

## CHAPTER XI: GENERAL OBSERVATION

Children are the most valuable gift to humanity. They are the most precious asset and valuable members of the society. The fate of a nation to which they belong, is in their hand. It is said that children are the future wealth of society and childhood is a significant and impressionable period of development of human beings because it holds the potential for the future progress of our society. The environment where the children are born and brought up needs to be conducive to their social, physical, intellectual, emotional as well as psychological health. Every society links its future with the present condition of its children. However, many of the children unduly minimize their present welfare or their future earning capabilities through their participation in work from a very early age of their life. It is a heinous practice and it is widely prevalent all over the world particularly in the developing countries. In this regard, Indian society is not an exception. Understandably, it is regarded as a social and economic problem, as it has become a serious burning issue in India, which has enormous dimensions. Occurrence of child work can largely be attributed to socio-economic structure of Indian society. Owing to certain forces and situations children are compelled to work from the very beginning of their childhood, which is harmful for them and society at large. Families below the poverty line force their children to get involved in work for augmenting the family income. Under acute financial distress, children take up jobs which are mostly exploitative. And in many cases, children are being abused due to their work involvement. They work hard throughout the day in hotels, restaurants, canteens, tea stalls, shops and way-side establishments, garages, mining and quarrying, construction and in many other sectors under inhuman and exploitative situations just for their survival. In many cases, to meet the basic needs like, food, shelter, dress, health, education and so on they have to confront a serious crisis. It robs off the opportunity of proper education, health and other facilities from their next generation. It seriously affects the childhood, growing up as well as the overall development of the children in all aspects and in many cases their right to life becomes difficult.

Primarily they have a big challenge to survive and due to this fact they are forced to participate in the struggle for survival by any means. Obviously these aforesaid all situations hamper their overall development. In this context, from various regions some people came to Balasan River basin area close to Siliguri town for survival as they were facing various problems like economic, socio-political and religious crises, etc. in their earlier places which were affecting their life and livelihood seriously. After migration, for maintaining their daily livelihood as well as for survival they got involved in stone based work. Among these people, major being the immigrant from Bangladesh and the rest from adjacent districts of this state, West Bengal and also from several neighboring states of the country too.

The immigrants from Bangladesh came here mainly due to economic, socio-religious crises and socio-political turmoil which caused communal violence and the rest of the people came from adjoining districts and states of the country, India mainly in search of work for livelihood. In their everyday life, they were going through lots of problems like severe poverty, insecurities in- food, shelter, dress, health, education, basic human rights etc. In this situation, their prime challenge was to survive by any means and as a result for survival it became mandatory for most of them to get involved in stone based work without any sex discrimination sacrificing many things. They had to work day long under various difficulties but they earned very little. With this poor income they could not meet what they need like proper shelter, food, dress, health, education, other livelihood amenities, enjoyment, etc. To augment the income and for maintaining the very minimum requirements of the family members they had no other option but involvement of children in the work. With their parents and adult family members the children had to work hard daylong. In this regard, particularly the children had to face many difficulties. They had no proper shelter to reside; many of them did not get the full meal and had to starve in many cases. Most of them had no proper and necessary dress and often they had to stay without wearing dress; necessary educational infrastructure was almost lacking; required treatment and necessary nutritious food for health were mere dream to them. They could not play games and failed to enjoy their childhood. Both the socio-cultural and natural environment was not in favour of their overall growing up and development. Moreover, the concerned children were exploited very much and also debarred from right to live in

various ways. This entails a detailed research. To examine the issue the present research work has been done on the children who work in the stone crushing field which is located in Balasan River basin near Siliguri town, Darjeeling district, West Bengal. This research study has been conducted to know which circumstances and factors were responsible for their involvement in the stone based work, their background, the type of work and nature of working involvement of children, the socio-economic conditions including food, shelter, dress, educational and health situation, their growing up including socialization, enculturation etc. and also to examine the problems of child workers and the violation of their rights. To conduct this study the village, Purba Rangia was selected which is situated in Balasan River basin under Matigara Gram Panchayat, near Siliguri town of Darjeeling district, West Bengal. The total population of the village is 1434. Among them majority (92.82%) belong to Rajbanshi community while the rest of the population belong to Brahmin, Kshatriya, Teli, Kapali, Jugi, Namashudra, Biswakarma; Santal and Muslims. Most of the people (95.35% of total working population) of this village are involved in stone based occupation. For this study, all the 250 (100%) child workers' families are taken and among them total 377(100%) child workers are found of which the males are 186 (49.43%) and females are 191(50.66%).

Both primary and secondary data were collected for this research work. The secondary data were collected from secondary sources whereas the primary data were collected from the field by using necessary anthropological methods.

This study was conducted near Siliguri Town of Darjeeling District. This town is known as the gateway of North East India and it is the transit point for air, road and rail traffic to the North East Indian states, neighbouring countries of Nepal Bhutan, Bangladesh, China and some context Myanmar too. It is an important trade center of West Bengal. The town Siliguri is also famous for various other reasons. Apart from having a socio-political importance, this area is famous for its well transport and communication; trade and commerce, industries including Tea, Transport, Tourism and Timber etc. Besides, this place is also famous for its nice weather, bio-diversities and blessed with natural scenic beauties, forests, rivers, wild animals and various natural resources.

Rapid urbanization is taking place in Siliguri due to multifarious reasons. Due to socio-political turmoil, economic insecurity and various other reasons people have been coming to this area since long from Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and North East India and also from adjacent district and states of India. Plenty of these people have migrated to Siliguri in search of work. According to Census of India, the population of this city has increased from 6067 to 1,772,374 in between 1931 and 2011. The population of city agglomeration has 1,901,489 in 2011. Census 2011 reveals that its area has also been expanded to 117.54 sq. km. from 15.54 sq. km in 1950. Presently the town Siliguri is over flowing with huge number of immigrants. It has now become the second largest urban centre of West Bengal. Majority of the people of this region belong to Bengali linguistic group. While there are people from other linguistic groups like Nepali, Behari, Punjabi, Marwari, Assamese etc. also live here. Among the Bengalis the frequency of the Rajbanshi is highest; whose primary occupation is agriculture. The studied village is not an exception in this regard.

The studied people came to the Balasan River basin near Siliguri town for earning. They had nothing as they were resourceless, shelterless, refugees mostly. They were not in a position to provide required food, shelter, dress, health facilities, educational requirements and other necessary amenities to the family members. Due to several difficulties having left all, these people were forced to come here only for survival. They were in a big trouble. They began to try with their best to survive by any means. Under these circumstances, these people settled down in Balasan River basin as the lands were available for free of cost. The river also provided the scope of earning through continuous supplying of various raw materials like stones, boulders, sand which have a great demand for urban construction and so on. For survival they engaged themselves in this work where the children were not excluded, because they had no other way.

The source of economy of the studied people revolve around stone crushing, truck loading and collection of sand and stones from the river. For this there is no requirement of monetary investment apart from the manual labour which they needed to provide. However, many children of the studied families had to do this job with their elder family members in the stone field sacrificing their childhood. They do several kinds of stone

based activities like stone collection, sand gathering, stone crushing and truck loading. They work in the Balasan River basin for all the year round ignoring the fact of burning heat of summer and freezing cold of winter but they earn very little as compared to their work amount. Their average monthly income is very poor (family income Rs. 2000/-; individual income Rs. 400/-). As a result they fail to manage their living with this little earning. In fact, their total family income is very poor excluding children's contribution to the family earnings and with this income it is not possible to fulfill the requirements of living like required food, clothing, proper shelter, treatment, education, and so on. They have an urgent need to enhance their earnings for maintaining their livelihood. But finding no other alternatives, most of the parents involve their children in stone based work. Owing to acute poverty the children do this work from an early age. Furthermore, absence of parents or guardians largely affects the children and under this situation in many cases the children are forced to take the responsibility on their own shoulder to run their families. In this concern, the children of few families lost their father and mother too. Apart from this, in few families it was observed that the fathers left their family permanently and established a new family by remarriage in other places. Under these circumstances, the children are forced to share the economic responsibility of the family. It is the fact that many of the studied children are not satisfied because their parents are not in a position to fulfill their personal needs. In few cases it is observed that the children earn money to satisfy their personal needs i.e. their favourite food items like fruits, chocolate, ice-cream etc.; sports materials like bat, ball, wicket, foot ball, sports shoes, various toys and so on; dresses like well shirt, pant, T-shirt, various female dresses and woolen garments etc.; purchasing sandals, shoes etc.; leisure and recreation i.e. purchasing sport requirements for what they like to play, watching cinema and theatre, etc.; personal hygiene like purchasing necessary cleaning agents such as soap, shampoo etc. for body cleanliness, surf and soap for washing dirty clothes and so on. Their parents fail to meet the expense of the above needs. Therefore, finding no other means to meet their needs they get involved themselves in stone based occupation. In the studied area, it is observed that some of the working children are motivated by their friends, neighbours and other elder persons of the family to get involved in stone based work and obviously it is another responsible factor for the involvement of children in this work. In the stone

field, the children are mostly involved in both stone collection and stone crushing activities while very few of them are engaged in truck loading activity as it is very much hard labourious. They have to do the work in the stone field for an average seven hours in a day. They wake up very early in the morning and then go to the working field and return home in the evening when the work is over for the day. They work throughout all the seasons in the Balasan River basin where the working environment is very much hazardous and unhygienic. In summer, the temperature become extremely high and they have to do the work in extreme heat of the sun. It has been noted during study that often they become ill due to continuous hard work in burning heat of summer. In winter the temperature of Balasan River basin becomes very low but they have to do the work continuously in this freezing cold of winter. Even, many of them have no proper warm clothes and owing to this fact during winter they work in the biting cold while shivering that make them very sick. Moreover, during rainy season there is continuous heavy rain in Balasan River basin but they have to do the work in the rain and even they have to collect stones from the river and owing to these facts their clothes get drenched but they have to work in wet clothes throughout the day that make them very sick. They have no end of misery because they have to work in ill health. Many of them have to work against their will because they work sacrificing their childhood, enjoyments and merriments. It is the fact that if they do not work then their families will face a big problem in maintaining livelihood. The average monthly income of the children is very poor (around Rs. 400/- only) which they provide to their parents that to enhance their family earnings a bit that is very much essential for their survival.

Food is essential for survival and for getting the studied people have to do a continuous hard work from morning to evening in all the seasons. The food is necessary for their continuous hard labour in the stone field. In this regard, almost all of them can manage their meal not more than twice a day and it is mainly rice, little amount of vegetables and pulses. Nutritious food like fish, meat, egg, fruit, milk etc. are necessary for growth and development of the children but it is mere dream to them. Even the sick children do not get it. Moreover, the children cannot purchase food from the market because their earnings belonged to their parents. They mainly eat meal on lunch and dinner time but it is insufficient and less nutritious. Their parents cannot give them a full feed. In the very

early morning before going to the stone field they take tea with biscuits or pup rice as their breakfast but in many times it is also hardly possible by some of them because it is really hard to them to manage it with their little earnings. They suffer a lot because in many times they have to starve and have a burning sensation in their stomach due to extreme hunger but nonetheless they have to do the work hungry in the stone field for prolonged hours (averagely seven hours in a day) that make them very weak. Even the place where they eat is also harmful for their health and development as due to busy working schedule they take their lunch in the unhygienic working field.

They fetch drinking water from wells but the noticeable matter is that these wells are always uncovered, unsafe which are unhygienic too. Especially in the working field, they use the river water for the purpose of drinking. But they do not take any precautionary measures like boiling, filtering, etc. It is the fact that they have not the capacity to bear the expense for fuel which is a great hindrance to boil the water. Nonetheless, they purify it by cloth but they cannot think so mainly due to their lack of knowledge and awareness. Lacking of required food, unfiltered drinking water etc. may have a bad effect on their health. Further, they face difficulties due to lack of citizenship and lack of the necessary education as they cannot enjoy the food and other necessary facilities from the government scheme. The food crisis is very acute among them and especially it has adversely affected the growth and development of the children.

All the people in the studied area are migrants. It is the fact that they came here in roofless and resourceless situation. In this situation, the River Balasan provides its basin with free of cost for making the house to these roofless and helpless people which is like the gift of God to them. All the family members altogether with their hard labour could make a little home on it. But in most of the cases, the condition of these houses is very poor. Most of the houses are composed of single little room. Very few families can enjoy three or more rooms. Many of them have no separate kitchen room. They cook inside the room and for cooking they use earth oven or cooking pit that emits huge smoke and their rooms become smoky. The smoky environment caused their eyes to go red and start watering and due to this fact children could not read the books and also could not write well. It is the fact that owing to extreme poverty they could not make any new veranda or

extension for cooking. Their houses are mostly broken and *kachha* type and these are made of wattle walls, corrugated tin roof, muddy floor and devoid of proper ventilation. During study, it is common to notice that during summer season the insider atmosphere of the houses is very much suffocating. The outside rain water leak into their rooms through roofs and walls which damage their many household stuffs and also affects their health badly as they are suffering from fever, cough and cold, running nose, nasal blockage, sneezing and headache. But they are not able to repair it. Due to absent of voter identity card and ration card they cannot enjoy the government scheme too. Further, there is no electricity in their houses and due to poor light they cannot read and write well at night and also face a problem in doing household works. Owing to lack of room all the family members have to share the single room. As a consequence, they cannot maintain their privacy. Owing to lack of insufficient space in the room their education gets hampered badly. Many of them have to live in the broken house and cannot repair it at the proper time. Apart from these, there is no sanitation facility in their houses. Due to lack of sanitation they use the open field for nature's call and the children often around their houses that are either in the village lanes or at the back of the houses. Owing poor and unhygienic living condition the studied children and their families face lots of difficulties and they become weak by various ill health. Moreover, unhygienic living conditions might have told upon their social and mental health as well.

Besides food and shelter, dress is also very essential for living. In this regard, if the dress of the studied people is observed then it is seen that many of them have one or two sets of dress and these are very poor in condition. It has been observed that they wear dirty and tattered clothes to work every day. Even, besides the work place, when they are at home or outside home, their dresses are very low quality. It has also been many of them mostly stay without wearing any shirt and it happens with the children. Particularly the number of dress of the children is less and many of them are dirty and tattered. They have to wait for any big festival in the hope of getting a dress but due to utter economic constraint it is hardly possible. Their clothes become dirty very soon due to rough use of it in dirty and polluted working environment. But owing to poverty and lack of time they neither can purchase detergent or any such cleaning agents nor can wash it. It has been seen that the most of the parents cannot provide a new well dress in any *puja* festival, marriage

ceremony etc. to their children and due to this fact their children wear those dirty clothes on these occasions. Owing to this fact, the children are too deeply hurt. In this regard, it is really a problematic matter to the teenage daughters and women because they are also not provided required clothes. Apart from these, it has also been observed that among the school going children, many of them have no school dress and though few of them can enjoy it but these are very old and dirty. Many of them are scolded by their teachers for not having the school uniform which become a sorrowful matter to them. Further, it has been known that due to lack of dress and also for sound scolding by the teachers many of them have a fear to attend the class that's why the rate of irregular schooling became increased. Gradually they have lost the interest in education and as a result, many of them have failed in the examination and ultimately dropped out of school. It lies in the fact that on the one hand the dress hampers their prestige and on the other hand it has a negative impact on their education. But the main cause of these problems is obviously their poverty which failed to provide the required dress to them. It is true that owing to lack of dress they face various difficulties. In the working field, they have to work in wet clothes and due to lack of clothing their wet clothes are dried up by with their body heat as they have no other option. Obviously they have some socio-cultural habits but it is impossible to change due to the poor economic situation; and because of this fact, their social, educational and health development are getting obstructed more. The above situation adversely affected their mind and they feel psychologically disturbed.

Like the above, health is also a very important aspect for survival of human beings. In this context, it has been observed that the studied people are living in the river basin and most of their houses are not in favour of living as these are mostly broken and *kachha* type and due to absence of sanitation and drainage system the surrounding environment are very much poor and unhygienic. For drinking water, their dependency on both the uncovered wells and river water can be noticed. They do not have enough food to eat and as a result they work in extreme hungry and even due to lack of dress they have to work in the wet clothe. Moreover, the uses of abusive words, loose talking, chaos, conflict between the families or within the family due to any small affairs have become a daily matter and it become serious when their fathers develop alcohol. They have to live under these situations and as a result, they have to suffer from various physical as well as

mental problems. Apart from these, due to illegal migration many of them failed to become a legal citizen. They are living with fear always that causes mental health problems among the children. During study it has also been observed that during work, often they made themselves injured with stone chips and iron implements and moreover, they are the sufferer of various hazardous diseases due to involvement in this work. It is true that they are suffering from various ailments and diseases owing to various reasons. But for the compulsion of hunger they have to do the work in ill health. There is no health centre in the studied area. For treatment of diseases and ailments they have to depend upon the untrained quacks of local medicine shops and traditional medicine men but in many cases they do not get proper treatment from them. It is the fact that owing to the utter economic constraint they cannot complete the full course of doctors' prescribed medicines. The patients are mostly referred to Matigara Primary Health Centre or North Bengal Medical College only when the condition becomes very serious. But owing to extreme poverty the treatment have to be stopped in the middle. For the treatment of diseases and ailments, many of their parents have to take a loan from local *samiti* (cooperative society) or from their local *sardars* of the stone field. Many of them are already indebted to local *samiti* and also to their local *sardars* of the stone field and still could not repay it that's why they are not given loan further. Due to incomplete treatment many of their injurious places become infected and turned into complex. It has been seen that there is negligence in the treatment of children because no treatment is done by the proper doctor and followed by a complete course and proper medicine. It is the fact that their economic capacity, shelter, food, education, citizenship or identity, natural and social environment are not in favour to make them cure. Thus, one of the important aspects i.e. health of the studied children is very much neglected.

Education is the cradle of the society. It has an important role in child's life because it provides a right direction of thoughts. Education plays an increasingly important role to improve child skills which help them to get success in any field and also helps to be self dependent. In this context, if the situation of the studied people is observed, most of them are illiterate and among the literates most of them are confined into primary level of education. Among the studied population the children are mostly literate but their education is confined into primary level. The number of children at secondary or above

level of education is very few. Even among the children those who are educated most of them cannot not read and write well because for many of them it is nothing but a luxury to go to school. In fact, they have a prime need to get involved in money making job. It is the fact that many of them have lost the interest in education and ultimately dropped out of school. It seems mandatory for the little children to take part in work. It is seen that almost all the school going children of the studied people are busy with stone based work for maximum time in a day. Otherwise, they have a probability to be deprived of minimum food too. During school time they have to work in the stone field and as a result they cannot understand the studied lessons of earlier classes at school. The educational level of their parents is either very poor or illiterate and even they are disturbed for various reasons. They are unable to provide proper guidance for education to their children. The children mainly face a big problem to understand the language English and mathematics also. But most of the parents had not the capacity to provide private-tuition to their school-going children. Though, few parents are able to provide private tuition to their children but it is for the short time because it is hardly possible for them to bear the expense of it. Even, many children do not get the other requirements like books, notebooks, pen, pencil, school bag etc. Moreover, the dwelling houses are mostly broken and the rainy water entered the room through cracked walls and leaky roof which damaged their study materials like books, notebooks etc. that became disable for reading and writing. Further, due to lack of electrification in their houses they face problem of poor light at night and as a result they cannot read and write well at night. Owing to lack of room and insufficient space in the room all the family members have to live in the single room and due to this fact the children cannot pay concentration to their studies. During study, it has been observed that they cooked inside the room and for this purpose they use earthen oven or cooking pit that make their rooms smoky which also affects their education badly as they cannot read and write well. Apart from these, many times they have to starve and under this situation they cannot pay attention to their studies. Continuous hard manual work with insufficient and less nutritious food makes them very weak and due to this fact they are losing interest in education. The mentionable matter is that the untiring hard labour makes their body painful and as a result their interest of education has become lost gradually. Besides these, the socio-cultural environment and

practices like alcoholism, gambling, regular conflict and chaos make them upset which affects their concentration to their studies. Apart from these, many of the studied children have to assist their parents in household works and in this regard, especially the female children are forced to do it. They have to do several domestic chores like washing cloth, sweeping floor, cleaning the house and utensils, carrying water, going to shop, taking care of younger siblings and so on that keep them separate from their studies. In this regard, many of the parents think that the foremost duty of every female is to do the necessary domestic chores because after marriage they have to do it. Therefore, it is more important for them to learn and practice it instead of schooling. According to them, if the females become educated then their husband will be benefitted more. Even, few of them opined that economically they are not in a position to make their children suitable for getting service through providing proper education. Therefore, in studied families the non-enrolment and dropout rate are more among the females than males. Besides these, another great problem is their lack of citizenship which has created a social and mental problem among them and it has a negative impact on the education of the children. This socio-psychological pressure has affected their studies badly. All the aforesaid situations are the great hindrance to the progress of their education. It can be said that this poor educational environment has a harmful effect on their studies. It is the fact that they are not in a position to continue their studies and even what they have, is not enough for progressing their education. Moreover, hunger, poor shelter, lack of dress, existing socio-cultural environment and poor health etc. have largely affected their overall educational progress.

It is seen that most of them are illegal Hindu migrants from Bangladesh. Though they have been living for long days but many of them do not have any related documents like voter identity card, ration card etc. As a result, they are deprived of getting required facilities those are expected to enjoy as an Indian citizen. It has been observed that they cannot enjoy the ration facility such as to access food supplies at subsidiary rates. Besides these, they do not get the necessary health and treatment facilities for Below the Poverty Line (BPL) card holders. Even they cannot enjoy the stipend facility for their studies. They are dispossessed of getting the required administrative facilities too that are expected to enjoy as a citizen. Ultimately due to lack of document of citizenship they are

scared of their illegal living because they always think that if due to this fact the Indian Government uproots them from their illegally occupied land then where they will go. However, it is true that the lack of citizenship or the related rights have a serious negative impact on these studied people and particularly the children are the worst sufferer of it. Moreover, they failed to provide securities of food, shelter, dress, health and treatment, education etc. to their children. Even, they are deprived of enjoying these facilities from the government too. Specially many of these studied children cannot meet to all the government supports in education and as a result, their studies get hampered seriously. Owing to lack of right to citizenship they did not get any help from the government to construct or repair their houses. As a result, many children had to live in broken and damped houses and due to this fact in many cases they became ill. It has also been seen that owing to lack of space in the room they lost interest in education and even in many cases they also left their study. Due to aforesaid facts an anxiety has been noticed among them and in many cases it causes their mental tension. The severe mental agony as well as the continuous discussion over these matters in these families affects the studied children badly that also make them ill physically and mentally. Because they think that “we have no value to the people of this country”. They are suffering from inferior complexity and it is likely to be expected.

The studied people have to do a continuous hard work but nonetheless they hardly meet the primary needs of the family such as food, proper shelter, dress, health and treatment, education etc. Even the physical and socio-cultural environment is not healthy. The children never can enjoy freely like eating food, study books, wearing clothes, playing sports and games etc. and all the family members have the same situation. Due to failure of fulfillment of needs of the families they have an anxiety, tension, fury, frustration, mental pressure and agony etc. Apart from these, due to lack of citizenship and its related rights etc. they could not control themselves in many cases and as a result, the intra-familial and inter-familial conflicts are common to notice among them. Many adult male members drink alcohol to get rid of this mental agony, but it become the cause of chaos and conflict in their families. Because they get aggressive and then start hassling and rebuking when they are drunk and it has a negative impact upon the women and children. To get rid of poverty as well as for getting pleasure they play gambling, lottery etc. and

for this purpose they spend a major part of their earnings. As a result it becomes more difficult to them to meet the needs of living. As a consequence, the frustration and anger get increased more among them. Besides the said difficulties, they are deprived of many government facilities for not having the citizenship and other related rights which make them more frustrated. Many studied people had the better condition in earlier. They could celebrate various festivals and could enjoy on different occasions in their daily life. Besides hospitality, they used to participate in various sports and games that always made them happy and they led a peaceful life under a particular social system. But due to various reasons they migrated here leaving many things and among them kinsmen, social order as well as social system is mentionable. But owing to migration and struggle for survival in a new environment they are forced to come out from many of their earlier social systems. In this stone crushing society the crisis of food, shelter, dress, health and education within the family or outside the family became a sore in their family life as well as in their social life too. It is the fact that the required materials for living a healthy life are very much lacking among them. Rather, they are leading an unsystematic life where they fail to meet basic survival needs. As a result, conflict, chaos, despair, theft, hassle, gambling, illicit sexual relation etc. have been increased badly in their society and children are the worst sufferer of it that is very much harmful for them.

In the context of the overall environment including socialization, enculturation and growing up of children, it has been observed that a continuous pressure and despair are common in this stone crushing society. The children have not the full meal and even they have no proper house or place for taking rest. They do not get the required dress. Necessary health services are very poor in condition. In many cases, they cannot enjoy the minimum treatment facilities and a proper care of their health is not taken almost. In most of the cases, their educational matter is very much neglected. They fail to participate in games and sports freely and also can not enjoy freely rather these little children have to do a continuous hard work against their will in the stone field ignoring the fact of all adverse situations. They are rebuked if they do not work and in many cases they are abused and beaten up too. Even, they do the work in the stone field sacrificing all their enjoyments and merriments, schooling and also ignoring the fact of their sickness and physical weakness. As a result, this stone based work and its necessary implements have

encroached their thinking in all around. The thought of other things is almost impossible for them and it will become very difficult for them to live their life at that minimum level too if they are outside of this thought. The intra and inter-familial conflict or uses of filthy language, drinking habit of the elder male members, torturing women and children, gambling, illegal sexual relation etc. are common in their society which have become an integral part of their daily life. They think that it is normal to observe these matters in their daily life and have adjusted themselves with it. As a result, their enculturation is occurring in this way. Family, peer groups, school, local environment etc. are the important agents of socialization but they learn hassle, conflict, chaos, filthy language, illiteracy, alcoholism, gambling and such other bad habits from these agents.

They have always a frustrated and disorganized life. This everyday observation and imitation deeply affects their practical life. For being illegal migrant the deprivation and exploitation in several fields and various behaviours of the local people and administration etc. make a frustration among them. It is true that after birth they are growing up under various crises, conflict, psychological pressure and frustration. The actual flourishing of child's mind which is expected to happen but it is not possible in any situation in the family or in society. It is the fact that children need to grow up in a healthy and proper way to make a healthy society, but it is not possible in case of these working children. Rather in lieu of mild or gentle nature, these working children have become furious, hungry, depressed, sick and illiterate. In the context of socialization, this stone based society is completely different. They have only aimed to live their life by any means and for this living most of them are forced to come here leaving everything and get involved in this work. It is not possible for them to make the necessary infrastructure for a healthy society. It is the main thing to live by any means sacrificing their ethics and ideology. Thus, the children naturally have entered into this work and environment unconsciously and getting habituated in the same way.

It is the fact that there are several laws and various other schemes to protect children from various forms of exploitation. Specially to stop child labour various initiatives are being taken. But nevertheless, there are many child workers or child labourers in a country like India who are forced to do the work due to several reasons. With the social

stratification and caste hierarchy especially the division of labour also involved with the social system in India. In the present study, all the child workers belong to a lower caste or lower social strata. The opportunities related to the essential needs for survival like freedom, justice, equality, food, dress, shelter, education, health, love, affection etc. are not given to the children.

Due to socio-political reason India was divided into two separate nations, India and Pakistan and then Bangladesh was separated from Pakistan. Due to socio-political turmoil and economic insecurity most of the studied people were forced to come here from this separate country, Bangladesh leaving their land, home and economic resources. In this context, their economy, familial structure, kinship behavioural pattern, religious rituals, norms, customs etc. have seriously been affected and these are more critical in the studied village, Purba Rangia as they lost most of their resources in earlier. The studied people faced various socio-economic and political problems in earlier due to many reasons. Even they were facing severe problem to survive. In this regard, the studied area is a better option for survival in all respects and thus they came here for maintaining their livelihood as well as survival as they had not any other better alternative place. For their survival, they had nothing but physical power at that moment. Therefore, primarily they were forced to come there where they got minimum earning scope. Studied people had to choose the Purba Rangia village as a suitable place which is located on Balasan River Basin nearby Siliguri town. They are forced to come here in moneyless, shelterless and resourceless situation. Because, as a primary need for survival with the opportunity of making a house at free of cost on the vested land of Balasan River basin, they got the scope of earning through stone and sand collection from the river, stone crushing and related stone based work. In fact only the physical labor is essential for this work and they had it only. But due to poor earnings they fail to fulfill the necessary needs of their family and especially of their children. In the struggle for survival they have no alternative but involving their children in work. As a result, the children have also to do this work most of the time in a day and throughout all the seasons.

A child should have good health, but these studied child workers do not get this opportunity. Because, to become healthy the food, proper shelter, dress, health and

treatment, educational facilities etc. are very much required. But these children often have to starve and most of the time they work hungry in the stone field. They never get nutritious food and many of them are weak by malnutrition. They have no proper shelter and in most of the cases their houses are broken, suffocated and moisturized where the environment is unhygienic which is neither in favour of their resting nor study. Besides food, dress, shelter and social environment, the health facilities including treatment is necessary for good health. But it is impossible for them to go for treatment hampering their work and even to bear the expense for continuing treatment would not be possible on their little earnings. Proper education is very necessary to be an ideal citizen. But they are not in a position to get even a minimum infrastructure too for continuing education and also for taking higher education. In this regard, besides books, notebooks etc., family and social environment, private-tuition, guidance for education, dress etc. are needed for them. But in many cases they have to get involved in work leaving their studies. Because if they do not work, they will not get food and if they do not get food, they cannot survive. In many cases, these children have not necessary dress and owing to this fact they have to face trouble during winter and rainy seasons.

It is the fact that food, dress, shelter, health, education, proper social environment etc. are necessary to grow up in a healthy way as well as to be an ideal citizen but they are deprived of it in various ways. They never get exactly what is necessary. Ultimately, these studied child workers are not only deprived but they are growing up within an unhealthy environment. Apart from these, citizenship and related rights are the big problem to them. Basically most of them have not the document of citizenship like voter identity card, ration card and such other documents and as a result, besides the deprivation of people belonging to various stages in society, they are also deprived of many government facilities. Due to lack of this right as a citizen a serious despondency is found among them. The studied child workers have nothing of those that a child should deserve to be grown up in a healthy way or to be an ideal citizen rather they are growing up through malnutrition, illiteracy, conflict, hassles, crisis, tension, anxiety, psychological pressure and frustration. It is harmful not only for the children but also an obstruction in making a healthy society.

In summary, it may be said that primarily the children of poor income families get engaged along with elder family members in the stone based work as it is very imperative for their survival. The children are always busy with work in the stone field during day time and have to do this work through the year mainly in order to get rid of economic instability of the family. Even, they work sacrificing their schooling, play-games, enjoyments and merriments etc. which are very essential for their growing up and development.

They have a serious economic problem. All the studied adult family members including children work hard altogether for the whole day in the stone field but their payment is very little. With this little earning they fail to manage all the expenses of necessary requirements like food, shelter, dress, treatment, education etc. They have not the full meal and work hungrily in the stone field. Even in many cases they are to starve and as a result, feel uneasiness in their stomach due to extreme hunger. However, due to daylong hard manual labour with less nutritious food they become weak very much which caused malnutrition. They have serious problem of shelter. Due to lack of room and insufficient space in the room they fail to maintain their privacy and the children also face serious problem in their studies. Further, most of the houses are broken too. The outside rain water leaked into their rooms through roofs and walls which damage their study materials and affect their health badly. They have no well and sufficient dress. Due to poor income the parents fail to provide a new dress to them and even many of them have no school uniform too. Due to hazardous working environment, unhygienic and poor living condition, lack of required food and food habit, unfiltered drinking water and various mal practices etc. the children are found to be sick and diseased throughout the year. For treatment of diseases they depend upon the untrained quacks of local medicinal shops and traditional medicine men. Owing to poverty they cannot go to the doctors always for treatment and also for the same they fail to bear the expense of proper medical checkup for long time with necessary diagnostic tests and prescribed medicines. Due to poor earnings in many cases they bring to an end of treatment in the middle. All the studied children are interested in education and most of the working children are students also. But they have not adequate books, note books, pen, pencil, private tuition etc. which largely affected their education. Due to busy working schedule during day time they

become very irregular in school attendance and they are found to lose interest in their studies. Many children in the studied area are first generation learner and as a result, the children do not get proper guidance for education from their parents. Further, owing to lack of proper shelter and little space in the room they fail to pay attention to their studies and also cannot write and read the books due to lack of electricity. As a consequence, many of them fail in the exam and ultimately have to drop out of school. It is the fact that working involvement is very essential for them rather than education and as a result, it is not be possible by them to continue education no more after primary level.

From the very little the studied children observe this work as well as environment in their daily life and as a result, from the very beginning their mental setup are developed by the effect of working environment and stone crushing materials and gradually they learn this work and become accustomed with such environment. They have no other way but following their livelihood pattern. In this way they are growing up. In the studied families the relationship among father, mother and their children is mostly based on economic performance where the love, affection, sympathy etc. are almost absent. There is a frequent conflict between husband and wife due to any small affairs in daily family life. Under these circumstances most of the children feel both emotionally and situationally helplessness. The confusion, fear and despair are developed into their mind. From an early childhood their psychological feelings have turned into serious complexities and frustration that robbed them from their childhood. The regular conflict and chaos due to any small affairs or uses of filthy language, alcoholism of the elder male members, gambling, torturing women and children, illicit sexual relation etc. become an integral part of their daily life. Under these circumstances their socialization as well as enculturation has been taking place and gradually they become accustomed with this socio-cultural environment. Besides these, peer groups, neighboring people and environment etc. are the significant agents of socialization but these children learn quarrel, conflict, chaos, hassle, dirty language, alcoholism, gambling etc. bad habits and practices from them. As a result, emotional as well as behavioural problems are developed among the children. Even their socio-religious life also gets affected seriously that has a negative impact on the progress of children. Many of them have no any document of citizenship like ration card, voter identity card etc. and as a consequence,

they are deprived of enjoying necessary government facilities and even do not get any help and cooperation from the government administration too that are expected to enjoy as a citizen. However, the lack of citizenship or the related rights used to create a tension in their families and it increased insecurity and identity crisis among the children. It is true that all the situations are not in favour of their progress and development which is just opposite to become an ideal citizen. The securities of food, shelter, dress, health and treatment, education, etc. are very much lacking and insecure and the studied children are the prime victims of it. Their life become uncertain and their solidarity and unity become lost which make them helpless. They are debarred from all the rights to be grown up of a child. The time to become a good citizen never appeared among them because their childhood was in a crisis and they are the victims of socio-economic and political inequality. It is the fact that the studied families are failed to ensure the right to food, proper shelter, dress, health and treatment facilities and necessary educational requirements to their children; and ultimately the matter of child rights is a mere dream to them as practically they are totally debarred from it. In reality, the children work against their will under hazardous environment and due to familial pressure they have no other means but involvement in this work.

Moreover, lastly it can be said that though this study has been done in a little area but it came to know to a certain extent that why the children are forced to do work and which are affected for working involvement. Ultimately it can be remarked that their involvement in the work was very essential for survival because they had no other option. It is true that many of their dreams will not probably become true ever, but at least they can be able to survive with utmost difficulty too through this child labour. It may be illegal but which laws will ensure their food and other requirements like shelter, dress, health and treatment, education etc. To create a healthy and prosperous society it is primarily necessary to make a child as an ideal citizen. Hope this action will be taken very soon.