

## CHAPTER - 8

### Concluding Observation on the relationship between Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

#### In the District Of Cooch Behar

(A) The Role of SATSA (State Agricultural Technologists Service Association) in the District of Cooch Behar: (Observation during the year 2004)—

SATSA is an organization for the governmental officers in the department of agriculture in the State. In the year 2004, it was observed, the organization offered enough scope for the farmers in the district of Cooch Behar to lead a better livelihood.

*The farmers in the district lead a miserable life due to the following: -*

- (1) The little or no arrangement of irrigation,*
- (2) The presence of the acidity of the soil,*
- (3) The arbitrary impact of the nature,*
- (4) Unbalanced competition caused by the impact of globalization leading to unfair price and practices with regard to agricultural produce, seeds, pesticides, agricultural inputs etc.*

With these several factors the farmers had nothing alternative but to oscillating with a hope waiting for the good days of the remote future.

In such a situation, in the year 2004, SATSA organized twenty (20) agricultural training centers and provided 1,500 (one thousand five hundred) farmers the knowledge of New Agricultural Policy and trained them about various technologies-related knowledge to the policy.

With a view to concretize the activities of the training programme and also the training camps, SATSA conducted sixteen (16) practical exhibition centers with regard to agro-farming in the district of Cooch Behar. The places of the training centers were at namely, Sat-Mile, Taka-Gachh, Chila-Khana, Talli-Guri, Nata-Fela (in the dilapidated bank of the river Kaljani in the sandy soil of Arampur in Balarampur) etc.

The crops chosen to aware the farmers at the exhibition were namely, mustard, maze, tobacco, nut, sunflower, water-melon, cucumber, the vegetables like Lau, pumpkin etc.

### **Output :**

Jogen Sarkar of the village Katamari in Sat-Mile hoped for better result from the Jatti tobacco—special variety tobacco in the region—the production of which the farmer expected to be increased from four (4) mons to five (5) mons average per bigha to eight (8) mons in 2005. That is, the farmers since then onwards expected to cultivate cropping of tobacco for much more larger area than ever-before.

Bhaskar Kati, another farmer in Takagachh opined, there was no provision for the cultivation of maze in their area since the inception of the locality. Now they (Bhaskar Kati and others) understood the necessity and viability of the maze cultivation in their locality. The active members of SATSA provided the

awareness, knowledge and expertise about the crop cultivation to these farmers at the spot by attending time and again, especially on Saturday and Sunday.

**SATSA**, other than counseling, provided seeds, fertilizers, bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, necessary food-items etc. of high standard. Now, the farmers expected twenty (25) mons maize per bigha.

Above all, the contribution that the SATSA provided was to be better narrated as offering a way and knowledge of alternative farming to people in different parts of the districts in a meaningful way.

(B)

#### **A. Work on Total Sanitation :**

**(Observation during the Month of February 2005)**

**The Role of following different actors**

- (1) *Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK), Cooch Behar District Branch;*
- (2) *Chokiar Chhara Maitri Sangha (CCMS)-a club in Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat -2;*
- (3) *Nishi Ganj Club (NGO and as a Mart) and*
- (4) *Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat-2.*

Chokiar Chhara is a village in Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat-2 having a population of 1528. (male-802; female-726). The number of total family is 347.

At the outset, it is to be stated that prior to the activities of the above-stated actors (e.g., NYK, CCMS, Nishi Ganj Club and the Nishi Ganj G.P.) the numbers of latrine in Chokiar Chhara village were only for 188 families. That is, 159

families had no any latrines at all. After the successful activities of these actors, the village of Chokiar Chhara is fully sanitized.

It was observed, the whole activity was done step by step.

*Firstly*, generally one of the activities of Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK) is to promote Self-Support efficiency for the clubs at the rural level thereby to help the villages self-reliant and developed.

Therefore, such idea was given to Chokiar Chhara Maitri Sangha.

*Secondly*, Maitri Sangha was advised to conduct a survey of their own village and to make the Participatory Resource Mapping (P.R.M.) of the village.

*Thirdly*, on the basis of the survey report a few problems were identified. Among those, sanitation was given priority.

*Fourthly*, Nehru Yuva Kendra took the responsibility of coordination among the agencies, such as, Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat-2, Sanitary Mart of Nishi Ganj Club, which is an NGO too, and Chokiar Chhara Maitri Sangha, through organizing several meetings.

*Fifthly*, *Chokiar Chhara Maitri Sangha (CCMS)* was advised to aware the people of Chokiar Chhara regarding the importance of Sanitation in the locality. The awareness programme was conducted through group meetings for one month.

*Sixthly*, Nehru Yuva Kendra scheduled the date and time for three-days programme in consultation with the club (CCMS).

*Seventhly*, CCMS informed all the target villagers, especially those who did not have any latrines to construct the sanitary latrines at their houses.

*Eighthly*, the beneficiaries, that is, the villagers themselves supported the programme, voluntarily took the responsibility of digging the ditch and constructing the lower and upper fencing of the latrines.

*Ninthly*, CCMS organized a picnic like food arrangement or party of which the financial cost was provided by NYK. Nishi Ganj Club as a mart took the responsibility of supplying the human resource such as, trained masons to guide the beneficiaries for installation, supplied materials, slabs, pans, platform and siphon etc.

*Tenthly*, what Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat—2. certainly drew the attention? The respective Gram Panchayat provided the cost of the materials to the Sanitary Mart under the *Total Sanitation Campaign (T.S.C.)* programme and *Central Rural Sanitation Programme (C.R.S.P.)*.

*Eleventhly*, besides the activities of the above-stated specific actors, there are the activities of other actors too to make the sanitation programme a grand success in the locality.

- (a) *The members of the Self-Help Groups in the locality extended their cooperation to this unique event. They dug the ditch of the latrine for four and half feet deep.*
- (b) *The beneficiaries on their part had enough contribution as they prepared the fencing on the surroundings of the ditch of the toilet both on lower and upper portion. That is, the villagers of Chokiar Chhara get interested and were involved in the programme thinking it as necessary and noble activities for them.*

In such way, *Nehru Yuva Kendra (NYK)* completed a commendable job in Ful –Bari Gram Panchayat and Bara Sol-Mary Gram Panchayat in the district of Cooch Behar.

To conclude, it can be cited ( which is come out of observation) that earlier the people of Chokiar Chhara were suffering from the lack of sanitary latrines not only due to lack of money but due to lack of awareness about the utility of the sanitary latrines in their daily life.

It was observed; Chokiar Chhara is a village in Nishi Ganj Gram Panchayat, which was found fully sanitized with regard to domestic sanitary latrines. And the way the whole process of activities were completed there was unique in the sense that it symbolized a notable example of relationship between *Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)* and *Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs)*.

(C)

## **Gitaldah Gram Panchayat - 2**

### **The Role of Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee (GGVC)**

Daribos, Bandher Kuthi and Jari Dharala were the three villages taken for studying Gitaldah Gram Panchayat-2. These localities are situated at the adjacent of India-Bangladesh border near Dharala river. Total population of these localities were about three thousands (3000). The main occupation of the people of these localities were agriculture ,mainly paddy, jute and tobacco cultivation. The people of these villages had to maintain link with Gitaldah Bazar or Sub-divisional town of Dinahata by crossing the river Dharala. During monsoon, the situation of stream and water level of Dharala cross the danger level and it causes loss of many lives

including people, domestic animals, the dwelling places, schools, mosques, temples etc. in the locality.

The people of these localities also suffer a lot from other difficulties. *The Border Security Forces (BSF)* does not allow the villagers to cross the river after six p.m. (as per the Order of the Government of India since 2002). This causes enormous trouble and tension to the private and public life of the people of these villages. The economic activities of these people are thus badly disturbed:

Since the localities are situated in the border area there are always the chances of smuggling, trafficking on drugs, women and girl-child, even cross-border terrorism.

Therefore, there is always an imperative to maintain a continued effort to check and combat such things (anti-social activities) despite the normal or special vigilance done by the BSF at these localities. Local Panchayat and the *Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee (GGVC)* were the actors that were entrusted with such responsibility.

*Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee*, it was observed, maintains strong vigilance in the locality to check child, women and drug trafficking by its Network Committee built up with women at more than twenty-four (24) villages.

*Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee (GGVC)* –a mass organization of *Society for Participation and Reflection (SPAR)*-an NGO organized seminars for the members of its *Self-Help Groups (SHGs)* in the month of June in 2003. Locally situated *United Bank of India (UBI)*, it was observed, helped these Groups by providing loan and necessary counseling.

In Gitaldah 234 SHGs were formed in association with the Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee. The rates of progress of these SHGS were almost positive. Therefore the local *Bank (UBI)*, it was observed, sanctioned sufficient loans to these Groups. The rate of savings and payment of loans of these Groups were encouraging. Out of 234 Groups, at least 55 Groups were provided more loans by the UBI. The amount of such loan taken by the Groups were an amount to Rupees 5 lakhs 50 thousands.

Besides, several seminars were arranged for these Groups with a view to accelerate the speed of work- efficiency and to alleviate poverty for a permanent solution to their many problems. On sixth June of the year 2003, the money amounted to Rupees 2,28000 were provided these Groups as extended loan to recognize their continued success in the desired direction.

Most of these Self-Help Groups were women-led Groups.

Again, in a Seminar held on September 13, 2005 in Dinhata town at Nripendra Narayan Smriti Pathagar. It was observed, the speakers present unanimously praised the activities of Gitaldah Gram Vikash Committee (*GGVC*) to fight against the trafficking of women, girl-child and drug in the locality at the border area. The notable dignitaries present at the meeting were the then Sabhapati of Dinhata Panchayat Samity, two other members of the respective Panchayat Samity and one member of Cooch Behar Zilla Parishad etc.

Inspired by the activities of the GGVC, Local Gram Panchayat started campaign and propaganda in the above-mentioned issue to reach to the desired target. *The Panchayat built up PRAMILA BAHINI* by taking interested and courageous women of the locality, especially the women from the Self-Help Groups. Now, the nature of their activities goes to a certain extent that it

encompasses an all round combing operation against the culprits in connection with such anti- social activities in the localities.

As for example, the women members of the **SHGs** are taking note of or investigating about the persons who are entering in the localities from outside for the purpose of marriage or for any other purposes to be served.

Again, the members of the SHGs are investigating the persons to whom the contract or dealing with regard to marriage or other matters are being fixed up or dealt with. The SHG-members are also keeping watch the places where the marriages are taking place. They do these activities either independently or through the local police stations.

It was also observed, the SHGs under the inspiration of the Panchayats campaigning against Child Marriage and Dowry System in the locality.

(D)

**Locality :**

**Ghegir Ghat in Dewan hat Village Panchayat under Cooch Behar**

**Panchayat Samity-2:**

**The role of Aashar Aalo-an NGO in the Locality.**

**Population: About 500 families.**

**Occupation: Making Patti by patti (a kind of bet) tree.**

About 500 families of the locality are engaged in making cool patti for a few generations. In Ghegir hat these occupational groups reside in a scattered way in

Ghegir hat Kuthi, Pushna Danga, Dhalua Bari, Kalighat including different parts of Ghugu Mari.

NGO working there is—Aashar Aalo. It was observed, Aashar Aalo(AA) organized six(6) Self-Help Groups(SHG) among the Patti workers or artisan families. The NGO(AA) arranges marketing by hiring stalls in the Block or District level fairs, such as Bhaowyaiah song competition, Rhaash Mela, Health or Like-wise fairs which are commonly held in the district of Cooch Behar. Such arrangements open the broad avenue of selling the patties or bet products to the interested customers in and out-side the district.

It was observed, the women artisans play an active role in this field. These women maintain accounts, manages shops, interact with the customers about the quality of the products made by the patti artisans.

*Aashaar Aalo (AA)* —the NGO maintains the links between the members of the SHGs and the different branches of the Government including Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samity or Block level officers, Banks or Financial Institutions etc. to arrange loans for the patti workers.

It was observed, Zilla Parishad authority bears a soft corner for these workers who belong to the marginalized section of the society, especially scheduled castes and *Below Poverty Line(BPL)* families. Therefore, Zilla Parishad allows its own stalls or jointly extends the cooperation for providing necessary arrangements for them.

### **B. Plight of the patti(mat) workers:**

It was observed, the collection of the raw-materials for bet tree are tough and it is beyond the capacity of the poor patti workers. The forest of Assam is the rich

source of the raw-patti bet. But due to insurgency in the State of Assam for past several decades, the supply of raw became uncertain and virtually stopped. Then the artisans had to depend on the meager availability of about 100 bighas of land used for such purpose (i.e., the cultivation of bet or patti in the locality). However, the requirement of land for patti cultivation is needed approximately 250 bighas.

Therefore, *first*, the deficit remained 150 bighas to fill the gap in the cultivation of patti in the locality. Due to scarcity of the bet tree, the artisans had to pay high price to get the raw bet.

*Secondly*, due to lack of better rail and road connection (as the meter gauge connection between Alipur and Banarhat is defunct), the local merchants try to compensate the transportation cost by giving low price to the patti workers.

*Thirdly*, Government loans are not frequently available for them.

*Fourthly*, the standard of infrastructure of patti-making environment was not up to the mark. There were no work-shades to save the workers and their materials from the monsoon rain. They thus were stopping works at the time of rainy-season.

In such a situation Aashar Aalo and the Zilla Parishad, as it was observed in the preceding analysis extended their fruitful cooperation to the patti artisan—denotes the example of better relationship between PRI and CSO in the locality.

### **MORE ABOUT AASHAR AALO (AA)**

The NGO in Dewanhat Village Panchayat organizes some SHGs (all of them are women-groups) and was able to generate the income opportunities for the members of these groups through different economic activities.

a) One such a group is *Dakshin Balasi Yuva Self-Help Group*. The group cultivates flowers (nursery) for two (2) bighas of land the respective group also maintains rearing of cattle engaged with the business related to paddy and rice-making.

b) Another group is *Dakshin Balasi Banstala Mahila Kalyan Samity*—The group has a Broyler-Chicken farm. Goat farm, Paddy and rice business. Each of the group members earn Rupees 1500/per month.

c) *Dakshin Balasi Panditgarh Mahila Kalyan Samity*. The group has a nursery for an area above 12 kathas of land. It has a scheme of rice business. Each group members earn Rupees 1000/ per month.

To conclude, the notable feature regarding *Aashar Aalo* was that it (AA) provided education and training, arranged Bank loans, encouraged the group members through proper counseling, thereby brought a major change (both in attitude and physical or material uplift) to these women members.

*Moreover, AA had the credit of forming the groups with a hope to build up a viable society in the respective locality.*

Now the women members of the above-mentioned SHGs, it was observed, can financially help others in their locality especially who are in distress. SHGs became such a source of inspiration to the people of the locality that now a day all the rest of the villagers became active members of the SHGs.

### **C. The role of Panchayat:**

It was observed, the local panchayat representatives relentlessly tried to inculcate the scientific knowledge and values with regard to the evils of the dowry system, gender inequalities etc. among the members of the respective SHGs.

## **(E) Cooch Behar Block-2:**

### **An Observation:**

(I) *The Byabsayee Samity* of Takagachh- Rajarhat was anxious about the poor conditions of their local market. Such a concern and tension got multiplied as soon as the Silbari Ghat Bridge was opened in the locality. Such opening up of the new bridge widened the potential expansions and opportunity of their market in near future.

The local *Gram Panchayat and the Panchayat Samity* responded to the demands of the *Byab Sayee Samity* as well as the locality.

*The three above-mentioned partners were assembled in a meeting and joined hand with each other and purchaged ultimately four and half bighas of land at the west of National Highway Chowpathy towards Pundi Bari Road.* Out of estimated Rupees 58 lakhs, local businessmen contributed Rupees 17.33 lakhs. Out of 174 stalls, 151 stalls were distributed to local businessmen at a minimum cost amounted to Rupees 32.5 thousand only.

### **(II)**

In Cooch Behar Block-2 at least 250 agricultural workshops were arranged by the **Panchayat Samity** to aware the local farmers about scientific farming.

*West Bengal Vignyan Manch, Cooch Behar District branch, Uttar Banga Krishi Vishya Vidyalay, Agricultural Graduates Club, etc., were the organizations that acted as the chief resources and expert organizations.*

As a result, qualitative changes were noticed in all thirteen (13) Gram Panchayats.

Earlier, only Aman paddy was produced. Now a day, paddy like *boro paddy* and different vegetables are produced in a massive way. That is, multipurpose cultivation (with a large number of crop variety) is encouraged in the respective Panchayat Samity.

Due to Non-Governmental and Cooperative effort Potato production in the Block was placed highest position in the district .The setting up of two (2) cold Storages one at Sonari and the other at Chakchaka are the example of such effort.

The cold storage at Chakchaka can store fish, meat,egg and vegetables.

In this Block, the cases of frequent leaving the dwelling places in search of job on the part of the rural poor and marginal people are comparatively lesser than that of the people of other Blocks in the district of Cooch Behar. The Block topped in the district in agricultural productivity due to positive advantage of irrigation.

### (III)

#### **The role of Zilla Saksharata Samity**

*In this Block the role of the Zilla Saksharata Sammittee was commendable one.* It could rightly mobilize the right persons to make the *Total Literacy Campaign (TLC)* a success. Thousands of youth rendered their voluntary labour for the expansion of Literacy. Therefore, it increased to 74.26 percent, which is a highest record in the District of Cooch Behar.The Government of West Bengal, felicitated the respective Panchayat Sammittee.

At present 127 Continuing Education Centers are holding the success at different localities of thirteen Gram-Panchayats.

## (IV)

### **Madhupur Gram Panchayat**

#### **The role of 'Sabuj Swapna'-a SHG in the locality:**

The distance of Madhupur from Cooch Behar town is eight (8) kilometer. Madhupur Dham is a well-known tourist place present at the locality.

Each year a large portion of agricultural land gets inundated and decayed due to floodwater and soil –erosion by the Torsa River. Some inundated places, while get dried and is turned into sandy and barren land. Obviously it becomes useless for agriculture and ultimately it becomes the places for the homeless people of the locality especially those who lost their home due to the flood caused by the same Torsa River. These are the routine feature of the locality of Madhupur for last few decades.

While most of these families suffer from backwardness and a lot of other disadvantages. the young people bear a small hope to raise their head high.

*Sabuj Swapna Self-Help Group* is the result of such a desire for ten (10) youths who formed the Group with a view to earn something and lead a more or less viable mode of life. The SHG was formed in the Month of May in 2001. The youth namely. Subhash Das, Fani DAS, Ratan Gore, Suya Das, Tapas Das, Swapan Das. Mridul Das, Arjun Das, Ranjan Roy, and Haradhan Basak were all from Scheduled Tribes and the villagers of Haripur Village. These youths started their business with Broiler Hens—but they were failed to get profit due to lack of electricity at their locality.

In 2002, they started the pig farming. Such alternative business provided them the way of earning. They were provided counseling from the *department of*

*Animal Husbandry.* Now, they can earn and deposit money to the local banks as savings. They maintain cordial relation with the *District Rural Development Cell (DRDC)* and are helped by a good financial lump sum through revolving fund of which greater portion was treated as grant-in –aid. They got loan for an amount to rupees two (2) lakhs from the local bank out of which DRDC contributed an amount to rupees one (1) lakh. They purchased one (1) bigha land and decided to launch one husking mill. The mill was treated not only a source of earning to them but also a source of animal food which helped them to continue a better business in the locality.

*The success of Sabuj Swapna Self-Help Group inspired the people of the locality. As a result, more than 54 SHGs were formed one by one in the respective Village Panchayat of Madhupur within a very short period.*

(V)

**(I)Dinhata( Block –2):**

### **The role of Bhekrapole Netaji Sangha—an NGO**

Bhekrapole Netaji Sangha (BNS) in the respective block works since 1991. It has 300 active members-workers. It monitors 52 SHGs out of which 40 are women groups. It maintains crèches, women hostel, free clinic, vocational training camp, sanitation programmes etc.

It was observed, Bhekrapole Netaji Sangha was fairly able to change the life-style of the anti- socials of that locality.

## **(II)Dinhata (Block-1):**

### **The role of Godhulibazar North East Society for Empowerment of the People(G-NESEP)-an NGO.**

*G-NESEP* is engaged in promoting Self-Help Groups (SHGs)in the Matalhat Gram Panchayat since 1998.

About 200 SHGs were formed in that area by motivating villagers,mainly women and youths.Out of total 200groups,149 groups were women-led groups.It was observed. these groups were able to bring a major change in the economic profile of the people of the locality . Moreover, the law and order situation of the respective locality had been improved under the direct supervision and influence of these SHGs.Earlier, a large number of people of the locality took up criminal activities as their source and means of livelihood due to economic backwardness and unemployment.

*G-NESEP* opened innovative means of self-employment by exploring new sectors in the locality on village-based industries.Apart from agriculture and animal husbandry such effort widened the scope of earning for the poor people in the locality.

In the respective Gram Panchayat, the role of the Panchayat, it was observed, not found satisfactory due to following reasons: A) the village Pradhan was changed for four times within the period of five years and the Panchayat was ruled by bi- party coalition. In such situation, the inter-party conflict hampered the development of the region.B)Different kind of corruption in the Panchayat were the other causes of underdevelopment. As for example, the people of Kharija-

Boradanga alleged that their two (2) kilometers of village road was not built up due to the negligence of the Panchayat.

Therefore, as a protest, the villagers of the respective village themselves built up the road on a voluntary basis in the presence of the then B.D.O. of Dinhat Block-2. The road is Jongra to Abalar Hat.

The communication at the respective Panchayat is very bad. There are at least 42 bamboo bridges, eight (8) bamboo-wire bridges present as the principal means of communication in the region.

It was observed, tube-wells in the locality are much less deep than that of normal requirement.

On 1<sup>st</sup> week of June, 2003, a *NABARD*-sponsored workshop on SHG was organized there to sensitize and motivate the rural population on how Self-Help Groups would be used for economic uplift. The villagers including the members of the SHGs, the officers of different Government departments and Bank officials were present at the workshop. The officers invited people present at the workshop to focus on behalf of themselves about the possible and potential means of self-employment opportunity available to their locality.

Now a day, the socio-economic condition of Matalhat, it was observed, had been improved considerably well. The recovery rates of loans have gone up considerably and the non-performing assets are reduced.

G-NESEP is trying to improve the development scenario of the locality further by promoting a number of workshops among the SHGs in the locality with the presence of a number of right resource persons both at the government and non-government level.

### **(III) Tufanganj Block –(I &II) :**

#### **The role of SRTDC(Sunderban Rural Training and Development Centre) NGO.**

#### **D. Observation during February, 2006**

In 1993 Cooch Behar got under severe attack of flood. During those days the then District Planning Officer (DPO) of Cooch Behar invited the NGOs outside of Cooch Behar to extend their cooperation for the flood victims.STRDC, SPAR etc,NGOs were among the main NGOs who responded the call or situation and entered the district of Cooch Behar.

*SRTDC*, permanently settled in Cooch Behar in 1995 and was registered under the Society of Registration Act in 1996.It (the NGO), earlier was not favored by a section of ideology-based political parties. Their allegation against the NGO was manifold. Now the situation has been changed. The NGO have more or less been able to prove its role positive.

There are 13 NGOs registered under the District Administration of Cooch Behar through the District Social Welfare Department and SRTDC belongs to one of them. At present, there are 7 permanent members, 16 field workers and 10 pay –volunteers engaged in the daily work of SRTDC. The donor agencies of SRTDC are Netherland, UNDP, Central Government and State Government of India etc.

SRTDC basically concentrated its activities in Tufanganj Block I and II.The Camp Office-Cum-Training centre of the NGO is situated at Harirhat-NayarHat village.

The prime task it performs is Group Formation and Strenthening. It deals 3 kinds of groups- a) Swarna Jayanti Village Swa-Rojgar Yozna ; b)APL-NABARD

related groups and c) Micro Finance or Credit. The number of groups that the NGO formed during the financial of 2004-2005 was 167. There were at least 25 groups for APL people and 97 Micro-credit arrangements during the financial year.

From the camp office it facilitates the Panchayat Raj Institutions and different Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the district. The NGO trains the people of the surrounded villages and the ICDS(Integrated Child Development Scheme) workers on HIV/AIDS etc. Moreover, the NGO arranges many awareness camps or programmes on the related issues.

The NGO was more or less successful to extend knowledge of fruit processing in the locality. It aptly took the help and cooperation with regard to technical counseling of the professors of the agricultural university present at the locality (i.e., the Uttar Banga Agricultural University situated at Pundi Bari in Cooch Behar Block II ).

The role of the University is more or less successful with regard to imparting expertise knowledge on these issues like soil testing, use of eco- friendly bio-fertilizers and pesticides, crop variety etc. However, it was found that a section of local leaders and politicians claimed much more contributions were essential to be performed by the University in the future days for the successful development of the region.

SRTDC strengthened its activity on the philosophy and reason that sooner the better it is essential to diffuse the information in many fields to the local poor villagers so that they realize the better means to lead a civilized and scientific life. Therefore, the NGO promotes to build people's organizations, arranges workers

meetings, and trains the local people specially the farmers on the updating of information, legal and health training for the women the concept of sustainable development etc. for the villagers.

The NGO extended its work with SUNLAP-a Kolkata based NGO on women and child trafficking to offer a better socio- economic environment for the poor farmers to combat migration among the marginal labourers in the respective blocks.

The NGO believes to concentrates its development work based first on the individual, then family, then locality then the village with a view to develop the personality and potentiality of the people properly.

*Let us focus one of its task observed on 11-02-2006.*

*Aalu Dhowa* is a remote village near Maruganj in Tufangaj Block. It was found that a poor couple was residing far away from its original dwelling village for several months. The couple was renegade from their neighbour and relatives and was given a small place to live at a remote corner and end of an unused field.

It was also found nobody speaks or transact any thing with the couple. It was simply because the couple was identified as HIV/AIDS patient.

The matter was somehow brought to the knowledge of SRTDC workers. It was also found that Panchayat was not able to bring any solution rather its role in the specific case was negative. It came in the field very late .It failed to persuade the villagers.

The SRTDC came forward to solve the issue. The NGO told the villagers that nothing to be worried from the disease excepting the connection in some specific ways like attachment of blood, hormone etc. with the patient. At the beginning the educated people of the village understood the advice and after that most of the villagers realized their misdeeds. They supported the SRTDC and brought back the couple in their original home.