

CHAPTER FOUR

GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT : SILIGURI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AREA

4.1 Introduction

Governance is a complex process and it works in a web. It demands proper webbing of the whole gamut of activities within the governmental apparatus – at the central, state and municipal level – to achieve the desired goal. Good governance thus entails proper coordination and efficient and optimum utilization of financial and manpower resources at all levels of governance. All these efforts have behind them the basic purpose of serving the people in an environment-friendly way.

The issues under study, as mentioned earlier, relate to Sanitation with special reference to Solid Waste Management; Water Supply; City Transportation, Pollution and Urban Social Forestry; and Slum Improvement and UPE. These are to be undertaken in the context of Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area. The ideals of these issues are well laid out by the Parliament and the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal in the form of Acts and Rules. What shape these ideals would take depends squarely on the Central and State Governments in general and SMC in particular. It would be interesting to observe as to what extent the gap occurs between the ideal and the real situation in each of the above issues within the SMC area, though, of course, taking into consideration the limitations of all levels of associated officials as human beings who are bound to err and can never be perfect. In similar vein, margin of error to some extent with regard to the personal observations and surveys made by the researcher himself cannot be ruled out. Having said so, the personal observations, data collection and the sample survey would definitely give an indication of the existing status of the issues undertaken for study in the backdrop of their historical development, the limitations of the concerned developmental issues as far as their governance are concerned, and the possible solutions to mitigate those problems which would help make a better environmental future of the city. Due help have been taken in this regard of various central, state and municipal level laws, rules, bye-laws and notifications; various central, state and municipal level schemes, plans, reports, surveys and inventories; relevant books, relevant articles from journals and newspapers; sample survey of

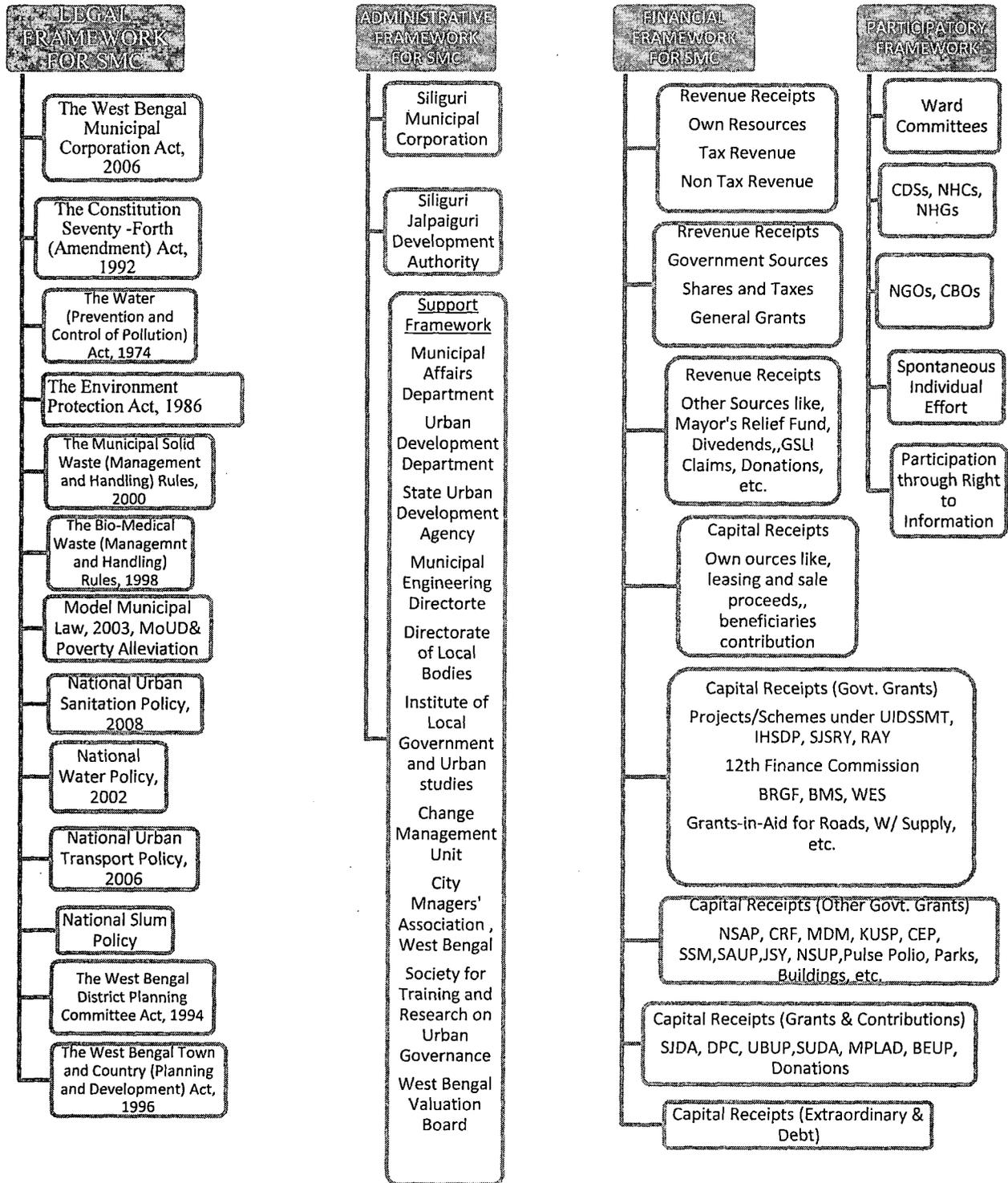
different levels of concerned officials and peoples' representatives; sample survey of city-dwellers regarding the services; and last but not the least, personal observations – participant-non participant and formal-informal – of the researcher himself.

It is well known that municipal body serves as the basic unit of governance in a town/city. In the case of the present study, then, it is the Siliguri Municipal Corporation which holds the key with respect to the above mentioned developmental issues. It functions through the Mayor as the political head and Commissioner as the administrative head, ably supported by Deputy Mayor, Chairman, MMICs and Ward Councillors at the political/representative level and the Secretary, Executive Engineer, Finance Officer and a host of staff at the administrative level. In order to serve the people efficiently, there are Borough Committees at the intermediate level, each consisting of a number of wards and headed by a Chairman. Finally, the basic unit is the Ward which functions through the Ward Councillor and the Ward Committee.

Serving approximately estimated 0.58 million people (SJDA 2004 : 54) in 47 wards of SMC area is truly a stupendous task, particularly in terms of infrastructure. However, through proper planning following legal framework; proper coordination within the administrative framework; proper management of financial framework; and proper development of citizens' awareness and participation through participatory and awareness framework would help SMC authority to bring about the four basic essentials of urban development, i.e., sustainable development, infrastructure development, uniform development and development with social justice. No doubt, if the attitude of all, associated with SMC administration are guided by the above, the hope laid down by the present Mayor of the SMC in her Budget (2010-11) speech would mean sense. In her words, "I hope for elevation of future Siliguri to a complete modernized 'DREAM CITY' through our activities honouring hope and desire of the citizen of Siliguri" (SMC Budget 2010-11).

There are a host of Acts, Rules, Regulations, Bye-Laws and Notifications; host of Departments of the Government of India and West Bengal; host of public and private financial institutions; and host of civil society groups which are directly or indirectly involved in serving the people of Siliguri with respect to the issues undertaken for study. Figure 4.1 lay down a recap of it.

Figure 4.1 : Operational Frameworks of Siliguri Municipal Corporation



4.2 Governance in Siliguri Municipal Corporation

Since the creation of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation on 12th January, 1994, the administration of municipal affairs was carried out as per the provisions of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990. However, with the enactment of the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006, the Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990 was repealed. As such, at present, the basic legal framework for municipal governance of SMC is the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006. In all, this Act consists of 8 Parts, 25 Chapters, 403 Sections and 5 Schedules. In 2007, an amendment was made to this Act and is known as the West Bengal Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2007 (West Bengal Act XXIX of 2007).

The municipal affairs of Siliguri are managed by SMC through three categories of functionaries, namely, (A) the Municipal Authorities; (B) the Officers; and (C) the Establishment.

(A)The Municipal Authorities of Siliguri Municipal Corporation – In accordance with the provision of the Act of 2006, it consists of (a) the Corporation; (b) the Mayor-in-Council; and (c) the Mayor (Section 9, Chapter III, Part II). The Corporation means the Board of Councillors charged with the authority of the Municipal Government of the SMC area and shall consist of the (a) Ward Councillors (47 at present) and (b) persons having special knowledge or experience in municipal administration as may be nominated by the State Government from time to time but without voting rights in the meetings of the Corporation (Sub-Section 1, Section 10, Chapter III, Part II). The present Board was constituted in September, 2009 with 47 Ward Councillors.

The Mayor-in-Council consists of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and such number of other elected members of the Corporation, not exceeding seven, as the State Government may from time to time determine [Section 19(1)]. It exercises the executive powers of the Corporation as may be delegated to it by the Corporation/BOC under Section 47(1). However, the powers are subject to the provisions of the WBMC Act, 2006 [Section 41(1)]. All executive actions of the MIC are expressed to be taken in the name of Corporation [Section 41(2)]. Besides, all proceedings of the meetings of the MIC are placed in the next meeting of the Corporation for consideration [Section 41(3)]. The Mayor nominates the Deputy Mayor and other members of the MIC from amongst the elected members

of the Corporation within a period of thirty days of his entering upon office. However, the State Government may extend the period of nomination for a maximum period of thirty days if an application with reasons is made by the Mayor [Section 19(2)]. The Mayor-in-Council is collectively responsible to the Corporation [Section 19(5)]. The following table 4.1. lay down the present (2009-) portfolios existing in SMC :

Table 4.1. Members of MIC, Siliguri Municipal Corporation

Designation (1)	Portfolios (2)
Mayor	General Administration, Finance & Accounts, Planning & Development, Assessment-Collection, Building
Deputy Mayor	Education & Culture
Member, MIC	Conservancy & Environment
Member, MIC	Public Works Department
Member, MIC	Slum Development & UPE Cell, Child & Mother Welfare
Member, MIC	Water Supply
Member, MIC	Electricity & Sports
Member, MIC	Trade License & Self Employment
Member, MIC	Health & Parking

Source : Official Web Site of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, www.siligurismc.com

This is to be noted that the present portfolios have remained unchanged with those of the previous MIC (2004-2009), except that of the reconstitution of the portfolios with one another.

As far as the powers and functions of the Mayor are concerned, Section 42 of the WBMC Act, 2006 details them out. The Mayor is the whole time functionary of the Corporation and presides over the meetings of the MIC. The agenda of the meetings are prepared under his direction. He allocates business of the Corporation among the members of the MIC. The Mayor may direct the execution of any work if that is necessary in her opinion. However, he is required to report forthwith to the BOC or the MIC as the case be, about the action taken. In case vacancy occurs in the office of the Mayor due to latter's death, resignation, removal or otherwise, the Deputy Mayor acts as the Mayor until a new Mayor is elected [Section 43(1)]. If the Mayor is unable to discharge his functions owing to

absence, illness or any other cause, the Deputy Mayor acts as the Mayor until the latter resumes his duties [Section 43(2)].

The Act provides for the formation of three types of Committees, namely, (a) Municipal Accounts Committee (Section 21, Chapter III, Part II); (b) Borough Committee (Section 22, Chapter III, Part II); and (c) Ward Committee (Section 23, Chapter III, part II). The Municipal Accounts Committee consists of not less than three and not more than five members and they are elected by the Board of Council from amongst its members by secret ballot and in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote. However, the members of the Mayor-in-Council are not eligible to vote. Besides, any member of the opposition in the Corporation is its Chairman. A Municipal Accounts Committee is constituted every year at the first meeting of the BOC or at its next meeting to be held within a period of next thirty days. The duties (Sub-Section 4, Section 21) of this Committee are (i) examination of the annual financial accounts of the SMC as well as accounts showing the appropriation of sums granted by the Corporation for its expenditure; (ii) examination of the report of the auditor on the accounts of the SMC and satisfying itself that the money disbursed were available for and applicable to the specified services or purpose as well as expenditure incurred in accordance with the authority governing the same; (iii) submission of report to the Corporation every year as well as from time to time; (iv) to consider the report of the special audit of any receipt or expenditure of SMC; and (v) discharge of such other functions as may be prescribed. However, the duties are to be performed subject to the other provisions of the Act. The present (2010-2011) Municipal Accounts Committee consists of three members, besides the Chairman. The composition of Borough Committee and Ward Committee are dealt with subsequently.

Section 24(1) of the Act provides for the constitution of the following five Standing Committees :

- (a) Finance and Resource Mobilisation Standing Committee;
- (b) Solid Waste Management Standing Committee;
- (c) Water Supply, Public Health and Sanitation Committee;
- (d) Public Works Standing Committee;
- (e) Health, Education and Urban Poverty Alleviation Standing Committee.

Besides these mandatory Standing Committees, other Standing Committees may be constituted by the SMC if it so think fit. However, the previous BOC (2004-09) had constituted the Public Works; Conservancy and Sanitation; Education and Culture; Water Supply; and Health as Standing Committees as per the provision of the earlier Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990. Thus, there has been a structural changes in the formation of the Standing Committees with the enactment of the new Act of 2006. The Finance and Resource Mobilisation Standing Committee has been inserted by the Act of 2006 which was earlier not constituted. It seems that the framers of the Act sought to make the municipal authorities of SMC to be more pro-active in terms of visioning different strategies for generating their own resources rather than to be majorly dependent on grants of the State and Central Governments for carrying out developmental and civic works of Siliguri. Further, more emphasis has been laid on solid waste management by separating it from other aspects of sanitation of Siliguri. As public health is related to sanitation, so the framers thought it prudent to strike the word off. Besides solid waste management, focus has been put on urban poverty alleviation considering the necessity of 'development with justice'. As such, it was inserted in the Act as part of the constitution of Standing Committees and got it tagged with two other related issues, namely, health and education. It was conspicuous by its absence earlier. It is to be noted that the aspect of culture has not been included as a part of the Standing Committee in the new Act which was earlier present.

On the whole, the departure with respect to constitution of Standing Committees laid down in the repealed Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990 are in the following respects :

- (a) Inclusion of Finance and Resource Mobilisation Standing Committee;
- (b) Inclusion of Urban Poverty Alleviation Standing Committee;
- (c) Segregating Solid Waste Management from the earlier Conservancy and Sanitation Standing Committee;
- (d) Non-inclusion of Culture as part of the Standing Committee.

These structural changes with respect to the Standing Committees seem to have been done in the Act of 2006 with the purpose of restructuring the Standing Committees of the SMC keeping in mind contemporary relevance. It needs to be seen as to how the municipal authorities of SMC have utilized the Act in respect to

the Standing Committees which functions as a recommending body to assist the Corporation in discharging its functions properly.

Each Standing Committee shall have not less than three and not more than nine members and are nominated by the Corporation from among its elected members. The Mayor, the Chairman and the Deputy Mayor shall not be a member of any Standing Committee. Besides, the Corporation may associate any person, any officer or employee of the Corporation, and any officer of the Government with any Standing Committee having requisite expertise for development of civic services, municipal finance and other areas related to municipal administration. The President and the Vice-President are nominated by the Mayor.

Section 25 of the Act lays down the functions of the Standing Committees. Their main function is to give recommendation with respect to possible measures for the removal of difficulties in implementing development programmes under their respective jurisdiction. Besides, the Corporation may refer to a Standing Committee for inquiry or report or opinion on such subjects relating to the powers or duties of the Corporation.

Apart from the Standing Committee, the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006 lays down the Constitution of an Education Committee and a Poor Fund Committee. The former is responsible for general control and supervision of primary and secondary schools maintained by the Corporation (Sub-Section 1, Section 26, Chapter III, Part II). The latter administers the Poor Fund, if any (Sub-Section 1, Section 27, Chapter III, Part II). It may be, however, noted that Siliguri Municipal Corporation, presently, do not have any such Education Committee and Poor Fund Committee.

The Board of Councillors may constitute Special Committees for the discharge of any specific function or for making enquiry and report on any specific matter (Sub-Section 1, Section 29, Chapter III, Part II). In the previous Board of SMC (2004-09), there were six such Special Committees constituted, namely, Review Committee, Selection Committee, Promotion Committee, Road Naming Committee, Building Committee and Business Advisory Committee.

(B)The Officers of Corporation – The Act of 2006 [Section 30(1), Chapter IV, Part II] lays down that the Corporation shall have the following Officers : (a) the Commissioner; (b) the Chief Engineer; (c) the Deputy Commissioner, Revenue; (d) the Health Officer; (e) the Finance Officer; (f) the Chief Auditor; and

(g) the Secretary. Besides, the same section provides for such other officers as may be designated by the State Government.

The earlier Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990 provided for only the posts of the Chief Executive Officer, the Secretary, the Executive Engineer and the Finance Officer. Thus, the new Act provides for the Chief Engineer in place of the Executive Engineer. Besides, new posts of the Deputy Commissioner, Revenue; the Health Officer; and the Chief Auditor; have been added. Further, the designation of the CEO has been changed to the Commissioner in the new Act. It is to be noted that though the designation of the CEO has been redesignated in SMC w.e.f. 01.11.2008. (SMC 2007-08 : 12), the status of other officers remain the same as earlier and the posts laid down by the new Act have not been created as yet. The officers so appointed are to be paid salaries and allowances out of the Municipal Fund [Section 32(1), Chapter IV, Part II].

The powers and functions of the Commissioner are dealt with under Section 44, Chapter IV-D, Part II. As the principal Executive Officer of the SMC, his main powers and functions are (a) performance of those functions specifically conferred or imposed on him by the WBMC Act, 2006 or by any other law for the time being in force; (b) assignment of duties and supervision and control over all officers and employees of the Corporation; (c) custodian of all records and papers and documents related with the proceedings of the Corporation, MIC and Municipal Accounts Committee as well as preservation of those in such manner and for such period as may be determined by regulations; and (d) preparation of annual report on the working of the Corporation as soon as may be after the first day of April each year and not later than such date as may be fixed by the State Government.

The financial powers of the BOC, the MIC and the Commissioner are such as may be prescribed [Section 46, Chapter IV-D, Part II].

In case a doubt arises as to whether any particular power or function appertains to BOC or the Commissioner, the Mayor shall refer the matter to the State Government and the decision of the latter thereon shall be final [Section 48, Chapter IV-D, Part II].

The Secretary is the Secretary of the BOC and the Municipal Accounts Committee and of other committees, if any, and shall exercise such powers, and shall discharge such functions, as are conferred on him by or under WBMC Act, 2006 or may be assigned to him by the Commissioner [Sub-Section 1, Section 45, Chapter IV-D, Part II]. Section 45(2) of the said Act requires the Secretary to act as

the custodian of all papers and documents connected with the proceedings of the BOC and Municipal Accounts Committee and of other Committees, if any, as well as preservation of the same in such manner, and for such period, as may be determined by the regulations. The Secretary of the SMC is also the SPIO of the Corporation.

(C)The Establishment of Corporation – The post of officers and other employees of the SMC other than those referred to in Section 30(1) above constitute the Establishment of the Corporation [Section 33(1), Chapter IV, Part II]. The State Government fixes the norms regulating the size of establishment of the Corporation from time to time [Section 33(2)]. Besides, the Corporation may determine what officers and other employees of the establishment of SMC are necessary with the prior sanction of the State Government [Section 33(3)]. Further, upward revision of the size of establishment may be done if such proposal of the Mayor-in-Council is approved by the Corporation/BOC, but not without the prior sanction of the State Government [Section 33(4)]. The BOC of the SMC may also appoint officers and other employees of the establishment on a contractual basis with the prior approval of the State Government [Section 34(3)]. The same section further stipulates that the remuneration for and terms and conditions of such engagement shall be such as the State Government may approve.

Under the establishment of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, there are 789 sanctioned posts under 66 categories of officers and employees. Table 4.2 lays down the names and numbers of sanctioned posts under the establishment of SMC.

4.2.1 Conduct of Business of SMC

In the first meeting of the Corporation after the general election which is convened within thirty days (the period may be extended by the State Government) after the publication of the election results and presided over by a member nominated by the State Government, the elected Councillors elect a Chairman from amongst themselves [Section 51, Chapter V, Part II]. The Chairman exercises powers in the Corporation similar to that of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The Chairman, at the beginning of each calendar year, nominates a panel of not more than three Presiding Officers specifying sequence from amongst the elected members of the Corporation so that one of them may preside over the meetings of the Corporation in the absence of the Chairman [Section 49, Chapter V, Part II]. The panel of Presiding Officers for the year 2010-11 consists of two members.

**Table 4.2. Names and Numbers of Sanctioned Posts under Establishment in
Siliguri Municipal Corporation**

Sl. No	Name of the Posts	Number of Sanctioned Posts
(1)	(2)	(3)
1	Accountant	1
2	Addl. Head Clerk	1
3	Assessment Inspector	1
4	Assessor	1
5	Asstt. Conservancy Inspector	3
6	Asstt. Assessment Inspector	2
7	Asstt. Cashier	1
8	Asstt. Engineer	2
9	Asstt. Tax Collector	3
10	Asstt. Teacher	2
11	Asstt. License Inspector	1
12	Attendant	4
13	Care Taker 1	2
14	Care Taker 2	1
15	Carpenter	1
16	Cashier	6
17	L.D.Clerk	51
18	Collecting Sarkar	28
19	Conservancy Inspector	3
20	Daftari	3
21	Deputy Accountant	1
22	Driver	25
23	Drummer	1
24	Electrician	9
25	G.D.A.	7
26	Guard	15
27	Head Clerk	1
28	Head Master	1
29	Health Assistant	1
30	Health Officer	1
31	Helper (Electric)	2
32	Jamadar	4
33	L.I. In Charge	1

Sl. No	Name of the Posts	Number of Sanctioned Posts
(1)	(2)	(3)
34	Law Assisstant	1
35	Librarian	1
36	License Inspector	1
37	Light Sarkar	3
38	Market Inspector	2
39	Market Superintendent	1
40	Mate	10
41	Mistri (Water Works)	1
42	Office Cleaner	1
43	Officer on Special Duty(Legal)	1
44	P.A. to C.E.O.	1
45	P.A. to Mayor	1
46	Mazdoor/ Labourer	95
47	Peon	35
48	S.A.E. (Electric)	2
49	S.A.E. (Mechanical)	1
50	S.A.E. (Civil)	15
51	Sanitary Inspector	4
52	Sr. Clerk (UDC)	17
53	Steno Typist	1
54	Store Keeper	1
55	Sub-Overseer	1
56	Surveyor	1
57	Sweeper	362
58	Tahashildar	3
59	Tax Collector	1
60	Tax Collector-in-Charge	1
61	Vaccinator	2
62	Vehicle Superintendant	1
63	Vehicles Cleaner	5
64	Ward Supervisor	19
65	Work Assistant	3
66	Work Supervisor	9
TOTAL		789

Source : Siliguri Municipal Corporation

Section 50 of the WBMC Act, 2006 provides that the Corporation shall meet not less than once in every month for the transaction of business. However, the Chairman may convene a meeting of the BOC whenever she may think fit or upon a requisition in writing by not less than one-third of the elected members of the SMC. It is the responsibility of the Commissioner of SMC under the direction of the Chairman to notify about the meeting of the Corporation at least seven days before the specified date. The Commissioner shall send the list of business to be transacted at every meeting to the members of the Corporation at least seventy-two hours before the time fixed for the meeting. No business other than those specified shall take place, except if any resolution is delivered to the Commissioner by any member of the Corporation at least forty-eight hours before the time fixed for the meeting [Section 53]. Besides, any Councillor may give notice (signed by at least two other elected members) of raising discussion on a matter of urgent public importance to the Secretary at least forty-eight hours before the date on which such discussion is sought. The latter shall place it before the Chairman (or the Presiding Officers in absence of the Chairman) and circulate the same among the members [Section 56]. The quorum at the meeting of the Corporation is one-third of the total members of BOC and its absence, the meeting is adjourned or suspended until there is a quorum [Section 4].

A Councillor may ask not more than two questions on any matter relating to the administration of the Corporation and the Mayor or any member of the MIC shall answer all such questions [Section 57]. Besides, Section 58 provides that any Councillor may ask for a statement from the MIC on an urgent matter relating to the administration of the Corporation by giving a notice to the Secretary at least one hour before the commencement of the sitting on any day. The Mayor or any member of the MIC may make a brief statement on the same day or fix a date for the same.

Minutes of the proceedings of each meeting of the Corporation shall be circulated to each member of the Corporation and the minutes of a meeting are confirmed at the subsequent meeting [Section 59(1)&(2)]. The WBMC Act, 2006 lays down that minutes shall be made available to any person on payment of such fee as the Corporation may determine [Section 59(1)].

Leader of the Opposition – Section 15 of the WBMC Act, 2006 provides that there shall be a leader of the Opposition in a Corporation, who shall be a Councillor and who is, for the time being, the Leader of the recognized political

party in opposition in the Corporation, having regard to the greatest numerical strength and recognized as such by the Mayor. However, if there are two or more parties in opposition in the Corporation having the same numerical strength, the Mayor recognizes the Leader of the Opposition considering the status of the political parties and such decision of the Mayor is final and conclusive.

4.2.2 Control of the State Government over SMC

The State Government can dissolve the Corporation basically on three grounds – (a) incompetence; (b) persistent default in the performance of duties or in the exercise of functions imposed on it by or under the WBMC Act, 2006 or any other law; and (c) exceeding or abusing its powers. However, before making such dissolution, a notice has to be served to the Corporation specifying therein a period within which the Corporation may submit representation against the proposed order of dissolution. As such, the State Government provides a reasonable opportunity to the Corporation of being heard [Section 60(1)&(2)]. With such dissolution all members of the Corporation, the MIC and any Committee shall vacate their respective offices and their powers and duties shall be exercised or performed by such person or persons as the State Government may appoint and subject to the direction by the State Government [Section 61(1)].

4.2.3 Sections / Departments of Siliguri Municipal Corporation

The administration of the Corporation is conducted and various civic services are provided through twenty-five sections/departments. However, for the purpose of the present study, the following departments require brief description :

Public Works Department – This Department is responsible for the execution of developmental schemes and projects like construction and maintenance of houses and buildings, roads, bridges, culverts, drains, parks and gardens. These are funded under general fund as well as Government-sponsored schemes like IHSDP, UIDSSMT, BRGF. These developmental schemes also include funding under SJDA, UUP, MPLAD, BEUP, etc.

Conservancy, Sanitation, Public Health and Environment Department – This Department is responsible for (i) sweeping of streets; (ii) drain cleaning including high drains; (iii) house-to-house collection of segregated waste; (iv)

collection, transportation and disposal of garbage; (v) anti-mosquito measures like fogging/MLO spraying; (vi) removal of unauthorized khatalas; (vii) cleaning of rivers; (viii) awareness against unauthorized plastic carry bag; (ix) food inspection and sampling work as well as regular inspection of markets, nursing homes, hotels, sweetshops, meat shop, etc.; and (x) observance of World Environment Day.

Water Supply Section – This Section looks after (i) implementation of water supply projects and schemes and operation and maintenance of water supply through PHED; (ii) house connection of drinking water supply; and (iii) collection of water charges.

Urban Poverty Eradication Cell and Urban Poverty Alleviation and Livelihood Cell – Reduction of poverty and ultimate eradication of poverty within SMC area are managed by these two Cells. The former Cell implements various Government-sponsored schemes as well as schemes initiated by Corporation itself. Some of the Government-sponsored schemes are SJSRY, NSAP, NFBS, JSY, MDM Programme, etc. Besides these, the SMC itself carries out social welfare schemes like old age pension, assistance to the differently-abled persons, providing rice to the poor persons, etc. out of its own resources.

The latter Cell has been formed under “National Strategy for Urban Poor and Urban Development” in December, 2007. The main responsibility of this Cell is to find out the critical gaps of the various schemes and policies of urban development. Such insight would help in understanding urban poverty and urban livelihood issues better. Ultimately, these would provide a base for strengthening the local capacities with the aim of sustainable socio-economic growth and improvement in the provision of basic urban services through community-owned and managed participating process.

Besides the above two Cells, mention may be made of Health Department and IPP VIII (Extension) Project Department, both of which primarily cater to the health needs of the urban poor of Siliguri. The former organizes regular immunization programmes; health check up camps, particularly in Harizan colonies; training and awareness programmes on various diseases and health issues; distribution of Vitamin-A Oil, ORS, etc., particularly in slum based wards; observance of important health related days, etc. The IPP VIII (Extension) Project started in Siliguri in 2000 with the financial assistance of World Bank and such assistance is being provided through Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor (KUSP). Under the Project, necessary health care services are provided to the patients

belonging to BPL families (also to APL families at nominal charges) through Maternity Home cum OPD (Matrisadan) situated in Ward No. 23, eight health posts and sixty-one sub-health posts in different areas populated by economically weaker sections.

Moreover, there is a Self Employment Section which deals with assisting unemployed youths to undertake self-employment schemes through the concerned departments like Youth Services Department, SC/ST Development and Finance Corporation, District Industries Centre, etc. Further, the Education and Culture Section deals with the implementation of schemes and programmes under Sarva Shiksha Mission.

License Section – Besides trade licenses, this section grants licences for rickshaws, vans, advertisements, hoardings and parkings.

Besides the above sections which owe direct relevance to the issues under study, the other sections/departments of the SMC, too, have their role to play in one way or the other, namely, General Department, Establishment Department, Accounts Department, Collection Department, Registration of Births & Deaths Department, Law Section, Census & GIS Section, Vehicle Section, Electricity Department, Purchase Section, Assessment and Review Section, Market Section, Guest House Booking Section and above all Draft Development Plan Section.

However, at the time when environmental and sustainable development is the buzz word, the presence of any exclusive section/department on urban or social forestry is conspicuous by its absence in the SMC. Though PWD of the SMC looks after the construction of parks in different wards of the city, the efforts towards social forestry along streets suffer from adhocism. Besides, there is utter lack of post-plantation maintenance, resulting in either death or improper growth of the street side trees. Absence of any planned and concerted effort towards social forestry has its tremendous bearing on air, noise and visual pollution of Siliguri. The urgent need, thus, is to have a separate department/section on social/urban forestry under the establishment of SMC.

4.2.4 Finacial Status of Siliguri Municipal Corporation

Table 4.3 lays down income-expenditure pattern of SMC since its elevation to the status of a Corporation.

Table 4.3. Statement Showing Income-Expenditure Pattern of SMC since its conversion to Corporation from Municipality in 1994

Sl. No.	Year	Total Receipts (Revenue Receipts+Capital Receipts) Rs. in Lakhs	Total Expenditure (Revenue Expenditure+ Capital Expenditure) Rs. in Lakhs	Yearly Growth Rate in Receipts (%)	Yearly Growth Rate in Expenditures (%)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1.	1994-1995	NA	NA	NA	NA
2.	1995-1996	1077.00	1015.72	-	-
3.	1996-1997	1684.99	1921.82	56.45	89.21
4.	1997-1998	1947.32	1963.37	15.57	2.16
5.	1998-1999	2526.98	2469.35	29.77	25.77
6.	1999-2000	2746.71	2679.29	8.70	8.50
7.	2000-2001	2909.03	2859.36	5.90	6.72
8.	2001-2002	2948.41	2635.96	1.35	-7.81
9.	2002-2003	2773.00	2613.00	-5.95	-0.87
10.	2003-2004	2206.40	2206.28	-20.43	-15.57
11.	2004-2005	2741.08	2740.94	24.23	24.23
12.	2005-2006	2394.56	2377.97	-12.64	-13.24
13.	2006-2007	3510.46	3273.29	46.60	37.65
14.	2007-2008	7477.77	5229.07	113.01	59.75
15.	2008-2009	7088.39	7037.44	-5.21	34.58
16.	2009-2010 *	8870.60	8873.75	25.14	26.09
17.	2010-2011 **	18123.88	18288.45	104.31	106.10

*Revised Budget Estimate

**Proposed Budget Estimate

NA means Not Available with the Researcher

Sources : (a) Figures of Receipts and Expenditures for the Financial Year 1995-96,1996-97,1997-98,1998-99,1999-2000,2000-01 and 2001-02 – Perspective Plan 2025, Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area, SJDA, Vol.I, February, 2004.

(b) Figures of Receipts and Expenditures for the Financial Year 2002-03,2003-04,2004-05 and 2005-06 – District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling, 2007, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Govt. of West Bengal.

(c) Figures of Receipts and Expenditures for the Financial Year 2006-07 and 2007-08 – Municipal Statistics 2006-07, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Govt. of West Bengal and Municipal Statistics 2007-08, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Govt. of West Bengal respectively.

(d) Figures of Receipts and Expenditures for the Financial Year 2008-09,2009-10(Revised Estimate) and 2010-11(Proposed) – Statement on Budget, 2010-11, Siliguri Municipal Corporation.

**Table 4.4. Statement Showing Income of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation
during the Financial Years 2004-05; 2005-06; 2006-07; and 2007-08**

(Figures in Rs. Lakhs)

Sl. No. (1)	Heads of Receipts (2)		2004-05 (3)	2005-06 (4)	2006-07 (5)	2007-08 (6)
1.	Municipal Rates and Taxes	Taxes on Houses & Lands	402.96	368.50	359.76	394.57
		Taxes on Animals and Vehicles	6.67	NA	6.28	6.75
		Taxes on Profession & Trade	38.42	NA	49.94	46.55
		Water Rate	22.65	NA	100.51	96.79
		Others*	10.41	87.47	31.59	36.85
Total Rates & Taxes (A)			481.11	455.97	548.08	581.01
2.	Realisation under Special Act (B)		—	—	725.56	4.57
3.	Non-Tax Revenue	Rents of Lands & Houses	42.13	NA	36.24	24.75
		Sale Proceeds of Land & Produce of Lands	27.05	NA	—	19.05
		Fees & Revenues from Markets and Slaughter Houses	21.05	NA	23.37	—
		From Burning Ghats & Burial Grounds	10.92	NA	11.98	12.19
		Others**	259.36	NA	73.57	614.52
Total Non-Tax Revenue (C)			360.51	538.63	145.16	670.51
4.	Grants & Contributions	From Government	721.80	712.18	1804.66	6065.30
		From Local Fund	90.78	NA	39.12	2.84
		From Other Sources	—	NA	197.88	77.42
Total Grants & Contributions (D)			812.58	NA	2041.66	6145.56
5.	Miscellaneous Income (E)		1063.18	NA	—	1.50
6.	Total Ordinary Income (F) = (A+B+C+D+E)		2717.38	NA	3460.46	7403.15
7.	Extraordinary Income & Debt	Loans	—	NA	—	—
		Advances	—	NA	—	1.56
		Deposits	—	NA	—	18.00
		Others***	—	NA	50.00	55.06
Total Extraordinary Income & Debt (G)			—	NA	50.00	74.62

8.	Total Receipts Excluding Opening Balance (H) = (F+G)	2717.38	2394.56	3510.46	7477.77
9.	Opening Balance (I)	477.97	524.86	566.72	803.94
10.	Total Income Including Opening Balance (H+I)	3195.35	2919.42	4077.18	8281.71

*Other Rates & Taxes include Lighting Rate, Conservancy (including Scavengi, Taxes on Persons, Miscellaneous Receipts & Penalties, and any other Receipts.

** Other Non-Tax Revenue includes Conservancy Receipts other than Taxes & Rates, Fees & Revenue from Educational & Medical Institutions, Tramways, Fines, Interest on Investments, Premium of Loans

*** Others includes Sale Proceeds of Government Securities and Withdrawal from Savings Banks, raised in open market

'_' means Nil

'NA' means not available with the Researcher

Sources : (a) Municipal Statistics, 2004-05, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(b)(i) Revenue Income & Revenue Expenditure for 2005-06, DLB, MoMA, Govt. of West Bengal

(ii) Total Receipts, 2005-06, District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling, 2007, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(c) Municipal Statistics, 2006-07, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(d) Municipal Statistics, 2007-08, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

Table 4.5. Statement showing Expenditure of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation for the Financial Years 2004-05; 2005-06; 2006-07; and 2007-08

(Figures in Rs. Lakhs)

Sl. No. (1)	Heads of Expenditure (2)		2004-2005 (3)	2005-2006 (4)	2006-2007 (5)	2007-2008 (6)
1	General Administration & Collection Charges	General Administration	185.62		199.88	401.15
		Collection of Taxes including bonded ware houses	64.90	-	59.67	58.24
		Pension & Gratuities	80.02	-	108.36	106.44
		Others*	-	-	-	5.94
	Total of General Administration & Collection Charges (A)		330.54	-	367.91	571.77
2	Public Safety	Lighting	131.79	-	191.46	209.06
	Total of Public Safety (B)		131.79	-	191.46	209.06
3	Public Health & Convenience	Water Supply (Capital Outlay & Establishment, Repairs, etc.)	177.61	-	251.17	1305.89
		Drainage (Capital Outlay & Establishment, Repairs, etc.)	174.22	-	247.23	370.24
		Conservancy	592.51	-	805.60	913.92
		Charges on Hospitals, Dispensaries, Vaccination & Other Sanitary Requirements)	-	-	135.25	68.96
		Markets & Slaughter Houses)	66.12	-	44.04	21.65
		Registration of Births & Deaths	4.45	-	5.04	6.24
		Public Works (Construction of Roads, Buildings, Stores & Establishment)	1069.28	-	842.62	1670.14
		Others**	-	-	60.40	52.92
	Total of Public Health & Convenience (C)		2084.19	-	2391.35	4409.96
	Public Instruction	Expenses on Schools & Colleges	76.64	-	234.45	164.61

4		Others***	—	-	—	—
	Total of Public Instruction (D)		76.64	-	234.45	164.61
5	Contribution for General Purpose, Hospitals & Museums (E)		—	-	—	27.02
6	Miscellaneous	Provident Fund	—		—	—
		Burning Ghat & Burial Ground Charges	8.33		9.50	11.82
		Others****	39.00		38.37	70.37
	Total of Miscellaneous (F)		47.33		47.87	82.19
7	Total Ordinary Expenditure (G) = (A+B+C+D+E+F)		2670.49		3233.04	5464.61
8	Extraordinary Expenditure & Debt Investment, Repayment of Loans, Deposits & Others (H)		—		40.20	264.46
9	Total Disbursement (G+H)		2670.49	2377.97	3273.24	5729.07
10	Total Income (Including Opening Balance)		3195.35		4077.18	8281.71
11	Balance in Hand (Total Income – Total Expenditure)		524.86		803.94	2552.64

*Others include Survey of Land & Refund (Other than Octroi)

**Others include Ponds, Public Gardens, Veterinary Charges, etc.

***Others include Contribution of Sports, Libraries, Civic Reception, Advertisement

****Others include Printing, Law Charges, Election Charges, Disposal of Pauper & Dead Bodies

'_ ' means Nil

NA means Not Available with the Researcher

Sources : (a) Municipal Statistics, 2004-05, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(b)(i) Revenue Income & Revenue Expenditure for 2005-06, DLB, MoMA, Govt. of West Bengal

(ii) Total Receipts, 2005-06, District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling, 2007, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(c) Municipal Statistics, 2006-07, Bureau of Applied Economic & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(d) Municipal Statistics, 2007-08, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

Table 4.6. Statement Showing Income (Revenue and Capital Accounts) of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation during the Financial Years 2008-09 (Actuals); 2009-10 (Actuals up to Dec. 2009); 2009-10 (Budgets Estimates); 2009-10 (Revised); 2010-11 (Proposed)

Sl. No.	Heads of Receipts	Actual Receipts, 2008-09	Actual Receipts for 9 months, 2009-10	Budget Estimates, 2009-10	Revised Budget Estimates, 2009-10	Proposed Budget Estimates, 2010-11
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1	Revenue Accounts					
1A	Own Source					
1Ai	Tax revenue	54,102,051	42,557,731	103,601,000	53,350,000	116,301,000
1Aii	Non Tax Revenue	78,179,307	53,301,194	110,760,000	69,968,000	139,125,000
	Total of 1A	132,281,358	95,858,925	214,361,000	123,318,000	255,426,000
1B	Government Sources					
1Bi	Share Taxes	24,752,000	11,050,000	30,000,000	20,510,000	32,500,000
1Bii	General Grants	95,802,314	134,885,590	175,116,000	205,191,000	282,024,000
	Total of 1B	120,554,314	145,935,590	205,116,000	225,701,000	314,524,000
1C	Other Sources	29,674,637	16,475,922	26,800,000	22,738,000	26,035,000
	Total of (1A+1B+1C)	282,510,309	258,270,437	446,277,000	371,757,000	595,985,000
2	Capital Accounts					
2A	Own Sources	15,666,840	266,071	83,623,000	8,650,000	56,953,000
2B	Government Grants	252,037,348	332,906,539	799,059,000	438,483,500	857,700,000
2C	Other Govt. Grants	34,087,090	12,000,000	177,140,000	19,500,000	77,500,000
2D	Grants & Contr. from Dev. Auth.	15,102,953	40,504,207	111,470,000	47,170,000	100,250,000
2E	Contr. from Other Sources	4,325,000	1,150,552	6,200,000	1,500,000	8,500,000
	Total of 2A to 2E	321,219,231	386,827,369	1,177,492,000	515,303,500	1,100,903,000
3	Extraordinary and Debt					
3A	Loan Account	524,445	0	2,500,000	0	22,500,000
3B	Encashment of Invest./Withdrawal from Bank Dep.	104,585,450	0	0	0	93,000,000
	Total of 3A & 3B	105,109,895	0	2,500,000	0	115,500,000
4	Grand Total of Income (1+2+3)	708,839,435	645,097,806	1,626,269,000	887,060,500	1,812,388,000

Source : SMC Budget, 2010-11

**Table 4.7. Statement Showing Expenditure (Revenue and Capital) of the
Siliguri Municipal Corporation during the Financial Years 2008-09 (Actuals);
2009-10 (Actuals up to Dec. 2009); 2009-10 (Budget Estimates); 2009-10
(Revised); 2010-11 (Proposed)**

Sl. No. (1)	Heads of Expenditure (2)	2008-2009 (Actuals) (3)	2009-2010 (Actuals up to Dec. 2009) (4)	2009-2010 (Budget Estimates) (5)	2009-2010 (Revised Estimates) (6)	2010-2011 (Proposed Estimates) (7)
1	Gen. Adm.&Fin.	65,087,877	65,935,088	144,726,000	95,006,000	153,588,000
2	Collection	5,787,095	5,308,340	8,167,000	6,840,000	8,775,000
3	Street Light	38,742,418	26,855,526	64,515,000	37,494,000	61,196,000
4	Public Works	210,849,194	137,263,857	351,322,000	227,197,000	378,322,000
5	Conservancy	103,401,868	91,732,627	141,100,000	128,741,000	171,556,000
6	Edu.&Culture	17,796,836	13,439,560	39,339,000	28,434,000	41,707,000
7	UPE&Slum Impr.	138,582,365	128,441,277	532,591,000	214,335,000	566,936,000
8	Water Supply	85,616,896	70,523,459	272,200,000	109,654,000	365,736,000
9	Market	3,012,772	2,628,551	6,505,000	3,486,000	6,480,000
10	Health&Sanitation	12,124,351	9,310,071	23,660,000	14,880,000	26,415,000
11	Assessment	657,295	424,463	968,000	701,000	1,435,000
12	Guest House	5,943,881	1,175,234	6,352,000	1,790,000	11,176,000
13	Birth&Death	725,243	1,371,521	934,000	1,917,000	2,198,000
14	License	1,063,712	892,041	1,370,000	1,163,000	1,410,000
15	IPP-VIII	10,781,018	8,818,090	22,670,000	12,425,000	17,500,000
16	Sports	888,645	1,269,312	7,810,000	2,110,000	5,915,000
17	Literacy	1,912,402	572,837	4,800,000	645,000	1,570,000
18	Indoor Stadium	770,734	334,581	1,685,000	557,000	2,910,000
19	Extraord.&Debt	0	0	0	0	4,020,000
TOTAL		703,744,602	566,296,435	1,630,714,000	887,375,000	1,828,845,000

Source : SMC Budget, 2010-11

Table 4.8. Statement Showing Population, Number of Rate Payers and Percentage of Rate Payers to Population in SMC and West Bengal (excluding KMC)

Sl. No.	Particulars	2004-2005		2006-07		2007-08	
		SMC	All ULBs of WB	SMC	All ULBs of WB	SMC	All ULBs of WB
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
1	Population (As per 2001 Census)	284602*/ 472370	14727155	472370	14914983	472370	14914983
2	No. of Rate Pay	86125	2013973	70000	2207199	66000	2161338
3	% of Rate Payers to Total Population	30.26**/ 18.23	13.68	14.82	14.80	13.97	14.71

Sources : (a) Municipal Statistics, 2004-05, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(b) Municipal Statistics, 2006-07, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(c) Municipal Statistics, 2007-08, Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government of West Bengal

(*&**Discrepancy in figures : In all possibility, the figures of population of SMC laid is faulty. Probably, the population figure of 14 wards which falls in Jalpaiguri has not been included. Based on the actual figure of 472370, the percentage of rate payers to total population would come to 18.23. As such, the percentage of rate payers to total population is wrong. However, in terms of total no. of rate payers, it may be correct.)

On analyzing the figures of the receipts and expenditures of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, one comes across few noticeable things. First of all, the growth pattern of the total receipts of SMC since its inception as a Corporation as laid down in Table No. 4.3 provides a fluctuating trend. One may notice high rises in some financial years and may observe nose diving in some of the financial years. This is obviously not the case of efficiency or inefficiency of the personnel of the SMC as the tables thereafter show a more or less smooth upward movement as far as revenue receipts from own sources are concerned. There seems to be no trend of any radical transformation in the work culture as far as collection of different tax, rates, charges, fees, etc. is concerned, in particular, the property tax which forms the major share in the revenue receipts from own sources of the SMC. This gets corroborated from the amount of arrears accumulating with respect to property tax. The available figures of the financial years 2007-08 and 2008-09 show that arrears on property tax were Rs. 71,291,411 and Rs. 74,990,666

respectively and the consequence of demand on property tax far exceeding the collection is the cumulative accumulation of arrears with every passing year. The more or less similar scenario can be witnessed with regard to other rates, fees, charges, etc. Taking clue from this, one may safely say that the rise and fall in the annual growth rate of the receipts of SMC get squarely integrated with the launch of new government sponsored schemes, such as, NSDP, SJSRY, VAMBAY, IHSDP, UIDSSMT, etc. Whenever assistance from such programmes have stopped due to the end of the programme itself or its merger with other programmes or whenever assistance have been less, the growth rates of receipts of SMC have suffered. One may take note of negative growth rates at least on four occasions in this regard which amply drive the point home.

Another problem witnessed in case of proposed budget estimates of Siliguri Municipal Corporation is that they have been highly inflated budgets without taking into account the real considerations from the past experiences. If the last two budgets of 2008-09 and 2009-2010 in the following column diagrams are observed, one may come across this aspect.

Figure 4.2.i

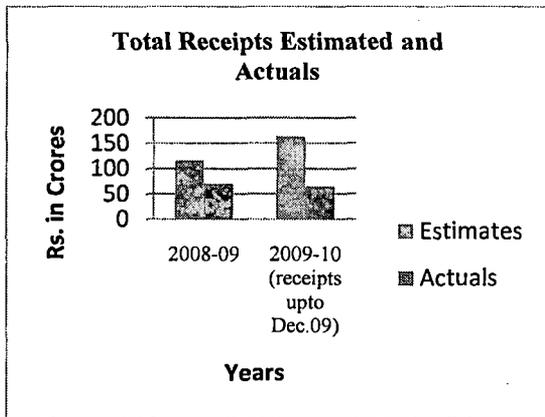
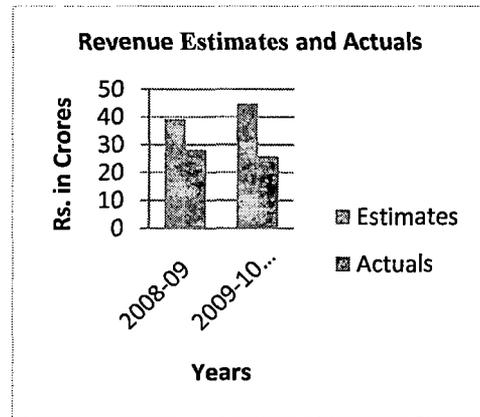


Figure 4.2.ii



Thus, from the columns above, it becomes clear that the percentage of total receipts as to the estimates in the financial years 2008-09 and 2009-10 (receipts up to Dec. 2009) were an abysmal 61.43% and 39.67%. If we consider the revenue receipts, they come to about 72.08% and 57.88%. This proves beyond doubt that the estimated capital receipts could not be garnered as expected. The obvious reason for this anomaly in capital receipts is the dependence on and mercy of the State and Central Governments as well as other financial institutions. The only way

out, then, seems to be the concerted efforts on the part of SMC to increase revenue receipts from its own sources. There may be three ways in this regard : (i) solemn effort for the collection of arrears; (ii) judicious increase in various taxes, charges, rates, fees, etc. to meet the costs of investment, operation and maintenance; and (iii) to find out newer ways and means of increasing revenue receipts from own sources.

The present budget (2010-2011) is, as usual, devoid of any innovative vision as far as augmentation of the own finances is concerned, despite laying down tall promises in all aspects of public life of Siliguri. Further, it is not free from populism, despite realization of the grave financial crisis SMC is undergoing. It is worthy here to lay down few lines from the budget speech (2010-2011) of the Mayor in this regard. She maintains at one place, “.....Though the total project cost of the schemes taken up under the Central and State assistance like IHSDP, UIDSSMT and other projects have increased considerably, total allocation has not yet been increased and therefore it is difficult to complete these projects....During the current financial year the salary and wages of the employees and workers of the Corporation has been increased due to implementation of the recommendation of the 5th Pay Commission but income of this Corporation has not been increased to meet additional financial liabilities....Expenditure of this Corporation has been increased remarkably due to rise of rate of energy bill and in other major heads Collection from property tax (which was fixed during General Assessment of Holdings in the year 1997-98) has remained unchanged. The valuation and assessment of property tax in respect of the new Buildings & Commercial Complexes which have come up in the intervening period has not been done and as a result collection of property tax from those holdings have not been possible & income from property tax in the last few years has remained almost same.....Moreover, we have taken the liability of Rs. 16 crores (approx.) to meet earlier dues.”

Despite highlighting the above problems with regard to financial situation of SMC, the Mayor in the next section of the speech mentions, “....No additional property tax burden to the rate payers in the next financial year 2010-2011. We shall lay emphasis for tax restructuring and realization of arrear dues”. This kind of populist strategy seems obvious for political reasons. But, nowhere in the budget has been detailed out as to how to restructure the tax structure and how to realize arrear dues. Notwithstanding, the Mayor in the subsequent sections of her speech

announces a host of welfare activities and developmental schemes for the citizens of Siliguri. It is astonishing, then, as to how to reconcile and judiciously blend the grave financial situation and populist measures on the one hand and the developmental aspects of Siliguri on the other. Under the circumstances, it would not be surprising if the present proposed budget receipts of about Rs. 181.23 Crores would meet the similar fate as those of the earlier budget estimates.

It is apt here to quote Pardeep Sachdeva (1993) who specifically deals with the acute scarcity of finance facing the urban local bodies, besides other aspects. He says, "Generally, their sources of income are inadequate as compared to their functions. Their chief sources of income are the varied types of taxes. However, most of the income generating taxes are levied by the Union and State governments and the taxes collected by the urban bodies are not sufficient to cover the expenses of the services provided. Though they can impose certain new taxes, the elected members of these urban bodies hesitate in doing so for fear of displeasing their electorate. The administrative machinery, at the disposal of these local bodies, is insufficient and ineffective. The staff, which is often underpaid, indulges in corrupt practices which lead to loss of income. Quite often, failure in collecting taxes leads to accumulation of areas running into crores of rupees. As a result, many urban bodies are on the brink of bankruptcy.....Many civic bodies have not been able to provide even the basic civic amenities in the areas which have been included in their jurisdiction during the last couple of decades" .

One aspect is unique as far as the attitude of local media as well as the common psychology of the people is concerned. Media, in general, highlight and give more space to the budget estimates proposed every financial year and people, too, seem to be more concerned with the promises made in the budgets. Hardly, the print and the visual media give serious attention to the question of whether or not the proposed budget estimates were realized and if not, what were the gaps. Critical evaluation by the media of the actual situation after the end of every financial year should be seriously promoted for the knowledge and concern of the common citizens of Siliguri. Such limitation on the part of the media gives ample scope to the Corporation to present unrealistic budgets without attracting criticisms.

4.2.5 Borough Committees and Ward Committees

Section 22 of the WBMC Act, 2006 (earlier Section 11 of the repealed Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990) enjoins upon the Siliguri Municipal Corporation to constitute a Borough Committee for each Borough which shall consist of not less than six contiguous Wards. The Councillors of the Ward constituting the Borough shall be the members of the Borough Committee and they shall choose among themselves a Chairman/Chairperson, the latter being not a member of the Mayor-in-Council or the Chairman of the Corporation. As per provision of the Act, five Boroughs have been formed grouping contiguous Wards under the SMC.

The purpose of formation of the Borough Committees is to decentralize the functions of the Corporation and establish an intermediary structure between the Ward and the Corporation. The Borough Committees under the SMC provides civic services to the citizens like collection and removal of garbage, removal of accumulated water on the streets and public places, connection, collection and supervision of water supply, street lights, health immunization services, implementation of mid-day meal, old age pensions and other schemes, collection of property tax and other functions as assigned by the Corporation through regulations. The Borough Committees functions under the general supervision and control of the Corporation.

Ward Committees are formed under Section 23 of the WBMC Act, 2006 (earlier Section 11A of the repealed Siliguri Municipal Corporation Act, 1990). Though constitution of Ward Committees has been an essential and regular feature under SMC, it is strange that under the new board, constituted in October, 2009, was not able to form Ward Committees in most of the total of 47 Wards till November, 2010. As such, in many of the Wards, the earlier Ward Committees are carrying out the functions. The Ward Committee consists of the elected Ward Councillor of the Ward as Chairperson and other members

BOX 4.1: WARDS UNDER THE BOROUGH COMMITTEES

Borough No. I – Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 45, 46 & 47

Borough No. II – Wards 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15

Borough No. III – Wards 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 & 28

Borough No. IV – Wards 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 & 35

Borough No. V – Wards 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44

nominated by the Councillor and the Corporation ranging from 4 to 14 depending upon the population of the Ward.

The Ward Committee functions under the general supervision and control of the respective Borough Committee/SMC and helps the Borough Committee/SMC in identifying the problems of the Ward, fixation of priority of problems so identified, monitoring the proper execution of the works, motivating the people of the Ward in the matter of the payment of taxes, rates and charges, organization of greater civic participation by holding periodical meetings, etc.

The Borough Committees and Ward Committees seek to promote the vision of the Municipal Affairs Department of West Bengal which lays down as thus, “The emphasis of the state’s urban development policy has been laid to create a livable, responsive, transparent, dynamic, environmentally balanced and investment friendly municipal system”.

4.2.6 Siliguri-Jalpaiguri Development Authority

Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority was established under the West Bengal Town and Country (Planning and Development) Act, 1979 on 1st April, 1980. The earlier Siliguri Planning Organisation (SPO) got subsumed into this newly formed SJDA. The planning and development activities of SJDA cover Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area (SJPA) and is spread over Siliguri, Jalpaiguri, Naxalbari and Phansidewa. However, due to its unique geographical location, Siliguri has been the focal point of the SJDA. The latter prepared an ‘Outline Development Plan’ in 1986 for 260 sq. km. of the SJDA’s area (about 22.47 % of the Authority’s area) which included the whole of 15.5 sq. km. of the Siliguri Municipality. This plan got the approval of the State Government under section 36(1) of the T&CP Act in 1991. In 1994, Siliguri Municipal Corporation and SJDA jointly brought out an ‘Approach Paper’ on urban development of Siliguri. This paper highlighted the need for 6,100 new residential units every year to meet the problems of housing in the city. However, it failed to identify the areas where such complexes would come up as well as for which income-group such complexes would be constructed.

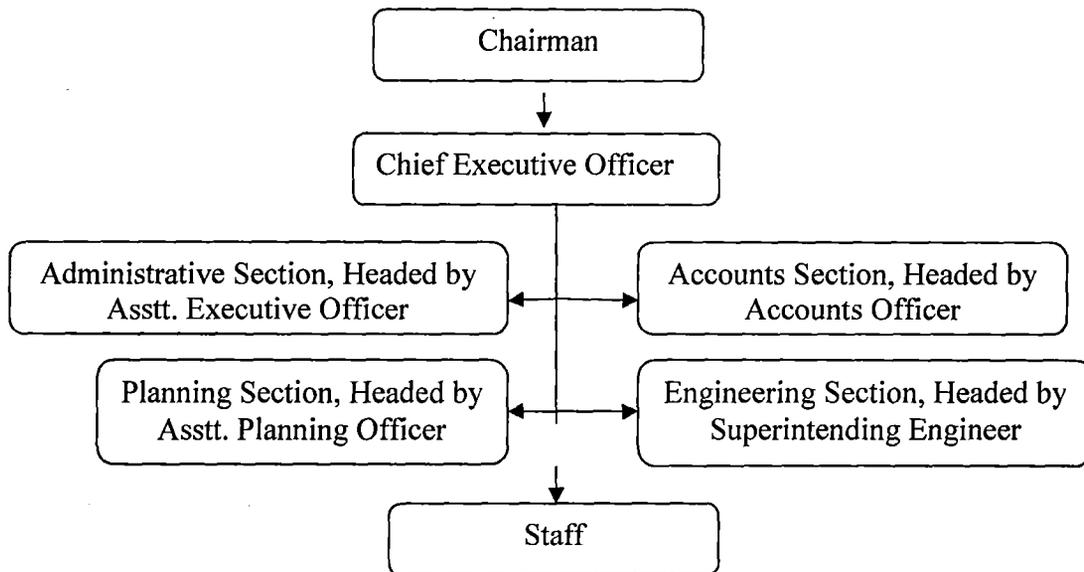
Finally, SJDA came up with the ‘Perspective Plan 2025 : Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area’ in February, 2004. The effort of such plan was initiated in May, 2002 and the task of the preparation of the plan was given to the Department of

Architecture and Regional Planning, I.I.T., Kharagpur. The project was funded by UNICEF. The vision of the Plan as laid down reads thus, “.....There will be improved infrastructure and services, shelter for all, health and hygiene along with social amenities, encouraging the development of the body and the mind within an ecologically sustainable framework.”(SJDA 2004 : xiii)

SJDA, a statutory body under the West Bengal Town and Country (Planning & Development) Act, 1979, derives its powers and functions from Section 13(1)(ii) of the said Act. The main powers and functions of SJDA are :

- (i) to prepare a Land Use Map;
- (ii) to prepare and enforce an Outline Development Plan;
- (iii) to prepare and execute development schemes;
- (iv) to co-ordinate development activities of all Departments and agencies of the State Government or local authorities within the Planning Area;
- (v) to carry out such works as are contemplated in the Development Plans;
- (vi) to acquire, hold and manage such property, both movable and immovable, as the Development Authority may deem necessary for the purposes of any of its activities and to lease, sell or otherwise transfer any property held by it;
- (vii) to purchase by agreement or to take on lease or under any form of tenancy, any land and to erect thereon such buildings and to carry out such operations as maybe necessary for the purposes of carrying on its undertakings;
- (viii) to enter into and perform such contracts as may be necessary for the performance of its duties and for exercise of its powers under this Act;
- (ix) to provide facilities for the consignment, storage and delivery of goods;
- (x) to perform any other function which is supplemental, incidental and consequential to any of the functions aforesaid or which may be prescribed.

Figure 4.3 : Organizational Structure of SJDA



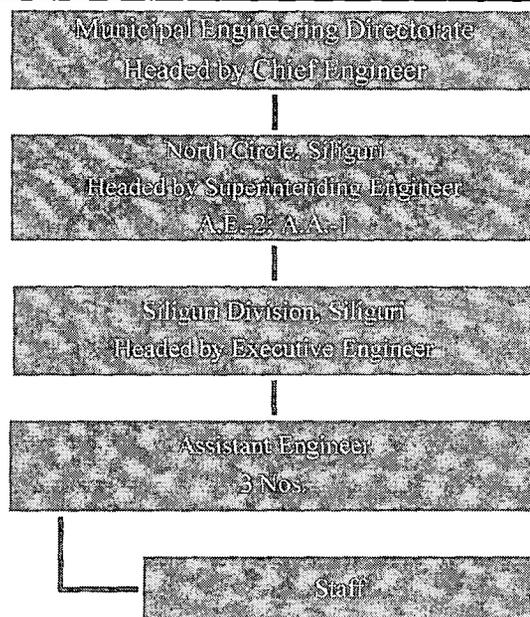
4.2.7 Municipal Engineering Directorate, Siliguri Division

It was in 1978 that the State Government decided to transfer the Municipal Engineering Stream of the T&CP department to the Local Government and Urban Development Department. In 1981, this Cell under the latter Department was reconstituted as a full-fledged Directorate, namely, Municipal Engineering Directorate (MED). The Siliguri Division of this Directorate provides technical assistance to the Siliguri Municipal Corporation with respect to planning, execution and monitoring of various developmental programmes within the SMC area. The main functions of the Siliguri Division, MED are :

- (i) to prepare of base maps and contour maps of the SMC area;
- (ii) to prepare of Master Plan as well as short and long term development plans;
- (iii) to render all types of technical assistance to the SMC with regard to planning, execution and monitoring of drainage system, solid waste management scheme, sewerage scheme and other development schemes under the Central and State Governments and under foreign assistance;
- (iv) to undertake surveys;
- (v) to approve high rise buildings above 13.5 meters within SMC area.

The organizational structure of the MED is as follows :

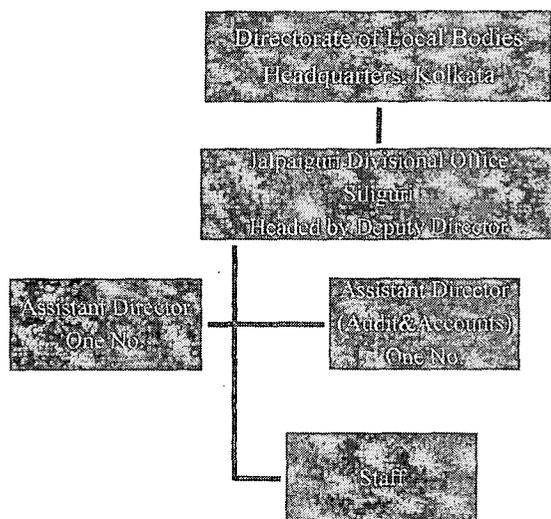
Figure 4.4 : Organizational Structure of MED



4.2.8 Directorate of Local Bodies, Siliguri Division

The Directorate was set up in 1978 for the purpose of performance of the functions like overseeing the working of the municipal bodies; analyzing their budgets; assessing their fund requirement; undertaking regular inspection and evaluation of the progress of the ongoing schemes; collecting and compiling staff statistics; collecting and compiling figures relating to demand and collection of property tax; examining the statutory reports like budget, annual administration report, annual financial statement, etc.; enquiring various complaints and allegations related to the ULBs; monitoring DFID assisted KUSP project under the guidance of CMU; dealing court cases pertaining to all matters of ULBs; preparation of various statistical documents; and performing general counseling wherever needed. The organizational structure of the Directorate is as follows :

Figure 4.5 : Organizational Structure of DLB, Jalpaiguri Divisional Office, Siliguri



4.2.9 WBPCB, Siliguri Regional Office

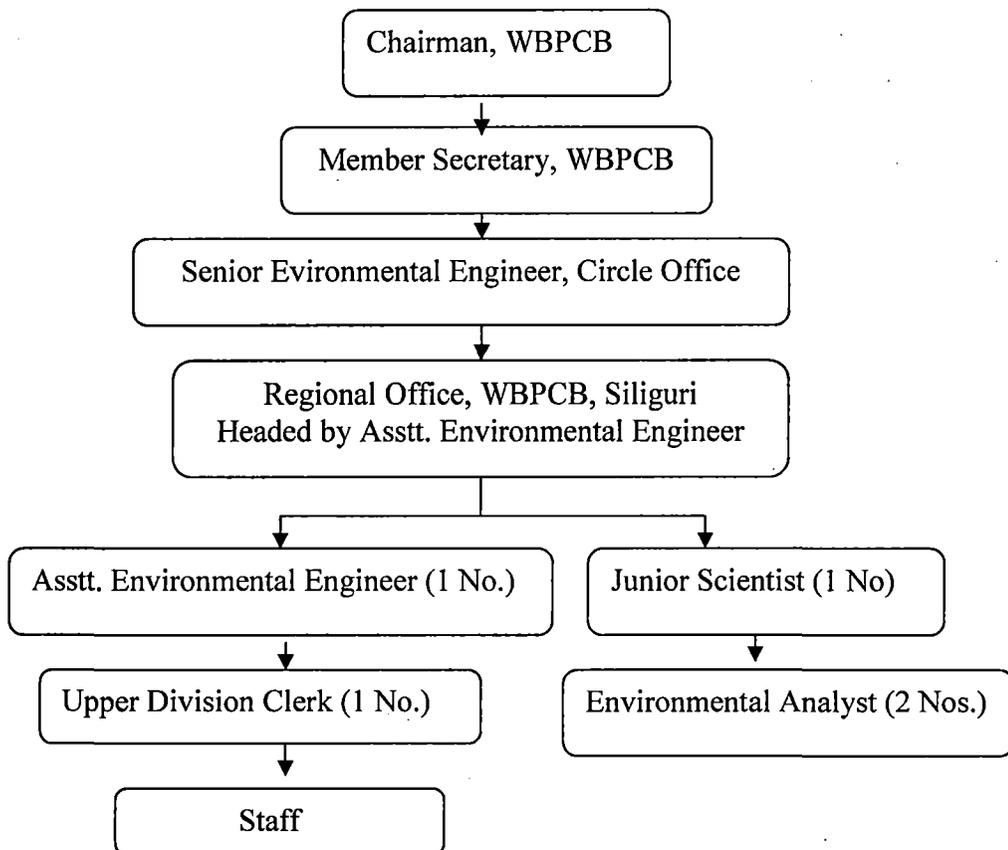
The West Bengal Pollution Control Board was constituted in 1974 and is responsible for implementing a series of environmental Acts and Rules, such as, The Water (Prevention and Control) of Pollution Act, 1974; The Air (Prevention and Control) of Pollution Act, 1981; The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and amendments and several Rules made there under; The West Bengal ground Water Resources (Management, Control and Regulation) Act, 2005; The West Bengal Trees (Protection and Conservation in Non-Forest Areas) Act, 2006; etc.

The main functions and responsibilities of the WBPCB are : (i) to plan comprehensive programme for, to advice the State Government on, to collect and disseminate information relating to, and to conduct and promote research relating to water and air pollution; (ii) to inspect sewage or trade effluents and to lay down specifications on sewage plants and water treatment plants; (iii) to evolve economical and reliable methods of treatment of sewage and trade effluents; (iv) to inspect whenever necessary industrial plants and manufacturing process; (v) to collaborate with CPCB in organizing training programmes and mass education programmes on water and air pollution; (vi) to control pollution in 17 categories of

highly polluting industries; (vii) to prepare inventorization of polluting industries; (viii) to manage municipal solid waste as well as bio-medical, plastic and hazardous wastes; (ix) to provide consent to establish, consent to operate and authorization for management of different types of wastes; and (x) to perform all other functions as may be prescribed by the CPCB or the State Government.

The Regional Office of WBPCB, Siliguri was established in January, 1998 to perform the above functions within its jurisdiction. The Organizational Chart of the Siliguri R.O. is as under:

Figure 4.6 : Organizational Structure of WBPCB, Siliguri R.O.



4.2.10 The General Problems facing SMC

The Siliguri Municipal Corporation has been confronting several problems which are creating bottlenecks in the development of infrastructure and provision of public services. Let us peep into some of them:

- (i) Paucity of Staff - Talking to several officials of the SMC, one thing that came out was the acute shortage of staff. The ratio of staff:citizen comes out to be 1:599 as per 2001 census and about 1:735 if the present estimated population of 5.8 lakhs is taken into account. However, these figures may be deceiving if the ratio is taken out section wise (where the actual specified work is done for the whole of Siliguri) which poses a serious challenge with regard to efficiency. The stress of overwork has its effects on the proper documentation of the previous and ongoing activities of the Corporation. As such, the Corporation has been at fault on several occasions in providing data not only to the interested persons for perusal but also to various government agencies.
- (ii) Need for Library and Documentation Centre – Taking clue from the above, there is an urgent need of a library and documentation section within the SMC. This will not only cater to the needs of perusal for the academicians, researchers, institutions and interested common citizens, but will also be helpful in easing the workload while providing data to the various government agencies. Further, such section has become necessary keeping into consideration the strict conditionalities (in particular with regard to data inputs) imposed by the Central Government in releasing ACA for various developmental and infrastructural projects. It is worth noting in this regard the statement of the Mayor in her Budget Speech, 2010-11, “We have taken initiative for setting up of a library of the Corporation where books, journals will be available for the Councillors, officers, employees of the Corporation and other interested persons and I have no doubt that all of us would be much benefitted after setting up of the same.” However, it is a big question mark as to when such initiative would become a reality and even if it gets opened, there are doubts as to its proper management and updating.

- (iii) Need for Augmentation of Own Financial Strength – Siliguri Municipal Corporation suffers from major financial crisis as far as its own resources are concerned. Besides the problems of timely recovery of arrears, inflated budget and populist budget as have been laid down in the earlier paragraphs, there have been instances of accounting gaps as well as diversion of funds. Audit Report (Civil) for the year ending 31st March, 2009 highlights diversion of funds meant for UIDSSMT Scheme. A total of Rs. 32.44 lakhs were diverted between February and December, 2008 for the construction of boundary wall of a building, erection of power transmission line, and purchase of equipment. Such wrath of audit reports can be avoided if serious attention is given towards the augmentation of its own resources. Scarcity of resources also has its adverse effects on the timely completion of the projects. After all, budget proposals are directly related to the aspirations of the people of Siliguri. As such, there is a need to blend in a proper manner populism and concern for genuine development on the one hand and serious effort to recover arrears on the other hand. Further, other measures of resource growth like issuance of municipal bonds, etc. should be contemplated for avoiding sole dependence on Central and State Governments for capital receipts. Moreover, such dependence limits the freedom of action of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation to provide public services in its own ‘milieu’ as it has to abide by the conditionalities of such capital receipts.
- (iv) Huge gap between Prescription and Description – The enormity of promises spelt out in the Budget Speeches amount virtually to utopianism in the backdrop of the financial and staff position. As a result, at the end of the financial year, the budget gets substantially revised, the capital works are half completed and the different public services end up patchy. Such uncontrolled budget formulations render them unreliable and as a result a huge gap is noticed between what is prescribed in the budget and what one actually sees in real ground situation.
- (v) Lack of Coordination between SMC and SJDA – Lack of coordination and arguments and counter-arguments between the Development

Authorities and the ULBs are evident everywhere. Though the problems between them generally lie under the carpet if the political parties following the same ideology are at the helm of affair at these two levels, the confrontation gets more pronounced when political parties following different ideology administers these two sets of institutions. As such, SMC and SJDA are no exception to the rule. On several occasions, such attitude has been witnessed through visual and print media briefs. This creates bottlenecks in the smooth functioning of both the institutions which are directly involved in the developmental aspects of Siliguri.

- (vi) Lack of Incentive to the Personnel – It has become customary in Budget Speeches to thank all staff members for cooperation in bringing about development of Siliguri. However, the SMC has not instituted any kind of incentive or annual awards based on the performance of personnel in different categories. This area needs to be looked into to instill urge among the staff members to optimize performance.
- (vii) Lack of much Attention on Urban Forestry – Social forestry / urban forestry in Siliguri suffers from adhocism, in particular, plantation of road side trees. The exercise of planting saplings on street sides have become a matter of occasions, such as, observance of forest week, World Environment Day, etc., thereby utterly lacking in post-plantation maintenance. As such, this very important sector for protecting and promoting environment require immediate attention. There is no separate MMIC for urban forestry in Siliguri as is present in other big cities like Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh, etc. Though MMIC, Conservancy and Environment is there but they are hard pressed with time to look into the matter with concerted effort as they are primarily engrossed with maintenance of sanitation in the city. Thus, neglect of this sector is not only environmentally harmful but is aesthetically displeasing.

4.3 GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SANITATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN SILIGURI

The Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India conducted a survey with respect to sanitation in Indian cities under NUSP during 2009-2010. The rating and categorization of cities was published on 10th May, 2010 which, of course, was later revised on the basis of inputs provided by the cities thereafter. Talking of Siliguri, the name of the agency which conducted the survey in the city was Development and Research Services Pvt. Limited, New Delhi. Siliguri was ranked 132 in terms of sanitation among 423 Class I cities surveyed securing a score of 38.597 out of a total point of 100. The performance of the city was measured on the basis of three objective indicators, namely, (i) Outputs-Related (a total of 50 marks); (ii) Processes-Related (a total of 30 marks); and (iii) Outcomes-Related (a total of 20 marks). The break-up of the scores of Siliguri in these categories were 13.167; 19.83; and 5.6 respectively. Later on, after revision of the ratings, Siliguri slipped one rank below to 133 as the score of Haldwani cum Kathgodam rose from 32.65 to 42.897. Among the cities of West Bengal, Siliguri stood 24th and among the cities/towns of North Bengal, it found itself on the 3rd spot after Darjeeling and Balurghat. In terms of categorization, the city was placed in the 'Black' category signifying the need for considerable improvements with regard to sanitation scenario of Siliguri.

There are host of issues that come under the purview of sanitation. In the main, they are (i) prohibition of open defecation; (ii) rehabilitation of manual scavengers; (iii) construction of individual toilets, community toilets, and public toilets; (iv) conversion of dry latrines into two-pit pour flush units; (v) proper sewerage system and reduction of ground water contamination; (vi) sewage treatment and reduction in pollution of water bodies; (vi) proper drainage system; (vii) regular cleaning of drains; (viii) regular street sweeping and washing; (ix) timely anti-mosquito measures through fogging/MLO spraying; (x) proper cesspool services; (xi) control over keeping of cattle and other animals within SMC area and sterilization of street dogs; (xii) regular food inspections at manufacturing units, markets, nursing homes, hotels, sweet shops, meat shops, etc.; and (xiii) proper solid waste management. Besides, it is also the responsibility of the authorities of SMC to create awareness among the populace on sanitation. It is

to be noted that the governance and management of municipal solid waste in Siliguri is differently patterned than those of other aspects of sanitation. Thus, it would be prudent to discuss the sanitation issue of Siliguri under two heads : (i) Sanitation in Siliguri excluding SWM; and (ii) Solid Waste Management in Siliguri

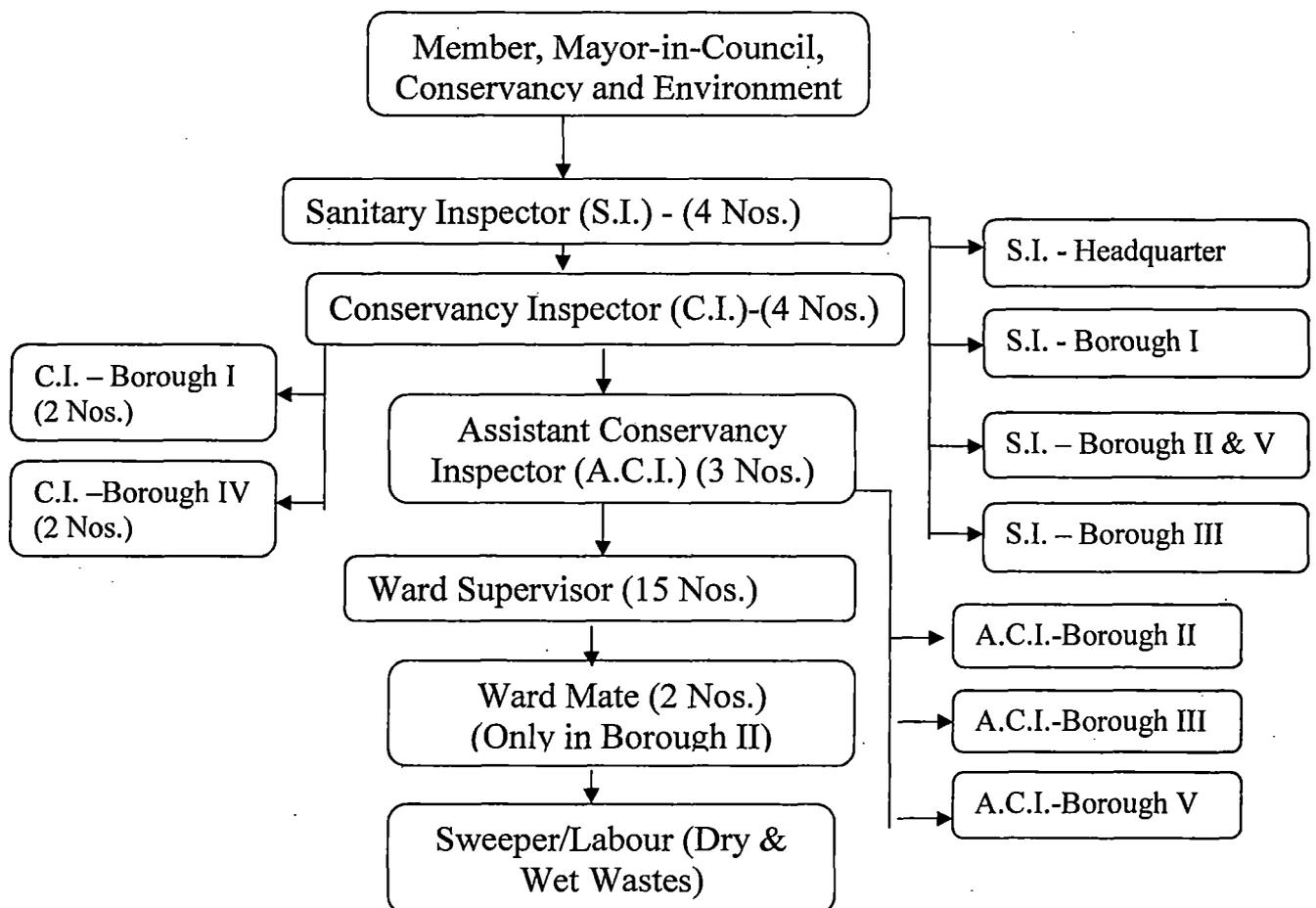
4.3.1 Sanitation in Siliguri excluding SWM

Both the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006 and the National Urban Sanitation Policy, 2008 act as the present basic guidelines for improving upon sanitation scenario of Siliguri. The WBMC Act deals with different aspects of sanitation under Sections 222-225 (drainage and sewerage); Sections 226-234 (drainage of premises); Sections 235-239 (privies, urinals, bathing and washing places); Sections 240-243 (cesspools and other filth receptacles); Section 300 (solid waste); and Sections 317-318 (food inspection). Besides, NUSP lays down as to what measures should be adopted to make the city totally sanitized, healthy and livable and ensure and sustain good public health and environmental outcomes for all their citizens with a special focus on hygienic and affordable sanitation facilities for the urban poor and women.

The following Figure 4.8 lay down the organizational structure for the governance and maintenance of sanitation in Siliguri. If one looks at the organizational structure of governance in sanitation in Siliguri, one would come across patchy workout at some levels and the structure lacks uniformity. In Borough IV, for instance, there is no Sanitary Inspector appointed to head the sanitary activities. As such, the sanitary works in this Borough is headed after by a Conservancy Inspector. Moreover, the chart reveals that there is no C.I. for the Boroughs II, III and V. On the other hand, Borough I and IV do not have any Asstt. Conservancy Inspector at present. Ward Mates have been found only in Borough II. As such, SMC has not maintained uniformity in its hierarchical structure with regard to governance in sanitation. However, some of the S.I.s and C.I.s revealed that the organizational structure is in the process of getting revamped to suit the provisions of the West Bengal Solid Waste Management Mission. The latter provides for 5 Sanitary Inspectors – one for each Borough – and 5 SWM Inspectors – one for each Borough.

4.3.1.1 Construction of individual toilets and community toilets, conversion of dry latrines into two-pit pour flush units and public toilets – The Central and the State Government initiated such effort in order to put an end to the unhealthy and degradable practice of manual scavenging of the night soil and providing alternative employment to the liberated scavengers. As such, the Central Government in 1993 passed the ‘Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993’ with the solemn resolve to completely eradicate manual scavenging from the country. Another purpose of such initiative was to stop the practice of open defecation.

Figure 4.8 : Organizational Structure of MIC, Conservancy and Environment, Siliguri Municipal Corporation



Source : Siliguri Municipal Corporation

In Siliguri, the Central Government sponsored ILCS Scheme started in 1986. To add to this, a state-sponsored programme 'Liberation of Scavenger Programme (LSP) also contributed in this regard. Under the latter, 1600 individual household two-pit latrines, 8 (4 seater) two-pit community latrines, and 10 two-pit latrines in pre-school education centre were constructed. (Ghosh et al 1994 : 201-202). On the other hand, a total of 12,547 low cost sanitation units were constructed under ILCS Scheme and a total 80 % of the slum dwellers were provided access to safe mode of sanitation due to this program. It was in the financial year 2008-09 that the Government of West Bengal announced that it had no dry latrines, implying that manual scavenging has effectively been abolished in Siliguri. However, it is to contend that though there is no existence of manual scavenging in Siliguri, open defecation, particularly on the riverbeds of the river Mahananda, continues unabated, thereby contributing immensely in the increase in water pollution of the river. Survey done by NUSP in early months of 2010 confirms prevalence of such practice. It goes to the credit of the SMC which got 4 out of 4 marks with regard to elimination of manual scavenging in the survey conducted. However, the general populace, in particular those residing in slum pockets let the efforts of SMC down in terms of use of toilets and not defecating in the open. In this category, Siliguri was awarded a poor 0.92 points out of the total of 8 points. Thus, the onus falls majorly on the shoulders of the common people to improve the sanitation scenario of the city with respect to use of individual and community toilets and avoid defecating in the open.

Though ILCS Scheme has ended in Siliguri but the slum population is growing with every passing year. The way out is the construction of as many community toilets as possible. This has been rightly given due attention in DPRs of IHSDP. However, with regard to public toilets in public places, SMC seems to be lagging behind. The authority has to take note of the fact that every day thousands of daily commuters and tourists visit the place and it is extremely necessary to have such facilities in substantial numbers, in particular, in places like bus stops, taxi stands, parking areas and markets. The women folk specially suffer in absence of such facilities. Moreover, urinating on road sides in public places does not provide a pleasing site as well as it goes against the principle of proper sanitation. It is surprising to note in this regard that within Borough II where the commercial hub of Siliguri is situated, there are only 5 such community toilets – 3 maintained

by the SMC and 2 by the Sulabh International. However, two other such toilets are under construction.

Though the SMC has taken steps to construct three Sulabh Complexes – near Kanchanjungha Stadium, Air View Hotel and Jalpai More – on PPP basis in the financial year 2010-11, the efforts are not enough considering the enormity of the problem. One real problem facing the SMC in this regard is the availability of land (SMC 2011-11).

Another area where the sanitation standard needs to be improved is in educational institutions. Generally, the cleanliness of urinals and toilets in schools and colleges are invariably neglected. It is absolutely essential that this aspect is given immediate attention. It is in the schools that the mind and thought process of the future decision makers are shaped. Thus, in order to have marked effect on the society as a whole, the improvement in the hygiene of the schools is the prerequisite. The Perspective Plan (2004) suggests that all schools and colleges may be instructed to maintain cleanliness of toilets and urinals and the sanitary inspector may impose strict fines on flouting the rules by erring school and college authorities.

Functions, fairs and large gatherings are regular features of this city. After such events end, the area emanates foul smell due to urinating as well as defecation in the makeshift urinals and toilets. In some gatherings, even those are absent. Siliguri Municipal Corporation should consider purchasing ‘mobile toilet vehicles’ and give those on rent for such functions, fairs and gatherings. This way, the sanitation scenario of the city can be substantially improved.

4.3.1.2 Sewerage System and Sewage Treatment - Presently, the city of Siliguri does not have any kind of sewerage system. The unplanned growth of the town, illegal constructions and mushrooming of slum and squatter pockets made it rather impossible for the SMC to go for a planned and concerted effort towards proper sewerage system. In the absence of any formal sewerage system, generally it is the septic tank which is used for the disposal of human excreta and other waters. As such, though in the underground tank the solids get digested by various bacteria and get transformed into sludge, there is all possibility of contamination of ground water with the liquid portion overflowing into a soak-pit from where it seeps into the ground. However, one of the area stressed upon in the Budget of 2010-2011 is taking up of construction of underground sewerage system in

consultation of the experts. Hopefully, Siliguri may see formal sewerage system becoming a reality in near future.

It is not only the ground water that is threatened with contamination but rivers Mahananda, Phuleswari, Jorapani and Panchonai which cuts through the city, too, are victims of water pollution. The study conducted under Mahananda Action Plan showed concern over the discharge of untreated wastewater effluents in the rivers, primarily through storm water drains which leads to water pollution of the rivers in a major way (Ref. Perspective Plan). The figure of the survey conducted by Central Pollution Control Board show that the total sewage generated in Siliguri in 2005-06 was 63.5 MLD and majority of this got disposed in the Mahananda river (CPCB 2005-06). However, the NRCD has put the figures at 59 MLD. Moreover, the defecation by the slum dwellers and squatters on the river beds, too, contribute to the water pollution in the rivers.

In this regard, SMEC India Pvt. Ltd. prepared the 'Detailed Project Report for Conservation of River Mahananda & other major Streams at Siliguri town' in 2003 for SJDA. In its Mahananda River Conservation Plan (MRCP) Report, suggestion was made for laying of trunk sewer lines intersecting the surface drains and directing the effluent to sewage treatment plants before discharging the flow to the river Mahananda. The sewer lines were proposed in the Report to run more or less parallel to the river Mahananda along its left and right banks. With regard to Jorapani and Phuleswari streams which were virtually transformed into sewage drains, the DPR suggested intercepting the flow for treatment through an STP and releasing it back to their course. The STPs in the Report were designed on the basis of an immediate design capacity (for year 2015) and an ultimate design capacity (year 2035).

On the basis of the DPR submitted by the SJDA, National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD), Government of India agreed to fund the works related to Mahananda Action Plan in order to enhance the Mahananda River water quality to Class 'C' Category of Inland Surface Water Quality as per Central Pollution Control Board specifications. In other words, the water quality will be made fit enough for outdoor bathing and as sources for water supply. The STPs has been proposed to comprise screening chamber, collection sump, sewage pumping, anaerobic pond and facultative pond.

Table 4.9. : Quantity of Effluent Disposed in Rivers of Siliguri

Name of the Rivers/Place (1)	Quantity of Effluent Disposed (MLD) (2)	Wards Nos. Disposing Effluent (3)
Drains on Southern Side of River Mahananda	8	46, 45, 2, 3, 1
Drains on Left Side of River Mahananda	21	42, 43, 44, 10, 4, 5, 31
Drains on the Sides of Rivers Phuleswari & Jorapani	30	15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 19, 29, 24, 30, 35, 34, 39, 38, 37, 36

Source : SJDA

The components of MRCP consists of (i) Interception and Diversion (I&D) Plan; (ii) Main Pumping Station (MPS) Plan; (iii) Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Plan ; and (iv) River Front Development (RFD) Plan. These activities are proposed to be completed in three Phases. Tables 4.10 and 4.11 lay down the details of STPs and the financial and physical status of the plan.

Table 4.10 : The Description of the STPs

Name of the STP (1)	Capacity of the STP (2)	Amount of Land Required(in Acres) (3)	Annual O&M Expenditure(in lakhs) (4)	
STP-1	Immediate Design Capacity (2015)	8	29	8
	Ultimate Design Capacity (2035)	13	38	5.5
STP-2	Immediate Design Capacity (2015)	21	31.5	4.5
	Ultimate Design Capacity (2035)	29	42	6
STP-3	Immediate Design Capacity (2015)	30	85	15
	Ultimate Design Capacity (2035)	45	115	22.5

Source : SJDA

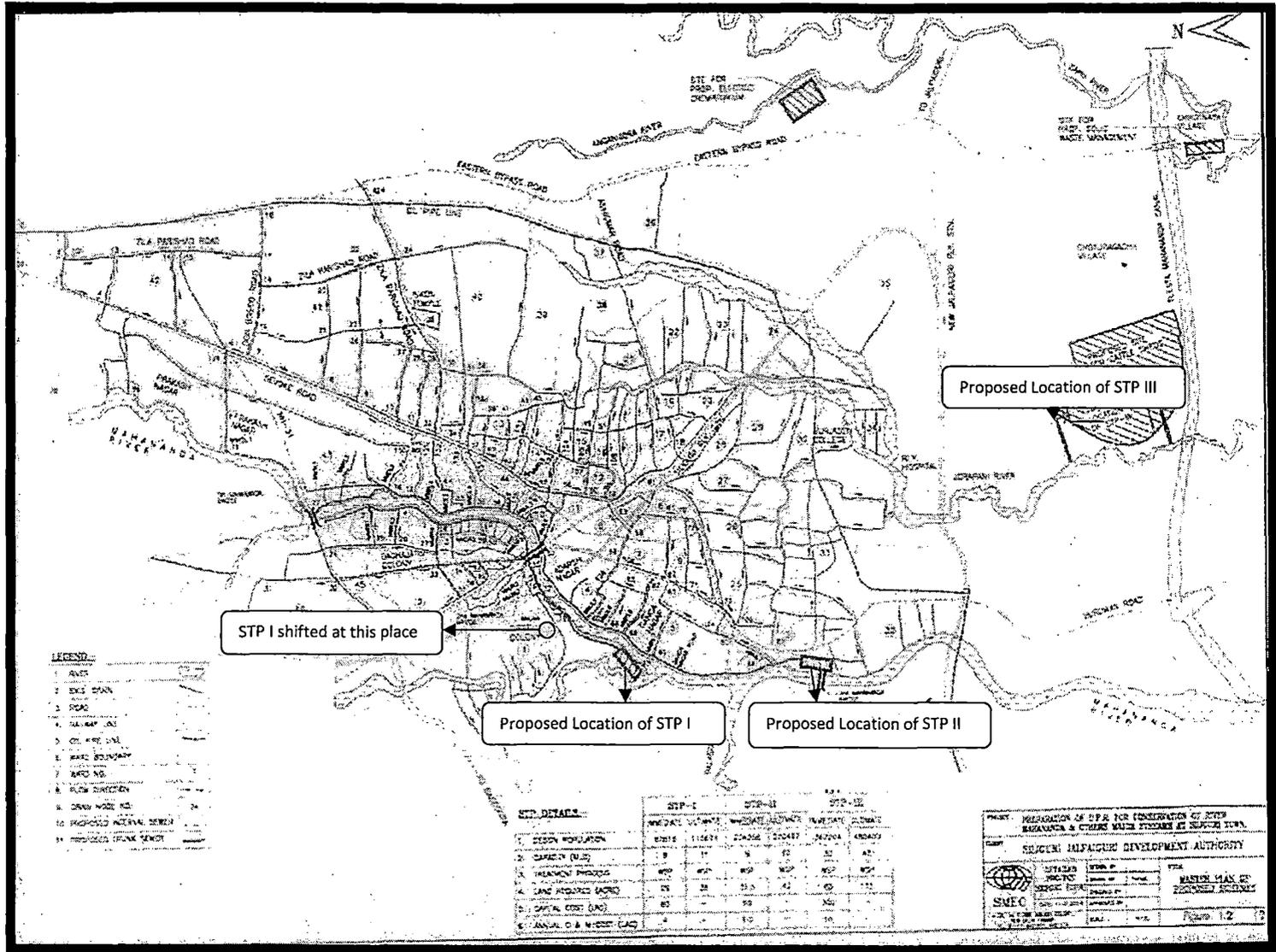
Table 4.11 : Financial and Physical Status of MRCP

Phases of MRCP	Total Amount Sanctioned (in Rs.lakhs)	NRCD, GOI Share	Govt. of West Bengal Share	Works to be Undertaken		Physical Status as on March, 2010
Phase 1	4039	2827.3	1211.7	I&D	South side of River Mahananda	2.5km.completed out of 3.5 km.
					Left Side of River Mahananda	3.5km. completed out of 6km
				STP	STP-1(South side ofMahananda)	Tender Process in progress
					STP-2(Left Side of Mahananda)	50% work completed
					STP-3(Left side of Jorapani)	90% work completed
				RFD	South side of River Mahananda	In Progress
					Left Side of River Mahananda	In Progress
On the sides of Rivers Jorapani& Phuleswari	In Progress					
Phase 2	1449	1014.3	434.7	I & D on both sides of River Jorapani (11 Km.) and on both sides of River Phuleswari (6 Km.)		Work in progress at different places on the sides of the Rivers
Phase 3	4039 (Demand as per DPR)	-	-	Linings, Desiltation and RFD of Rivers Jorapani, Phuleswari and Panchonai		DPR Submitted

Source : SJDA

However, in course of implementation of MRCP, the SJDA has been facing various problems, in particular related to acquiring land both for the purpose of I&D and STP. For instance, in case of I&D, it has become extremely difficult to lay down sewer lines between Mahananda Bridge at Hill Cart Road and STP at Nouka Ghat due to the mushrooming of illegal structures and hutments in the way. In the similar vein, the original selection of land for the construction of STP-1 was Patiram. However, due to the resistance by encroachers out there, the venue was ultimately shifted near Diesel Loco Shed. All this led to the delay in the implementation of the project. Similar problems are being faced with regard to STP-2 as well as River Development Plan. Nonetheless, the Mahananda River Conservation Plan seems to be dream come true for the city of Siliguri as far as sanitation scenario is concerned.

Mahananda River Conservation Plan (Source: MRCP, SJDA)



4.3.1.3 Drainage System

The Outline Development Plan, 1986 prepared by SJDA maintains that “The uneven topography of the Terai region with heavy rainfall during monsoon and absence of proper drainage system create serious water-logging problem in the ODP area. The three rivers viz., Mahananda, Fuleswari and Jorapani serve as natural outlet in the Siliguri-Dabgram urban area; but the internal drainage system do not serve as proper links. They are not maintained according to sound public health engineering standards.

A nominal drainage system is in existence within the municipal areas; there is not even minimum drainage system in the urbanizing peripheral areas. Moreover the municipal effluents get discharged into downstream areas intensifying the problems further. The comprehensive drainage scheme for the urban and urbanizing area being prepared by the LGUD and NBFC Commission require to be implemented early.”

As such, the drainage system of Siliguri was poor at the time of its constitution as the Corporation. However, slowly and gradually, the situation got improved. At present, the total length of drains in Siliguri is approximately 910 kms. (272 km. pucca and 638 km. kutch) The main funding agencies for construction of surface drains and storm water drains have been UIDSSMT, BRGF and SJDA. Besides, SMC has been using its own fund for the purpose. The works related to drainage system sanctioned in the near past and have been completed or are in progress are laid down in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 : Drainage Works within SMC Area

Funding Agency	Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in Lakhs)	Year	Wards/Areas Covered	Status (As on March, 2010)
UIDSSMT (ACA being 80% of the Total Cost)	3386.39	2007-08	All except 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 23 & 32	75 Kms. completed out of total of 80.775 Kms.
BRGF	55.70	2007-08	33, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40	3.308 Kms. proposed and completed
	66.19	2009-10 (Upto Dec.'09)	31-44	Work completed

	125.00 (Proposed)	2010-11	31-44 (To be covered)	-
SJDA (Under Plans & Schemes)	11.83	2007-08	Khanik Sangha More to Jorapani Bridge	Work Completed
	7.91	2008-09	RUB near IOCI	Work Completed
SJDA (Under UUP)	90.00	2010-11	Saradapally	Proposal sent to UUP

Sources : Annual Report, SMC, 2007-08; SMC Budget, 2010-11; Annual Report, SJDA, 2009-10.

One of the major problems facing most of the drains in Siliguri is their loss of capacities due to the irresponsible behavior of common public like throwing garbage, plastics, etc. in the drains instead of specified garbage collection bins. Another problem is the rapid urbanization of Siliguri resulting in construction of residential and commercial units in much of the open fields, plots and ponds. This has affected the rainwater falling over the surface and getting absorbed directly into the ground. Rather, due to urban development, a large amount of water is being directed to the drains, thereby resulting in the increase in the volume of the flow. Thus, though a lot is being done by the SMC and SJDA with regard to drainage system, future planning should incorporate a scientific review on the sizes and slopes of the drains keeping in mind the undulating topography of the areas within SMC.

4.3.1.4 Street Sweeping and Cleaning of Drains

There is no PPP mode in operation with regard to cleaning of streets and drains in Siliguri. The whole exercise is owned by the SMC itself. The coverage is claimed to be 100 percent. The officials associated with sanitation maintained that while street sweeping is done on a daily basis, cleaning of sludge and other rubbish from the drains is done on a weekly basis. Sweeping approximately 1400 kms. of roads (pucca, semi pucca and kutchha) (Pourbarta 2010) and cleaning approximately 910 kms. of drains (both 272 km. pucca and 638 km. kutchha) falling within SMC area are far beyond the capacity of the permanent sweepers. As such, a huge number of temporary (both casual and man-days) sweepers and labourers have been employed for this purpose. Though the Ward Councillor and the Ward Committee employs the temporary sweepers/labourers, the payment is done through the respective Boroughs and the salary/wages are reimbursed by the SMC.

There are 265 (approximately) nos. of hand driven carts and 94 nos. of cycle-vans (as of 30.11.2010) employed for the purpose of sweeping and cleaning. Besides, the SMC owns a motorized and automated vacuum cleaner for the purpose of sweeping the arterial roads. With respect to the use of safety equipments by the sanitary workers, it was found during field survey that none of the workers were using them. The S.I.s and C.I.s, who were interviewed confirmed the findings of the field survey, but at the same time maintained that such equipments are provided by the Corporation. The obvious question, then, arises as to why the sanitary workers are not dictated upon to use them.

However, with regard to cleaning of drains in the city, one paradoxical situation is generally observed. The sludges in the drains are cleaned and are kept on the side of the roads, thereby making the roads dirty. Before those are finally transported to their destination, the dirt in the form of sludge gets spread all over the road by the passing by vehicles making the sight very unpleasing and the place unhygienic. To spread dirt in order to clean one is not at all a noble practice on the part of SMC. This practice should be stopped immediately. The proper method would be to transfer the sludge from the drains directly in to the hand cart or cycle-van provided for the purpose.

4.3.1.5 Anti-mosquito measures through fogging/MLO spraying

The chocked drains at several places, the heaps of garbage on road sides, the irregular cleaning of drains at many places result in the growth of mosquitoes. However, there is no regularity maintained in terms of fogging/MLO spraying. The good sign in this respect is that in the last financial year, the SMC has purchased 3 small sized fogging machines which will hopefully strengthen anti-mosquito measures in Siliguri.

4.3.1.6 Cesspool Service

This service is rendered to the rate-payers with the help of 7 nos. cesspool vehicles owned by the SMC – 2 for headquarters and 1 each for the five borough offices. Besides, one cesspool vehicle is privately owned by the Baba Ambedkar Sanitary Mart but maintained by the Corporation. All the vehicles have the capacity of 6,000 litres. The maximum number of trips allowed per day per vehicle

has been fixed at three. The charges for this service are (i) General – Rs. 400/-; (ii) Tatkal – Rs. 700/-; and (iii) BPL Family – Rs. 150/-.

Though the maximum number of trips has been fixed at three per day per vehicle, there are instances of illegal trips as have been highlighted during survey. These trips are not entered at the disposal site in lieu of some financial benefits. The sanitary workers associated with cesspool services have their own justified answer when queried about this. Their argument lies in the fact that they are paid a paltry consolidated salary of Rs. 3,200/- per month which is not enough for running their family. The Sanitary Inspectors and the SMC should find out a judicious solution to this so that such illegal trips can be stopped and the financial losses of the SMC can be tapped.

4.3.1.7 Control over keeping of Cattle and other Animals within SMC area and Sterilization of Street Dogs

The illegal cow sheds or khatalas on the banks of the Mahananda River are one of the polluting agencies of the river. On several occasions, notices have been served to the khatal owners to vacate the place by the Irrigation Department and several times, the SMC has swirled into action for the eviction of illegal khatalas and their owners as a step to beautify the river front and to check flow of pollutants into the river. However, on every occasion, the exercise ended up half-hearted due to the protests under the banner of some Committee. Besides, political considerations and compulsions also helped dampening the move. As such, one may notice khatalas lining the river Mahananda even today. It may be noted that the Mahananda River Conservation Plan (MRCP), too, suggests effective measures for relocation of these cattle sheds and the blue print of this Plan has included construction of such cattle shed near STP III on the side of Jorapani-Phuleswari rivers.

With regard to sterilization of street stray dogs, the SMC in collaboration with a local organization Animal Link has sterilized 39 such dogs in the financial 2009-10 at the Dog Sterilization Centre of SMC. Though this programme is continuing even in this financial year, but the exact figures are not available. One of the problems encountered by the SMC is the lack of trained personnel for capturing stray dogs. There is, thus, the need to train SMC's dog-catchers and volunteers on the finer points of catching them without harming either the dogs or themselves. Besides, there is also the Siliguri Chapter of the People For Animals

(PFA), a national animal rights' group formed by Maneka Gandhi, which strives to provide care to ill animals as well as home for the strays in the city.

One positive proposal in the budget of the financial year 2010-11 is the construction of a modern abattoir in Siliguri as per guidelines and with the assistance of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, GOI.

4.3.1.8 Regular food inspections at manufacturing units, markets, nursing homes, hotels, sweet shops, meat shops, etc.

Though there is no available data with the researcher to show as to the number of times food inspections have been conducted this financial year, but the general observation at the sweet shops, meat shops, hotels and, in particular, the road side eateries do suggest lack of efforts on the part of SMC in this aspect.

4.3.2 Solid Waste Management in Siliguri

Though Section 2 of the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006 which deals with definitions of various terms used in other parts of the Act, does not exactly lay down the definition of the term 'solid waste', but definitions laid down for terms 'filth' (Sub-section 37); 'offensive matter' (Sub-section 69); and 'rubbish' (Sub-section 89) may be taken as the meaning of municipal solid waste. Besides, the definition of the term 'trade refuse' (Sub-section 103) may mean commercial waste, bio-medical waste and hazardous waste. By the definition laid down, filth includes offensive matter (and sewage); offensive matter includes animal carcass, kitchen or stable refuse, dung, dirt and putried or putrefying substance other than sewage; rubbish means ashes, broken bricks, broken glass, dust, malba, mortar, plastic bags and refuse of any kind which is not filth; and trade refuse means the refuse of any trade or industry.

The collection, removal and disposal of solid waste are dealt with under Section 300 of Chapter XVI of Part VIII of the West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006. However, the 7 Sub-sections of Section 300 of the Act are of general in nature and do not lay down the details for the management of municipal solid waste.

The collection, segregation, storage, transportation, processing and disposal of municipal solid waste generated within Siliguri Municipal Corporation area

mandatorily require the application of rules detailed out in the Municipal Solid Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000 which was enacted by the Ministry of Environment, GOI in exercise of the powers conferred by Sections 3, 6 and 25 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (Act 29 of 1986).

Besides the household, institutional and commercial waste which are to be managed and handled by the above mentioned Act and Rules, there is generation of a large quantity of bio-medical wastes within SMC area due to the presence of a large number of institutions generating bio-medical waste which include hospitals, nursing homes, clinic dispensaries, veterinary institutions, animal houses, pathological laboratories and blood banks. The collection, receipt, storage, transportation, treatment, disposal or handling of such wastes mandatorily require to follow the Bio-Medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998 and the three amendments made there under – twice in 2000 and once in 2003. These Rules were also enacted by the Ministry of Environment, GOI in accordance with the powers conferred by Sections 3, 6 and 25 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (Act 29 of 1986).

Another type of wastes which are generated particularly from the industrial and manufacturing units are known as hazardous wastes and the management of such wastes are done following the Hazardous Waste (Management, Handling and Trans-boundary Movement) Rules, 2008 repealing the earlier Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1989 and the amendments made thereupon in 2000 and 2003. The present rules are more practical and effective in implementation. Though there are very few such industrial and manufacturing units within the SMC area and need to be managed under the mentioned Rules to prevent environmental pollution, yet it is not directly related to the study as municipal solid waste includes basically household, commercial, institutional, construction and demolition and municipal service wastes as well as treated bio-medical waste. However, it may be noted that some wastes generated from industrial and processing units, such as, housekeeping wastes, packaging, food wastes, construction and demolition materials are to be treated as municipal solid wastes and to be handled as per MSW (Management & Handling) Rules, 2000 by the SMC authority. On the other hand, some hazardous wastes generated from households, commercial, institutional and medical establishments are to be dealt separately under the Hazardous Waste (Management, Handling and Trans-boundary Movement) Rules, 2008 by the SMC authority. Besides, the plastics are

regulated by the Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999 as amended in 2003. Further, the used batteries are managed and handled under the Batteries (Management and Handling) Rules, 2001.

The following Table 4.13 lays down the types of solid wastes generated within SMC area:

Table 4.13 Sources and Types of Solid Waste within SMC Area

Source (1)	Typical Waste Generators (2)	Types of Solid Waste (3)
Residential	Single and Multifamily Dwellings	Food Wastes, Papers, Cardboards, Plastics, Textiles, Leather, Yard Wastes, Woods, Glasses, Metals, Ashes, (Household hazardous wastes and Special wastes(i.e., Bulky items, consumer electronics, battery, oils, tyres, etc). (The last two items are dealt separately and not included under MSW)
Commercial	Stores, Hotels, Restaurants, Markets, Office buildings, etc.	Papers, Cardboards, Plastics, Woods, Food wastes, Glasses, Metals, Hazardous wastes and Special wastes (The last two items are dealt separately and not included under MSW)
Institutional	Schools, Hospitals, Prisons, Government centres	Same as commercial
Construction and demolition	New construction sites, Road repair, Renovation sites, Demolition of buildings	Woods, Steels, Concretes, Dirts, etc.
Municipal Service	Street cleaning, Landscaping, Parks, Beaches, Other recreational areas, Water and waste water treatment plants	Street sweepings, Landscape and tree trimmings, General wastes from parks, Beaches, Other recreational areas, Sludge
Industrial	Light and Heavy Manufacturing, Fabrication, Construction Sites, Power and Chemical Plants	Housekeeping wastes, Packaging, Food wastes, Construction and demolition materials, Hazardous wastes, Ashes, Special wastes (The last three items are dealt separately and not included under MSW)
Process	Heavy and light manufacturing, Refineries, Chemical plants, Power plants, Mineral extraction, and Processing	Industrial process wastes, Scrap materials, Off-specification products, Slag, Tailings (All the items are dealt separately and not included under MSW)
Bio-Medical	hospitals, nursing homes, clinic dispensaries, veterinary institutions, animal houses, pathological laboratories and blood banks	Human anatomical wastes, animal wastes, Microbiology and Biotechnology wastes, Waste Sharps, Discarded Medicines and Cytotoxic Drugs, Soiled, Solid, Liquid and Chemical Wastes, Incineration Ash (The treated wastes are included under MSW)

4.3.2.1 The Studies on SWM in Siliguri - The Siliguri Municipal Corporation is the agency in whom the management and handling of municipal solid waste within the SMC area is entrusted. As far as 'municipal solid waste' is concerned, the Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000 lays down that it includes residential, institutional and commercial wastes generated within the area in either solid or semi-solid form excluding industrial hazardous waste but including treated bio-medical wastes.

It was in the early years of this decade that a study, the Mahananda River Corporation Plan (MRCP), was undertaken by SMEC India (Pvt. Ltd.) for SJDA. Though this study primarily focused on and addressed upon the improvement of water quality of the river Mahananda and the streams Jurapani and Fuleswari, it also laid down some useful suggestions on SWM for the town of Siliguri.

Thereafter, another study was undertaken on SWM under the auspices of the United States Asia Environmental Partnership (US-AEP) Programme of United States Agency of International Development (USAID).

In February, 2004, the Department of Architecture and Regional Planning, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur came out with the 'Perspective Plan 2025 : Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area'. This two volume compendium was prepared for Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority and the study was funded by the United Nations Children's Fund. The first volume deals with the 'Status Report' and the second one with the 'Proposals'. Though the study encompasses a wide spectrum of developmental activities covering a wide space – both urban and rural falling within Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area, it does throw some valuable insights on SWM practices in Siliguri and as to how those may be improved upon.

4.3.2.2 Governance and Management of MSW in Siliguri

The Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000 has laid down in details as to how to manage MSW properly. Accordingly, it has laid down compliance criteria and implementation schedules. In case of Siliguri, however, the implementation schedules have not been strictly complied with. The solid waste management in Siliguri took off as late as January, 2006 much behind the schedule laid down in the Act. Moreover, initially, the mission was launched in some of the wards on a pilot basis and thereafter, gradually it covered other wards

of the city. The governance and management patterns at different levels are handled by different institutions and agencies. Siliguri Municipal Corporation is responsible for the capital investment for the purchase and development of primary collection system, secondary storage facilities and transportation of the MSW to the disposal site. Besides, SMC is also responsible for fixing conservancy charges.

The house-to-house collection of MSW is the responsibility of the Ward Solid Waste Management Committee. Every Ward in the city (except Ward No. 47 where such system is not in operation) has such Committee and the membership varies from 15 to 25 depending on the population of the Ward. It is the responsibility of the Ward SWM Committee to employ the sanitary workers for house-to-house collection of household wastes; employ collectors for collection of conservancy charges; and arrange for the payment of sanitary workers and charge collectors from the conservancy charges that are collected from the Ward. The job of sanitary workers is to transfer the collected garbage at the designated secondary storage facilities.

The SMC is responsible for the transfer of the MSW from the secondary storage site to the trenching ground through tractors and dumpers. Besides, the Corporation also transports street sweeping wastes, sludge from drains and septic tanks, green waste, debris and construction wastes, littered garbage on the roadside to the disposal site through employing its own trucks as well as hired trucks.

The biological processing of waste is done on a PPP mode and for the purpose of producing organic compost from bio-degradable waste, a Manure Compost Plant has been set up at the SMC Trenching Ground nere Don Bosco School in association with M/S Hindustan Jayba Rasayan , Kanchrapara, West Bengal. Further, recyclable and dry waste is being collected by North Bengal Plastic Federation from the Trenching Ground with the sale price being Rs. 3.50 per kg. (Ref. MIC, Conservancy and Sanitation, SMC)

4.3.2.3 Facts and Figures on MSW Management in Siliguri

The Siliguri Municipal Corporation area generates waste garbage to the tune of 450 mt. on an average daily basis at present. However, the quantity of waste exceeds during the season of cauliflower, pineapple etc. and during festivals. They originate from residential areas (household garbage, waste food, eatables, etc.); commercial areas (discarded packaging from shops, waste food from eateries,

waste generated from vegetable, fruit and fish markets, etc.); and treated bio-medical waste. The garbage is collected from the 11 (eleven) listed markets (D.I.Fund Market and Bidhan Market are cleared by contract system regularly), Cinema Houses (8 nos.), hospitals (4 nos. including T.B. Hospital), nursing homes (33 nos.), 50-60 nos. pathological laboratories, bus terminus, regulated market (fish, vegetable, fruit, potato & onion), hotels and restaurants (approx. 200 nos.). Besides, the Corporation is providing 'Night Conservancy Service' on the main arterial roads, viz., Hill Cart Road, Bidhan Road, Sevoke Road and Bidhan Market areas. This service is likely to be introduced in some other congested areas like Naya Bazar, Khalpara, Vivekananda Road, S.F. Road, Bus Terminus area and some other Commercial areas (www.siligurismc.com).

Under the solid waste management mission, the Corporation has introduced the 'Poly Bag System' in all the 47 wards with the purpose of house to house collection of solid wastes. Under this scheme, two poly bags – one green coloured for bio-degradable waste and another black coloured for non bio-degradable waste – were distributed to each household on payment of Rs. 50/- so that organic and inorganic waste could be segregated at the level of household itself. However, from the number of sale of the poly-bags (only 60881 households out of total of 96496 households in SMC Area), it is clear that nearly 40% of the households are not participating in the mission following rules.

Efforts are also on to segregate the plastic and recyclable materials at the doorsteps involving the rag pickers. With that end in view a number of meetings have been held with Paschim Banga Vigyan Mancha and North Bengal Plastic Federation (NBPF). However, as of now, nothing concrete has materialized. The financial facts and figures related to Municipal Solid Waste Management in Siliguri are laid down in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 : Financial Status of Siliguri Municipal Corporation with regard to

Conservancy

Particulars (1)		2007-08 (Actuals) (2)	2008-09 (Actuals) (3)	2009-10		2010-11 (Proposed Budget Estimates) (6)
				2009-10 (Actuals for 9 months upto Dec.'09) (4)	2009-10 (Revised Budget Estimates) (5)	
Revenue Receipts from Conservancy (Own Sources)	Garbages Cleaning Charges	1,892,087	1,672,414	1,793,952	1,950,000	2,000,000
	Cleaning of Septic Tank	1,322,039	1,626,780	1,410,755	1,900,000	2,000,000
	Special Conservancy Charges	567,232	497,945	505,100	510,000	750,000
	Debris Cleaning Charges	756,230	1,102,442	486,358	725,000	1,500,000
	TOTAL	4,537,588	4,899,581	4,196,165	5,085,000	6,250,000
Total Revenue Receipts from Own Sources (Tax Revenue + Non Tax Revenue)		104,340,271	132,281,358	95,858,925	123,318,000	255,426,000
Percentage of Revenue Receipts from Conservancy to Total Revenue Receipts from Own Sources		4	3.70	4.38	4.12	2.45
Revenue Expenditure on Conservancy	Establishment	-	65,487,324	68,563,562	93,535,000	102,400,000
	Maintenance	-	21,289,329	16,997,954	24,531,000	53,606,000
	Miscellaneous	-	192,102	77,233	125,000	300,000
	TOTAL	-	86,968,755	85,638,749	118,191,000	156,306,000
Total Revenue Receipts : Own Sources (TR+NTR) + Govt. Sources (S&T+GG) + Other Sources		269,116,593	282,510,309	258,270,437	371,757,000	595,985,000
Total Revenue Expenditure		-	250,623,410	253,353,799	371,034,000	525,117,000
Percentage of Revenue Expenditure on Conservancy to Total Revenue Expenditure		-	35	34	32	30
Revenue Receipts from Conservancy '>or<'Revenue Expenditure on Conservancy		-	<82,069,174	<81,422,584	<113,106,000	<150,056,000
Total Capital Expenditure on		-	16,433,113	6,093,878	10,500,000	15,250,000

Conservancy					
Total Expenditure on Conservancy (Revenue + Capital)	34,443,376	103,401,868	91,732,627	128,741,000	171,556,000
Total Receipts of SMC (Revenue + Capital + Extraordinary& Debt)	737,356,934	708,839,435	645,097,806	887,060,500	1,812,388,000
Total Expenditure of SMC (Revenue + Capital + Extraordinary& Debt)	564,497,717	703,744,602	566,296,435	887,375,000	1,828,845,000
Percentage of Total Expenditure on Conservancy to Total Expenditure of SMC	6.1	15	16	15	9

Sources : Budgets of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11; Annual Report of SMC, 2007-08

4.3.2.4 The Future Plans with regard to Municipal Solid Waste Management in Siliguri

The existing dumping ground which is situated about 8 kms. from the centre of the city near Baikunthapur Forest (landmark being Don Bosco School and falling under Ward Nos. 41 and 42) has an area of 28 acres. However, only approximately 20 acres are being used for the purpose of disposal of garbage as the remaining portion has been encroached upon. As of now, this dumping ground is filled to the optimum level. Keeping the situation in mind, the SJDA undertook a study way back in 2003 for setting up a compost plant and landfill site at Putimari near Sahudangi in Binnaguri Mouza, some 10 Kms. away from the city. A detailed 'Project Report' was prepared in this regard and submitted for authorization to the WBPCB. The latter has already approved the project and has sanctioned a grant of Rs. 25 lakhs for the same. The area of this new site is proposed to have 35 acres and 19.67 acres of land at the site has already been purchased and registered (SMC 2010-11). For the purpose of setting up a solid waste processing plant at the venue, expression of interested and reputed organizations has already been obtained through tender by SJDA and final selection is in process. However, despite acquisition of land in 2004, nothing concrete has progressed and the land is still lying vacant primarily owing to the opposition of the local populace.

According to one of the press briefs of SMC, as only 30% of the garbage is used for producing fertilizers, the rest organic waste can be burnt to generate an estimated 5 to 7 mw power which would help save the civic body Rs. 7 to 9 lakh

per month which is paid as electricity bills for street lights and pumping stations. As such, the Corporation on 26.03.2008 endorsed the proposal of the West Bengal Renewable Energy Development Agency for setting up of a power generation plant for generation of power from municipal waste. For the purpose of the project, the SMC identified a 13 acre plot at Putimari near Sahudangi in Rajganj block. According to the then MMIC (Conservancy), the SMC would donate 13 acres of land and set up infrastructure like boundary wall, housing for employees, drainage, road, electrification and water. It was decided that the Agency would provide technical assistance in the generation of power. However, the power generation is yet to take off.

The present incumbent of MIC (Conservancy and Environment), SMC, in a press release on 05.11.2009., had announced launching of awareness campaigns for the residents of Siliguri on the systematic disposal of waste. For the purpose, decision was taken to distribute CDs to all 47 Ward Councillors, who, in turn, will show them in their wards using LCD projectors and other audio-visual mechanisms to the residents. The CDs would contain information and guidelines on waste disposal and proper collection of garbage. The content of the documentary would be 'dos' and 'don'ts' for the residents on conservancy, guidelines for collecting garbage, the necessity of solid waste management and how a resident can help civic employees dispose the waste (The Telegraph 2009). However, the survey of the people on the issue reveal that no respondent ever got to see any such documentary. Hopefully, such noble project would be disseminated with genuine effort among the masses in near future.

4.3.2.5 Problems Associated with SWM in Siliguri

Siliguri Municipal Corporation is the ultimate authority in Siliguri responsible for the collection, temporary storage, conveyance and ultimate and safe disposal of solid waste originating from residential, commercial areas and hospitals, nursing homes and pathological laboratories. Despite having infrastructural arrangements and regular attempts for the augmentation of the same, the solid waste management seems to be far short of the desired standards as have been reported by various sources as well as observed by the researcher himself.

As has already been mentioned that as solid waste may be categorized into hazardous and non-hazardous, bio-degradable and non bio-degradable, and

recyclable and reusable or non-recyclable and non-reusable, the methods for their final disposal require different management practices. However, it has been observed that these practices are mostly environment-unfriendly which may be harmful to the Siliguri dwellers through pollution of air and water in the long run. The main deficiencies of the governance aspect in the present system of solid waste management may be laid down as under :

(i) Lack of Proper Training to Sanitary Workers and Non-scientific Collection of Solid Waste at Source – The first and foremost pre-requisite for making the SWM Scheme a success in Siliguri is the proper training of sanitary workers on the finer aspects of garbage collection. It has been observed by the researcher that generally they do not put pressure on the inhabitants to deposit their compostable and non-compostable garbage in the two different poly bags provided for the purpose. Moreover, those citizens who prefer to use two poly bags, it has been observed that sanitary workers, on most of the occasion, mix them up in one bin. There is a need to make them understand by the Sanitary Inspectors, the Ward SWM Committee members as well as the educated citizens about the problems in composting and recycling as well as cost escalation on mixing different types of wastes. Thus, the major problem of primary collection is the non segregation of reusable and recyclable waste material at source. Besides, hazardous domestic wastes, such as, used batteries, cosmetic items, broken bulbs, paints, aerosol cans, etc. are dumped together with other waste. This practice may lead to harmful health hazards for the sanitation workers.

(ii) Improper Management of Waste at Storage Points – The secondary forms of waste storage depots are not scientifically designed. It is observed that the sanitation workers generally deposit the waste on the ground just outside the storage bins as they find it quite difficult to transfer the waste efficiently in the bin. Even if they do so, there remains the possibility of some garbage being strewn on the ground. Besides, the dwellers, too, avoid going near the bins to deposit their waste. They find the sites very unhygienic and generally throw the waste in the bin from a distance. As a result of all these, the garbage is strewn all over the place around the masonry bins and vats instead of being confined within the demarcated area.

(iii) Unhygienic Transportation of the Waste to the Dumping Ground – The loading of waste from the storage bins/vats onto the conveyance vehicles is manually done which again causes strewing of the waste all around. Besides, this

method is injurious to the health of the sanitation workers and reduces their productivity. Again, most of the vehicles which transport the garbage are uncovered. Not only this gives unsightly appearance and emanates foul smell all the way, it also causes nuisance because of littering of waste on the streets on the way to disposal site.

(iv) Deficiencies at the Landfill Site – The general practice is simply dumping the waste at the landfill site. They are neither covered nor spread. This may lead to environmental pollution in the form of sub-soil water contamination. Moreover, another aspect which may pose serious health hazard is the unscientific method of disposal of treated bio-medical waste.

(ii) Inadequacy of Vehicles and Equipments – The fleet of vehicles arranged for the transportation of the waste to the dumping ground or to the processing and disposal sites is inadequate. The trucks and trailers which are generally used for conveying the waste are quite old and meet frequent breakdown and require frequent repairs. Besides, private trucks are also hired for the purpose. Despite these, the combined fleet falls short of the requirement to transport all the waste of the city on day-to-day basis, causing backlog for removal of garbage. No doubt, if the situation is not urgently improved upon, the solid waste transportation would worsen further as the volume of solid waste generation is expected to rise with the passage of time seeing the fast pace of urban growth of Siliguri.

Besides, there is acute shortage of community bins. These are few in number and disproportionate to the population and the quantity of solid waste generation. Most of the localities do not have any. This creates problems for those residents (single and leave for work, working couples, for some reason absence from house, and the like) who are not present at home when the sanitation workers visit the area for collection of garbage. Thus, these sections of people generally tend to throw the household garbage on to the streets or in the drains.

(v) Irregular Collection – The collection of garbage is not extended on Sundays and public holidays. The collection of waste through street sweeping is also quite irregular.

(vi) Illegal Practice of Dumping Waste at Improper Place – It has been noticed on several occasions that the MSW are not properly deposited at the stipulated secondary storage facility. More so, newspaper reports confirm (Ananda Bazar Patrika, 8 November, 2010) that at one place, nearby to the army transit camp, garbage have been deposited in an unauthorized way to help facilitate construction

of a taxi and auto stand. This practice needs to be checked to maintain cleanliness in the surroundings.

(viii) Constraints of Funds – This is one area which needs to be urgently attended at. SWM is a capital intensive programme. Not only in terms of coverage, fund is required for replacement of vat bins at regular intervals. This only relates to the collection aspect of SWM. Proper and final disposal demands huge investment on the part of the SMC. The fact is that about 80 to 90% of the expenditure goes in only collection and transportation of the garbage. As such, virtually nothing remains at the disposal of the SMC to think about its proper and safe disposal. The SWM service charges, as laid down above, are too meagre to sustain it in proper manner. Table 4.14 amply shows the poor status of the revenue receipts in this regard. While the percentage of total revenue receipts from conservancy to total revenue receipts hovers between 2.45 to 4%, the percentage of revenue expenditure on conservancy to total revenue expenditure is somewhere between 30 to 35. This huge gap requires to be filled in order to successfully sustain the project.

4.4 GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN WATER SUPPLY

Before 1994, ring wells and tube wells were the main source of water for the people of Siliguri residing within Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area. These traditional sources of water were qualitatively poor and unhygienic. Though recommendations were given and plans were formulated with regard to water supply by the Siliguri Planning Organization (Interim Development Plan and Comprehensive Development Plan), The Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority (Outline Development Plan) and Siliguri Municipal Corporation along with SJDA (Approach Paper) in the pre-1994 period, but the efforts undertaken were far from satisfactory (the details laid out in Chapter 3). As such, the city was prone to different types of health hazards, the most prominent being dysentery and diarrhea. One of the top priorities, then, of the civic body after its up gradation from Municipal Council to Municipal Corporation was the supply of potable water through a systematic distribution system among the urban dwellers of Siliguri.

4.4.1 Facts and Figures

It was in October, 1993 that 'Siliguri Comprehensive Water Supply Project: Phase I' was sanctioned. This project started in May, 1994 and was completed and

commissioned on 31.12.1998 with the active support of the Public Health Engineering Directorate, Govt. of West Bengal. The total cost of the project came at Rs. 4617.55 lakhs and the components of the project were laying of pipelines, establishment of treatment plant and construction of reservoirs. The sources of funding were HUDCO, State Government and Siliguri Municipal Corporation. The supply of potable water to the residents of Siliguri finally started from September 1999 and it covered Ward No. 1 to Ward No. 30 of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation (www.siligurismc.com)

The IInd Phase of Water Supply Scheme for the Siliguri Added Area (Ward 31 to Ward 44 falling under Jalpaiguri district) was started under UIDSSMT with an approved cost of 2271.00 lakhs being shared by the Central Government and the State Government (Departments of Municipal Affairs and Public Health Engineering). Subsequently, the Additional Central Assistance (ACA) of Rs. 1850.87 lakhs was released for the project in two installments of Rs. 942.47 and Rs. 908.40 lakhs by the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance, GOI. The first part of the IInd Phase was completed during the year 2007-2008 and the supply of water started for the wards 31 to 35 on 23.03.08 (SMC 2007-08). The supply of water in the remaining Wards 36 to 44 is nearing its completion, though partially, it has already started.

In the remaining Wards of 45, 46 and 47 falling under Zone X, though water supply has started in Ward No. 45 recently, the residents of Ward Nos. 46 and 47 are still to get household water connection. The project of water supply in this Zone has been taken up at an approximated cost of Rs. 13 Crores. A sum of Rs. 2.50 Crores, Rs. 2.80 Crores and Rs. 1.00 Crores have already been received from SJDA; from Department of Municipal Affairs, Government of West Bengal; and under BMS respectively. Provision of the remaining fund (including SMC's own fund) is being contemplated so that the work gets completed by the end of the financial year 2010-2011 (SMC 2010-2011)

The present source of 'Raw Water' is Mahananda River Barrage Pond and the location of intake is on the left bank upstream of the barrage. It is pumped through 900 mm diametre C.I / M.S Pipe to the Treatment Plant at Fulbari, located at about 1 Km. away from the intake site on the left side of the road towards barrage from Siliguri. The treatment Plant has the following units:

- (i) Chemical House
- (ii) Flash Mixer

- (iii) Clariflocculator - 2 nos.
- (iv) Rapid sand Filtration with Back – Wash arrangement – 12 beds.
- (v) Disinfections

The Chemical House of the Plant accommodates 3 Alum Dosing Tanks to administer a continuous alum solution dosing of 55.02 MLD of water. The Chemical House has also the arrangement of dosing coagulants and PH correction if necessary. Besides, arrangement is there for continuous dosing of disinfectants. Raw water after being treated is stored in a CWR of capacity 4000 m³.

PHED is the water quality monitoring agency of both the raw and treated water. The monitoring of raw water is done on a weekly basis, of treated water at the treatment plant on daily basis and of distribution network on a weekly basis.

The treated water is pumped and transmitted through transmission main of 900 mm diameter C.I / M.S pipe to CWR at Jhankar Head Work, about 9 Km. away from the Treatment Plant. The reservoir has the capacity 6000 m³.

The distribution system of Siliguri Comprehensive Water Supply Scheme is divided into 10 (ten) zones and the treated water from Jhankar CWR is pumped through the raising main to different zonal elevated reservoirs. Finally, piped water reaches the consumers through distribution main through Street Stand-Posts and Household connections.

The following table seeks to lay down a trajectory of basic facts with respect to water supply scheme in Siliguri :

Table 4.15 : A Comparison of Water Supply Scheme in Siliguri : 1999 and 2010

Sl. No.	Particulars	September, 1999 (Commissioning of the Water Supply Project)	2010 Figures	
			As on 31.03.2010 (Figures of PHED)	As on 30.11.2010 (Figures of MIC, Water Supply, SMC)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	Population (Estimated) in lakh	3.67	4.93	4.93
2.	Capacity of Treatment Plant	55.02 MLD	55.02 MLD	55.02 MLD
3.	Quantity of Supply	8.00 MLD	32 MLD	40 MLD
4.	Remaining Quantity	47.02 MLD	23.02 MLD	15.02 MLD

5.	Per Capita Supply	Based on Treated Quantity	150 LCPD *	112 LCPD*	112 LCPD*
		Based on Supplied Quantity	21.8 LCPD*	64.9 LCPD*	81.1 LCPD*
6.	Total Number of House Connection provided		4,662	11,500	15,074
7.	Total Number of Households		-	-	98,000 (appr.)
8.	Coverage	Population	-	-	95 %
		Area	-	-	95 %
9.	Nature of Source of Water		Surface	Surface	Surface
10.	Length of Pipe-line	Transmission Main	9.00 km.	-	-
		Rising Main	11.00 km.	-	-
		Distribution Main	180.00 km.(New) 50.00 km. (Old)	-	-
11.	Number of Stand Posts		648	878	1188
12.	Total Number of Zones		6	-	13
13.	Daily Supply through Tankers		Nil	Nil	Nil
14.	Average Hours of Supply Daily		-	-	4
15.	Number of Times Supplied Daily		-	-	2

*Calculated

Sources : www.siligurismc.com

www.wbphed.gov.in

MIC, Water Supply, Siliguri Municipal Corporation

From the above Table, it appears that the position of water supply within the Siliguri Municipal Corporation area seems to be satisfactory as presently there is still a surplus of about 15 MLD of treated water. Moreover, the C.I / M.S Pipe laid down is capable of carrying 60.52 MLD of treated water, which was projected to be the water demand for the year 2011. The original design of the water treatment plant at Fulbari was fixed for a projected population for the year 2011 of the Phase I area (Wards 1 to 30) considering a demand of 150 Litres Per Capacity Per Day (LCPD). Later on, the design was made along with Phase II area (Ward 31 to 44) and the projected demand was calculated to be 84.85 MLD for the year 2021 keeping in consideration the demand of 185 LCPD. Thus, there is a need to look into the matter as to why there is not enough demand for the Corporation's water supply which is very much evident in case of majority of other Class I cities.

It is to be noted that the entire population of Siliguri was already having adequate water supply through individual tube wells and dug wells prior to the construction of the piped water supply scheme for the town. Moreover, the populace was not facing much difficulty in extracting ground water as the levels of ground water in Siliguri did not go beyond four metres. As a result, there were very few people who applied for a piped connection since that meant paying an extra water tax and an extra burden on the budget of a household. Besides, the supply of water by the SMC through substantial number of public stand-posts at street corners without charging any fees also desisted the populace from taking house connections.

Nonetheless, if the figures provided by PHED (31.03.10) and MIC, Water Supply, SMC (30.11.10) are to be believed, there has been a substantial increase in the number of water supply connections within last six months. This may be largely attributed to the mandatory requirement to have piped water supply connection for any new residential or office complex coming up within the Corporation area. Besides, slow but steady change in the social psychology of the people at large has also been witnessed. Keeping these considerations in mind, there is a need to have a long-term vision of municipal water supply so that the dwellers do not face any sort of scarcity in future times to come even though such scarcity is unlikely to crop up in coming few years. Realizing these, the SMC has given some thought with respect to water supply, though not comprehensive, in its Draft Development Plan (2008-2013). The following Table lays down the immediate future plans of the SMC with regard to urban water supply.

Table 4.16 : Immediate Future Plans of SMC on Water Supply

Particulars		<u>Scheme 1</u> Extension of Pipe Line covering Wards 31 to 44 (2)	<u>Scheme 2</u> Construction of Stand Posts- 335 Nos. in all Wards (3)	<u>Scheme 3</u> Alternate Source of Water Supply from Teesta River at Gazoldoba (4)
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)
Start and End Date		September, '08- September, '13	September, 2008 – March, 2113	N.A.
Project Cost (in	TCR	250.00	142.00	-
	ARE	7.00	14.20	-

Rs. Lakhs)	Total	257.00	156.20	82.07
Fund Name	BRGF	Spot Source	Central Government	

Source : Draft Development Plan, SMC, 2008-2013

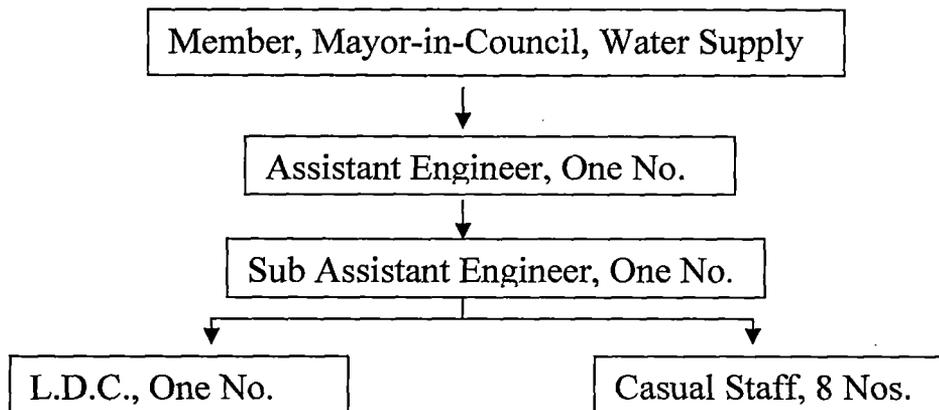
4.4.2 Governance in Water Supply in SMC

The West Bengal Municipal Corporation Act, 2006 (commenced on 29th May, 2008) is the legislative framework for provision of water supply within the jurisdiction of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation. Part I, Chapter I, Section 2 and Sub-Sections 64 and 108 of the Act lay down the definitions of the term ‘Municipal Waterworks’ and ‘Waterworks’. The former means a waterworks constructed, operated, maintained and managed by the Corporation or purchased or taken on lease by the Corporation. The latter includes all lakes, tanks, streams, cisterns, springs, pumps, wells, reservoirs, aqueducts, water-trucks, sluices, mains, pipes, culverts, hydrants, stand-pipes, conduits, and things, which are used, or are intended to be used, for the purpose of supplying water. Sections 175 to 221 [Part VI (Civic Services), Chapter XI (Water Supply and Drainage)] of the Act details out the provisions related to water supply within SMC area and Section 176 in this regard enjoins upon the SMC to supply wholesome water for the domestic use of the inhabitants. Besides the above Act, the Corporation is also deemed to comply with the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution), 1974 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977, both of them enacted by the Government of India. Moreover, the concerned authorities with regard to SMC water supply system take reference of the National Water Policy, 2002 and the Model Ground Water Legislation brought out by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) as and when necessary.

The institutional arrangement of ‘Water Supply’ in SMC area involves Public Health Engineering Directorate (PHED) and Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC). Whereas the capital works and O&M is dealt by the PHED, the collection of revenue is the responsibility of the MIC, Water Supply, SMC.

The organizational structure of Water Supply Department of the SMC is as follows :

**Figure 4.10 : Orgnizational Structure of Water Supply Department of
SMC**



For the purpose of convenience in water supply, the city of Siliguri has been divided into 10 Zones and each of the Zones 7, 8 and 9 have been further divided into two Sub-Zones. The following table lays down the details of the zonation of water supply service in Siliguri.

**Table 4.17 : Number of Zones with Regard to Water Supply in Siliguri
(As on 30.11.2010)**

Sl. No. (1)	Name of the Zone (2)	Number of Reservoirs (3)	Capacity of the Reservoirs (4)
1.	I	2	Old – 0.80 Lakhs Gallons ; New – 1.75 Lakhs Gallons
2.	II	1	2.5 Lakhs Gallons
3.	III	2	Old – 1.00 Lakhs Gallons ; New – 1.50 Lakhs Gallons
4.	IV	1	2.00 Lakhs Gallons
5.	V	1	2.50 Lakhs Gallons
6.	VI	1	2.50 Lakhs Gallons
7.	VIIA	1	3.5 Lakhs Gallons
	VIIIB	1	Under Construction
8.	VIIIA	1	3.5 Lakhs Gallons
	VIIIB	1	Under Construction
9.	IXA	1	1.75 Lakhs Gallons
	IXB	1	Under Construction
10	X	1	Tender Procedure in Process

Sources : Water Supply Department, SMC
PHED, Planning Circle II, Siliguri

The water supply charges for household connection started in the year 1999 and since then, it has never been revised. Besides, there is no charge imposed on water supply through street stand-posts. As far as the water supply charges are concerned, it is levied at the monthly rate of 1 % of the deposited money for water supply connection, except those of bulk supply and industrial establishments. The connection charges within Siliguri Municipal Area have been categorized into three categories, namely, (i) Domestic; (ii) Commercial; and (iii) Industrial. Table 4.18 lays down the connection charges for these categories of consumers.

Table 4.18 : Connection Charges and Monthly Water Charges within SMC

Area

Sl. No. (1)	Categories (2)		Connection Charges (3)	Water Charges (4)
1.	Domestic	Up to 3000 sq. ft.	Rs. 3,000/-	Rs. 30/ month
		Between 3000 and 4000 sq. ft.	Rs. 4,000/-	Rs. 40/ month
		Between 4000 and 5000 sq. ft.	Rs. 5,000/-	Rs. 50/ month
		Above 5000 sq. ft.	Rs. 5,000/- plus Re.1/ sq. ft. for additional area	Depending on total area
2.	Commercial	Guest House up to 20 beds	Rs. 10,000/-	Rs.100/ month
		Guest House above 20 beds	Rs. 10,000/- plus Rs. 500/- per additional bed	Depending on total no. of beds
		Hotel up to 20 beds	Rs. 15,000/-	Rs.150/ month
		Hotel above 20 beds	Rs. 15,000/- plus Rs. 1,000/- per additional bed	Depending on total no. of beds
		Restaurant up to 1000 sq. ft.	Rs. 5,000/-	Rs. 50/month
		Restaurant above 1000 sq. ft.	Rs. 5,000/- plus Rs.2/- per sq. ft. for additional area	Depending on total area
		Hall up to 5000 sq.ft. for commercial and social purpose	Rs. 10,000/-	Rs. 100/month
		Hall above 5000 sq. ft. for commercial and social purpose	Rs. 10,000/- plus Rs. 2/- per sq.ft. additional area	Depending on total area
		Nursing Home up to 20 beds	Rs. 10,000/-	Rs. 100/month

		Nursing Home above 20 beds	Rs. 10,000/- plus Rs. 1,000/- per additional bed	Depending on total no. of beds
3.	Industrial			Dealt on Individual Basis

Source : www.siligurismc.com

With respect to bulk water supply, it is at present provided only to the North Bengal Medical College @ Rs. 5 Lakhs per month as water charges.

The detailed list of street stand posts and their locational pattern is laid down in Table 4.19 as under.

Table 4.19 : Detailed List of Street Stand Posts within SMC Area (As on 30.11.2010)

Zone No.	Ward No.	Present Nos. of Stand Posts	Population of the Ward (as per 2001 census)	Street Stand Post: Citizen Ratio in the Ward	Total Nos. of Stand Posts in the Zone	Provision as per DPR	New Proposals
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
I	6	17	9023	1 : 531	87	130	-
	10	22	4720	1 : 215			-
	11	9	2933	1 : 326			-
	13	14	5070	1 : 362			-
	14	25	6407	1 : 256			-
II	4	34	20028	1 : 589	125	130	-
	5	32	15326	1 : 479			-
	7	20	9889	1 : 494			-
	8	25	7843	1 : 314			-
	9	14	7306	1 : 522			-
III	25	21	8525	1 : 406	129	130	-
	26	19	4873	1 : 256			-
	27	31	5630	1 : 182			-
	28	22	9578	1 : 435			-
	29(P)	18	4783	1 : 266			-
	30	18	6510	1 : 362			-
IV	12	22	3772	1 : 171	228	105	-
	15	26	8103	1 : 312			-
	16	22	5984	1 : 272			-
	17	26	5485	1 : 211			-
	18	44	8440	1 : 192			-

	19	12	3233	1 : 269			-
	20	43	9869	1 : 230			-
	21	33	5875	1 : 178			-
V	22	40	10293	1 : 257	129	120	-
	23	31	6205	1 : 200			-
	24	42	11165	1 : 266			-
	29(P)	16	4783	1 : 299			-
VI	1	16	17843	1 : 1115	136	125	-
	2	33	11436	1 : 347			-
	3	30	11753	1 : 392			-
	45	21	7117	1 : 339			-
	46	18	21222	1 : 1179			-
	47	18	8363	1 : 465			-
VII A	31	32	13414	1 : 419	76	42	-
	32	26	11845	1 : 456			-
	33	18	13543	1 : 752			-
VII B	34	42	16560	1 : 394	81	47	-
	35	39	14945	1 : 383			-
VIII A	39	10	11237	1 : 1124	47	30	10
	40	28	18164	1 : 649			8
	41(P)	9	12951	1 : 1439			4
VIII B	36	18	13553	1 : 753	49	38	-
	37	17	14431	1 : 849			-
	38	14	11235	1 : 803			5
IX A	41(P)	33	12951	1 : 392	60	5	
	43 (P)	12	9661	1 : 805			
	44	15	11522	1 : 768			
IX B	42	27	14711	1 : 545	41	NIL	
	43(P)	14	9661	1 : 690			

'P' denotes Partial

Source : Water Supply Department, SMC

The table above on street stand posts for municipal water supply provides a vivid picture on non-maintenance of uniformity as far as location pattern is concerned. The number of stand posts in three of the Wards is striking – Ward Nos. 1, 39 and 46. In these Wards, there is one street stand post for an average of 1115, 1124 and 1179 persons respectively. On the other hand, in some of the Wards, the number of posts exceeds far more than the requirement, for instance, Ward No. 12 (1:171), Ward No. 18 (1:192), Ward No. 21 (1:178) and Ward No. 27 (1:182). Not only is the question of uniformity, but the location pattern of stand

posts also goes against the principle of social justice. If one looks at the number of slum pockets in each Ward, one finds them highest in Ward Nos. 1 (13 notified slums) and 46 (14 notified slums). It is in these Wards that the majority of the people are poor and cannot afford to have an individual household connection for water supply. Moreover, there are problems with what number of stand posts has been prescribed in the DPR and what number actually exist in each zone. Disparity is evident in this respect, too, as in some zones, the number has exceeded too far than prescribed in the DPR and in some, it is too less. One glaring instance is Zone No. IXA where the actual figure of stand posts is twelve times than that laid down in the DPR. With respect to new proposals, one may note that the most needy Wards 1 and 46 have not been considered.

The financial status of last three years of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation with regard to water supply is laid down as under :

Table 4.20 : Financial Status of Siliguri Municipal Corporation with regard to Water Supply

Particulars		2007-08 (Actuals)	2008-09 (Actuals)	2009-10		2010-11 (Proposed Budget Estimates)	
				2009-10 (Actuals for 9 months upto Dec.'09)	2009-10 (Revised Budget Estimates)		
(1)		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
Revenue Receipts from Water Supply (Own Sources)	Tax Revenue	Water Tax	3,866,482	4,440,797	4,338,580	5,000,000	6,000,000
	Non Tax Revenue	Water Connection Charges	5,812,602	10,196,875	8,608,316	10,000,000	10,000,000
		Water Tank Charges	183,925	214,975	108,650	165,000	250,000
	TOTAL		9,863,009	14,852,647	13,055,546	15,165,000	16,250,000
Total Revenue Receipts from Own Sources (Tax Revenue + Non Tax Revenue)		104,340,271	132,281,358	95,858,925	123,318,000	255,426,000	
Percentage of Revenue Receipts from Water Supply to Total		9.45	11.22	13.62	12.30	6.36	

Revenue Receipts from Own Sources						
Revenue	Establishment	-	312,264	529,537	695,000	916,000
Expenditure on Water Supply	Maintenance	-	12,224,537	10,089,598	16,810,000	30,100,000
	Miscellaneous	-	40,464	35,000	50,000	100,000
	TOTAL	-	12,577,265	10,654,135	17,555,000	31,116,000
Total Revenue Receipts : Own Sources (TR+NTR) + Govt. Sources (S&T+GG) + Other Sources		269,116,593	282,510,309	258,270,437	371,757,000	595,985,000
Total Revenue Expenditure		-	250,623,410	253,353,799	371,034,000	525,117,000
Percentage of Revenue Expenditure on Water Supply to Total Revenue Expenditure		-	5.02	4.21	4.73	5.93
Revenue Receipts from Water Supply '>or<'Revenue Expenditure on Water Supply		-	>2275382	>2401411	<2390000	<14866000
Total Capital Expenditure on Water Supply		-	73,039,631	59,869,324	92,099,000	334,620,000
Total Expenditure on Water Supply (Revenue + Capital)		130,289,864	85,616,896	70,523,459	109,654,000	365,736,000
Total Receipts of SMC (Revenue + Capital + Extraordinary & Debt)		737,356,934	708,839,435	645,097,806	887,060,500	1,812,388,000
Total Expenditure of SMC (Revenue + Capital + Extraordinary & Debt)		564,497,717	703,744,602	566,296,435	887,375,000	1,828,845,000
Percentage of Total Expenditure on Water Supply to Total Expenditure of SMC		23.08	12.17	12.45	12.36	20.00

Sources : Budgets of Siliguri Municipal Corporation, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11; Annual Report of SMC, 2007-08

4.4.3 Problems of and Possible Solutions to Water Supply System in Siliguri

The population of Siliguri Municipal Corporation has been estimated to be about 4.93 lakhs according to the estimates of PHED as on 31.03.2010. If the trend of urbanization of Siliguri continues at this rate, the total population of Siliguri may stand at about 5.86 lakhs in 2011 and about 7.03 lakhs in the year 2021 (Perspective Plan, Volume II 2004 : 54). In this context, it may be noted that out of about 98,000 households in the city, water connection is prevalent only in 15,074 households as on 30.11.2010. As such, even today, the sources of water for the

majority of the households are dug wells and tube wells. Besides, as there is no provision presently of any kind of sewerage system in the city, the sanitation system is solely dependent on underground septic system with soak pit. Moreover, majority of plots in Siliguri are smaller in size. In this backdrop, crops up the first problem with regard to ground water as the recommended spacing between the soak pit and the dug wells and tube wells are more often violated which invariably poses a serious threat of contamination of water by the underground effluents from the sewer.

As to why a meager 15.4 (approximate) percentage of households have water supply connections, there is a need to understand the general social psychology of the Siliguri dwellers. It was observed while surveying and talking to several dwellers in different localities that a large percentage of population use water from the street stand-posts as a source of drinking water. It is to be noted that this treated water is being utilized without paying any charge. More so, a huge number of such users do have the financial stability to go for connection of SMC's water supply system. Instead, they meet other requirements of water through individual water supply like tube wells or dug wells fitted with small pumps. This issue needs to be addressed in order to reduce contamination of ground water as well as conservation of ground water.

However, despite the abysmally low percentage of household water supply connections, one very striking feature in this regard is that there has been a phenomenal increase in water supply connections between April, 2010 and November, 2010. During these eight months, the number increased from 11,500 to 15,074 – an increase of about 4,600 connections. Thus, though lately, the mindset of the populace seems to be changing in this respect. This situation needs to be usefully tapped by the Water Supply Department of the SMC. Increase in number of connections would not only reduce the threat of contamination of ground water but at the same time, it would substantially increase the revenue receipt of the Corporation.

If the trend of increase in connectivity as witnessed above continues, the supply side augmentation would be the inevitable consequence. Keeping such consideration in mind, the SMC pursued the matter with the State Government and the follow up action resulted in the formation of a Committee comprising of representatives from Municipal Affairs Department, Govt. of West Bengal; Irrigation Department, Govt. of West Bengal; Public Health Engineering

Directorate, Govt. of West Bengal; Water Supply Department of KMDA; MED; Teesta Barrage Authority; and Siliguri Municipal Corporation. The Committee has come out with the identification and survey of alternative intake source at Gazaldoba, some 27 kms. away from Siliguri. This distant water source and its transfer to Siliguri through gigantic and heavy pipes involve huge capital investment as well as it is time-consuming. In a way, this huge engineering-oriented augmentation plan is a common practice and is more acceptable at all levels. Nonetheless, in all probability, SMC would succeed in receiving the proposed huge fund of Rs. 25 crores for the project from the government and other institutions. This is primarily due to the hard fact that no strict conditionalities are laid down with regard to reforms in water supply system while sanctioning funds. This seems to have attributed largely for the sense of complacency on the part of Water Supply Department, SMC and the PHED as far as vision and innovation in this sector is concerned.

For the last ten long years when water supply first started in Siliguri through 'Siliguri Comprehensive Water Supply Project', it has remained comprehensive only in terms of area coverage. There is no denying the fact that about 95 percent of the total area of SMC has been covered under the system. But then, establishment of water supply infrastructure and maintenance of the same is not enough. It is realized that reforms are like blood in the body and are necessarily needed to sustain the system. On same principle, numerous reforms are to be executed to make water supply reliable, self sustainable and last for longer period. However, the sad story with SMC is that the other measures needed to conserve water, to reduce contamination of ground water and to augment revenue resources to the optimal level have not been forthcoming. In order that water supply system in Siliguri become comprehensive, the followings need to be addressed :

(i)Need to Augment Revenue Receipts – Though SMC has made compulsory consent for connection of municipal water supply before sanctioning any new building plans, the need is to extend it and make it mandatory for all households, except for the slum households for the present, to obtain individual house connections. Even if slum households, which constitute about one-third of the total households, are exempted from this mandate for the time being, it would help SMC quadruple its revenue income from water supply which can be usefully utilized in O&M without being dependant on grants. Slum households may be

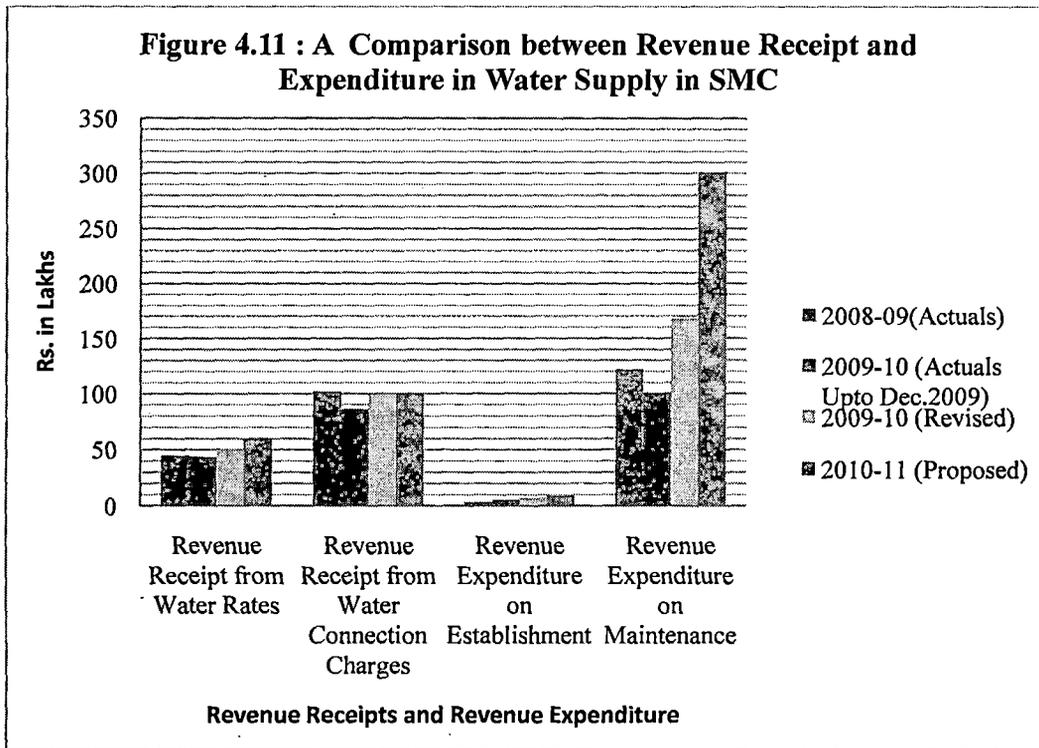
incorporated in due course under the purview on the basis of lesser or subsidized water connection charges and water rates.

(ii)Need to Do Away with Populist Measures – The sorry state of affairs with the executing agency of the SMC is that it is rarely involved when it comes to the question of amount of water charges. Though the capital and O&M expenditures on water supply have increased manifold, the water connection charges and water rates have not been revised since the inception of water supply system in Siliguri. The concerned authorities of SMC should strive out to revise the charges judiciously from time to time keeping in consideration the need to augment its resources for serving people better.

(iii)Need to Restructure the Existing Water Connection Charges and Water Rates – The water connection charges for the domestic consumers of Siliguri seem to be a bit impracticable. The baseline connection charge has been kept at Rs. 3000/- for houses up to 3000 sq.ft. It is to be kept in mind that a very less percentage of people of Siliguri own houses with plinth area above 1,500 sq.ft. As such, one time connection charge of Rs. 3000/- for all households upto 3000sq.ft. appears to be huge enough for many to get connection of SMC's water supply system. It would be advisable to keep the connection charge commensurate with the square footage of the house. This would be within the reach of the common populace and would also promote the principle of equity. The loss of revenue can be made up by enhancing the water rate from the existing 1% of the connection charge to 2 or 3% of the connection charge or through alternative methods of water rates.

The above three issues highlighted are inter-related to one another. No doubt, the basic objective of any water supply system is cost recovery to the maximum possible limit. For this, the simple theory is to get more and more households within SMC area connected to the water supply system. However, increase in the number of connections is majorly dependent on the judicious water connection charges and water rates which call for measures rising above populism. Figure 4.11 seeks to substantiate the point with regard to water supply system in Siliguri. Let us examine the scenario. Firstly, it becomes clear from the Chart that the revenue receipts from water rates and water connection charges have remained almost constant without any major fluctuations in the last two financial years and have been proposed in the budget to remain more or less similar in this financial year. This amply proves that the collection of water rates by the SMC and Borough

Offices under it lacks efficiency. This is for the simple reason that while receipts from connection charges is a one time affair, water rates are received on a cumulative basis and, as such, more and more accumulation is the natural expectation with every passing year.



The second noticeable thing in the Figure above is that the revenue receipts from water connection charges is almost double the amount than that of the revenue receipts from water rates in the preceding two financial years. The almost similar case has been proposed in the current financial year. This can be attributed to the existing huge connection tariffs. However, the negativity of such charges is the low percentage of household connections. One of the many possible solutions is to reduce the household area and amount of baseline connection charges and to increase the water rates by a percent or two. This would lead not only in the growth of household connections but also would result in the substantial growth of revenue receipts in the form of water rates in the long run.

These considerations are to be addressed sooner than later by the SMC as the cost of maintenance of water supply system has been increasing gradually as is evident from the figures in the Chart. One, it is the escalating costs of equipments

and electricity charges and two, it is old water pipe lines which results in regular breakage and interruption in steady water supply. The Mayor of SMC rightly showed her concern in this regard in her Budget Speech on 29th March, 2010 when she says, “....., we have taken measures to solve the problem due to breakage of underground old water pipe lines for steady water supply, which is another main cause of interruption of water supply. For this purpose a total sum of Rs. 32.83 crores has been proposed in the present budget.” (SMC 2010-10 : 17)

Coupled with the above reasons, there is another reason as to why urgency is to be felt in augmentation of number of household connections of water supply in Siliguri. Presently, the city does not have any kind of sewerage system and waste water treatment plant. Perspective Plan 2025 (2004 : 141-142) for the Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area maintains that, “....for the town of Siliguri there is no formal sewerage system and mostly it is the septic tank that is being used for the purpose. This method of sewage disposal requires that all the human excreta and other waters be directed to an underground tank, where the solids are digested by various bacteria and gets transformed into sludge with the liquid portion overflowing into a soak-pit from where it seeps into the ground. It is understood that this water, which seeps into the ground may not be free from pathological germs. Although the tube wells for the supply of water to any building would be drawing water from an aquifer much below the level of the underground septic tank, there should be a regular monitoring of the pumped water quality for organic contaminants in the different wards of the town, especially those with high population density. For the dug-wells, it is most likely that the source is the shallow water aquifer that may be polluted beyond the limits prescribed for human consumption. Hence, the checking of water quality of wells is an absolute necessity.”

The Plan further lay down, “The ground water may also contain undesirable chemical impurities. Iron is a major nuisance in the SJPA as many of the chemical analyses of water show. Arsenic is not yet a problem, but could emerge in places where there is heavy withdrawal of ground water.....it is absolutely essential that strict monitoring should be done for the water table levels at various points within the municipality.” The above arguments laid down in the Perspective Plan favour more and more connections of household water supply system in order to reduce depletion of ground water levels and contamination of ground water.

Not only ground water, rivers Mahananda, Phuleswari, Jorapani and Panchonai which cut through the city, too, are victims of water pollution. The study conducted under Mahananda Action Plan showed concern over the discharge of untreated wastewater effluents in the river, primarily through storm water drains which leads to water pollution of the river in a major way. The figure of the survey conducted by Central Pollution Control Board show that the total sewage generated in Siliguri in 2005-06 was 63.5 MLD and majority of this (about 30 MLD) got disposed in the Mahananda river (CPCB 2005-06). Moreover, it has been claimed that there is no prevalence of open defecation in the city and that all poor dwellers have been covered under ILCS scheme. However, the survey conducted under NUSP in the early months of 2010 revealed open defecation being practiced in the city, in particular along the banks of river Mahananda. As such, the defecation of the slum dwellers and squatters on the river beds, too, contributes to the water pollution in the river.

Right now, the demand for household connection of piped water is still low and the demand capacity of the water intake and treatment plant which is 55.02 MLD is not running to its full capacity. The Perspective Plan (2004, Volume II : 59) observes in this regard, "It is observed that since the households are usually having their own source of water, like tube wells and dug wells, there is general reluctance amongst many to adopt piped water connection for their houses. However, since most of these household-owned sources tap the shallow ground water, the quality of which is affected usually with excessive iron content, the residents nevertheless obtain water for cooking and drinking from the public stand posts available in the locality. Even then, there is substantial use of ground water for various domestic purposes. This is not a very healthy practice since it may be concluded that due to dense network of septic-tank and soak-pit, that the ground water must be affected by microbial pollution. Although no quantitative data was available to substantiate the hypothesis, it is common knowledge that the effluent of the soak-pit pollutes ground water, especially if it is quite high, as in the SJPA region. The high reported incidences of gastro-intestinal diseases from the region indirectly confirm to the degraded quality of the shallow ground water table."

In case the SMC makes it mandatory for every household to have individual municipal piped water connection (as of now it is applicable only to the new buildings and houses), it may be expected that the present intake capacity may not suffice. Keeping this in mind, the SMC has already surveyed an alternative source

at Gazaldoba near Siliguri. The projected population of the SMC area for 2025 is estimated to be around 8,34,600 (Perspective Plan, 2004 Vol.II : 60), of which about one-tenth, specially slum dwellers, may still be expected to depend upon public stand-post supply of water. The Perspective Plan considers this a reasonable assumption on the basis of the current slum population being about one-third of the total population of Siliguri. The Plan assumes that the remaining population would meet their filtered water demand from house-connections. Considering a supply value of 40 lcpd for the stand posts and 70 lcpd for the house-supply (in accordance with the norms adopted in the National Water Policy, 2002), the total water demand works out as 3.3 MLD and 52.5 MLD respectively. Since the capacity of the present water supply plant is 55.02 MLD, it may be expected that the existing capacity of water supply would suffice up to 2025. However, beyond that, not only the capacity of the pumping and treatment plant would require augmentation but measures would be required in terms of 'demand management', too. This has to be done keeping in consideration the rise in affluence and people tending to use filtered water for gardening, car washing, etc.

The Siliguri Municipal Corporation, thus, should gear itself seriously for the years to come in terms of sustainability of quality and quantity of water. The measures, some of them highlighted in the Eleventh Five Year Plan, need to be adopted in this regard in coming years may be enumerated as under :

(a) Demand Management of Water – This can be done by evolving realistic water tariff which would help discourage excessive use of treated/potable water. This may be done through installation of water meters for consumers. However, this should be done in a phased manner. This would not only help conserve water but also would generate revenue on a realistic basis. A metered system of water supply is a better option than the existing water rate system based on the valuation of the house property. The Perspective Plan (2004) has laid down another viable option for fixing water rates in Siliguri. It suggests that the tax for each house may be based on two rates – the lower one up to a certain limit and the higher rate for any consumption beyond that. The threshold value could be decided by considering the consumption possible for a family consisting of, say, five members. If a demand of 70 lcpd is assumed for each member, the monthly consumption for a household should be around 10850 litres. Taking this as a threshold value, the water tax may be worked out based on the actual consumption.

However, the pricing of urban water services should be realistic and should be based on the assessment of 'demand' and 'willingness to pay' by the communities.

Other measures for reducing demand and conserve water can be done by adopting measures like, recycling and reuse of water; rainwater harvesting; water-efficient household equipments, like, 'low volume flushing cisterns', 'waste not taps', etc.; holding information campaigns; and the like.

(b)'Full Cost Recovery' Policies – From the financial status, low number of household connections and high number of street stand posts laid down above, one may conclude that Siliguri Municipal Corporation do not have any concrete vision and policy for full cost recovery with regard to municipal water supply. Thus, the need is to adopting 'full cost recovery' policies to achieve financial sustainability.

(c)Plugging Unaccounted For Water (UFW) – As of now, the SMC does not have any kind of data on UFW which causes reduction of water availability substantially. Despite having plenty of water at the disposal of SMC at present, still it should start adopting measures to plug this leakage which would help the Corporation in future.

(d)Need for Developing a Strong Database – There is a need on the part of the SMC to develop a computerized MIS. This would help it in future in exchange of information with other ULBs and other levels of governance and thereby help it in planning, decision-making as well as mid-course corrections.

To end on a positive note, the Mayor announced in her Budget (2010-11 : 17) that steps would be taken against misuse and overflow of water on roads and buildings. Besides, she made a commitment for mitigating the problem of frequent interruption in water supply by replacing the old and broken underground pipeline and for this purpose, a total sum of Rs. 32.83 crores has been proposed in the Budget. Further, from her speech, one may draw that making rainwater harvesting arrangement compulsory while passing the new building plans is under consideration of Siliguri Municipal Corporation.

4.5 CITY TRANSPORTATION, POLLUTION AND URBAN SOCIAL FORESTRY IN SILIGURI

The total road length within Siliguri Municipal Corporation area is about 1417 kms. (Pourbarta 2010), combining both kutchha and pucca roads. Out of these, about 3 kms. are managed by the NHAI, about 17 kms. by the PWD Department,

Government of West Bengal and the remaining are under the control of Siliguri Municipal Corporation. The increase in the length of roads within SMC area has been phenomenal in the last decade in the backdrop that the road coverage was only 650 kms. in 1999-2000 (Urban West Bengal 1999-2000).

Despite having such a vast network of roads in Siliguri, the city suffers from tremendous congestion, owing primarily to the unplanned growth and unprecedented rise in the number of vehicles. It was in 1998 that for the first time RITES conducted 'Traffic Engineering and Management Study, Siliguri Urban Area'. The major findings of the study are laid down in the following Table 4.21.

Table 4.21 : Functional Classification, Right of Way Classification, Surface Condition of Roads within SMC

		Percentage
Road Hierarchy	Arterial	22.7 %
	Sub-arterial	26.5 %
	Intercity/ NH	11.8 %
	Other Roads	38.7 %
Total		100 %
Right of Way Width	<10 M	51.8 %
	10-15 M	15.4 %
	15-20 M	2.2 %
	20-25 M	4.9 %
	25-30 M	3.4 %
	>30 M	22.3 %
Total		100 %
Road Condition	Poor	51.3 %
	Fair	34.5 %
	Good	14.2 %
Total		100 %

Source: Traffic Engineering and Management Study, Siliguri Urban Area; Rites, 1998

4.5.1 Transportation System and Traffic in Siliguri

The recommendations laid down by the RITES to streamline transportation system in Siliguri and to ease traffic congestion seemed not to work. As such,

thereafter, few other studies were undertaken in this respect. One among them was conducted by the Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority. Another one was done by the Department of Architecture & Regional Planning, IIT, Kharagpur under the study 'Perspective Plan 2025 : Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area'. Besides, a lot of seminars and workshops have also been conducted by various agencies, not only as to how to manage traffic better but also to create awareness among the general public the benefits of following the norms of safe driving and following traffic rules and regulations. The traffic department of Siliguri has been annually conducting 'Road Safety Weeks' (in 2011 between 1st and 7th January) in this regard. The latest in the line of such efforts was the organization of the Workshop on 07.10.2011 for the purpose of preparing a 'Traffic and Transportation Master Plan for Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area' as well as to devise a Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP) for Siliguri. Despite efforts with respect to management of city transportation of Siliguri, nothing seems to be working as of now, thanks to the narrow lanes, less number of major arterial roads, increased number of vehicles, less number of parking facilities, encroachments on the roads, etc. The transportation system of Siliguri, thus, can be bracketed as 'in disarray'. The situation is likely to become grave if the traffic volume is not controlled urgently on the main arterials roads like Hill Cart Road, Burdwan Road, Sevoke Road, Station Feeder Road and Bidhan Road. At least, the estimation of RITES, laid down in Table 4.22, shows so. Of late, City Mini Buses and City Autos have been introduced within SMC area. Besides, a large number of cycle-rickshaws and cycle carts are used for para transits. Again, it has been observed that pedestrian movements are significantly high at important locations, such as, Hospital More, Mahabirathan, Court Road, Bidhan Road, Thana More and Hill Cart Road, and, thus, requires well-planned pedestrian facilities at these locations.

As far as parking facilities are concerned, problems are acute especially during peak hours at Hill Cart Road, Bidhan Road, Sevoke Road, Burdwan Road, Station Feeder Road, Mahabirathan, Vivekananda Road, Nehru Road and Court Road. Though truck terminals have been built at Matigara (Paribahan Nagar Truck Terminal) and at Phulbari, roadside truck parking are prevalent.

Some of the the measures proposed to be undertaken by the SMC as have been laid down in the Budget of 2010-11 with regard to the improvement of roads and transportation system are installation of modern traffic signaling system; scientific restructuring of the bus and auto rickshaw routes; widening of roads;

removal of encroachment from roads and footpaths, in particular, footpath below the Mahabirsthan Fly Over & opening of the closed Railway Gate at Mahabirsthan; setting up of traffic booth; erection of railing at the footpath of different roads on need basis; welcome gate at the entrance of our city; road indicator & electronic board; modern footbridges near Air View Hotel and Sevoke More at Ashrampara under PPP model; modern parking arrangement on PPP model; construction of Bus and Auto Rickshaw Stand near Bagrakote; and to solve the problems of unlicensed rickshaws.

4.22 Estimation of Daily Traffic Volume on Important Roads Within SMC

Area

Name of The Road	Total no. Of vehi- cles(1999)	Total PCU (1999)	PCU of FMV (1999)	PCU of FMV (2007)	PCU of FMV (2013)	PCU of FMV (2025)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Hill Cart Road	47549	54505	21696	34497	42086*	60015*
Burdwan Road	11116	17920	10250	16297	19883	28353
Sevoke Road	29763	32942	12406	19725	24064	34316
DBC Rd.	14801	19907	9694	15414	18805	26816
S.F.Road	6653	8907	4316	6863	8373	11940
Bidhan Road	21393	23132	8371	13310	16238	23155

* PCU of FMV (2013&2025) on Hill Cart Road have been worked out considering improvement of alternative routes through which traffic may be diverted

Source: Traffic Engineering and Management Study, Siliguri Urban Area; Rites,1998

4.5.2 Possible Solutions for Effective Transport System

From the above available data, one may discern that traffic volume within SMC area is significantly high and the roads are not commensurate with the vehicle demand. Thus, Siliguri suffers from 'capacity problem'. To solve this problem, some of the urgent requirements are as follows:

- widening of roads;
- planning for alternative routes;

- improving surface conditions of roads;
- restricting heavy vehicles on roads not designed for such vehicles;
- segregating slow and fast moving vehicles on some major roads;
- increasing modern parking facilities;
- constructing flyovers wherever feasible.
- planning proper pedestrian crossing to avoid capacity restrictions;
- upgrading existing and constructing new truck and bus terminals.

However, having laid these, it is also the hard truth that these measures cannot be the only viable way out for solving capacity problems in the long run. It is extremely difficult on the part of authorities to match the demands for roads with that of the supply of vehicles. The number of vehicles would be increasing at a fast pace in this city in the coming years, seeing the importance, Siliguri has commanded in recent years; the incentive of easy availability of vehicle loan facilities; and competition to economise the prices of vehicles by the automobile manufacturers. No doubt, the above considerations are to be looked into, but at the same time one should give thought to another dimension to ease out congestion and pollution, gripping this city. The concerned authorities should promote 'public transport system' in such a way that people would voluntarily prefer that in lieu of private mode of transport. Measures need to be worked out for providing incentives to the public transport system and disincentives to the private mode. This would definitely help in lowering down level of pollution as well as congestion and traffic snarls on major arterials. After all, promotion of public transport system in a planned manner is what the vision and objective of the National Urban Transport Policy is.

Again, one should not lose sight of the social justice aspect of development which holds true even in the transportation sector. It is often seen that the rickshaw and cart pullers, majority of who are poor, bear the maximum brunt whenever traffic management plans are carried out on major arterials of the city. It is unfair on the part of authorities to lessen their already crunched finances for running their families. They should be provided their due share for earnings on the major arterial roads. Measures need to be devised in this regard too as true development demands caring for the needs of all sections of society in a judicious manner. One should not

forget that these modes of transport substantially contribute in lessening the pollution level of the city.

5.7.4 Carrying Out Suggestions for Improvement of Traffic System in Siliguri

The above section suggests that traffic system may be improved in Siliguri which would not only lessen pollution, congestion, traffic snarls and traveling-time but also help generate employment by implementing the following two sets of measures in a judicious manner:

- (a) capacity building; and
- (b) promotion of public transport system.

(a) Capacity Building

The concerned authorities, SMC and SJDA have laid down in their policies to implement future transport infrastructure plan in phased manner during coming years within SMC area. This would definitely help in capacity building of the transport sector. The proposed improvements in transport infrastructure are indicated in the following Table 4.22 :

Table 4.23 : Proposed Improvements in Transport Infrastructure in Siliguri

Sl. No. (1)	Details (2)	Phase I Period (3)	Phase II Period (4)	Cost at 2003 Prices (Rs.lakhs)	
				2003-13 (5)	2013-25 (6)
1	Upgrading of narrower portion of Burdhan road	4-lane with divider		1100	
2	Upgrading of Sevoke road	4-lane with divider	6-lane with divider	770	770
3	Upgrading of Vivekananda Road	2-lane	4-lane with divider	110	220
4	Extention of Vivekananda Road to the other side of the Mahananda River	2-lane	4-lane with divider	598	598

5	Connecting SH12A to the proposed upgraded Eastern Bypass intersecting the road from NJP skirting the boundry of Binnaguri and Dabgram Mouzas	2-lane		1352	
6	New truck Terminal by the side of Eastern Bypass at the intersection with the road connecting NJP Rly. Station with Warehousing		√		600
7	Upgrading of existing Fulbari Truck Terminal	√		600	
8	Bus stand at Siliguri Jn. Rly. Station near upgraded old Matigarah Road bus terminal	√		500	
9	Bus Stand at south of NJP station bus terminal	√		500	
10	Flyover over the intersection of S.F.Road, Hill Cart Road and over the broad guage railway line in the heart of the city	Already completed		1300	
11	Flyover over the intersection of the broad guage railway line with the Eastern Bypass		√		1100
12	Flyover over the intersection of the broad guage railway line with the road on the north of NJP Rly. Station connecting Eastern Bypass	√		1100	
13	Pedestrian Flyovers/Underpasses at (i) Hashmi Chowk (ii)at the junction of Sevoke Road and Hill Cart Road (iii)near Tenjing Norgey Bus Terminus	√		600	
14	Bridge over Mahananda River on extention of Vivekananda Road		√		1200
15	Traffic engineering and operation schemes in five areas- (i)around Siliguri Jn. Rly. Station including Hill Cart Road (ii)around Hashmi Chowk (iii)around Panitanki More (iv)near Mahabirsthan More (v)near NJP Rly. Station	√		800	
16	Junction improvement in terms of channelisation, intersection lighting,, pedestrian crossings, road markings	15	15	450	450
17	Dispersal plans at: (i)Siliguri Jn. Rly. Station (ii)Siliguri Town Station (iii)NJP Rly.Station	√		900	
18	Off Street Parking facilities at: (i)Near Hill Cart Road(2 in no.) (ii)near Bidhan Road	√		2000	

(iii)near Sevoke Road				
(iv)near Bagrakote				

Source: Perspective Plan 2025 for Siliguri Jalpaiguri Planning Area: Volume II

The above data shows that the authorities are expected to spend a grand total of about Rs. 17618 lakhs for capacity building till 2025 to improve transport sector within SMC area. These would significantly help in solving the problems of traffic and transportation, besides contributing to the economic development of Siliguri. However, it is to contend that it is a long drawn affair and need to be managed and improved on a continual basis. Moreover, this capacity building alone would not serve the ultimate objective of containing and lessening vehicular congestion and pollution. This needs to be complemented and supplemented by the urgent implementation of above laid down second strategy.

(b)Preference to Public Transport System

It has already been discussed in Chapter Two that both private and public modes of transportation have their relative advantages and disadvantages. Whereas mass transport system is cheaper; is more environment-friendly as it economises on the number of vehicles used; and lowers congestion, private transport is more comfortable; is more convenient as it takes user from door to door; and helps in avoiding inconvenience caused due to waiting for buses and other modes of public transport. But on comparing, one may conclude that the advantages of public transport system far outweigh the advantages of private transportation in view of overall urban development. It is rather unfortunate that Indian urban authorities, including Siliguri, have failed to take serious note of this.

International cities like Moscow, London, Paris, Berlin, etc. have greater area and less density of population. On the other hand, Indian major cities are characterized by higher population density and smaller areas than those of developed western world. Still, mass public transport network is more comprehensive in the latter case. Indian cities are characterized by more reliance on private transport. Siliguri is no exception to this rule.

It is not that city public transport is non-existent in Indian cities, but the fact is that the ratio between private and public modes of transportation is dismal as

well as the quality of service is too unattractive for those who can afford to use private motorized vehicle on their own means.

It may be noted in this regard that city planners and policy makers tend to increase urban roads wherever feasible to ease traffic congestion. Besides, new parking areas are built. But then, such planning and policy further attracts more vehicles which further leads to more congestion, shortage of parking places, increasing pollution level, high energy consumption, increase in average travel time and retardation of productivity. This vicious circle of more roads and traffic growth can be checked if public transport system is made more attractive which would act as incentive to even those who can afford private means of transportation. At the same time, urban authorities should come out with certain disincentive measures for private mode of transportation so that people would restrict their use for each and every purpose. Not that the individual transport should be abandoned altogether, but both should act as a coordinated whole which can solve the traffic problems of the future.

The detail laid down in Chapter Two proves that the specific area requirement for car is 20 times greater than bus even at low occupancy levels. Apart from this, a bus is 15, 5, and 4 times lower than car, two-wheeler and three-wheeler respectively as far as cost of operations in terms of passenger kilometer is concerned. As far as energy cost is related, it is 21, 12 and 10 times lower respectively.

Siliguri Municipal Corporation should urgently come out with a massive blueprint of mass public transport which would entail manifold benefits like, (a) less expenditure for the common man; (b) reduction in energy consumption; (c) employment generation in its own way; (d) lesser congestion; (e) lesser pollution; (f) lesser accidents; and (g) lesser stress.

As far as Siliguri is concerned, the concept of city buses, which took off few years back with 13 routes and 42 mini buses (Perspective Plan 2004) could not become successful. This may be primarily attributed to the civic authorities' policy to introduce shared auto services on the same routes as city-buses. The method of provision of licenses to shared autos was applied in such an indiscriminate manner that these took over the city-buses in popularity as public transport system. This lack of vision on the part of civic authorities has demonstrated in due course that Siliguri have become infamous for rash driving, utter violation of traffic rules, and

making the major thoroughfare utterly chaotic, highly polluted and accident-prone than those of city-buses.

In order to make public transport system viable, popular and acceptable by the people as well as keeping in consideration problems of pollution, congestion and accidents, there is a need on the part of SMC and SJDA to go for two sets of measures :

- (I) Incentives for making public transport system popular among people;
- (II) Disincentives so that people shift to public transport system under normal conditions.

The first category includes would include measures like (i) segregation; (ii) densification; (iii) high level of frequency; (iv) different classes of buses; (v) art of the state originating and terminating points with specified bus stops at manageable distances; (v) publication, dissemination and display of route charts and other information on traffic rules; (vi) strict enforcement of discipline for those associated with public transportation system, and the like.

On the other hand, the second category of measures may include (i) high parking charges on major arterial roads; (ii) no parking zone for automobiles on the major arterial roads for a day in a week ; (iii) park and ride facilities; (iv) substantially high fine charges for violation of traffic rules and discipline; (v) segregating some narrow lanes in the market place exclusively for pedestrians, and the like.

4.5.4 Vehicular Pollution and Need for a Planned Urban Social Forestry in Siliguri

Even if the mindset of people change more towards public transport system on account of pursuance of strategy of incentives and disincentives, mentioned in the preceding section, vehicular pollution is going to stay considering the growth of population of Siliguri. As of now, vehicular pollution in Siliguri is gradually getting alarming. The main cause of urban pollution in Siliguri is the abundance of vehicular traffic movement in the localized zones along the major roads. Along the Hill Cart, Sevoke Road, Bidhan Road and Bardhaman Road, the traffic movement is extensive. In particular, pollution near the Tenzing Norgye Bus Stand and the SNT Bus Stand seems to be more because the average speed of the vehicles is very low due to frequent congestion and waiting passenger vehicles, producing high quantity of hydrocarbon. Generation of HCO is usually much higher when the

vehicle is on the idling mode. Traces of air pollution are also high near the truck terminal along the Vivekananda Road. Besides carbon emissions, pollution is caused due to suspended particulate matters caused by the vehicles. A vehicle generates about 12^{10} particles per km. (Jagmohan 2005). Besides air pollution, noise pollution is also significantly higher along the heavy vehicular traffic roads.

As has already been mentioned in Chapter Two that promotion of public transport system in the cities, adoption of appropriate and cleaner vehicular emission technologies, and special consideration in designing pedestrian and non-motorized transport (NMT) facilities along the roads will go a long way in reducing urban pollution caused by vehicles, but these alone are not sufficient unless and until urban forestry is given due space in the overall planning process. It is so because it provides one of the most significant environmental and material benefits to the urban dwellers.

Urban forestry management requires a 'planned, integrated, and systematic' approach. Planning is important because trees are very often considered as an afterthought once development has taken place. It is generally not incorporated at the original design phase. An integrated approach implies the participation of many different organizations - local councils, municipal and national planning bodies, departments, etc. Systematic management entails regulated tree management; operations such as planting, pruning, and felling must all be conducted in an organized manner and at the appropriate time.

4.5.5 Is Urban Social Forestry in Siliguri Planned, Integrated and Systematic?

As planning denotes incorporation of urban social forestry in the original design phase of planning, so, one may not prefer to call urban social forestry in Siliguri, a planned exercise. It suffers from ad hoc efforts and perhaps the least concerned aspect of urban governance despite having great environmental benefits in terms of reduction of air and noise pollution, heat and air currents. Tree saplings are generally planted to mark important occasions like observance of forest weeks, World Environment Day, etc. One may find surprising that the establishment of the Siliguri Municipal Corporation have twenty five different sections to properly govern the city, but there is no exclusive section on urban social forestry. It is the PWD section which looks after the parks of the city which is not enough at all. Moreover, this section hardly gets any time to think over street side forestry as its

time is primarily consumed in construction activities. Moreover, the Department of Forest, Government of West Bengal, do not have any division on urban social forestry based in Siliguri. It is looked after by the Divisional Forest Officer, who again is short of time to ponder seriously over this question. Moreover, there has been tendency to plant saplings jointly by the Forest Department and SMC which results in problems of coordination and question of responsibility. It is in the absence of any planned and concerted effort, the Mayor cannot but only ask for whole hearted cooperation from all concerned in this regard. It may also be laid down that the role of Regional Office of WBPCB is also not very encouraging.

Urban social forestry in Siliguri also falls far short of being called an integrated approach as participation of different organizations - municipal, state and national planning bodies, departments, etc. – is lacking.

It is, however, in the third respect that the lack of commitment and seriousness is most discernable. Under no circumstance, urban social forestry in Siliguri can be termed systematic which entails regulated tree management; and conduct of operations such as planting, pruning, and felling in an organized manner and at the appropriate time. No doubt, hundreds of saplings were planted along the main arterial roads in Siliguri in 2009 jointly by the SMC and the State Forest Department, but the saddening part is that post-plantation care is completely absent. As a result, one may notice that most of the saplings have either died or have poor growth.

The SMC Budget of 2010-2011 has proposed allotment of a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs for plantation of variety of trees in association with the Department of Forest, Government of West Bengal, but it would be loss of time, energy and money if attention is not given to make urban social forestry planned, integrated and systematic. Two other major problems of governance encountering urban forestry in Siliguri are (i) lack of detailed and strongly enforced legislation concerning the management of trees in Indian cities, including ones growing on private lands; and (ii) non-availability of urban tree databases and inventory techniques for most of the Indian cities.

However, at the same time, it has to be mentioned that one of the major practical problems with regard to urban forestry in Siliguri is that the space is precious, and subject to many competing land use pressures. Much of the challenge of urban forestry in Siliguri, thus, would lie in making optimal use of the limited area available for urban trees.

4.5.6 A Model for Urban Social Forestry in Siliguri

The first and foremost requirement on the part of SMC with regard to urban social forestry is to divide urban settlements into broad spatial categories and accordingly suitable plant types may be planted. One type of zonation may be dividing the city into (i) Core - the city centre; (ii) Corridors – areas along which the town/city is expanding, usually along communication routes; (iii) Wedges - areas unsuitable for buildings and habitation; and (iv) Periphery - the urban fringe.

The second step is careful thought and forward planning for the cultivation of trees. These, in the main, include deciding upon the tree species and the sites for the plantation of trees.

The third step involves management requirements, both before plantation and after plantation. The requirements before planting trees are proper preparation of the site and plantation of the tree stock following proper plantation technique. The requirements after plantation are watering at regular intervals, weeding, staking, tree surgery and protection and removal of tree waste at regular intervals.

Finally, it may be laid down that neglecting urban forestry would definitely entail in depriving the urban dwellers of the manifold benefits accruing from them. The most important being the environmental benefits in terms of reduction in air pollution and noise pollution. Besides, urban forestry leads to improvement in landscape. The concept of a “green city” can be a source of civic pride, and used to attract investment into an area. As such, there is a need to plant variety of trees with different foliage, blossoms, heights, colours and shapes which will not only help enhance the economy and visual character of the city, but will also reduce glare and reflection.

(Ulrich, 1990:29) mentions that people derive quantifiable benefit from the passive experience of viewing trees, the positive effects being both psychological and physiological.

It may, however, be argued that for many urban dwellers of Siliguri, issues such as landscape, amenity and a sense of well-being are an irrelevance. That the urban poor have pressing needs cannot be disputed, but it should not be assumed that these entirely erase from them any aesthetic appreciation of their surroundings. Street trees may also have an important recreational role at the site of tea shops and a gathering spot for poorer people to sit and chat.

Not only environmental and aesthetic benefits, trees also provide human comfort, such as, protection from heavy rain as well as shelter to the urban poor during night for sleep.

4.6 GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN SLUM IMPROVEMENT AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN SILIGURI

The WBMC Act, 2006 has laid down improvement of ‘bustees’ (slums) as one of the obligatory functions of the Corporation [Clause(c), Sub-Section(3), Section 97, Chapter VIII, Part IV]. The term ‘bustee’ has been defined in the Act as an area containing land, being not less than seven hundred square metres in area, occupied by, or for the purposes of, any collection of huts or other structures used or intended to be used for human habitation [Sub-Section 9, Section 2, Chapter I, Part I]. Further, the hut has been defined as any building, constructed principally of wood, bamboo, mud, leaves, pressed cloth or thatch, and includes any structure of whatever material, declared by the Corporation to be a hut for the purposes of this Act [Sub-Section 49, Section 2]. Besides, the Census of India, 2001 defines ‘slum’ as : (i) all areas notified as ‘slum’ by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act; (ii) all areas recognized as ‘slum’ by State/Local Government and UT Administration which have not been formally notified as slum under any Act; and (iii) a compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.

The improvement of ‘bustees’ (slums) involves several other obligatory functions [Section 97] and discretionary functions [Section 98] of the Corporation mentioned in the same Act.

Part VII, Chapter XV of the WBMC Act, 2006 is dedicated to ‘Bustee’ covering Sections 296-299. These Sections lay down that the Corporation may define the external limits as well as alter the limits of any ‘bustee’. It is the responsibility of the Corporation to execute improvement schemes of ‘bustees’ like water supply, sinking of tubewells, laying of water-pipe lines, installation of overhead reservoirs, pathways, lighting, sanitation, provision of flushing of privies and sewers, laying of drains, conversion of service privies into connected privies or septic tank privies, removal of solid or liquid wastes, sewers and sludge from

septic tank, cleaning of squatting platforms, and the like. Besides, the Corporation has the power to acquire the right of user in land or around 'bustee' for the purpose of effecting improvement. Again, the Corporation may sanction building plan for renovation, addition or alteration of huts or conversion of existing huts into 'pucca' structures upon payment of such fees as may be determined by the Corporation by regulations. However, before such sanction, a lay out plan of the 'bustee' shall be prepared by the Corporation.

Slum (to be used subsequently in place of 'bustee') development involves two-pronged programmes – (a) infrastructural development programmes, both social and physical; and (b) income generating programmes. It is with the combination of both these programmes that the slum dwellers can be pulled out of the vicious circle of poverty and overall improvement in the quality of life of slum dwellers can be achieved, thereby providing them a dignified living. The above two types of programmes for slum development, together, are known as the urban poverty alleviation/eradication programmes. Before going into the details of urban poverty alleviation/eradication programmes for slum development of Siliguri, it is pertinent to lay down facts and figures of slums within SMC area as well as the organizational structure at the Corporation, Borough, Ward and Departmental level responsible for slum development and UPE.

4.6.1 Facts and Figures

The reasons for the development of slums in Siliguri and its facts and figures before conversion of Siliguri from Municipality to Municipal Corporation in 1994 have already been laid down in Chapter Three. As such, this chapter confines itself to post-1994 period with regard to slum development and UPE, though at times old facts and figures may come in for the purpose of giving relevance.

It has already been laid out in the last Chapter that the roots of slums in the towns of North Bengal can be attributed to the insufficient agricultural development to sustain the increasing growth of population as well as inability of the existing tea gardens to plough back enough money for the economic development of the region. This forced migration from rural to urban areas of the region. However, with the process of industrialization being very slow, the rate of rural-urban migration continued to exceed rates of urban job creation and surpassed the absorption capacity of the industry. Further, the events of Indo-China War and the creation of Bangladesh in the 1960s and 1970s respectively resulted in

huge influx of people from outside the region, particularly in the urban agglomerations. All these combined together led the majority of the urban dwellers to earn their livelihood from the tertiary sector, with slum dwellers engaging themselves as scavengers, non-agricultural labourer, petty businessmen, rickshaw and van puller and motor and auto rickshaw driver.

Table 4.24 lays down the basic facts related to notified slums in the city of Siliguri.

Table 4.24 : Facts and Figures on Slums in Siliguri

Ward No (1)	Total Population of the Ward as per 2001 Census (2)	Total Nos. of BPL Families in the Ward* (3)	Total Slum Population as per 2001 Census (4)	Total Nos. of Slums in the Ward* (5)	% of Slum Population to Total Population of the Ward (6)	Average Population Size of each Slum in the Ward (7)
Ward No.1	17853	1588	8744	13	48.98	672.62
Ward No.2	11436	534	4533	5	39.64	906.60
Ward No.3	11753	436	3477	3	29.58	1159.00
Ward No.4	20028	1368	8365	8	41.77	1045.63
Ward No.5	15326	927	9755	3	63.65	3251.67
Ward No.6	9023	434	1254	1	13.9	1254.00
Ward No.7	9889	426	2437	2	24.64	1218.50
Ward No. 8	7843	38	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No. 9	7306	9	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.10	4720	46	760	1	16.10	760.00
Ward No.11	2933	0	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.12	3772	1	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.13	5070	45	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.14	6407	8	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.15	8103	24	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.16	5984	19	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.17	5485	20	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.18	8440	714	3816	5	45.21	763.20
Ward No.19	3233	62	301	1	9.31	301.00
Ward No.20	9869	459	6162	6	62.44	1027.00
Ward No.21	5875	99	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.22	10293	315	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.23	6205	245	1181	2	19.03	590.50
Ward No.24	11165	218	3799	4	34.03	949.75

Ward No.25	8525	48	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.26	4873	118	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.27	5630	28	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Ward No.28	9578	1439	8607	6	89.86	1434.50
Ward No.29	4783	162	2180	2	45.60	109.00
Ward No.30	6510	86	1482	2	22.76	741.00
Ward No.31	13414	524	5103	3	38.04	1701.00
Ward No.32	11845	355	3216	2	27.14	1608.00
Ward No.33	13543	302	3038	2	22.43	1519.00
Ward No.34	16560	908	9150	9	55.25	1016.67
Ward No.35	14945	1230	10085	9	67.48	1120.56
Ward No.36	13553	956	5305	5	39.14	1061.00
Ward No.37	14431	363	10976	5	76.06	2195.20
Ward No.38	11235	317	2006	1	17.85	2006.00
Ward No.39	11237	136	1305	1	11.61	1305.00
Ward No.40	18164	743	5809	10	31.98	580.90
Ward No.41	12951	947	3550	5	27.41	710.00
Ward No.42	14711	909	4689	4	31.87	1172.25
Ward No.43	9661	1558	6807	7	70.46	972.43
Ward No.44	11522	1139	7260	4	63.00	1815.00
Ward No.45	7117	294	4335	3	60.91	1445.00
Ward No.46	21222	1626	13245	14	62.41	946.07
Ward No.47	8363	675	5482	6	65.55	913.67
TOTAL	472384	22898	168214	154	-	-

*Figures as on March, 2010

Source : SMC

The table above shows that 14 out of the total of 47 wards have no slum pockets. However, in other wards of the city, slum population constitute a sizeable percentage of the total population of the respective ward. It constitutes about 35.61 percent of the total population of the city as per figures of 2001 census. However, the Annual Report, 2007-2008 of Siliguri Municipal Corporation lays the slum population figures at 1,73,111, thereby accounting for 36.81 percent of the total population (4,72,384 as per Census 2001) of the city. 80% of the slum dwellers are migrants from Bihar, Assam, West Bengal, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan and 69 % of them are staying for more than 10 to 15 years. Except for some slums on railway lands, all other slums are notified slums.

Slums are located along the River Mahananda, Fuleswari and Jorapani on the Railway lands and in the heart of the city near railway town station. Due to

ineffective development control regulations, slums have developed on the riverbeds and on the railway lands resulting into degrading urban environment and unhealthy living conditions. Siliguri Municipal Corporation has been engaged in undertaking a numbers of developmental activities under various Government projects to upgrade their living standards as well as to provide better livelihood opportunities through various self-employment programmes. However, the huge number of slums and squatter colonies present a tremendous challenge to the municipal authority for bringing about their overall development and achieve the vision of infrastructural, uniform and equitable development of the city. The stupendous task has to be seen in the backdrop of absence of any slums in Siliguri till 1971 (Banerjee et al 1980) and only 48 slums as per 1991 census (1 – 30 wards as other wards were included in 1994).

From the table above, one may discern that the slums are not uniformly distributed among the wards. Besides, the average population size and social composition of population in the slums in different wards are also varied. As such, any solemn effort for the up gradation of the slum pockets calls for keeping these considerations in knowledge. Tables 4.25 and 4.26 take a look at that.

Table 4.25 : Categories of Slum Pockets*

Percentage of Slum Population to Total Population of the Ward (1)	Nos. of Wards (2)	Population of Slum Pockets in a Ward (3)	Nos. of Wards (4)
No slum existing	14	No slum existing	14
Upto 20 %	6	Below 500	2
Between 20% and 40%	12	Between 500 and 1000	12
Between 40% and 60%	5	Between 1000 and 2000	16
Between 60% and 80%	9	Between 2000 and 3000	2
Above 80%	1	Above 3000	1

* Constructed from Table 4.24

4.6.2 Slum Improvement and Siliguri

As far as slum improvement within Siliguri Municipal Corporation area is concerned, it primarily consists of four major components, namely, (i) housing; (ii) low cost sanitation; (iii) physical infrastructure; and (iv) social infrastructure. The physical infrastructure has its sub-components in the form of (a) water supply; (b)

roads; (c) drains; (d) community toilets; (e) community baths; (f) street lights; and (g) solid waste management. Finally, the social infrastructure in slum pockets consists of sub-components of (a) community seva kendras; and (b) community centres.

The efforts to solve the housing problems in slum areas of Siliguri started under the shelter upgradation scheme whereby the slum dwellers, having titles to the huts they lived in, were made eligible for taking up repair works for their shelter. For this purpose, the Siliguri Municipality took a loan of nearly Rs. 5 crores from HUDCO. As such, during 1992-93, nearly 5,000 families in the slum area were provided with the loan of Rs. 3,000 each and the subsidy of Rs. 1,000 each. The loan amount was repayable in 10 years with an annual interest rate of 7.25%. The monthly instalment payment, thus, came at Rs. 39/- (Ghosh et al 1994). Thereafter, the provision of shelter to the urban poor was made under the NSDP launched in 1996. Under the National Slum Development Program (NSDP), the UPE Department of SMC constructed/renovated 368 dwelling units by 2001. A total number of 881 families have benefited under shelter for shelter less scheme of NSDP till its merger with IHSDP. With the advent of VAMBAY in 2001, construction of new dwelling units in the slum pockets was vigorously pursued. Ultimately, with the launch of Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme in 2005, both the NSDP and VAMBAY were subsumed in it. IHSDP was launched with the basic objective of having an integrated approach in ameliorating the conditions of urban slum dwellers who do not possess adequate shelter and reside in dilapidated and sub-human conditions. It may be noted that despite efforts to solve the housing problems of urban poor of Siliguri, the results have not been very encouraging as the number of dwelling units constructed under programmes like NSDP and VAMBAY were far too less to cater to the needs of a huge number of kutcha and semi-pucca houses of the slum pockets. This is well confirmed by the Perspective Plan (2004) of the Siliguri-Jalpaiguri Planning Area which maintained that only 6% of the slum houses were pucca. About 18% of the houses were semi-pucca and about 76% of the slum dwellings were kutcha. This scenario is becoming grave with time due to the fast pace of the growth of slum population without any commensurate increase in the area of the slums, thereby resulting in constraints of space and making the living conditions more and more unhygienic. The latest figure suggests the number of total slum households in Siliguri to be 33,231 with average household size being 4.9 (Purobarta, 2010 : 66).

It needs to be seen as to how far the IHSDP solves this problem with the sanctioning of 5063 numbers of dwelling units to be constructed in three phases between 2009 and 2012. Indeed, under the present circumstances, the authorities of SMC would be facing mounting challenges to overcome this uphill task.

4.6.2.1 ILCS and Siliguri

Integrated Low Cost Sanitation (ILCS) for the Liberation of the Scavengers Programme (LSP) was initiated in 1981 by the Ministry of Home Affairs with the purpose of converting dry latrines into two-pit water seal pour flush latrines; constructing new sanitary units in those households which practiced open defecation; putting an end to the unhealthy and degradable practice of manual scavenging of night soil from the dry latrines; and providing alternative employment to the liberated scavengers. The prime objective, thus, was improvement of the overall sanitation scenario of the urban poor following a demand-driven Total Sanitation Campaign Programme

. In 1986, it was converged with UBS and the latter, in turn, got subsumed in UBSP, launched in 1990. The Central Government in 1993 came out with the 'Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993' with the solemn resolve to completely eradicate manual scavenging from the country.

The ILCS Scheme started in Siliguri in 1986 under UBS with funding from the Central Government, State Government and UNICEF and contributions by the beneficiaries (in case of individual toilets). Under the Scheme, SUDA has been the nodal agency in the State and SMC through MED has been the implementing agency. Under UBS, till 1990, 350 individual households two-pit were constructed. Besides, under the same programme, 8 (4 seater) two-pit community latrines were

BOX 4.1: FACT SHEET OF NSDP IN SILIGURI	
○	Nos. of Families benefitted under Shelter for Shelterless Programme - 961/381
○	Nos. of Leprosy Shed Constructed - 35
○	Number of Tube Well Installed - 640
○	Nos. of Ring well Platforms constructed - 185
○	Nos. of Women Bathing Place constructed - 115
○	Nos. of Community Toilets Constructed - 8
○	Nos. of Community Centre constructed - 8
○	Number of Service Privy Converted into Low Cost Sanitary Latrines - 12547
○	Concrete Drains constructed - 72 Km
○	Bituminous Roads constructed - 90 Km
○	Concrete Cement Roads constructed - 18 Km
○	Extension of Street Light Facilities - 35 Km

Source: Report on UPL in SMC Area 2006-07 (Data gap with regard to housing in two different Reports)

constructed. To add to UBS, a state-sponsored programme 'Liberation of Scavenger Programme (LSP) also contributed in this regard. Under this, 1600 individual household two-pit latrines, 8 (4 seater) two-pit community latrines, and 10 two-pit latrines in pre-school education centre were constructed (Ghosh et al 1994 : 201-202).

With the launch of UBSP in 1990 and the passage of the above-mentioned Act, the ILCS Scheme was intensified in Siliguri. An assessment of the situation based on Municipal data of 1990 showed that out of 21,000 holdings, 2,575 service privies were existing at that point of time. However, within the allotted fund for this purpose amounting to Rs. 100.71 lakhs, only 1302 service privies could be converted to LCS latrines. Thus, for the remaining 1,273 dry latrines, a further fund of about Rs. 32 lakhs was provided by the HUDCO in the form of loan. But with the abnormal growth of the city and its conversion to the status of the Corporation, the slum population grew to an unmanageable proportion. As such, much more construction of household toilets and community toilets were needed. Finally, a total 12,547 low cost sanitation units have been constructed under this scheme and total 80 % of the slum dwellers have access to safe mode of sanitation due to this program. It was in the financial year 2008-09 that the Government of West Bengal announced that it has no dry latrines, implying that manual scavenging has effectively been abolished in Siliguri. However, it is to contend that though there is no existence of manual scavenging in Siliguri, open defecation, particularly on the riverbeds of the river Mahananda, continues unabated, thereby contributing immensely in the increase in water pollution of the river. Survey done by NUSP in early months of 2010 confirms prevalence of such practice.

The funding pattern under ILCS Scheme for EWS for Siliguri was as laid down in Table 4.26

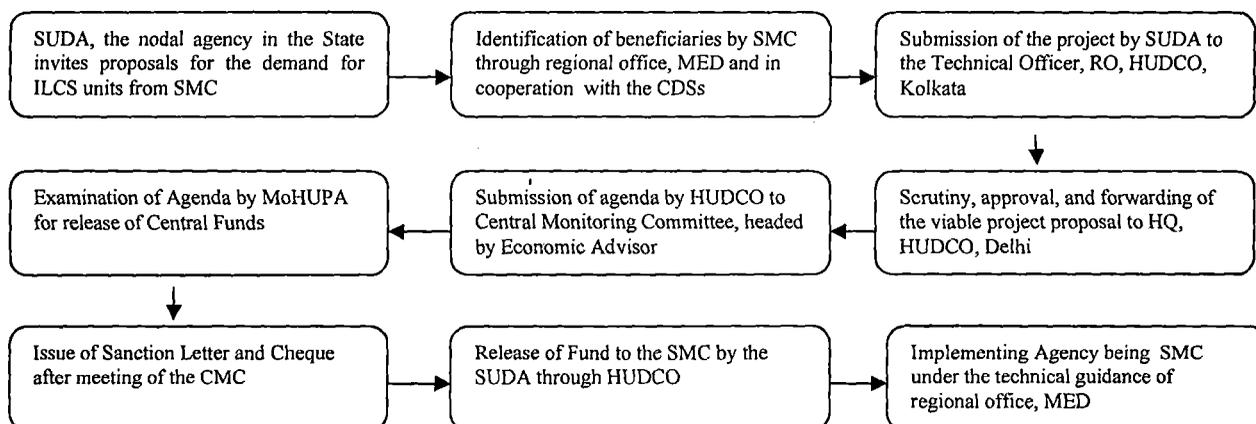
**Table 4.26 : Funding Pattern under ILCS Scheme applicable in case of
Siliguri**

Particulars (1)	GOI Subsidy (2)	GOI Loan (3)	State Subsidy (4)	Beneficiary Contribution (5)	Corporation's /Beneficiary Contribution (6)
All-India Before Revised Guidelines, 2008	45%	50%	-	5%	-
All-India After Revised Guidelines, 2008	75%	-	15%	10%	-
In Case of West Bengal till 2001-02	45%	-	50%	5%	-
In Case of West Bengal after 2001-02 till Revised Guidelines, 2008	45%	-	Addl. Grant of Rs. 400/- per unit as well as Addl. Amount for the construction of the superstructure	-	55%

Source: Evaluation and Impact Assessment of ILCS Scheme, Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd.

Further, the implementing mechanism under the ILCS Scheme with respect to Siliguri which was followed can be understood in the form of following Figure 4.12.

**Figure 4.12 : Implementing Mechanism under the ILCS Scheme in
Siliguri**



It may be noted that though the numbers and areas of slums have remained same, the population has increased substantially, resulting in major space constraints. As such, while implementing ILCS Scheme, one of the major problems faced by the implementing agencies of SMC was the space constraints. Besides, at many places, the soil composition was not suitable for the construction of the pits. All these created major limitation in the construction of septic tanks. It was also experienced by the authorities concerned that on many occasions appropriate location of tank as per technical specifications falls to other beneficiary's boundary which, in turn, resulted in resistance. Thus, one of the major suggestions put forward was regarding the flexibility in the adoption of design of the latrines to be constructed. Apart from these, other problems which were highlighted were more or less similar to those experienced by other cities, such as, low amount of GOI subsidy norm as the target household beneficiaries were from the very poor category, delay in the process of fund release by HUDCO, allocation of funds for awareness generation about the usage and maintenance of the latrines, and the like.

However, declaration of no-scavenging in Siliguri by the SMC does not mean that there is complete eradication of open defecation in Siliguri. On the other hand, slum population, as always, is on the rise without increase in the areas of the slums with the consequence of acute space crisis. With the end of the ILCS Scheme in Siliguri, it is beyond the financial capability of the Corporation to go alone for the construction of new household toilets. Under the circumstances, the only viable option is the construction of community toilets on a priority basis. Moreover, there is a need for regular and vigorous door-to-door campaign in the slum pockets highlighting the negative environmental effects of open defecation on river water.

4.6.2.2 Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) and Siliguri

The funding pattern under the Scheme is 80:15 among the Central Government and the State Government. The remaining 5% is to be contributed by the individual beneficiary. A total of Rs. 1 Lakh has been earmarked for the construction of a dwelling unit. The Government of India has approved projects

under IHSDP in 3 Phases to SMC. Table 4.26 lays down the approved Schemes of housing under IHSDP.

Table 4.26 : Housing Scheme under IHSDP for SMC

Sl. No.	Phase	Sanctioned Amount (In Crores)	Date of Sanction	Nos. of Dwelling Units	Description of Other Works	Time Limit for Implementation of the Project
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1.	Phase I	36.82	31.03.07.	1998	Construction of roads, drains, electric poles, water supply, community centre/bath/toilets, etc.	2009- 2010
2.	Phase II	19.99	12.05.08.	1206	Do	2010- 2011
3.	Phase III	35.98	19.01.09.	1859	Do	2011- 2012

Source : SMC Budget, 2010-2011

The following Table 4.27 lays down the Additional Central Assistance (ACA) status of IHSDP under JNNURM with regard to Siliguri.

Table 4.27 : 'On' Account Payment of Grant Component of ACA for the IHSDP under JNNURM

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Year and Date	Name of the Project/ Particular	Total Project Cost	Central Share (CS)	Amount Recommended for Release
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
2005-06	-	-	-	-
2006-07 31.03.2007.	IHSDP Scheme for the town of Siliguri, West Bengal (Phase I)	3682.10	2945.68	665.99 (Part of the 1 st installment of Rs. 1472.84, i.e. 50% of the Central Share)
2007-08 28.06.2007.	Remaining balance of the 1 st installment of Rs. 1472.84 of the Phase I	-	-	806.85
2008-09 29.04.2008.	In-situ construction of 1206 DUs in 29 slums in Siliguri, West Bengal (Phase II)	1999.24	1406.43	703.22 (1 st Installment)
2008-09 27.03.2009.	Balance amount of ACA of Phase I released as 2 nd installment	-	-	1472.84

2008-09 27.03.2009.	IHSDP Scheme for the town of Siliguri, West Bengal (Phase III)	3598.74	2581.55	1290.78 (1 st Installment)
2009-10 29.07.2009.	VAMBAY (Scheme No. 18665, Agency- SJDA)	64.00	32.00	15.00
2010-11 14.06.2010	Revised CS approved for DUs under Phase III = 1487.20 (Originally CS approved = 1189.76)		297.44 (Increased ACA approved)	148.72

Source : www.mhupa.nic.in

The Efforts of the SMC with regard to Proper Implementation of IHSDP

In order that IHSDP gets implemented properly in accordance with the guidelines of the MoHUPA, GoI, the officials of the SMC, MED, PHE along with the CDSs functionaries and respective Ward Councillors have conducted a detailed survey of the slums for the purpose of identification of the beneficiaries. Besides, a number of meetings have been organized with the beneficiary families in order to explain them the details of the Scheme as well as their role and involvement in its implementation. The Corporation has taken pains to ease the burden of the beneficiaries' own contribution for dwelling units by making a request to the nationalized banks to extend finances on easy terms. In this regard, the State Bank of India and the Union Bank have given their consent to provide loan of Rs. 10,000/- at a rate of interest of 4% per annum for the maximum tenure of five years. Thus, the beneficiaries have the option of contributing either the whole amount of Rs. 16,000/- (20% of the project cost per dwelling unit) or to contribute Rs. 6,000/- and apply for the bank loan for the remaining amount of Rs. 10,000/-. For the smooth implementation of the schemes under IHSDP, a Cell has been constituted at the Corporation level. Further, in order to closely monitor the implementation of the works under the Programme, Ward level and Slum level Committees involving the CDS members and other slum dwellers have also been formed.

Problems Confronted in the Implementation of IHSDP

Some of the problems has been highlighted by the SMC in its Report, 'Urban Poverty Alleviation and Siliguri Municipal Corporation Area, 2006-07'

with respect to the proper implementation of IHSDP. In the area of infrastructure development of slums, National Slum Development Programme was the main source of funds along with VAMBAY. Roads, drainage, water supply, electricity and housing were provided to the poor in all slums irrespective of their land title. On the contrary, IHSDP guidelines lay down that no scheme should be taken up in those slums which are existing on the railway and other government lands. Moreover, the Programme requires selection of slums on the criterion of backwardness. Further, it prescribes implementation of the Programme in phases. All these have left SMC with no government fund at its disposal to undertake housing and infrastructural activities in those slums which could not be included under IHSDP. As a result, some of the Wards of SMC which have majority of population living in slums have been deprived of the benefits of IHSDP. Mention may be made of Ward No. 1 and Ward No. 46 where there are 13 and 14 slum pockets respectively. Due to the criterion of land title laid down under IHSDP, only 1 slum pocket from Ward No. 1 and only 2 slum pockets from Ward No. 46 were chosen under the Programme. It may also be noted that for the same reason, four Wards with a sizeable number of slum population, namely, Ward Nos. 18, 28, 32 and 33 were completely left out. Besides, in some of the Wards, some slum pockets were included and some were left out due to same limitation. In all, out of the total of 154 notified slum pockets, only 94 got included under IHSDP. It may, however, be noted that SJDA has decided to bring about comprehensive development, out of its own funds, on the pattern of IHSDP in those slums pockets which have been left out.

Problems have been noticed with regard to proper implementation of the housing scheme under IHSDP in Siliguri. The writer came to know from the slum dwellers that in several cases, the work have been completed only up to plinth area even after the lapse of about three years of the first phase. In some other cases, it was reported that there have been changes in the contractors several times which attributed in the delay of the completion of the dwelling units.

4.6.3 Urban Poverty Alleviation in Siliguri

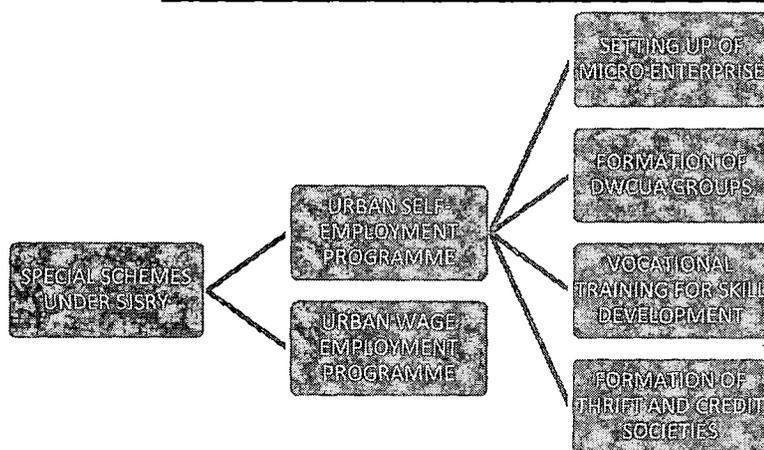
Among the several programmes of urban poverty alleviation in Siliguri, the most important is Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY). Among other

programmes/schemes, mention may be made of National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP), Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Mid Day Meal (MDM).

4.6.3.1 Swarna Jayanti Sahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) in Siliguri

This centrally assisted poverty alleviation programme was launched on 1st December, 1997. It seeks to provide gainful employment to the unemployed and underemployed urban poor. So, though the programme is implemented on a whole town basis but special emphasis is given on urban poor settlements. Again, among the target groups, special attention is given to women, people belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and disabled persons. The programme provides that not less than 30% of the beneficiaries should be women. Besides, the percentage of SC/ST beneficiaries should be proportionate to the total population of the town. Finally, 3% of the beneficiaries should belong to disabled (differently abled) category. Figure 4.13 lays down the special schemes of the SJSRY originally devised and were in operation within SMC area between 1997 and 2008-09:

Figure 4.13 : The Original Components of SJSRY



The guidelines of the SJSRY schemes got revised w.e.f. the financial year 2009-2010. As such, at present, SJSRY Scheme has five components which are in operation in Siliguri, as elsewhere in the country. They are :

- (1) Urban Self Employment Programme (USEP);
- (2) Urban Women Self help Programme (UWSP);

- (3) Skill Training for Employment Promotion amongst Urban Poor (STEP-UP);
- (4) Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP); and
- (5) Urban Community Development Network (UCDN).

The main features after various changes affected in the components of the revamped SJSRY are as follows :

- (1) USEP – (i) the eligibility criterion of ‘not educated beyond 9th Standard’ has been removed; (ii) assistance is given to individual poor beneficiaries for setting up gainful self-employment ventures; (iii) project cost ceiling has been increased from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 2 lakhs and subsidy component from 15% to 25% of the project cost; and (iv) provision is there for Rs. 80 lakhs (Rs. 60 lakhs as one time capital grant and Rs 20 lakhs for the running cost for 3 years on a tapered scale) as infrastructure component for setting up Micro Business Centres (MBC), Informal Sector Markets, Common Housing Facilities.
- (2) UWSP – (i) minimum number of women in a Women Self-Help Group has been reduced from 10 to 5; (ii) subsidy amount of group enterprises of urban poor women has been increased to 35% of the project cost or Rs. 3 lakhs or Rs. 60,000 per member of the group, whichever is less; (iii) revolving fund assistance to the T&CS increased from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 2000 per member subject to a ceiling of Rs. 25,000 per T&CS; and (iv) if any member of the T&CS saves at least Rs. 500 in a fixed deposit for 12 months with the society, she is entitled to a subsidy of Rs.30 in a health/life/accident/any other insurance scheme for herself.
- (3) STEP-UP – (i) skill training is now linked to ‘certification and accreditation’ and emphasis is on PPP (Public-Private Partnership) mode with the involvement of reputed institutions like IITs, NITs Industry Associations, reputed Engineering Colleges, Management Institutes and other reputed agencies; (iia) training is to be provided in service business, manufacturing activities and local skills and local crafts, such as, construction trade and allied services like carpentry, plumbing, electrical as well as manufacturing low-cost building materials based on cost-effective technology using local materials for setting up self-employment ventures or for securing salaried employment; (iib) for the purpose of construction related training, provision is there for using the services of the Building Centres sponsored by HUDCO

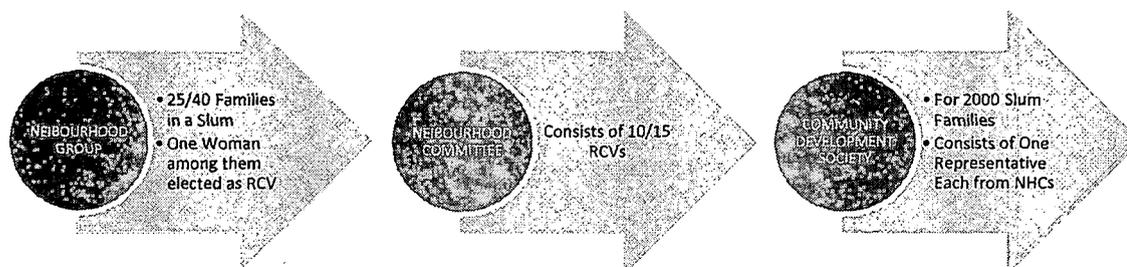
(Housing and Urban Development Corporation) or BMTPC (Building Material Technology Promotion Council) within the States/UTs; (iii) among the beneficiaries, not less than 30% would be women, the percentage of SCs and STs should be at least to the extent of the proportion of their strength in the city/town population below poverty line and 3% reservation is for the differently-abled person; (iv) average expenditure ceiling per trainee has been enhanced from Rs.2,600 to Rs.10,000 which include material cost, trainers' fees, tool kit cost, other miscellaneous expenses and the monthly stipend paid to the trainee; and (v) 15% of the total financial and physical targets under STEP-UP at the national level has been earmarked for the minority community in pursuance of the Prime Minister's 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities.

(4) UWEP – (i) provision is there for generation of wage employment to beneficiaries living below poverty line through construction of socially and economically useful public assets like community centres, storm water drains, roads, night shelters, kitchen sheds in primary schools under Mid-day Meal Scheme and other community requirements like parks, SWM facilities, as decided by the community structures themselves; (ii) special emphasis is to be given on the construction of community assets in low-income neighbourhoods; (iii) this component is application to towns/cities with population up to 5 lakhs as per the 1991 Census; (iv) the material:labour ratio is 60:40, relaxable upto 10% either way; and (v) beneficiaries to be paid prevailing minimum wage rate, as notified from time to time for each area.

(5) UCDN – it supports and promotes community organizations like NHGs, NHCs and CDSs to facilitate sustainable local development.

The most important feature of SJSRY programme is the active participation of the women from BPL families in the formulation, implementation and supervision of the schemes. For the purpose of this, a three tier structure has been formed which is presented as follows:

Figure 4.14 : The Three Tier Structure under SJSRY



Under the scheme of SJSRY, the CDSs share the prime responsibility for the identification of beneficiaries, preparation of applications, monitoring of recovery, identification of suitable projects for that particular area as well as other necessary support. The following table indicates the formation of NHGs, NHCs and CDSs in the slum pockets within SMC area:

Table 4.28 : Physical Status of NHG, NHC and CDS in Siliguri

Years (1)	No. of NHG/RCV (2)	No. of NHC (3)	No. of CDS (4)
Upto 1999	1100	151	15
Upto 2008	1216	154	15
As on 15.12.2010.	1216	154	15

Sources : SMC Five Years: 1994-1999; SMC Annual Report, 2007-2008

Town Project Officer, UPE Cell, SMC

Each of the 15 Community Development Societies (CDSs) in Siliguri is a registered body under Society Act. Besides, there are 15 Community Organisers (COs) appointed by the SMC for the maintenance of liaison between the CDSs and the UPE Cell of the SMC. These 15 COs act as the Secretaries of the 15 CDSs. The suggestions put forward by the CDSs reach the UPE Cell through the COs. The various suggestions are discussed and prioritized keeping in consideration the financial aspect by the MMICs under the Chairmanship of the Mayor and in presence of the MMIC, UPE, IPP-VIII & Mother and Child Care and associated officials.

4.6.3.1.1 Performance of SMC under Earlier Version of SJSRY

By the end of 1999, vocational training under SJSRY were provided to 303 women and 1,920 youths and loans on low interest and subsidies were given to 1,361 persons under USEP of SJSRY (SMC 1994-1999).

During 1999-2003, out of about 600 women who were provided training, 450 got self employed. Besides, about 400 TCGs (Thrift & Credit Groups) were formed and about 7000 women got associated with these. Out of these, some 4000 women received loans for establishing business. It was estimated that about Rs. One Crore thrift got collected from the Group Members (SMC 1999-2003).

The financial year 2006-07 saw the number of TCGs increasing to 610 with 583 of them availing revolving fund (DoMA 2006-07). Besides, there were 3 nos. of DWCUA in Siliguri. Further, under the USEP (micro-enterprise) scheme, 37 individuals were provided loans.

There was further improvement witnessed during financial year 2007-08. While the number of TCGs grew from 610 to 855 (with 815 groups availing fund) and the number of DWCUA from 3 to 4, another 12 beneficiaries were added under USEP (micro-enterprises). Besides, the total number of persons provided vocational training rose up to 860 by the end of the year (SMC 2007-08).

4.6.3.1.2 Present Status of SJSRY in Siliguri under the Revised Version

As on 15.12.2010, under the USEP (Individual Micro-Enterprise), five individuals have so far applied for loans, but they are yet to be sanctioned by the banks. Under UWSP, only one group consisting of 5 members has been provided with credit under UWSP (Group Micro-Enterprise). At present, 825 nos. of groups have been assisted with revolving fund under UWSP (Revolving Fund). Under STEP-UP, a total of 1064 persons have been provided with skill training for wage/salaried employment. Out of these, 651 are general, 247 SCs, 137 STs and 29 of them belong to minority section. Out of the total number of persons given training, 1034 are women. It was only with regard to one BPO Training session that 30 boys were selected for the purpose as not much women were interested to go for such training. It may be noted that the latter training was provided on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode by involving Orion Edutech Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata. Among other areas where training are provided under STEP-UP in Siliguri,

mention may be made of beautician course, food processing, crystal bag making, soft doll making, chow chow and chowmin, tailoring, embroidery, etc. Further, there is a micro-business centre, 'Srishti' present in Siliguri.

With regard to the functions of the Town Project Officer (TPO), UPE Cell, SMC, they are (i) coordination of the activities of all the CDSs and Cos; (ii) identification of the urban poor clusters and areas for setting up of community structures like Neighbourhood Groups (NHGs), Neighbourhood Committees (NHCs) and Community Development Societies (CDSs); (iii) conduct of households and livelihood surveys of slum pockets; (iv) identification of beneficiaries for various schemes under SJSRY; (v) provision of training to COs; and (vi) ensuring SHG-Bank linkage. However, as of now, there is no such arrangement in the UPE Cell for the TPO to monitor programme activities by deploying suitable MIS/e-Governance tools.

The coverage of each CDS in Siliguri are laid down in the following Table 4.28.

Table 4.28 : Physical Status of CDSs in Siliguri

CDS No. (1)	Wards Covered (2)	Total Nos. of Slums Covered (3)	Total Slum Population Covered (4)
CDS No. 1	Ward 4	8	8365
CDS No. 2	Ward 28,29	8	10787
CDS No. 3	Ward 19,20,23,24	13	11443
CDS No. 4	Ward 6,7,18	8	7507
CDS No. 5	Ward 2,3,45	11	12345
CDS No. 6	Ward 1,47	19	14226
CDS No. 7	Ward 42,43	11	11496
CDS No. 8	Ward 46	14	13245
CDS No. 9	Ward 10,44	5	8020
CDS No. 10	Ward 36	5	5305
CDS No. 11	Ward 35	9	10085
CDS No. 12	Ward 30,33,34	13	13670
CDS No. 13	Ward 5,31,32	8	18074
CDS No. 14	Ward 37,38,39	7	14287
CDS No. 15	Ward 40,41	15	9359

Source : TPO, UPE Cell, SMC

4.6.3.1.3 Limitations in Proper Implementation of Schemes under SJSRY in Siliguri

One of the major problems confronting training programmes under STEP-UP is that it is the State Urban Development Agency (SUDA), the nodal agency for SJSRY in West Bengal, who decides as to areas in which training is to be provided. As such, the role of SMC in this regard has been rendered non-existent. The TPO and several COs maintained during interview schedules that while choosing areas for training, the milieu of a particular city should be kept in mind. Otherwise, the whole exercise would end up in futility as well as result in loss of time, energy and above all, money. The issue that came up through discussions with regard to training programmes is that the UPE Cell is dictated upon to carry out the directives of the SUDA, based in Kolkata. One such example highlighted by several of the interviewees was the training programme organized during 2009-10 on making of 'Crystal Bags'. Out of the 25 beneficiaries imparted training, none of them reportedly got employed or is encouraged to initiate their own small business of crystal bags as the demands for such bags are minimal in Siliguri. In their opinion, it would be wise enough if the responsibility to identify the areas of training lie with the UPE Cell, SMC. The COs who were interviewed were unanimous in demanding more training sessions in tailoring as that was more popular among the beneficiaries.

Another problem highlighted was that it is again the SUDA who chooses the institution for imparting training from a panel prepared by it. In this regard, too, no consultation is done with the UPE Cell, SMC. More often than not, the institutions chosen for the purpose happens to have their base in Kolkata. If majority of the interviewees are to be believed then local trainers are capable enough to impart such trainings to the beneficiaries which would help save valuable public money.

One of the major demands of the authorities concerned was the increase in the number of beneficiaries stipulated for a training session. As of now, the number of beneficiaries to be imparted training in a particular session is normally fixed at 50. As a result, the share of each Ward under the SMC comes to an average of 2 beneficiaries. It becomes extremely difficult, sometimes, for the COs and Chairpersons of CDSs in identification of beneficiaries, in particular in those areas of training which are quite popular among the beneficiaries.

There are problems with regard to trainers, too. It was alleged that though at the initial stage of training, classes do run regularly, but with the passage of time, irregularity steps in the conduct of classes. Besides, allegation was also made as to the use of proxy by the trainers. There are instances of trainers deputing better students in the batch for the purpose of imparting training which obviously lowers the standard of training. Instances were highlighted where the beneficiaries, after completing training under STEP-UP, got trained again from privately-run institutions in order to initiate business.

With regard to the Thrift and Credit Groups (TCGs) under UWSP (Revolving Fund), one suggestion put forward by majority of the Resident Corps Volunteers (RCV), Chairpersons of the CDSs, COs as well as TPO herself was to increase the credit from the existing Rs. 2000/- to at least Rs. 5000/- in order to run the Groups successfully. The amount laid down under the revised SJSRY is not enough to start any sort of self-employment seeing the commercialization of Siliguri. Moreover, a demand was also put forward that the tenure of loan payment should be increased from existing 10 months to 15 months. This would help ease the burden of the beneficiaries to a large extent.

As far micro-enterprise scheme under USEP is concerned, it was observed that the banks generally are averse to the idea and generally show disinterest in sanctioning loans for any such enterprise. This is also to mention here that there is a justification on the part of the banks to show disinterest as it has been experienced that the number of defaulters in such cases are substantial.

As of now, the role Cos, CDSs, NHCs, RCVs is confined to formation and monitoring of TCGs. Even in case of selection of beneficiaries for various training programmes, their role is very limited and in most of the cases, it is the Ward Councillor and Ward Committee who play the leading role in this regard. Those in the UPE Cell are of the opinion that slum improvement and urban poverty alleviation programs would be better managed if planning and execution come under one umbrella. They seek that UPE Cell and CDSs should be given the sole responsibility in this respect. In their opinion, this would further better coordination in the implementation of the slum improvement and UPE programmes. However, they also held out that prior to any such move, proper training should be provided to the COs and members of the CDSs.

4.6.3.2 National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) in Siliguri

This programme was launched on 15th August, 1995 and is implemented in rural as well as in urban areas. It is monitored by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India with regard to effective implementation of the programme by the concerned States/UTs. In the State of West Bengal, SUDA is the nodal agency for its implementation in the urban areas.

NSAP is a significant step towards the fulfillment of Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in Article 41 of the Indian Constitution. It enjoins upon the State to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness, disablement and in other cases of undeserved want within its economic means. The Programme has been modified 7 times since its inception and presently has five components instead of three at the time of inception.

Thus, NSAP presently consists of the five following schemes :

(i) Indira Gandhi Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) entitling BPL persons aged 65 years or above to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-.

(ii) Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS) entitling BPL widows aged 40-64 years to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-

(iii) Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS) entitling BPL persons aged 18-64 years with severe and multiple disabilities to a monthly pension of Rs. 200/-.

(iv) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) entitling a BPL household to lump sum amount of Rs. 10,000/- on the death of primary breadwinner aged between 18 and 64 years.

(v) 'Annapurna' scheme providing for 10 kg of food grains per month free of cost to those senior citizens who, though eligible, have remained uncovered under NOAPS/IGNOAPS.

The physical status of the Schemes under NSAP in Siliguri as on February, 2010 is laid down in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29 : Physical Status of Schemes under NSAP in Siliguri as on February, 2010

Sl. No.	Name of Schemes	No. of Beneficiaries
1	IGNOAPS	3129
2	NFBS	41
3	Annapurna Yojona	224
4	IGNWP	196
5	IGNDPS	9

Source : UPE Cell, SMC

Apart from these, several number of applications for financial assistance under IGNOAPS, IGNWP etc. have been forwarded to SUDA for approval. Besides, 6038 families are being provided assistance under the Antyoday Anna Yojana. Under Janani Suraksha Yojana, 315 beneficiaries have been provided with assistance.

It may be noted that only BPL families can avail the benefit of the above schemes. However, many people are there who are poor but their names have not been included in the BPL list. As such, the Siliguri Municipal Corporation has extended helping hand towards them by running several social assistance schemes out of its own resources. Table 4. 30 lists out those schemes.

Table 4.30 : Social Assistance Under Own Resources of SMC

Sl. No	Name of the Scheme	Category of Beneficiaries	Rate of Assistance per month	Nos. of Beneficiary	
				Present	Proposed
1	Old Age Pension	Supportless persons above 60 years	Rs. 300/-	500	1000
2	Pension for Widows	Supportless Widows	Rs. 300/-	300	500
3	Pension for Physically handicapped	Mentally & Physically Handicapped Persons belonging to Poor Family	Rs. 300/-	400	500
4	Special Assistance to Eminent Persons	Eminent Persons in the fields of Sports and Cultural Activities	Rs. 500/-	50	50
5	Distribution of Rice	Supportless Persons above 60 yrs who do not posses BPL Card	@10 kgs/ Month	1500	2000
6	Financial Assistance to the Students	Poor & Meritorious Students for Higher Studies from H.S. to M.A.	Rs. 4000 (One Time)	500	500
7	Financial Assistance to the Students	Poor & Meritorious Students for studying Engineering, Medical, etc.	Rs.15000 (one time)	10	15

7	Financial Assistance for Renovation and Reconstruction of Shelter	Poor & Supportless persons not able to reconstruct or repair their shelter	Rs. 5000 (one time)		
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Source : Budget, 2010-11, SMC

4.6.4 Some Other Initiatives and Proposals of SMC with regard to Slum Improvement and UPE

Some other initiatives and proposals of the SMC as laid down in the Budget, 2010-2011, with regard to slum improvement and urban poverty alleviation may be enumerated as follows :

- Proposal for setting up of a self shelter in Siliguri for at least 100 orphans, and destitute children to provide for safe shelter as well as for making arrangement for their education & vocational training for appropriate physical and mental growth;
- Proposal for launching of the 'Housing for the Urban Poor' during this financial year with the objective to provide financial support to the urban poor for the construction of new dwelling units (Rs. 1 Lakh per unit) as well as up gradation/extension of existing units (up to Rs. 60,000/- per unit);
- Proposal for taking initiative for providing skill training, marketing assistance, and extending benefits of government sponsored schemes, assistance from non-government organisations and financial institutions like banks etc.;
- Proposal for providing assistance for treatment of female diseases and pregnant mothers;
- Initiation of measures, like free legal aid and other assistance against women atrocities and social injustice;
- Securing land tenure to the urban poor;
- Implementation of the Rajib Awas Yojana from the financial year 2010-2011;
- Proposal to construct two night shelters for the poor and shelter less people in the financial year 2010-2011.

Figure 4.15 : Map Showing Location of Overhead Tanks within SMC Area

Source : Perspective Plan, SJDA

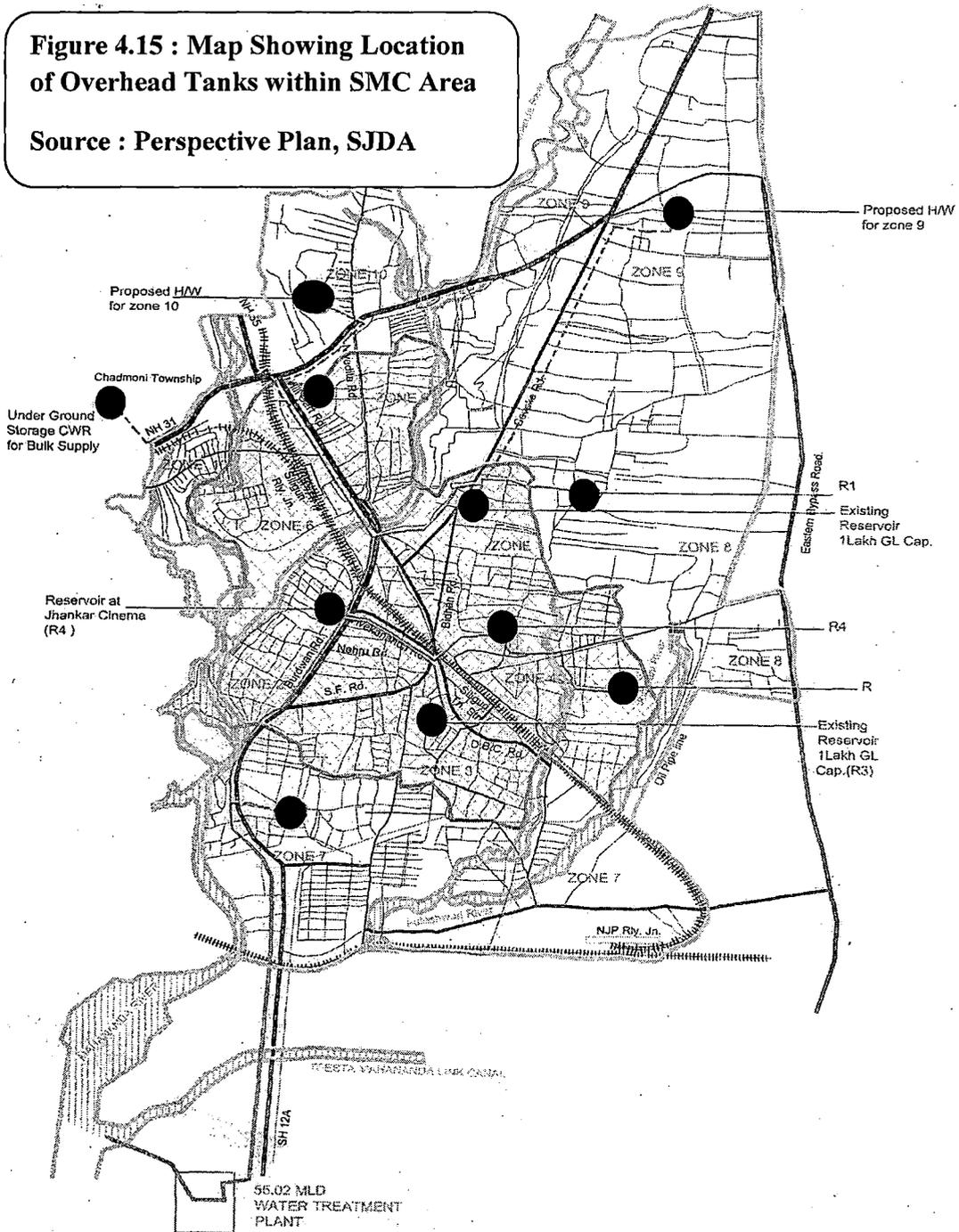


Figure 4.16 : Map Showing Areas of Traffic Congestion Within SMC Area

Source : Perspective Plan, SJDA

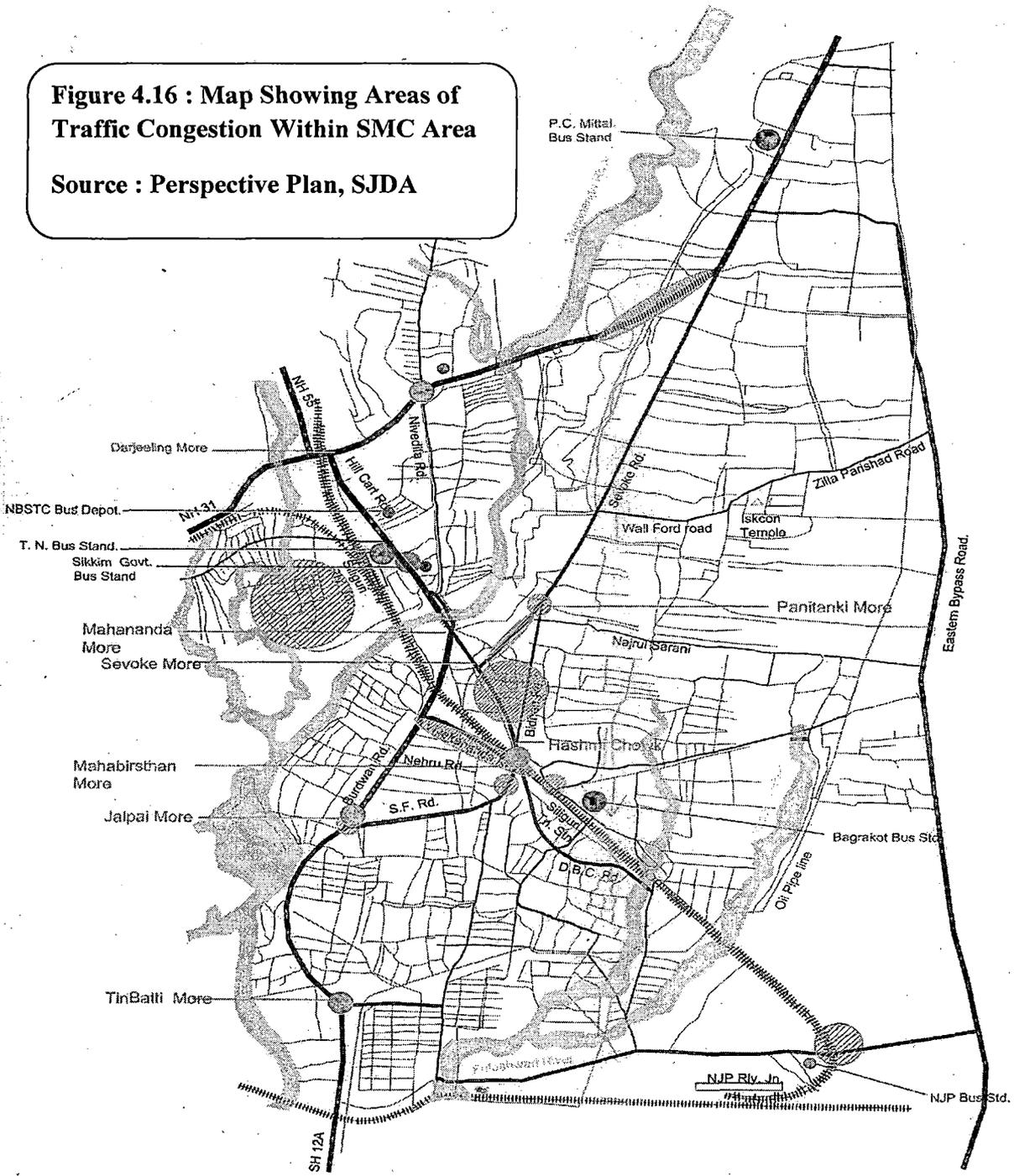
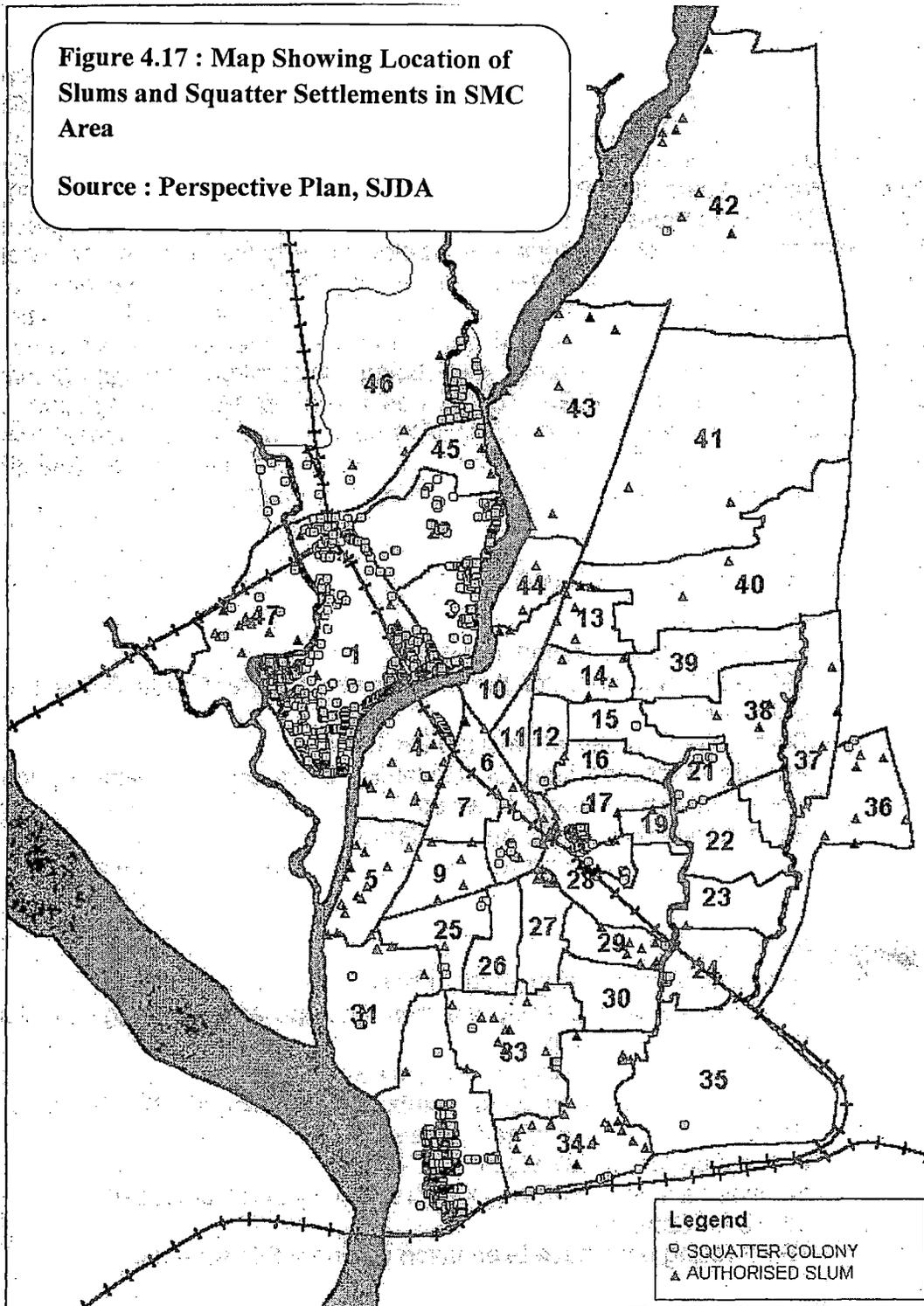


Figure 4.17 : Map Showing Location of Slums and Squatter Settlements in SMC Area

Source : Perspective Plan, SJDA



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