district is intersected by numerous rivers and streams all of which arise in from the hills and mountains and flow into the Brahmaputra. On the northern bank, the principal tributaries of the Brahmaputra are the Manas, the Barnadi and the Pagladiya. Besides these three big rivers, there are numerous other rivers coming down from the Bhutan Hills to the district. Most of them are not very important. Between the Bardani and the Manas, there is a complicated network of shallow streams, which meander over the plains and ultimately find their way into the Brahmaputra, most of them being first collected either in the Pagladiya or the Chaulkhowa.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Barpeta Road is the important railway station and biggest trade and commercial centre of the district. Bahari and Kholabandha are the river ports. It is also the gateway to the "Manas" sancturay'. The total Road length in the district is 1395 kms of which 59 kms is National Highway, 101 kms state highway and 1235 kms is other PWD roads. 197 kms are surfaced and 1198 are graveled roads. Bus services of Assam State Transport Corporation are available for the most of the towns of the district from here.

Geography of Barpeta District varies from low lying plains to high land having small hillocks in the South western corner of the district, namely Bagh bar, Fulora and Chatala overlooking the secenic and mighty Brahmaputra river. The climate of Barpeta remain mild and pleasant round the year. Tropical monsoon climate of this district provider's two district runner and writer. The summer season of March to May followed by the Monsoon from June to September. This is followed by cool winter reason from October to February. The soil of Barpeta district may be classified as sandy, sandy-loamy and forest-soils. The Barpeta district of Assam courses an area of 3245 square Km is bounded by international border that is Bhutan Hills the North, Nalbari District in the East, Kamrup and Goalpara District in the South and Bongaigaon District in the west.

EARLY HISTORY:

The history of the district is a glorious one. Places like Barpeta, Bajali, Sarthebari, Sarbhog, Howly, Moinbari, Fulora-Chatala and Leh-Dongra are famous for their respective historical importance. Mahapurush Sri Sri Sankardev, founder of Vaishnavite culture, established Satras like Chinpara, Kamarkuchi and Patbaushi in the district and thus Barpeta become the centre of Baishnavite Culture in Assam. Sarthebari, a town within the district is famous for its Brass Industry. Sarbhog was an important place during the British regime where an airstrip was established during world war -II. Leh - Dongra, situated in the Southern part of the district is famous for its legendary person "Dak". It is known that in 1320 AD the king Fingua Ruled in Bajali area. Dubi near Pathsala town was famous for "Dehadasi Nritya. In 1942 Madan Barma and Routa Kachari of Bajali area became Martyrs of the freedom movement. Presently, Pathsala has become a pioneer in popularization of the mobile theatre in Assam.

DISTRICT FIGURES AT A GLANCE:-

District Geographical

Figures	Census population 2001
Distance from state capital - 145 km	Total Population = 16,42,420
Total area : 3245 sq. km	Male population = 8,46,106 (51.52%)
Forest cover : 1639.67 sq. km	Female population = 7,98,6314 (48.48%)
Cultivated Area = 44670 Hect.	Sex Ratio (M/F) = 1000:941
Under Paddy	Rural population = 92.97%
Cultivation = 36500 Hect	Urban population = 7.03%
Under tea plantation = 5920 Hect	SC population = 90,687 (6.54%)
Density = 472 Person/km	ST population = 1,10,452 (7.97%)
	General population = 11,84,520 (85.49%)
	Male = 1,53,339 (18%)
	Female = 1,47,756 (19%)
	Literate person = 47%
	Male Literate = 54%
	Female Literate = 39%

No. of Education Block	= 8
No. of Development Block	= 12
No. of Sub-division	= 2
No. of Goan Panchayat	= 149

No. of Town committee	= 6
No. of ward	= 48
No. of CRC	= 146
No. of VEC/WEC/TGEC	= 1080

ABOUT THE AREA:-

In the year 1992, 15 July Pakabetbari Development Block was inaugurated as Pakabetbari, including 10 Gaon Panchayats and two Mouzas i.e. Betbari and Paka Mouza.

Under Betbari Mouza, there are 7 Goan Panchayats and under Paka Mouza, there are three Goan Panchayats respectively.

The total population of the area, according to 2001 census report is 1, 18, 330 person. The number of Scheduled castes is 14922 and scheduled tribes 2528. There are altogether 20834 number of families. There are 3 H.S. School, 13-High School, 15-Sub-health Centre, 1-primary health Centre (Under Construction). Again, there are 4 rivers- Pahu mara, Tihu, kaldiya and Palla.

Again, the geographical area of the Block is 9069 Bighas, 4 katha, 7 1/6 lessa. The total Goan Panchayats under the Block is 07 and total villages under the Block is 64. The uncultivated area of the block is 1, 8317 Bighas, 1 katha, 8 2/3 lessa. Similarly barren and uncultivated land is 1475 Bighas, 4 Katha and 11 Lessa. Area under irrigation and types of irrigation is also nil. There is no forest area. The area under agriculture is 70 852 Bighas, 2 Katha and 9 lessa.

The total population of the area is 1, 63,168 where 83, 684 person male and 79,484 female. The total scheduled tribes population is 1773 and scheduled castes is 3962 where 2094 person male (SC) 1868 person female (SC) and 905 person male (ST), 868 person female (ST). The number of the villages connected by motorable road is 21 and there is no any national highway and state highway. The district road is Barpeta, Nagoan, Sarthebari road.

CHAPTER -3 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

For understanding any aspect clearly and to know the gaps in that area, it is very essential to have a brief review of the earlier studies in that specific area. Hence, an attempt has been made in this chapter to review briefly the existing literature on the different dimensional of poverty and socio-economic conditions of SC and ST in the country.

A number of studies on Poverty have been conducted by the economists of the country and their focus on poverty is from economist's point of view. Thus it may be useful to have a brief survey of the relevant sources having bearing on the study.

Charan Singh, in his "India's poverty and its solution" (1964) neither defines and measures poverty nor views it as different from under development. His major thrust is on outline of an alternative strategy of economic growth with emphasis on small and medium farmers and entrepreneurs, labour intensive techniques and utilization of surplus labour for capital formation.

Tarlok Singh (1969) in his study identifies poor's as a) petty cultivators, b) agricultural laborers, c) cultivators with less than 5 acres of land, and d) no cultivators who are in traditionally poor occupations. He says that poverty in India is basically a rural phenomenon that has emerged during the last 70 years.

P.C. Joshni in his book "Social Dimensions of the Problem of Poverty" (1971) emphasis on concentration of wealth and power in the hands of few.

Dandekar and Rath are also not explicit about the courses of poverty. But they are explicit about the causes of income inequality which are taken implicitly as the causes of poverty. They asserted that prevailing inequalities in the distribution of income, unequal distribution of the means of production and unemployment and underemployment.

M.L. Danta Wala (1971) seems to consider under utilization of human resources to be the chief cause of poverty.

Keith Griffin (1976) in his book attributes to the structure of Indian economy and its pattern of growth. He does not consider population to be the basic cause of poverty.

D. N. Dwivedi's (1976) work considers low income, savings and capital, low production, primitive agriculture and lack of market orientation and lack of education to be only the superficial causes of poverty. He says, the main causes of poverty are the concentration of economic power. It is the

economic power through which all the major decisions are taken in favour of the rich and not so poor classes.

A. K. Sen (1975) consider poverty as a function of technology and productivity or ownership of the means of production and of exploitation and social arrangements for production and distribution.

C.T. Kurien (1977) also seems to consider technology, productivity, exploitation, distribution are the chief causes of poverty.

Epstein and Jackson (1975), M. Adiseshiah (1976) and V. Shanumuga Sundram (1979) have emphasized the institutional factors of poverty.

V. G. Rao and G.P. Mishra (1981) has been confirms the major hypothesis of the poverty school that poverty is positively related to per capita income. The study also reveals that poverty declines with increase in the compensation of employees and in the share of the primary sector.

V.K.R. V. Rao (1982) has made a study on "Food, Nutrition and poverty in India".

Studies also made by Deshpande, Ashwini (2001) on "Caste at Birth? Redefining Disparity in India" and "Does caste still Define Poverty"? And Meenakshi, J.V. and Ray, Ranjan on "Impact of household size and family composition on poverty in rural India" Which examine the economic status of Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes.

Boroah, Vani K. (2005) has made a study on. "Caste, Inequality and poverty in India". Through the study the investigation was made on living standards of SC and ST and non-scheduled in India. Barooh estimates a multinomial logit model of poverty, computing the average probability of being poor at different poverty lines for SC, ST and non SC/ST households.

Bhaumik and Chakrabarty (2006) in their study on "Earnings Inequality in India: Has the Rise of caste and Religion based on Politics in India had an impact examine differences in earnings/mean consumption levels among the social groups (SC, ST and non-scheduled)

Kijima, Yoko 92206) in his study on "Caste and Tribe Inequality: Evidence from India" uses household level data drawn from the consumption surveys of the NSS to decompose differences in mean consumption levels between the SC/ST and the non- SC/ST into the components explained by differences in economic characteristics on one hand and differences in returns to characteristics on the other.

There are several other studies were made by different researchers like Rao and Rao (1951) on "Critique on group prejudice in India", B.N. Gupta on "The Dynamics of caste ranking and Inter caste relations in a village community of North West India with particulars reference to social change", Sinha and Sinha (1960) on "A study of prejudice among university students",

Khan and Khan (1980), Pimpley and Sharma (1985) Joseph Mathew (1986), Ramashray Roy and V.B. Singh (1987) Nanduram (1988) Selvanathan (1989), Pandey 1991 and Venkates Warulu (1991) etc. has also made other researches on different aspect of SCs and STs in India Context.

Apart from these, there are also several studies made for the SC and ST communities in India.

S.N. Pathak and S.P. Pandey (2005) has made a study on "Scheduled Caste Development – A study of special component plan" including six districts viz. Allahabad, Lacknow, Varanasi, Agra, Gorakhpur and Kanpur.

One of the most relevant inquiries was undertaken by the Madras Institute of Development Studies who surveyed the trends in income earned by Harijans in Tamilnadu and the study reveals the deteriorating condition of the SCs in Tamilnadu. (1974).

Saraswathi made a study (1974) of minorities in Madras state. In this study she has given an account of the difficulties faced by the minorities including Harijans.

Hanumanta Rao (1997) has selected a village in West Godawari district of Andhra Pradesh and studied diverse aspects of the village. He divided the population into three categories like Scheduled castes, Backward class and Advanced caste.

Dr. Ramaiah takes up major issues involved in the development of tribal areas particularly in the process of planning and implementation of development programmes for critical analysis. He highlights the life of all three major tribes of Andhra Pradesh, namely Gonds of Adilabad, Koyas of Godavari and Chenchus of Mahaboobnagar in detail. The study gives a broad outline of the tribal life, their economy and development perspective.

Bernard S. Cohn made (1965) a study of Rajput village in Jaunpur district of Uttar Pradesh which is of special interest because of its focus on factors which initiate constructive change. This study has brought how development can transform the lives of the scheduled castes village.

Sunanda Patwardhan (1973) made a study of Harijans in Pune city of Maharashtra. In her study, it was studied the changes that has taken place in the social system and whether it is possible for the people among the lower castes to go up in the ladder.

Dr. Soran Singh had made a study on the changing socio-economic condition of the scheduled castes with special reference to district Jaunpur in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It deals with the study of inter caste relations and social distance among scheduled castes.

P. Hanumanta Rayappa and R. Mutharayappa had made a study on **Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes** which deals with the dimensions of backwardness and efforts are made so far to improve their living conditions.

The Cultural Research Institute for Tribal welfare of West Bengal undertook a study to assess the impact of industrialization on socio-economic and psychological life of tribal communities. The Institute also had undertaken another study of the tribal workers in tea industry (1964).

L.P. Vidyarthi (1964) in his study of Munda and Oraon tribals living in Ranchi City points out, "The process of urbanization among the tribals of this city involves changes in several dimensions."

A study of tribal economy of Gujarat undertaken by Shah (1967) was based on the Indian Rural Debt and Investment survey of R.B.I. (1961-62) and the study undertaken in Gujarat state.

Murty (1972) discussed the malpractices of moneylenders, problems of shifting cultivators and functioning of Muttadar system and reviewed various measures to be taken for amelioration of tribal conditions in South India. The study of Nayyer D.P (1974) examined the tribal development under different Five year plans. It is pointed out that in the Fifth plan, education is considered as an important tool to improve and integrate the tribal's with national life.

M.L. Patel (1997) was mainly concerned with the land problems of tribals. According to him during 17th and 18th centuries there were many tribal kingdoms in India. Gradually the expansions of the more advanced groups forced the tribals to retreat into the nearest hills and less fertile areas during the British period.

Sharma B.K. (1980) tried to focus attention on the existing weak socio-cultural and economic linkages and also a solution there to, through a general settlement and linkages plan keeping in view of the different economic activities that might be acceptable to people and suitable for the tribal area. The study states that Government of India has not only failed to encourage the development of tribals but has actively maintained their under development.

Pradeep Kumar Bose (1981) questioned the validity of observing stratification pattern among Indian tribes on the basis of caste hierarchy or sacred hierarchy and instead recommends secular hierarchy or division on class basis, justified class as a valid principle for studying Indian tribes.

Jagana Tripathy (1981) analyzed classes and class relations in three villages of Orissa and considered the particulars models of production operation of them. Finally he concluded that economically constituted class does not lead automatically to the self conscious class.

Makhan Jha (1982) studied the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of the tribes of Orissa. The study examined the interrelationship among the economic organization, social structure, the life cycle, the religious beliefs and practices of the tribes residing in the different area.

Bhagat (1983) attempted to quantify some of the socio-economic factors determining the difference in the adoption of improved agricultural practices in tribal Bihar.

Kothari (1985) conducted enquiry about the tribal social change among the Bhills of South Rajasthan. The enquiry is concerned with the problem of the direction of social change.

Maurya R. D. (1985) identified that, education can play a crucial role in inculcating awareness among the tribal's about their legislative right and thus help them to cope up effectively with the challenges of modern life.

Srivastava LRN (1987) also focused on the education of tribals and stated that objectives of education in the tribal areas leads to production orientation, economic growth and value orientation.

Sujatha K. (1988) viewed that for the fast development of tribal areas, integrated development approach is highly essential.

The study of Rama Rao V. (1988) also pointed out the need for integrated approach for tribal education development.

Prasad R.R. (1988) emphasized the different dimensions of tribal development during British rule and in free India. The study observed that the planned development programmes in India have uplifted the tribal people in many areas.

Mahalingam S. (1989) has advocated that tribals in India form the very segment of the weaker sections of the country with their traditional skills and resources. He also explained the importance of different tribal groups and their marketable products, salient features of tribal marketing structure and institutional building for the development of tribal market.

Obweroi R.C., Murty T.V. and Sharma R.K. (1989) conducted enquiry about agricultural development on tribal farms in Himachal Pradesh. The study revealed that the farmers were found to differ significantly among themselves for the constraints in the development of agriculture.

Shah B (1990) observed that the tribals in India differ from one another in many respects. She emphasized the different problems associated with the tribal education promotion programmes.

Verma R.C. (1990) examined the different dimensions of the Indian tribal society through the ages. Khare (1991) examined the impact of economic development on socio-economic conditions of the Munda tribe of

Bihar and Jarkhand states. The study identified a gap between the tribal welfare plans and their implementation.

Choudhury Budhadeb (1992) conducted a macro level study on Indian tribes. In the study, the dimensions of socio, cultural, religious and economic changes are highlighted. The study also analysed the socio-economic and ecological development issues of Indian tribes.

Heredia, R.E. (1992) has explained that the isolation of the tribal community from the mainstream of society is a much larger issue in which education as an agency of socialization is one important dimension. He advocated the need for non-formal education for the promotion of education in the interior tribal area.

Bhange N.P. (1993) reviewed the recommendations of different tribal commissions and committees appointed by the Government of India.

Etala, Sammaiah (1993) concluded a study of hurdles in the implementation of welfare measures provided in order to equalize educational opportunities to SC students in Andhra Pradesh with special reference to Telangana. The objectives of the study were to assess the awareness of SC students about details of the welfare measures provided to them; to study the adequacy of the welfare measures thereof, and to identify the hurdles in the implementation of welfare measures by the government functionaries in the Department of Education and Social Welfare.

Devendra Thakur and D.N Thakur (1995) reviewed the tribal development and planning in India. They studied in depth the massive efforts that have been made for the socio-economic development of the tribal people by the Government through organized economic planning.

The study of Virginius Baxa (1999) suggested that tribes are whole societies each with its own language, territory, culture, and customs and so on.

Mohan Rao (1999) examined tribal development in Andhra Pradesh with respect to their process, performance and prospects.

Against this background, the researcher felt the relevance of examining the socio-economic conditions of SCs and STs and impact of poverty on their life. A close reflection on the foregoing review of the earlier studies is expected to indicate the relevance of the present study.

CHAPTER -4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Even after sixty years of Independence over a quarter of our population still remains poor. However, the county has successfully reduced the share of the poor in the population from 54.8% in 1973 to 27.5% in 2004. Among the social groups, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and backward castes accounted for 81% of the rural poor. In 2004-05, while the head count ratio of the poor in the total rural population was 28%, among the Scheduled Castes it was 36.8%. In the urban areas, the head count ratio overall was 25.6% but among SCs it will be even higher in rural areas at nearly 40%.

The proportion of ST population among the rural population living in poverty has increased from 14.8% in 1993-94 to 17.5% in 1999-2000 – double that of their share in the total population in India. For rural population the incidence of poverty among the ST had fallen from 50% in 1993-94 and 44.2% 1999-2000. In 2004-05, the incidence of poverty among the STs stood at 47.3% for the rural population.

It is also worth mentioning that in rural areas SCs do not have access to land and therefore are forced to migrate to urban areas more often. On the other hand, STs in rural areas have much better access to land especially in the forested area, but the quality of that land, and its productivity is low, and yields low income. Thus, in terms of income and poverty as well as the other indicator of human development like education, health and nutrition, the STs and SCs have much worse than other population.

To ascertain the widespread influence of poverty, the investigator has tried to make an analysis from collecting interpreted it accordingly.

Table :1

SHOWING VILAGE-WISE POPULATION OF SURVEYED SCs AND STS AND THEIR PERCENTAGE

Block	Sl No.	Villages	House	Total Popn.	SC Popn.	SC male	SC Female	ST Popn.	ST Male	ST Female	% of SC/ST of popn. in the villages
SARUKHE TRI	1	Gahia	276	1430	-	-	-	286	147	139	20%
	2	Balapara	216	1135	-	-	-	786	390	396	69%
	3	Bharegaon	118	684	-	-	-	338	157	181	49%
	4	Gartari	117	639	-	-	-	272	136	136	42%
PAKABE TBARI	5	Debra	152	871	-	-	-	366	171	195	42%
	6	Manipur	236	1406	-	-	-	794	397	397	56%
	7	Kawaimari	162	968	-	-	-	149	77	72	15%
	8	Katha Iartari	256	1440	-	-	-	394	200	194	27%
PAKABE TBARI	1	Bamundi	280	1535	1533	791	742	-	-	-	99%
	2	Anartari	246	1325	1136	566	570	-	-	-	85%
	3	Newlarbhitha	341	1953	1905	995	910	-	-	-	97%
	4	Satrapaka	71	379	177	105	72	-	-	-	46%
SARUKHE TRI	5	Satrabarala	113	689	389	206	183	-	-	-	56%
	6	Niz Saldhah	270	1638	663	331	332	-	-	-	40%
	7	Jabri Kuchi	81	449	229	126	103	-	-	-	51%
	8	Bebeja Para	328	1873	269	130	139	-	-	-	14%

From the table 1, it is seen that both scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes people are concentrated in all the villages of Sarukhetri and Pakabet bari block. Thus out of these 16 village, 200 households from each 100 (SCs and STs) were taken into consideration. All the villages of the district is situated in the plain area.

SHOWING FAMILY PATTERN OF AND THEIR INCOME:

TABLE -2

Family Type	SC families	ST families	Primary sources of In come	Estimated income per annum
Nuclear	27	17	Agriculture	Rs.3000:5000
Joint	69	82	Agriculture	Rs.5000-7000/-
Extended	-	-	-	-
Single	4	1	Salaried	Rs.7000-10,000
Total	100	100		

The above table reveals that the majority of the villagers are living in nuclear family and joint families. In this case, people belonging to SCs are to have nuclear families than STs. The estimated income of nuclear families rests on Rs. 3000- 5000/-per month, joint families Rs.5000-7000/- per month and single families Rs.7000-10,000/- per month respectively. There are only 4 families of SCs and 1 family of STs having single family pattern.

The estimated income of nuclear families rest on Rs 3000-5000/-per month, joint families 5000-7000/-per month and single families 7000-10,000/-per month respectively.

TABLE - 3
COMPOSITION OF HOUSE HOLD INCOME OF SELECTED HOUSE HOLD:

Block	Sources of income	SCs	STs	Percentage	
				SCs	STs
SARUK	Agriculture	61	40	61%	40%
	HETRI				
	Salaried Employment	03	01	3%	1%
	Labourer	21	32	21%	32%
	Fishing/Hunting	05	-	5%	-
	Daily-wager	10	27	10%	27%
PAKABE	Agriculture	50	45	50%	45%
	TBARI				
	Salaried Employment	02	02	2%	2%
	Labourer	10	19	10%	19%
	Fishing	07	-	7%	-
	Daily-wager	31	34	31%	34%

From the table 3, it can be noticed that the major sources of income of the sample households are identified as agriculture. There are also more individuals involved in labourer, fishing (mainly in Scheduled castes), and daily wage earning are additional sources of income. The income from agriculture constitutes 61% (SCs) 40% (STs) in the total income of all sampled household and salaried persons are also negligible. It is also seen that poverty increases with the scanty of income, with the highest poverty incidence observed among household that have labourer, daily wage earner and even agriculture.

TABLE-4
INCOME LEVEL OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE SAMPLED VILLAGES:

INCOME LEVEL (Per Annum)	NO. OF SC HOUSEHOLD	NO. OF ST HOUSEHOLD	PERCENTAGE	
			SCs	STs
Below 3000	34	28	34%	28%
3000-5000	62	66	62%	66%
6000-8000	04	06	0.4%	0.6%
9000-10,000	Nil	Nil	-	-
Above 10,000	Nil	Nil	-	-

In combined two blocks the number of scheduled caste households having income below 3000/- three thousand is 34 and scheduled tribe is 28. The number of Scheduled castes households having income between 3000-5000 is 62 and Scheduled tribe is 66. Again the number of SCs households having income between 6000-8000 is 4 and STs is 6 and income having 9000-10,000. The SCs household is nil and STs household is nil. It is found that most people are involved in doing low and fourth-grade jobs. Being illiterates they are deprived of getting any opportunities from the Government. Both the two communities of households had reported that there is no availability of agricultural land and so they like to involve themselves in labour works and wage-employment.

OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL OF THE CASTES:

Occupation is pre-dominantly the main deciding factor for determining the socio economic condition of family. The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under the present study could be grouped under three broad occupational divisions like - a). The agriculturists who own and cultivate the land, b) The craftsmen who follow certain trade or Business and c) the labourer who work on daily wages. In the surveyed villages, the scheduled castes communities are Namasudra, Bania, Dholi, Jalkeot, Jalo-Malo were found more concentrated and in regard to scheduled tribes Bodo-kachari were found. The scheduled castes communities like Namasudra, Bania have preferred to involve in agricultural works where as the remaining other castes like to follow their traditional occupation but with adopting modern techniques. The Bodo kacharis are also engaged in agriculture works. The occupational structures among the various castes are indicated in table 5:-

TABLE-5
DIFFERENT CASTES AND THEIR OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURES:-

Castes	No. of Households	Agriculturists	Craft mea/ business	Labourer	Traditional occupation
Namasudra	54	Agriculturists	Preferred	-	-
Bania	20	Agriculturists	Goldsmith	Labourers	-
Dholi	9	-	-	Labourers	
Jalkeot	11	-	-	Labourers	
Jalo-Malo	6	-	-	Labourers	
Bodo	56	Agriculturists	Business	Labourers	NIL
Bodo-kachari	44	Agriculturists	Business		NIL

If our attention turns to the occupation and its impact on the ratio of per capita expenditure to the poverty lines, it leads to the conclusion that agricultural labourers households are more likely to have a higher poverty incidence other than occupational groups. SCs households who are self-employed in agriculture have a much higher incidence of poverty than STs Households. The results also suggest that households that contain labourers, whether involved in agricultural or non-agricultural work, are more likely to be in poverty when compared with households where there are self-employed

TABLE-6
INCOME PATTERN OF THE FAMILY

	Scheduled castes	Scheduled Tribes
No. of Earners	81	78
No. of Earning dependent	151	147
No. of non earning dependent	192	183

From the information collected about the number of members belonging to the SCs and STs, it is seen that the number of earners among the SC communities is 81 and ST communities is 78. Similarly, the numbers of earning dependent and non-earning dependent in SC is 151,92 and ST is 147,229 respectively. It is worth mentioning that we are considering those persons as earners who earn cash through some employment and there are some women involved in household work, nourishing the animal and men who are casual earners, but depending upon head earners are considered as earning dependent. Again, non-earning dependent are below 7 years of age and above 60 years of age. The table shows that non earning dependent is more among the communities. It is noted that a very high dependence on earners are an indication of the general poverty of the region.

TABLE 7 –Employment status of the households :
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE Sampled households is as follows–

Category	Age of the Households SC of						Age of the Households of ST					
	15-25		26-36		36-50		15-25		26-36		36-50	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Agricultural Labour	5	7	42	08	37	12	16	08	30	9	17	5
Salaried Services	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Part-time workers	-	-	18	-	13	-	-	8	36	-	7	-
Fishing	-	-	5	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any other Daily (wages)	9	2	15	6	7	2	-	-	27	11	23	-

From the employment structure, it is found that the proportion of dependent non-workers is higher 79.16% than the workers and the work participation rates have relatively higher for men by 84% (SC) and 63% (ST) than women. It can be noticed that the participation of women is so negligible, only men belonging from the age group 26-36 years are largely involving in gainful employment. The age group of 36-50 years also indicating active involvement in different employment, but mainly in agriculture. Most of the households are associated with agriculture and some are involved in two or three other occupations like salaried services, wage or part time labourer, and fishing. The extent of unemployment is very high in Pakabetbari block than Sarukhetri block.

CONSUMPTION PATTERN:

The consumption expenditure pattern of people mainly depends on employment and income of the individual households. Similarly consumption expenditure pattern at a point of time speaks about the living standards of the people. To analysis the pattern of consumption, household data have been obtained from individual households regarding the expenditure of food, dresses, ornaments, education, health and others. As poverty decides how much is to be spent on those basic needs, so the investigator has taken these variables.

TABLE-8
SHOWING CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF THE COMMUNITIES:

Consumption	Percentage
Medium Amount	60%
Low Amount	20%
High Amount	17.8%

The survey present that about 60% of the total sample data consume medium amount, 20% household low amount and only 17.8% spend highest amount on food. Those household's per capita income in below <3000, spend the lowest amount on dress, education & health. Both the SC and ST Communities show that in so far as deprivation is concerned and they cannot afford a high amount to the other items. Expenditure on education and other development process is very little amount proved that prevalence of poverty in the area. As observed from the field work, poor households who have lower income and less spending on food also consume less expenditure on other items. Again it indicates that higher spending on food is possible if family's income is higher.

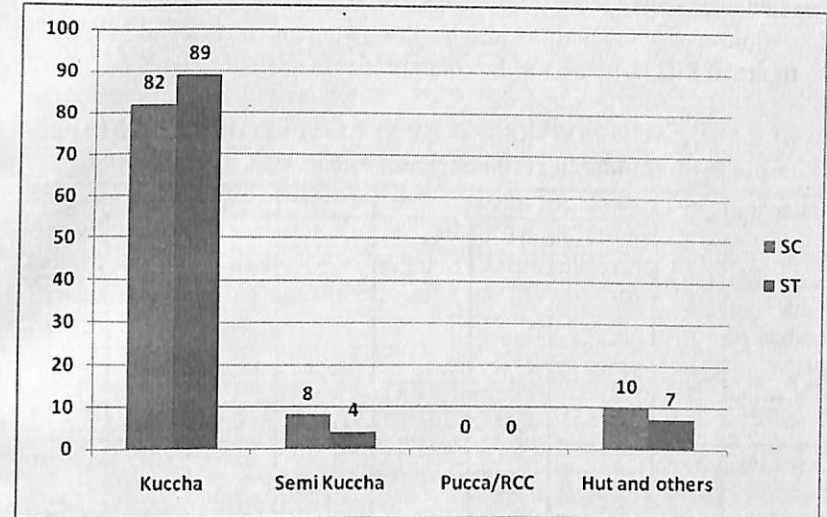
HOUSING CONDITION:

Housing is one of the basic necessities of every human being, which constitute the protecting base for any individual and his family. An attempt is made to study the housing conditions of Schedule Castes and Scheduled Tribes household and data pertaining to it are presented in table – 9.

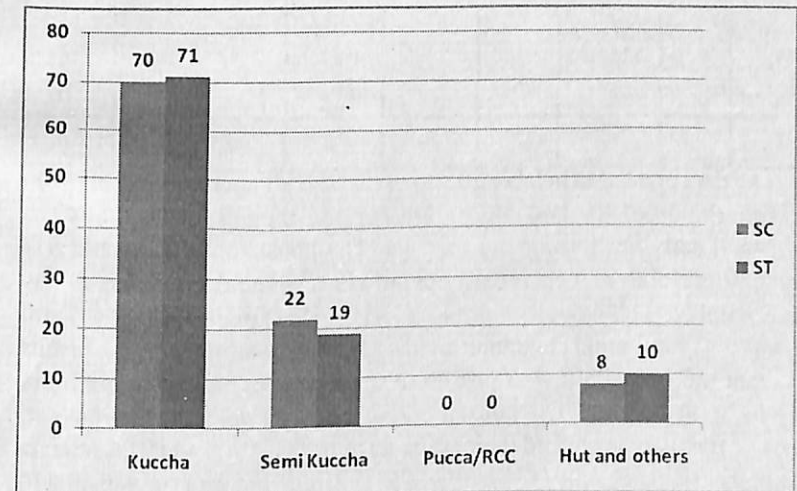
TABLE 9
SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSE HOLD BY THE TYPE OF HOUSES:-

Block	Housing characteristics	No. of Households SC	No. of Households ST
Sarukhetri	Kuccha	82	89
	Semi kaccha	08	04
	Pucca/ RCC	NIL	NIL
	Hut and others	10	07
Pakabet bari	Kuccha	70	71
	Semi kaccha	22	19
	Pucca/ RCC	NIL	NIL
	Hut/ others	08	10
		100	100

Graphical Representation of the Data pertain are presented below-



Sarukhetri



Pakabetbari

As it is evident from the table 9, that as many as SCs and STs Households of both the Block have kuccha house without having any modern amenities. The percentage of having kuccha house is SCs 82% and STs 89% the percentage of semi kuccha house in case of SCs households is 0.8% and STs Households is 0.4%. There are also hut houses among the SCs and STs, while the figure of R.C.C. house for the communities is nil.

**TABLE 10: LAND POSSESSED BY SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS:
(Sample Households-200 (100-SC) and 100 -STs)**

Category	Sarukhetri Block				Pakabetbari Block			
	SC	NO of families	ST	No. of families	SC	No of families	ST	No of families
Total land possessed per household	½ 1	93%	1 Bighas	91%	½-1½	98%	½ -1½	87%
Land in leased	NIL	-	NIL		NIL	-	NIL	-
Land leased out Basti land	NIL ½	- 93%	NIL ½ Bighas	91%	NIL ½-1 Bighas	- 98%	NIL ½ -1 Bighas	- 87%
Agricul tural land	½-½ Bighas	15%	½ Bighas	11%	1 Bighas	21%	1 Bighas	33%
Others	-		-		-		-	

The data presented in table 10 shows that the villagers of both SCs and STs Households of the two blocks are earning their livelihood through agricultural activities throughout the year. The household of SCs and STs Communities, (both of them) possesses only ½- 1½ bighas of total land. The SC households of communities possess ½-1½ (15%) bighas of agricultural land while ST household communities have 1 (%) bighas of such. The results imply that the household who possess a smaller amount of land are more likely to be in poverty. The households of both the communities have ½ Bighas of Bastiland each and their percentage is 93% (SC) and 91% (ST) in Sarukhetri Block and in Pakabetbari. It is slight better as compared to Sarukhetri as it is seen that in the block 98% (SC) and 87% (ST) families have possessed ½ to 1 bigha as bastiland each.

Thus, from the above analysis the second hypothesis that is 'There is a significant relationship between poverty and socio-economic condition of SCs and STs' is confined.

FAMILY SIZE:

The number of member in the family is probably the first pre-requisite in the determination of economic status of a family. From the information collected about the number of members belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes, it was found that 200 in STs families had 484 male and 181 female members and in SCs families 401 (M) and 195 (F) members. Among the Scheduled Castes, even the minor boys and a girl become an earning member of the family. In the family normally a boy or girl above 10 years of age is a working member of the family and contributed towards the total income of the family.

TABLE 11-SHOWING TOTAL FAMILY MEMBERS OF THE SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS ALONG WITH THEIR WORK PARTICIPATION.

No. of Family		Both off the selected blocks		work participation of the households			
Scheduled castes		Scheduled tribes		SC		ST	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
84	181	401	195	51	08	41	11
70	194	397	139	37	11	39	10

From the above table, it is seen that 88% members of SC and (Male) 80% ST families were working members. This figures appear that the cause of poverty of both the communities is not because of availability of earning members but because of proper utilization of manpower available in the family

ELECTRICITY OF THE SELECTED VILLAGES:

Though during the decade 1991-2001, the access to availability of electricity among the households of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes increased by 16.2% and 13.7% respectively, still both the SCs and STs Households were deprived in comparison to households of general people's. On the other hand, while determining socio-economic status of SCs and STs families, sources of light used by them was considered as an indicator of socio-economic status.

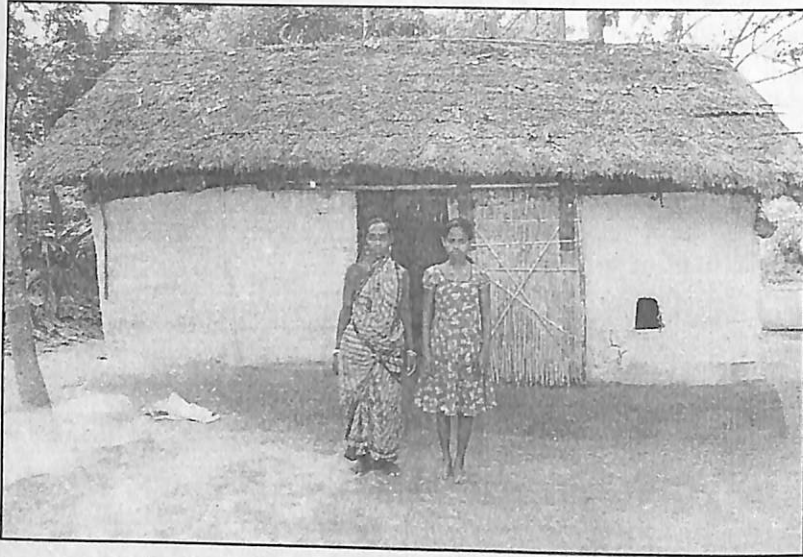


Fig. 9. A view of housing condition of SCs.

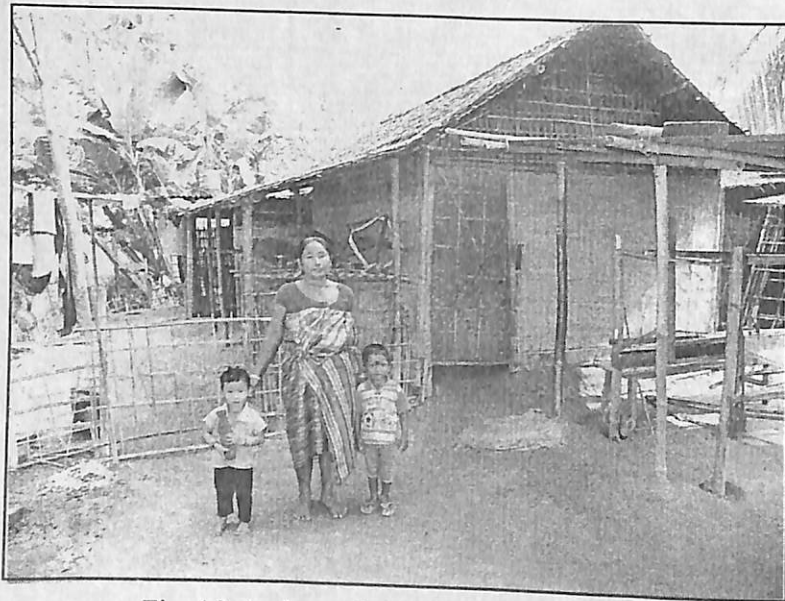


Fig. 10. A view of nuclear family of STs.



Fig. 11. A schedule caste woman with her poor housing condition

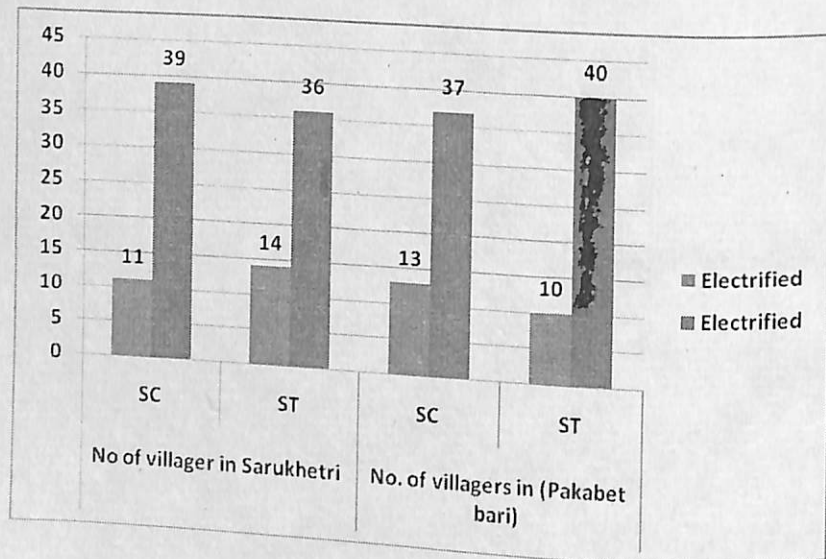


Fig. 12. A view of Kaccha latrin

According to the data on electricity based on houses and households amenities data, 24 % (SC), 24% (ST) of the household in the area have access to electricity. It is noted that 76% of the villages of the area have no electricity. Most of them use earthen lamp, kerosene and it is again indicative of the backwardness of the study areas. This is also a factor in the appraisal of poverty in the area. Although, electricity is extended to the villages, but only a selected few households are taking electric connection in their households.

TABLE 12-SHOWING THE ELECTRICITY FACILITIES OF THE VILLAGES:

S. N	Category	No of villager in Sarukhetri		No. of villagers in (Pakabetbari)	
		SC	ST	SC	ST
1	Electrified	11	14	13	10
2	Electrified	39	36	37	40

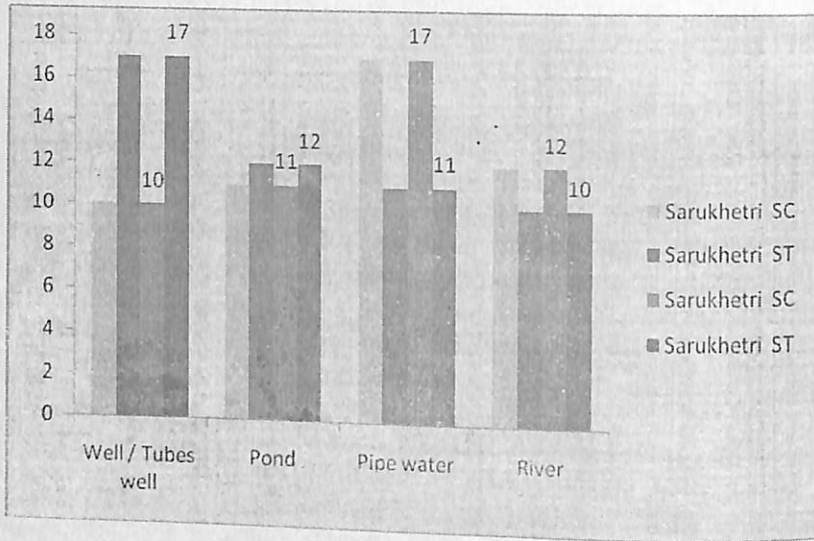


DRINKING WATER FACILITY OF THE VILLAGES:-

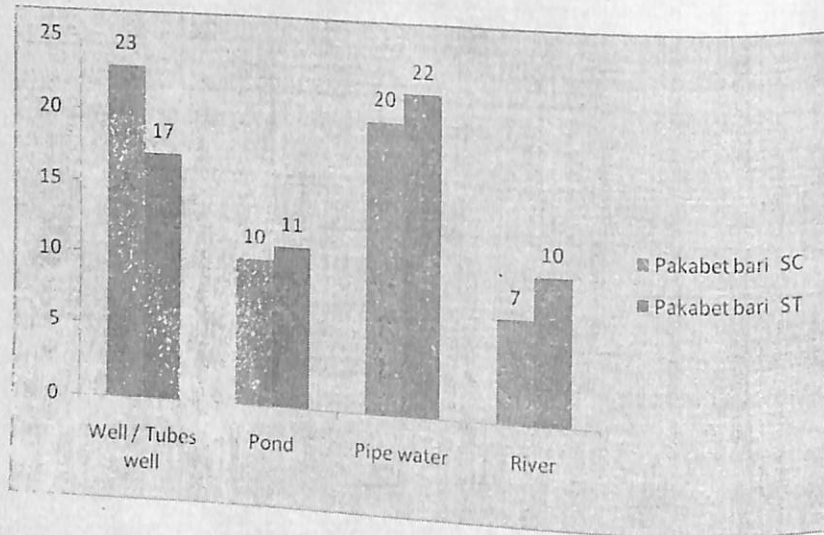
The comparison of 1991 and 2001 census data with regard to percentage of households having improved drinking water facility is SCs (63.6% and 81.1%) and STs (43.2% and 61.7%) indicates variation as the present study reveals that the facilities of drinking facility in both the areas is so deplorable. It was found that out of 100 SC families only 20% in Sarukhetri and 46% in Pakabetbari used their own source of drinking water. These families household their own well and tube well. The rest of the other families were using community hand pump, ponds and rivers. Similarly, out of 100 ST families, 34% in Sarukhetri and in Pakabetbari have used their own drinking water facilities and data pertaining in table 13 also shows that 66% most of the people have been fetching water from the pond, pipe water and nearby rivers.

TABLE 13: VARIOUS SOURCES OF DRINKING WATER FACILITIES OF THE SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS:

Sources	Sarukhetri		Pakabetbari	
	No. of Households 100		No. of Households 100	
	SC	ST	SC	ST
Well / Tubes well	10 (20%)	17 (34%)	23 (46%)	17 (34%)
Pond	11 (22%)	12 (24%)	10 (20%)	11 (22%)
Pipe water	17 (34%)	11 (22%)	20 (40%)	22 (44%)
Rivers	12 (24%)	10 (20%)	07 (14%)	10 (20%)



SARUKHETRI

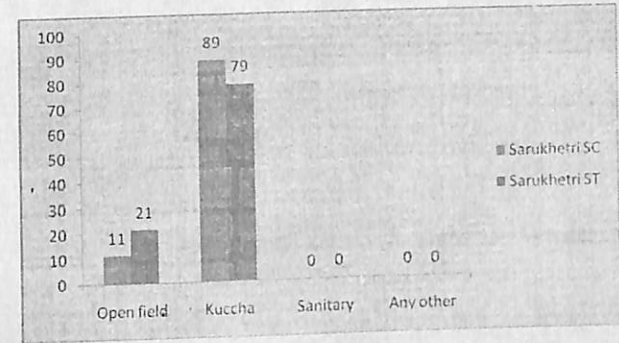


Pakabetbari

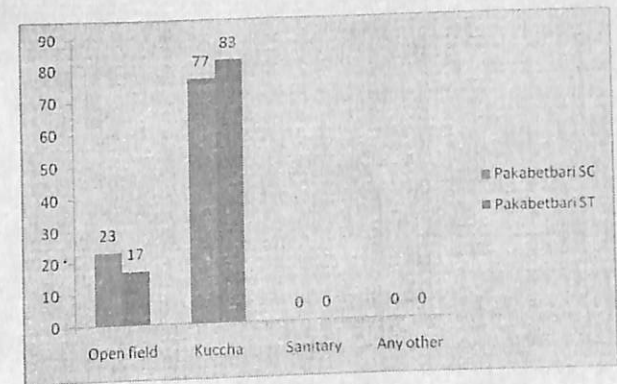
FACILITIES OF SANITATION:

TABLE 14: SHOWING HOUSEHOLDS HAVING VARIOUS SANITATION

Sanitation facilities	Sarukhetri		Pakabetbari	
	No. of Households		No. of Households	
	SC	ST	SC	ST
Open field	11	21	23	17
Kuccha	89	79	77	83
Sanitary	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Any other	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL



SARUKHETRI



Pakabetbari



Fig. 13. A view of unhygienic condition of a village

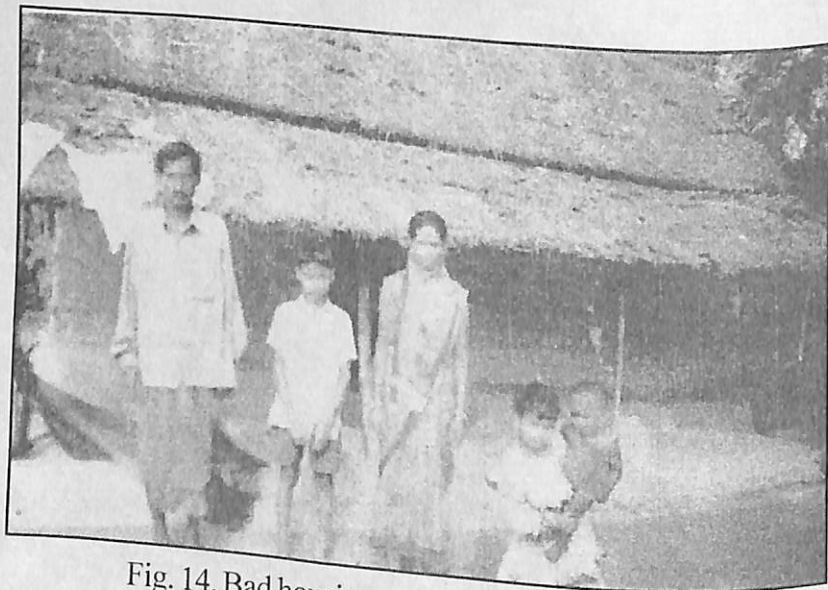


Fig. 14. Bad housing condition of SCs families



Fig. 15. Bad housing condition sCs families

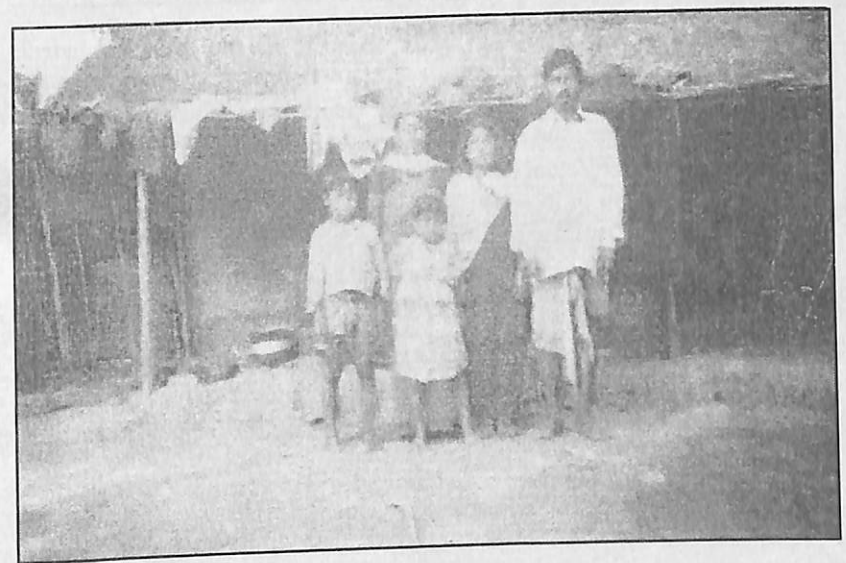


Fig. 16. Bad housing condition of a STs families

The sanitation status of the sample households is generally unsatisfactory due to unhygienic house structure, unsafe drinking water sources and improper way of disposal of waste. This has resulted in a lower health status for the people of the surveyed households.

The table 14 shows that, as regards sanitation majority of SCs and STs Households have found to be using kuccha latrine. The rest of other households are in favor of using open field. The communities of both the blocks are deprived of using modern latrine facilities.

EDUCATION STATUS OF THE FAMILY

The quality of human resource is judged from the level of literacy and skilled training attained by the people in the area. There is a direct relationship between illiteracy and poverty in the study area.

TABLE 15: DISTRIBUTION OF HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLDS BY LITERACY LEVEL:

Block	Group	Literacy Level				Total
		Primary	Middle	Higher	Illiterate	
Sarukhetri	SC	10%	3%	NIL	87%	100
Pakabetbari	ST	8%	1%	NIL	91%	100

The information collected in this regard indicated that 87% respondents were from SCs communities and 91% respondents in STs communities are illiterate. It also indicated that about 10% members of SC and 8% member of ST families had read up to primary level 3% and 1% up to middle and there is no single individual having higher education. As such there is low level of participation in the development activities. It also supports to the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between poverty and educational status of SC and ST communities. Thus, the overall picture regarding literacy indicates that the literacy rate is comparatively low in both the communities.

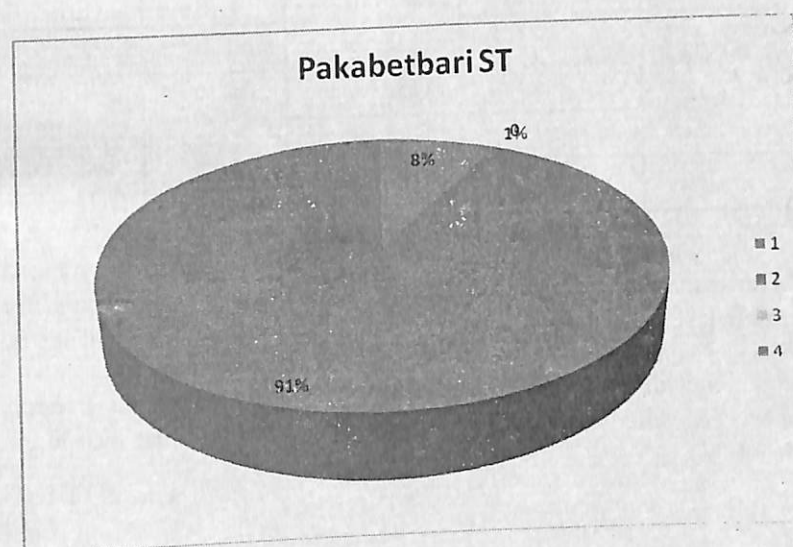
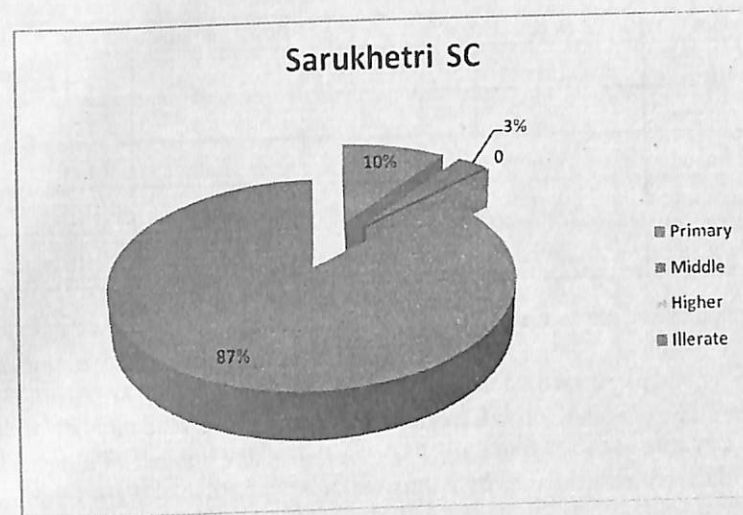


TABLE 16-EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF STUDENTS:

Standard	Scheduled castes		Scheduled tribes	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
L.P. School	54	27	43	23
M E School	26	21	30	19
H S School	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
College	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

Regarding the educational of students, the table-16 shows that the number of school going children of SC communities is 54 (Boys) and 27 (Girls) in L.P. School, whereas 43 (Boys) and (Girls) are from ST communities in both the two blocks. In ME schools, also the number of SC Boys is 26 and girls is 21 and in ST communities, the number of boys is 30 and girls is 19 respectively. It is interesting to note that there are no any students enrolled in H.S. school and college level.

TABLE 17- SHOWING DROP-OUT OF STUDENTS AT THE VARIOUS LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN THE YEAR 2008:

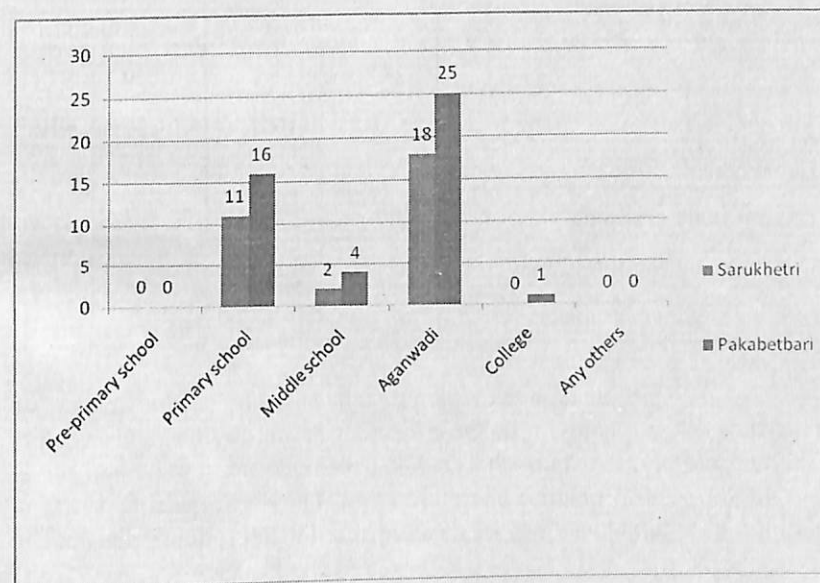
Standard	Scheduled Castes		Scheduled tribes	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
I	-	2	-	1
II	5	7	4	3
III	3	6	2	7
Iv	17	21	10	11

Drop-out of students from the schools is a very common problem in rural areas more particularly in SC and ST villages. The main causes of it are due to lack of awareness towards education, lack of educational facilities, and lack of minimum facilities at home i.e. poor economic condition etc. The figures of dropout shown in table 17 indicate that the highest droppers are from Scheduled caste girls and boys than Scheduled tribes girls at the standard IV.

TABLE 18-
EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES OF THE BLOCKS:

S.N	Type of school	Sarukhetri	Pakabetbari
A	Pre-primary school	NIL	NIL
B	Primary school	11	16
C	Middle school	02	04
D	Aganwadi	18	25
E	College	-	01
F	Any others	NIL	NIL

It can be noticed from the table 18 that in Sarukhetri block, there are only 11 primary schools, 02 middle schools, 18 anganwadi centres and in Pakabetbari block there are 16 primary schools, 04 middle school, 24 anganwadi centers and one college (under developed). It may be mentioned that there is no any pre-primary centre or school in the area.



OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN THE BLOCK:**TABLE 19:**

S.N.	Type of centre	Sarukhetri	Pakabetbari
A	Community centre	NIL	NIL
B	Namghar	12	18
C	Village library	NIL	NIL
D	Youth club	03	08
E	N.G.O	NIL	NIL

It is evident from the table 19 that there is no any community centre's, village library, NGO's in both the areas. In Sarukhetri block, there are 12 Namghars, 03 youth chubs and in Pakabetbari block, there are 18 Namghars and 08 youth clubs respectively.

TABLE 20- SHOWING DIFFERENT FACILITIES RECEIVED BY THE FAMILIES:

Category	Sarukhetri		Pakabetbari	
	SC	ST	SC	ST
Irrigation facility	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Engagement of Agriculture labour	"	"	"	"
Having share cropping	"	"	"	"
Receiving agricultural Loan/Help	"	"	"	"
Making of other products	"	"	"	"

The data presented in the table 20 reveals that in the study area not a single household is enjoying the benefits of irrigation schemes and any other facilities. As they are so poor, that they do not employ any agricultural labour and do not want to practice share cropping. They have been deprived of getting agricultural loans and are not able to sell their product in the market.

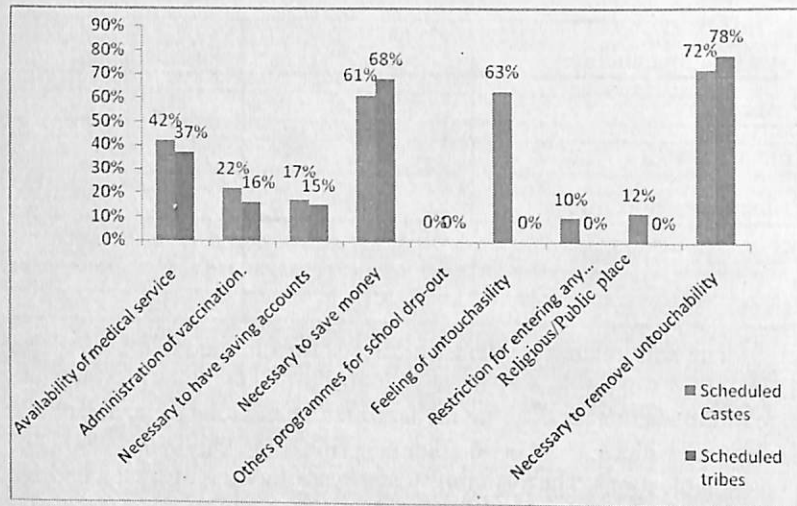
TABLE 21: SHOWING CIVIC FACILITIES OF THE SELECTED AREAS:-

Type of clinic anelities	Sarukhetri	Pakabetbari
Post office	02	01
Telegraph office	NIL	NIL
Primary health centre	NIL	NIL
Veterinary dispensary	01	02
Private doctor	NIL	NIL

The data related to civic facilities shown in the table 21 indicate that two villages of Sarukhetri are having post office facilities and only one village of Pakabetbari is availing the facilities. In addition to the telephone and telegraph offices, there is no other any villages to enjoy the benefits of such communications. The availability of private doctor is also nil, but there is only one veterinary dispensary in Sarukhetri and 2 in Pakabetbari which is deplorable in condition. From the above two tables, we can say that the services provided by the Government and other organization in the upliftment of the communities are not sufficient.

TABLE 22: SHOWING TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD AVAILED DIFFERENT FACILITIES AND THEIR OPINIONS:-

	Scheduled Tribes	Scheduled Castes
Availability of medical service.	42%	37%
Administration of vaccination.	22%	16%
Necessary to have saving accounts.	17%	15%
Necessary to save money.	61%	68%
Others programmes for school drop-out.	NIL	NIL
Feeling of untouchability.	63%	-
Restriction for entering any religious/public place.	10%	-
Have any inferiority complex when you visit the other villages' house.	12%	-
Necessary to removal untouchability.	72%	78%



Graphical Representations of table 22 with the help of bar diagram

The data pertaining on table 22 shows that 42% of scheduled caste households and 37% of scheduled tribe's households had reported that they received very negligible medical facilities in the town area only.

22% (SC) and 16% (ST) households had administered vaccination of their children in town area. 61% (SC) and 68% (ST) and had opined that saving money is necessary for the forth coming days although most of them do not possess any saving account.

It is also reported that there is no any programmes for the children who leave the school. During the investigation, it is come to our notice that feeling of untouchability is there among the SC households only, but their restriction to visit religious places and other villager's house is not very strict. As social changes take place due to advancement of science and technology, perhaps for this as many 72% SC households and 78% ST households were opined to remove the untouchability from the society.

LIVE STOCK POSITION:

Regarding livestock of the selected households it is seen that most of the villages are not possessing even one pair of bullocks. There are very few households possessing more than 2 cows. Poultry is found among the SC and ST households, but their number is also negligible. Goats and ducks are also found in very limited number of households of both the areas. Among the tribal families, number of households having less than 2 pigs is 08 in Pakabhetbari and 09 in Sarukhetri. But they use it for their occasional household's consumption.

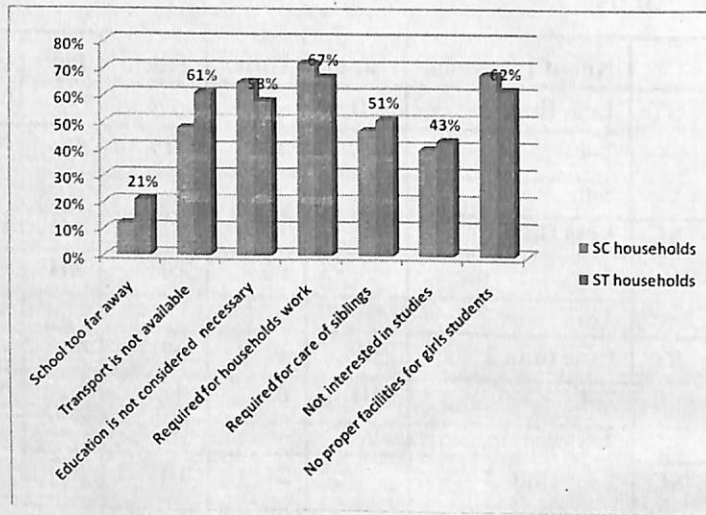
TABLE 23: SHOWING LIVE STOCK POSITION OF THE SURVEYED HOUSEHOLDS:

		No. of Livestock	Bullock	Cow	Duck	Pig	etc
PAKABETBARI	ST	Less than 2	NIL				
		2-4	-	12	11	08	NIL
		4-6	-				
	SC	Less than 2	05	13	09	NIL	11
		2-4	-	06	10	NIL	-
		4-6	-	-	-	-	
SARUKHETRI	ST	Less than 2	Nil	17	07	09	-
		2-4	NIL	06	04	06	NIL
		4-6	-	-	-	-	-
	SC	Less than 2		21	10	-	-
		2-4		08			-
		4-6		-	-	-	

TABLE 24: SHOWING OPINION OF MEMBERS TOWARDS EDUCATION:-

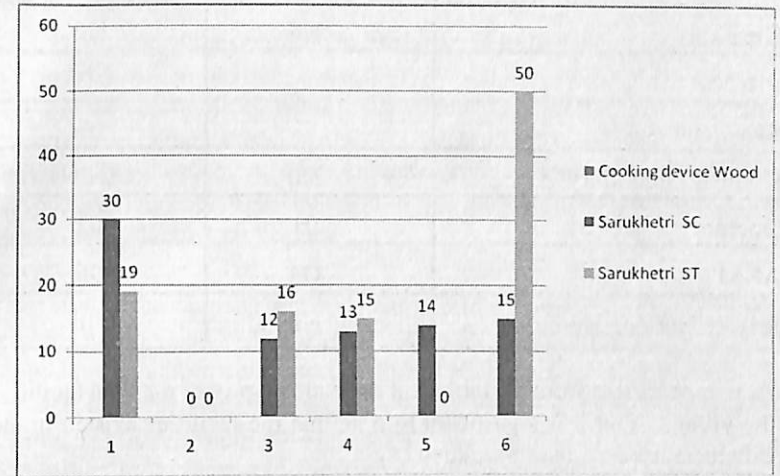
Categories	SC households	ST households
School too far away	12%	21%
Transport is not available	48%	61%
Education is not considered necessary	65%	58%
Required for households work	72%	67%
Required for care of siblings	47%	51%
Not interested in studies	40%	43%
No proper facilities for girls students	68%	62%

The data presented in table 24 revealed that both Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities are not shown deep interested in sending their children to the schools due to the above –mentioned reasons. Majority of SC people i.e. 72% and 67% of ST people are like to stay their children at home for involving household activities. Similarly, 40% SC people and 43% ST people are also not interested in studies as they feel that money is the great hurdle to them. There are also no proper facilities for education of girls' students. The results of the table 24 also presented in a graphically as below-

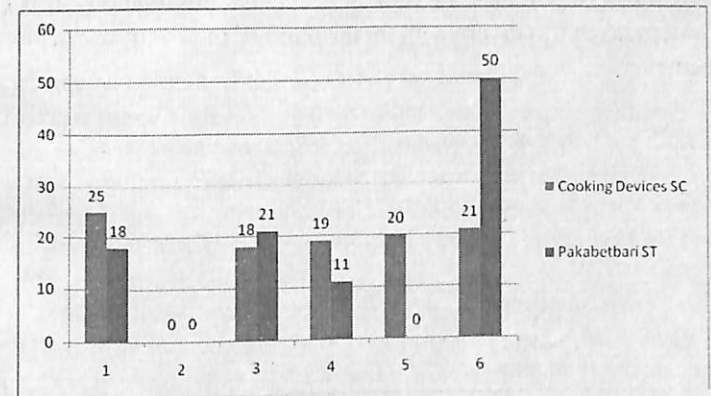


The result of the table24 also presented in a graphically as below
TABLE 25: COOKING DEVICE USED BY THE SELECTED HOUSEHOLDS

S.N	Cooking device	Sarukhetri		Pakabetbari	
		SC	ST	SC	ST
1	Wood	30 (60%)	19 (38%)	25 (50%)	18 (36%)
2	Coal	-	-	-	-
3	Kerosene	12 (24%)	16 (32%)	18 (36%)	21 (42%)
4	Crop-residues	08 (16%)	15 (30%)	07 (14%)	11(22%)
5	Any other	-	-	-	-
Total		50	50	50	50



Sarukhetri



Pakabetbari

The respondents were asked, during the course of investigation, to indicate the cooking device used in their families. From the replies received in this regard, it was found that 55(SC) and 37% ST families still used wood. Use of other cooking devices such as kerosene, crop-residues was reported by 30% (SC) and 37 (ST), and 23% (SC) and 18% (ST) respectively.

TABLE 26—MEDICAL FACILITIES OF THE VILLAGES:

Facilities	Sarukhetri	Pakabetbari
Hospital	Nil	Nil
PHC	1	1
Sub-Centres	02	07
Clinical Laboratory	Nil	Nil
Doctors	01	02
ANM	04	06
Private Nursing Home	Nil	Nil

It appears that from the table that there are no proper medical facilities in the villages. But it is significant to note that the facilities existed in the Pakabetbari is better than Sarukhetri.

Thus, we may say that the factors related to households such as lack of proper housing condition, electrification, drinking water, indifference attitude of Governmental policies and programmes etc have greatly contributed high poverty among the villages. In view of the above observations, it is clear that the steps taken by Government for the removal of poverty are deplorable and apathetic.

CHAPTER -5 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Poverty is not merely due to the absence of modern technology but it is primarily due to lack of productivity or the lack of the will and skill to utilize to the best of the available and potential material and human resources. Poverty is a complex and multi faceted problems and deserves proper understanding. It requires to be examined from different angles and unusual perspective. The state of Assam stands out as the state most adversely stricken by poverty, followed by Tripura.

Studies throughout the world economy reveal that the higher population growth, higher also is the level of poverty. High level of poverty and population growth creates unemployment problems. Existence of such factor also slackens the pace of economic development and lengthens the period for the benefits of developmental polices.

The following are some of the major findings of the study:

1. The analysis of data indicated that the sampled villages are not well connected with the transport. Both the SC and ST villagers do not have easy access to the communication system. There are only bus services from the town areas like Barpeta town, Sarthebari town to the villages. The villagers are still depending on foot tract to visit other places out of their villages. It was also found that less than 73% of the village roads are kuccha fair weather roads. Majority of the villages are located at a considerable distance from the nearest District or Block Offices. Some of the villages are still located in inaccessible areas. So, the area does not seem to have a good net work of roads connecting important urban areas. Most of the interior villages have no roads or links with the outside world.
2. The study also reveals that the housing conditions of the selected households are kuccha. A very poor family is compelled to cook within the living room, while the better off had a verandas or a separate kitchen. The housing conditions of the households are generally of kuccha in mud construction, Cement plaster house were noticed in rare cases. Due to their poor income pattern, they are not able to improve their condition of the house.

3. The land holding pattern of households shows that landlessness is a big problem faced by the peoples. Most of them do not have sufficient lands. Though their occupation agriculture, due to lack of sufficient land they cannot produce agricultural commodities to meet their day to day requirement. Though Govt. has provided different schemes of loans for SC, ST and other disadvantaged group of people, yet they are not in a position to arrange sufficient security money for obtaining such loans.
4. Due to absence of marketing and smooth transport facilities major part of the local products finds their way to the bazaars of local area and elsewhere, within and outside the state through middlemen who buy them cheap from the local growers and sell them dear making big profit margin. This is one of the reasons for backwardness of this isolated area. It was reported by the people that there is no planned collection of marketing facilities provided by the Government.
5. Another significant finding of the study is that majority of the families of the villages are poor, illiterate, and ignorant. Through agriculture is underdeveloped, more than 70% of the workers are engaged in this activity which is the primary occupation of the people. Though selected households are cultivators, they are also involved with other occupations like labour workers, part time wage workers, fishing (SC communities) etc. The number of person taking services as other occupation is limited.
6. We have noticed that higher dependency on others increases poverty. As the number of dependent children increases in the family, the per capita food expenditure becomes lower. However, as there is rise in their income, expenditure of these consumption items also increases. The analysis of data reveals that dependency ratio of both the selected communities is relatively higher. The participation of women in different working fields is also lower than men. Thus proportion of non workers is higher than workers.
7. The income pattern of the SC and ST households reveals that, though agriculture is the primary occupation of all selected sample households, they are able to receive only Rs 3000-5000/ Per annum. Income received from the sources of salaried services are recorded at Rs. 8000/- per annum. Another important finding is that the income received from the laborer is relatively very low and recorded at Rs. 3000/- per annum. Thus, there is a positive and significant relationship between and size of the family, quality of food, income from land and magnitude of poverty.

8. The socio-economic life of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes of the selected households indicates that they are much influenced by agricultural sector. The study shows that SC and ST households possess less agricultural lands, although it is prime asset of them. The agricultural products are paddy, potatoes, mustard, jute, vegetables. These products are for household's consumption and those who have surplus sell it to the other people for cash income. Those who are not having land to cultivate are engaged as wage labour, part-time workers etc.
9. The poorer class becomes the worse sufferer as they face the problem of both crop failure and reduced work availability. Availability of work, within the village emerged as influencing factor of poverty. Since people are not capable or have capacity to undertake job in the urban setting, their economic dependence is largely on the local conditions. Therefore, the incidence of poverty is heavily influenced by local people employment, largely in agricultural operations.
10. The pattern of consumption expenditure of the selected households reveals that most of them spend a higher proportion portion of their income on food items than any other items. A few families show their preferences in using other items. But the relatively poor households of SC and ST people spend more on foods. As in the area, there is no higher income group, so they have not incurred more money on education, health etc. Thus, it is clear that expenditure on education and other development process is a very (little) amount which prove the prevalence of extreme poverty in the area.
11. During the course of study, the respondents were interrogated to know whether they knew about the special programmes initiated for their benefit. Information collected in this regard shows that more than 87% of the survey households of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities of the villages are not aware about the welfare schemes as provided by the Government and other agencies. They are neither aware nor benefitted from such schemes.
12. Majority of SC people of the villages have reported that they do not feel any inferiority complex and nor they experience any restriction in visiting the religious places. A few of them think themselves inferior to general caste people.
13. It is also found that the educational levels of the household families are also not encouraging due to deprivation and poor socio-economic condition. The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes people are not aware to attend school and remained backward educationally. A large

- number of SC and ST children discontinue their studies pre maturely before completing the level for which they were enrolled.
14. There is no industry in the villages capable of absorbing the vast labour force.
 15. The irrigation system provided by the Government plans also discouraging and negligible in almost all villages. No longer have they received any care by village or Panchayat or the Governments.
 16. Electric connections are also found in limited households. The survey shows that 24% SC and 24% ST households have electric connection in their premises. Low level of electrifications once again indicative of the backwardness of the area. Since their income pattern is not high, therefore they have to use Kerosene for lighting their homes.
 17. The present existing medical facilities in the area is also indicative of its backwardness. Though health consciousness is growing among the people belonging to SC and ST and majority of the people are showing preference to use traditional medicine. Due to shortage of modern medical facilities they are bound to use this type of medicine frequently.
 18. The problem of drinking water facility is also faced by the SC and ST people of the selected households. A few people use tube well water. But most of the families use water of pond, river etc. Thus, provision of safe drinking water cannot be said to be satisfactory in the areas.
 19. The study shows that a large part of the area has experienced serious floods from time to time in the recent past. Heavy floods occurred particularly in the year 2007, and 2008, causing considerable devastation in the area. In the year 2009, the people of the area also experienced the drought condition. These have made agriculture problematic and have added to the poverty of the agriculturists in general. In the flood or draught affected area, people engaged in agriculture are hardly able to find subsistence from the land. Moreover, the flood also affects the public health as it often leads to an outbreak of various diseases like gastroenteritis, cholera etc.
 20. It was also seen that due to poor economic condition, most of the parents are not able to provide the basic educational facilities like books, light, writing material etc. Under such prevailing condition, the children do not find any inspiration and motivation to attend school regularly.

CHAPTER-6 SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION:

The concept of poverty is not restricted to economic inequality, but subsumes an inequality of opportunities, capabilities; choices and social basics. Amartya Sen wrote a book entitled "Poverty and Famines" in 1981 in which he illustrates that poverty does not mean low income but lack of income. In this connection it is need of the hour to know the root cause of lack of income of poor people who are deprived of many opportunities like health, education and employment, which contribute to a great extent to eradicate poverty. Poverty is of course a matter of deprivation. In the opinion of Amartya Sen, "Starvation clearly is the most telling aspect of poverty". According to Mahatma Gandhi, Poverty is the great evil which tends to go further to demoralizing activities like prostitution, gambling etc.

According to A.N. Cairn Cross, "Underdeveloped countries are the slums of the world economy." The extent of poverty is so much deep rooted in the underdeveloped countries that they cannot get out of it in the short period. Until the underdeveloped countries are out of this problem, they cannot move forward on the path of economic development. That is why Policy makers and economists in the third world increasingly place emphasis on direct programmes for the removal of poverty. The world submit for social Development, 1995 gave a new impetus to National and international actions for poverty eradication. They have aimed to reduce the proportion of people living in the extreme poverty by 2015. Again, the United Nations (UN) declared 1997-2006 as the UN decade for the eradication of poverty and October 17 as 1997 Human Development Report introduced the concept of human poverty which focuses on the denial of opportunities or choices of human development-to lead a long, healthy, creative life to decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect of others.

The major findings of the study indicate that even though Government made different schemes for upliftment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities, yet they are still not in a position with the rest of the society. This is mainly due to cause that opportunities provide by the Government for the communities (SC and ST) are not reaching the hands of the actual beneficiaries for which the economic conditions are still in a shattered state and is also a big cause of illiteracy. Again, negligence, apathetic and half hearted attitude of both the Government as well as the NGOs towards

the implementation of the development programmes meant for SC and ST communities are also some one of the main constraints of their backwardness. Considering this fact, it is desirable to suggest certain measures for the upliftment of the SC and ST communities. On the basis of the studies, the investigator would like to put forward the following suggestions with a hope that these might be able to solve the problems of the ST and SC communities to a certain extent.

1. It was found that the composition of the poor shows that the self-employed in agriculture constitute the bulk of the poor, followed by the self-employed in non-agricultural occupations, labourers in rural areas and self-employed. So, the local self government needs to be empowered to address the issues of poverty eradication.
2. Voluntary organization will need to be promoted and assisted to play a partnership role in the designing and implementation of programmes.
3. Assistance should be given to promote self-employment and other ventures subject to such income/or economic criteria as may be prescribed from time to time.
4. All developmental policies should focus attention to the development of the people and this policies should be geared, so as to benefit the poor directly.
5. For economic empowerment like improving the ownership of capital assets, enhancing the business capabilities and skills of SCs and STs members, distributing surplus land to landless households, providing employment generation schemes and offer programmes to support the release and rehabilitation of bonded labourers.
6. Educational development programs should be initiated by including programs like improvements in educational infrastructure in areas predominantly populated by SCs and STs Communities, giving financial support for education at various level, provisions of quotas and other incentives etc.
7. The study also identifies the low level awareness about the developmental programs and plans initiated by Government. In order to make the backward people aware of the different schemes of development, the concerned departments should make special arrangements for wide publicity among the illiterate people of both the communities about the various schemes of development and for participating in the process of implementation of such schemes.
8. The findings of the study indicates that the participation of the people (SCs and STs) in the process of planning is low and therefore self-help groups need to be organized and empowered to address the issues of

poverty eradication. State aided self-organizations could be the right way for not only building a survival strategy but also for preserving human dignity.

9. It is also found that 15-35 years of age, the problem of youth unemployment is perhaps the most serious and disturbing of the social and economic problems of the area. Therefore productivity in the handloom and handicraft should be promoted and adequate opportunities should be provided to the youth.
10. The members of poor and landless Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people depend on their own market system. So, the state should adopt such policy that raises their purchasing power and diversification of the economy should be adopted which would not only increase production but would ensure better distribution by raising employment generation.
11. The present study establishes that certain geographic factors, directly or indirectly have impact on poverty of the people. It is noticed that the size of landholding and percentage of marginal farmers are important variables of poverty. The geographical condition like lack of communication, water availability, soil quality, lack of amenities etc. explain the poverty in a better and convincing way.
12. For development of education of SCs and STs, steps will be taken to ensure that the problems such as high dropout, stagnation, non-enrolment of girls' students etc. are effectively tackled.
13. Facilities like schools, hostels and institutional structures for health care, nutrition, drinking water supply, road linkages & housing will be made available in such a way that these promote integration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with the rest of the society.
14. Attention should be paid not merely on distribution of materials like food, commodities, assets, loans etc., but more on replacing lost income of the poor through public works projects. The state should give priority on education, employment and health of the poor which seems to be the root cause of the problem of poverty and underdevelopment.
15. Free supply of books, stationery, uniform mid-day meals should be expanded. An appropriate package of services will be worked out to promote literacy and raise the level of education of communities where the current level is very low. Special attention will be paid to the retention of the girls' child in school.
16. Special attention should be given to remove various kinds of disparities caste, gender and regional and achieve universal elementary education.

17. Provide better education and health facilities to strengthen the capabilities of the poor and vulnerable groups to earn income.

Latest studies on poverty considers education to be a contributory factor towards increasing one's earning capacity and hence in determining the quality of life. Investment in educational infrastructure determines the facilities of education available, but investment's cannot be left in the hands of private investors as return to educational investment is long-learn and more of a social rather than economic nature. Consequently, investment in education is an important factor which is left in the hands of the Government and it has tremendous potentiality to determine the quality of life available to the masses. It is revealed that Assam has the lowest per capita expenditure on education followed by Manipur and Meghalaya. Consequently, the literacy rate in the state too is one of the lowest in the region.

Poverty is a malady which could be eradicated only if there existed universal commitment to end it. All the problems must be analyzed in a holistic way and everybody must realize his share in the process of initiation of their eradication. It must be fought collectively. Again, the economic betterment of the rural poor cannot be achieved without social transformation involving structured changes, educational development, increased awareness, and change in outlook, motivation and attitudes.

Our Five Year Plans have laid emphasis on the development of agriculture to remove poverty, employment opportunities and facilities should also be provided to people by the establishment of small scale and heavy industries. But the programme of poverty alleviation is not so simple as to be successfully solved by the Government, thus there is a great need for political and social awakening. People should be made aware of various programmes and benefits of these programmes, so that people at the lowest rung of Rural Society may make substantial progress in making their lives more economically productive.

Thus any attempt in tackling poverty necessitates basic understating of the critical issues and evolving action plan with sustainable options based on appropriate strategy.

APPENDIX

CASTE-

- (A) Any of the hereditary, endogamous social classes or subclasses of traditional Hindu society, stratified according to Hindu ritual purity, especially the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra castes.
- (B) A domestic unit consisting of the members of a family who live together along with nonrelatives such as servants.

HOUSE-HOLD- The basic residential unit in which economic production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing, and shelter are organized and carried out.

FAMILY- A family (from Latin: *familia*) is a group of people affiliated by consanguinity, affinity, or co-residence. In most societies it is the principal institution for the socialization.

NAMASUDRA- Namasudra (also Namassej or Namassut) is the name of a Hindu community originally from certain regions of Bengal, India. They were traditionally engaged in cultivation and as boatmen.

BANIA- The word Bania is a generic term derived from the Sanskrit word vanij meaning merchant or trader. The Bania (otherwise known as Baniya, Vani and Vania) is an occupational community of merchants, bankers, money-lenders, dealers in grains or in spices, and in modern times numerous commercial enterprises.

BODO-KACHARI- The Bodo-Kachari Tribe is a branch of the great bodo group of the indo-mongloid family which is commonly known as the Bodo-Kacharis. They are popularly known as Sonowal kachari and Thengal kachari in upper Assam while western part of the state they are familiar as the Bodo-Kachari.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC- A person's position in any given group, society or culture.

DROP-OUT- One who quits school.

-One who has withdrawn from a given social group or environment.

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