

CHAPTER- VII

STRATEGIES FOR THE SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION AND CONCLUSION

7.1. Summary:

The present study under the title '*A study on the problems of urbanization in Cooch Behar town, West Bengal, India*' has been wrapped up under seven chapters:

The first Chapter under the title "*Introduction*" has given a short description of the present study. Here the methodology of the study has also been presented. The present study has been based on census data collected from relevant issues of the reports of Census of India, field survey and observations. Starts with the introduction of the study devoted with the meaning and definitions of urbanization and enters into the theoretical discussions as well as the study area and finally deals with the objectives, methodologies, hypotheses with review of literatures and lastly the design of the thesis. The introduction chapter also with a brief review of literature where it is basically incorporated titles having relevance to urbanisation.

The second chapter start with a brief review of geographical back ground where basically incorporated with the physical and cultural aspect in Cooch Behar town. In the next part Demographic characteristics have been discussed with urban population, density, decadal variation and level of urbanization, literacy, Sex-ratio, caste, workers-non-workers, occupation and their level of development in the town of Cooch Behar.

In chapter three brief descriptions to the history of Cooch Behar town have been given. The pattern of development of this city and its present position has also been discussed in this chapter. Here it is indicate a significant historical event which had left its influence on the form of and function of the town. The relevant information presented in this chapter is based on historical and archaeological reports, various inscriptions, which have already been documented and contemporary literary work which describe the city in some detail. Here it also discuss some of the important

factors which are responsible for bringing about a growing trend of urbanization and factors of urban growth Cooch Behar in particular. The town being an urban centre, within a large track of interior rural region, is likely to have a pull factor on the surrounding villages for urban facilities, services and job opportunities.

In the fourth chapter where morphology and land use reveals that, with the passage of time Cooch Behar grew very rapidly not only in terms of population but also in its urban fabric. It is clear from the study that the land uses under residential purpose in a large quantity. Introduction of good quality of road transport and rail communication with the rest of the country brought more socio-economic prosperity for the town. Simultaneously, it is desired that the vast rural hinterland of Cooch Behar district will open more opportunities for Cooch Behar town to have its considerable infrastructure of trade and commerce in the coming future which will surely make the further shaping of the urban land use. There is plenty of developable land available in and around the existing town area. It also found that Cooch Behar town is less progress in industrial activities because it is evident from the field survey that it is a residential town. It is found that large urban centres have low open space and at the same way small urban centre is large the open space similarly it can be concluded that Cooch Behar town open space spreading in every wards. Now-a-days with the spread of urban amenities into rural areas, rural life is being urbanised.

In the chapter fifth physical and social environment have been discussed that, the town was neither an industrial centre nor did it arise all in a sudden. This development is, somewhat, uneven. Rural areas closer to Cooch Behar show the highest degree of urbanisation. The growing urbanization demands water supply, drainage facilities and waste removal as part of the amenities needed by the town. The town suffered a lot from shortage of drinking water. Prolonged water scarcity had hampered the economic growth of the town for nearly two decades. The urbanization process of Cooch Behar town has been occurred since more than three centuries. From the above discussion, it is evident that infrastructural as well as public services (amenities and facilities) of that town are the result of various unscientific urbanization processes of occurrences. Though, there are some advanced techniques of urbanization followed by the “Coach dynasty” in the pre-independent era i.e. all the roads of the town are connected together at a right angle and all the houses of the town are square in shape. But, along with these facilities, Cooch Behar town are not rapidly growing if compared with population and

commercialization due to lack of transparency. If Central Government, State Government, municipalities and other organizations takes some strategic development for that purpose, the town becomes a popularized urban area within the State as well as in the country in near future.

The chapter sixth find many problems in Cooch Behar town. Urbanisation has, however, some unfavourable effects also. However, considering the past growth trend and future prospect of population of this town, provisions will have to be made for additional land for future land use including filling in the gaps of existing shortage in infrastructural conditions. Urbanisation breeds many complex social problems. It destroys the values, culture and conventions of the society. Shortage of living space and high cost of living leads to the breakup of the joint family system. It leads to increase in crimes, violence, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, alcoholism, psychological depression, restlessness in educational institutions, social unrest, prostitution etc. With urbanisation and growth of cities, infrastructural problems arise in the form of shortages of school, college and other educational institutions; roads, buses, railways, flyovers, waterways, bridges; sewerage system, houses, administrative service etc. The government and local bodies are unable to find sufficient resources to meet them in compared to their ever-increasing demand. Growth of city limits leading to overcrowding in other residential areas thereby creating problems of residential accommodation, electricity, water supply, drainage, collection of domestic wastes which pile up on streets and drains leading to flood creating overall unsanitary conditions in the town.

Finally, the summary of the thesis together with the conclusion drawn and policies recommended have been placed in this chapter.

Cooch Behar was a native State before independence. It was a planned town since 1885 during the time of King Jagaddipendra Narayan. King Nripendra Narayan planned modern Cooch Behar town as “City of Beauty”. A Town Committee was constituted in the year 1885 to supervise the amenities of urbanities and subsequently, it was transformed into Cooch Behar Town in the year 1946. Cooch Behar, being introduced as the Municipal Town since 1946 is maintaining it’s proud with all its historical background.

Major findings

- I. In the context of Hypothesis-I *“There is mutual relationship among physical, cultural and societal landscape with the urbanisation in the study area”* which is describe in chapter II, III and IV. The function of the town as a district head quarter will gradually increase its importance. So, the physical and social linkage infrastructural facilities are necessary not only for the dwellers of the town area but also for requirements of the whole district. Different census year showing that the population growth rate within Cooch Behar municipality is declining. The trend of decadal growth rate from 1971 it was 28.06%, 1981 it was 15.60%, in 1991 it was 14.665, in 2001 it was 7.385 and in 2011 it becomes to 1.38% which has been shown in table 2.6. But with the outgrowth of Cooch Behar town in 1971 index of growth was 1.78 and in 2011 it reach to the index of growth as 3.72, which has been shown in table 3.5. The exponential growth of Cooch Behar town is absent towards south (Table 3.6) for river barrier in the south, which explain the mutual relationship of physical, social and cultural landscape of urbanization is true and thus the hypothesis I is accepted. The land use survey reveals that, the land use under residential area was 43% of the total area. In 2006 the residential land use becomes 62% of the total area and it reach to 66% of the town area in 2016. Moreover, the early settlement was developed along with the establishment of princely state and influences by kings of the dynasty. When population expanded further, settlement extended outside the town limit. Now according to 2011 census there are five census-towns emerge beside municipal boundary and it is the sign of urban expansion.
- II. In the context of Hypothesis-II *“Urbanization of Cooch Behar town encounters many environmental issues which are by nature anthropogenic sources”* which is discussed in the chapter V. The discussion highlights many environmental issues like physical as well as social environmental issues. The urban dwellers of Cooch Behar town facing many environmental problems, which moving toward the environmental degradation of the town. The water quality, air condition, drainage condition and social infrastructural condition is not satisfactory level which creating environmental issues. Hence, the hypothesis two is accepted. Rapid structural change in the urban landscape has created pressure on land and urban

amenities. This has given rise to urban environmental problems such as reduction of vacant space, demand for transport facilities and insufficient provision of other necessities like better sanitation, protected water supply etc. In Cooch Behar, the growth of population has simultaneously increased the number of vehicles on roads which create not only the traffic hazards but also damage to environment through the noise pollution.

- III. In the context of Hypothesis-III, “*Growing urbanization has resulted many negatives impacts in Cooch Behar town*”, this is analysed in the chapter VI. The results revealed that urban dwellers faced many problems due to rapid urbanization such as drinking water problems (above 64% of respondents), garbage problem (Above 77% of respondents), sewerage problem (Above 88% of respondents), institutional problem (Above 68% of respondents), natural calamities problems (Above 80% of respondents), and electricity problem (Above 80% of respondents). Therefore, Hypothesis three is also accepted. As the most of the residents of Cooch Behar Town are not satisfied with the existing system, they want improvement. Therefore, they are willing to pay something to get better facilities to manage their household wastes. But there should be an adjustment of pay structure with economic conditions of the households. It can be said that as education and awareness of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Nirmal Bangla play significant role, government should increase its involvement in education and awareness campaign.

7.2. Significant of the study:

A study on the problems of urbanization in Cooch Behar town, West Bengal, India is largely a comparatively unexplored research area. There are a few research works on different aspects of the problems, but these do not cover the key issues of urbanization or urban development today.

Currently, it is widely believed that the goal of sustainable urbanization will be unattainable unless harnessed by a coordinated effort of the agencies. But there are actually very few works in how the machinery is organised and works in the small and medium size cities and towns.

To, fill the research gap, an attempt has been made here to study the problems of urbanization in Cooch Behar town. It is admitted that this micro level study on the

problems of urban development would not be able to highlight all the problems of small and medium cities and towns. Yet, the study seeks to make an in-depth analysis in order to analysis the major issues of development and their management in a medium size city in the backward part of the state of West Bengal.

The significant of Cooch Behar hinges on a number of factors. Cooch Behar has grown as a town mainly before independence, and has been passing through various ups and downs. The study is significant because its growth from a riverside tiny village to a township is the typical manifestation of pre-colonial urbanization in West Bengal. It helps to understand the forces that are responsible for the sluggish growth of the city. Study is significant in understanding the problems in Cooch Behar as a medium size city, attention of the government to its problems and also the politics and management of civic affairs. Further, the study is significant for examining the problems and prospect of the evolving pattern of the decentralised development.

7.3. Strategies for the sustainable urbanization:

In planning urban areas the physical features of the city like the location, layouts of residential areas, streets and other transportation facilities and industries is the concern of present day town planners. This type of urban planning aims to arrange and rearrange these physical features to create an orderly but static, efficient and attractive community. But this type of urban planning has got its own limitations as it includes only a limited portion of the urban community. The town planner completely or at least partially ignores the people who live in that planned community and without whom there would be no buildings or land uses. Therefore, it is essential for an urban planner to plan for social structures, institutions, cultures and socio-economic classes which form the fabric of society.

The planning should begin at the people's level by conducting opinion surveys and investigative studies regarding how people live, what they want and what problems they have and where they want to live. For a proper framing of urban planning policies it is essential to have an idea of the city's demographic, economic, social and regional character.

7.3.1. Suggested development plans:

Cooch Behar, the district headquarters has very slow rate of growth in the last decade. The level of urban population in West Bengal it increased from 28.03% to 31.89%

between 2001 to 2011, but we found an opposite picture at Cooch Behar town decade by decade from 1991 to last census year decadal population growth rate are decreasing day by day these are 14.66%(1991), 7.95%(2001), 1.36%(2011), though we found that 5 village area awarded by census town adjacent to Cooch Behar town so it shows that around the main Cooch Behar town population increases from previous decade. The rapid increase of population in the surrounding area acts as the main constrain in achieving the decided economic and social progress in the town. Being an urban centre Cooch Behar failed to provide enough civic amenities to the people and enable to open a new horizon of development.

The uneven distribution of urban facilities is responsible for the dispersal of development and the quality of life of the people which is also responsible for various problems such as continuous increase of population, shortage of housing, growth of slum housing environment etc. The increased population has led to the growth of more labour force, mainly in informal sectors and increase the problem of unemployment, as the town has no industries, which need less number of workers.

The previous discussion shows that the earlier developmental strategies for the town had not been executed properly so, very little development was made in the town. So to meet the goals of urban development policy, there is a need for powerful planning instruments. Considering the present problems of the town, some new strategies are suggested in this chapter.

7.3.2. Suggestion for demographic problems-

The data analysis in related to population found some imbalance in the chapter II and also in the chapter III. The continuous growth of population aggravates the problem of housing in the town. The density of population is high in the central part i.e, Biswa Singha Road etc. and very high is found in slums situated in Marwari patty, Rail Ghumty etc. The occupancy rate of houses is made very close to each other, so that the full utilization of land could be made which lead congestion and lack of fresh air.

- I) The municipal authority should sincerely strictly to follow the housing rule while sanction the houses construction plans it.
- II) Government should provide and effective housing scheme at the North and East fringe of the town.

- III) Construction of multi-storeyed residential flat should be encouraged in wards situated at the fringe and well connected with the Central Business District.
- IV) The existing facilities like schools, medical facilities Bank, supply of drinking water and other facilities should be distributed in these newly developed residential areas.
- V) Some vacant plots can be converted in to residential flats in a planned way.

7.3.3. Suggestion for slum development-

According to municipal report (2005) 54 slum pockets comprising 24270 slum population are found in the town, which need improvement scheme. The result of the study on slum people in Cooch Behar town finds different problems in their minimum livelihood, which are showing in the study (chapter VI). For their better livelihood some proposals are given here. The urban agenda proposed several measures for poverty alleviation.

- i) There is a need for an effective implementation of national housing policy (NHP) in the town. It is necessary to have a target for constructing houses for labourers and alum dwellers.
- ii) Low cost housing scheme are required to solve the housing problems of the poor, specially the slum dwellers.
- iii) Innovative initiatives by construction development should be taken to popularize the use of low cost effective building materials.
- iv) Swarna Jayanti Shohari Rozgar Yojna (SJSRY) has been implemented in the cities and experimentally his programme can be applied in the town to increase the employment opportunities among slum people.
- v) For the infrastructure development public private partnership (PPP) can be promote by the town.
- vi) Self help group concept should be promoted in the town.
- vii) Roads and pavements should be constructed to improve the condition.
- viii) Slums require pucca drain for sewerage disposal.
- ix) Construction of community latrine and ring well should be promoted in a large scale by the municipal authority.

7.3.4. Suggestion for educational facility-

In Cooch Behar town literates are high in respect of total population in central and words of southern part of the town are of residential in nature. Large numbers of educational infrastructure are found here. But the entire western part of the town is neglected than the eastern part.

- i) For both secondary schools the number of institutions is not sufficient to accommodate increased eligible student in future so, to minimize the spatial gap between schools in number at both primary and secondary schools are to be imitated. These new school should serve at least 1 km. around them were the accessibility and convenience to the children are maximum.
- ii) The functional gap between institutions should be filled up by setting up new school of higher level or to convert lower order school to higher order.
- iii) As the number of students at college level has been increasing every year on higher education institute (college) is to be established to cope up with present and future need.
- iv) A considerable amount of land should be earmarked for a residential hostel for the students of Women's College and ITI College in a suitable place in the town.
- v) Gender gap in higher education should be reduced.
- vi) Some educational institutions need play ground with in their premises (like Uchhabalika Vidyalay, University B.T. and Evening College, Polytechnic College, Thakur Panchanan Mahila College etc.).
- vii) In all primary school supply of safe drinking water and sanitary system should be initiated.
- viii) In order to enforce compulsory primary education dropout rate much be reduced.
- ix) Adult education and awareness programme about education should be initiated through mass communication media.

7.3.5. Suggestion for medical facility:

The existing medical services in the town are insufficient with the only one existing Govt. hospital which has been discussed in chapter-V. As the district hospital is situated in the middle most of the people of the district have to cover medical facility, some suggestion can be made to solve the problems associated with the medical facility of the town.

- i) To minimize the spatial gap another health service centre should be installed either in south or north point of the town.
- ii) Number of doctors, nurse in the district hospital is very few to serve the huge population of the town and district which needs immediate recruitment of doctors and nurse.
- iii) It very common to found heat two or more patients in the general ward one bed, which aggravate the spread of contamination of disease among the patients. So the number of beds should be increased.
- iv) The District Hospital is lack of modern equipment and diagnostic facility, which need to provide very soon.
- v) Separate ward should open for infectious diseases in the hospital.
- vi) A rehabilitation centre should be established with in the premises of district hospital.
- vii) The infrastructure of district hospital should be improved along with improvement of water supply and sanitation.
- viii) Hospital should take initiative in implementing family planning programme in face of cost among the poor.
- ix) Intensive awareness campaigns are needed and social mobilization for leprosy patient.

7.3.6. Suggestion for market facility:

Market facility is the most important need for the people of urban dwellers. As the discussion on market facility is not distributed properly (Chapter-V) and there are found many bad conditions. To flourish the commercial activities in Cooch Behar town the following suggestions is recommended.

- i) The main commercial activities are concentrated in the central and mid southern point of the town and the entire western part northern part have no daily market. So to minimize the travel distance between the existing markets at least four daily markets have to be initiated for easy accessibility and quick service.
- ii) A new whole sale market should be constructed along the Cooch Behar - Dinhata Road which is well connected with the state high way and through

which vegetable, rice etc. are to be supplied from the neighbouring area of the town.

- iii) Arrangements of proper drainage in each marked and lavatory facilities must be made.
- iv) All existing market needs concrete shade, road and drinking water facility.
- v) Bhabaniganj Bazar suffers from proper storage facility, lack of parking space. To solve this problem Bhabaniganj Bazar is to be converted in to a multi-storeyed market complex in which the ground floor may be used for go-down and car parking propose.
- vi) Selling of vegetable and other articles on the foot path should be restricted.
- vii) Every market is proposed to redevelop the area and provide proper loading and unloading facilities.

7.3.7. Proposal for new industries:

For the demographic discussion in the chapter-II it is found that there are a huge number of people are unemployed. The town has some small scale industries house are suffering from shortage of space and capital investment. So, some proposals can be made developer these small scale industries in the town.

- i) Some of the agriculture lands and vacant lands along the state highway near New Cooch Behar may be converted into an industrial area based on the local raw materials. This proposed area has advantages site lying away from the town but well connected by road aver nearby railway station.
- ii) Food processing units and other agro based industries and forest based industries may be initiated in the proposed industrial area.
- iii) Fertilizer, plastic, Electronic, chemicals metal industries, transport industries are to be proposed for future industrial estates (Chakchaka).
- iv) Sufficient supply of power and water are recommended for development of the industrial units of Cooch Behar town.
- v) Some special subsidies, raw materials allocations priorities for availability of loans are recommended for development of the proposed industrial units.

7.3.8. Proposal for transport facility:

Transport is the main factor for proper urban growth. But in the discussion of chapter-V and chapter-VI reveals the bad situation of transport system with road condition. For the development of the town some proposals are made to solve the existing problem related transport facility.

- i) Road condition can be improved by widening the main roads and lanes. Repairing of culverts and road surface along station feeder road, New Town Para should be under taken by the respective should be undertaken by the respective authorities.
- ii) Maintenance of roads streets and bus stands should be improved, garbage construction waste, debris should be removed from the road regularly, which will be helpful check the possibilities of road accidents especially during rainy season.
- iii) Properly designed shades for buses and passengers waiting rooms lavatory facility of the town.
- iv) A new bus stand should be constructed at Cooch Behar-Dinhata high way for the buses playing between Cooch Behar to Dinhata and Mathabhangra.
- v) In the town a truck stand is suggested at Harinchawra which get the advantage to connect the town with state highway (SH12).
- vi) Proper and adequate parking facilities for all types of vehicles are proposed to be provided near Bhabaniganj Bazar and the front of District hospital and Station Chowpathi etc.
- vii) To improve the traffic congestion the removal of encroachment on the roads and foot path along the Sunity road, B.S. road is suggested .This will do with minimum demolition work.
- viii) A fly over road to be constructed over rail ghoomti to minimize the pressure on the time of passing the train and to solve the congestion problems of ghoomti area.
- ix) The different railway level crossing should be provide with flyover or underground bridges to control the traffic at here points.
- x) Road side plantations road are proposed for beautification and environmental improvement along Sunity road Cooch Behar-Siliguri road etc.

- xi) To support the proposed programme of planning, operation and management at transport system in the town, there is need for organized urban transport information system.

7.3.9. Proposals for street lighting facility:

There are some street light systems in some street in Cooch Behar town. This is not maintaining properly which is reveals in the study of chapter-V. To fulfil the street light system some measures should taken by the authority.

- i) There is a need for more number of street lights in the town .The municipal authority should take initiative to provide street light in the peripheral words along with removal of disordered lamps
- ii) The C.B.D. area and the main business through fares are proposed to facilitate with more halogen lights to cheek the incidents of crime at the night.
- iii) New electric connections should be providing in the slum houses.
- iv) The service of the state electricity board is not satisfactory which need initiatives at the government level to solve the problem of frequent power cut.

7.3.10. Proposals for water supply facility:

From the field study it reveals that 60% of the respondents are not satisfied for water supply system of the town. In some wards worse condition were found. To solve the water problem in the town some suggestions are here.

- i) A comprehensive piped water supply scheme may be initiative in the near future to fulfil the demand of drinking water in the town.
- ii) New over head tanks are suggested to set at the southern part of the town.
- iii) The number of water stand posts should be increased in same area.
- iv) Maintenance of stand post and removal of broken tap should be done time to time by the municipal authority.
- v) Water of overhead tank is expected to purely by clorinization process regularly.

7.3.11. Proposals for maintaining environmental quality:

The environmental quality decreasing day by day in Cooch Behar town which is come out from the discussion of chapter-V. So to maintain the proper environmental quality some measures are suggested here.

- i) Service efforts one needed to provide adequate sanitary facilities in the town to make the living condition healthier.
- ii) Environmental awareness has to be created among slum dwellers through educations or mass communications system.
- iii) Installation of low cost sanitation facilities community latrines in the slum area.
- iv) Drains and road sides should be cleaned regularly. The municipal authority should give priority to this.
- v) To control air and noise pollution new policy should apply as directed by pollution control board.

7.3.12. Proposals for waste management:

Now a day's Private Public Partnership (PPP) system is being popular in social service. In this regard Willing To Pay (WTP) model is fruitful in urban service. Willingness to pay for improved waste management system a Binary Logit Model was estimated in chapter VI. Besides these some other measures should take by the authority.

- i) To avoid pollution of drainage system suitable sites for waste disposal have to be determined.
- ii) No. of septic tank sludge clearance should be increased.
- iii) Resources recovery plant may be installed in New Cooch Behar dumping ground.
- iv) Increase the number of labourers in this service and payment regularization should be taken under consideration.
- v) PPT model can be used for waste management.

7.3.13. Proposal for drainage development:

Proper drainage and sewerage are the basic pre-requisites for healthy environment and as well as standard of livening. By the drainage system in Cooch Behar town water logging problem hampering the social life. People of Cooch Behar town are suffering

for unscientific drainage system which has been discussed in chapter-VI. So to solve this problem these measures can be applied. This are-

- i) Municipal authority has to be providing with a proper drainage and sewerage system.
- ii) Drains should be covered which will decrease the risk of spreading disease.
- iii) Proper sewerage system may be initiates in the slum areas of the town.
- iv) Illegal constructions which obstructed the easy flow of wastewater and surface runoff should be removed.
- v) Drains are proposed to level according to the slope for easy flow of wastewater.
- vi) Construction of culvert near ghoomti-4 in necessary to drain the excess water during the rainy season.
- vii) Scientific and appropriate plans are required to solve the problem of water logging water during the rainy season.

7.3.14. Proposal for community facility:

There are some open space in Cooch Behar town which is found in land use and land cover study in the chapter-IV. These places can be developed by increasing community facilities.

- i) Parks are proposed to be provided near the residential area of the North and at the extreme South, within every reach of the people of northern and southern point of the town.
- ii) The existing playground should be preserved and vacant spaces in the residential area will be converted into play fields with in the easy reach of every home.
- iii) There are many unused government land which can be transfer to community facility for Cooch Behar town dwellers and also for the hinterland.

7.3.15. Other recreational places:

There are many ponds in the town which may be converted into a place at aquatic sports. Nearby locations in Cooch Behar sports complex and vacant places around it

may be help full to construct a sport village which will have gymnasium, indoor stadium and other facilities within its premises. Some potential tourism sports are noticed in are around the town, those needs proper planning successful implementation Cooch Behar Rajbari be development as a historic tourist sport .The temple of Madanmohan, Boro Devi Bari etc. have both religious and historic appeal. Side if river Torsa can be developed as eco-friendly tourist village in future.

7.3.16. Proposal for effective land use:

Cooch Behar is an old planned residential town. Now population growth changes the land use pattern in the town which is shown in chapter-IV. So the land use should be done in this way.

- i) In the town some use of lands are incompatible as public sector, commercial sectors are developed scattered in the residential area of the town. This public and semi-public sectors specially so permanent offices should be transfer to the Northern point of the town where lands are available to this purpose.
- ii) There should a separate commercial zone in the town.
- iii) Small scale industries, work shop, publishing units may be transfer to the proposed industrial sector (Chakchaka) at the North-Eastern of the town.
- iv) The land along the railway track is encroached for further expansion of railway line and related uses.
- v) Some private schools those are situated at the commercial centre or along the main business through fare should be transferred in appropriate places.
- vi) To establish a compatible relationship between different land uses of land may be restricted houses should be converted only for commercial purpose at the extreme North along the National highway by maintaining the norms of land use.

Cooch Behar is a peaceful residential town, where it is not much developed and is facing the problems of insufficient and uneven distribution of urban amenities. The municipal authority failed to promote the Morden urban facilities to its residents. The present socio-economic condition has been discussed along with the identifications of problem of the town. The high growth rate of population creates immense pressure on existing land and other resources, which affects the urban environment and living

standard of the people of the town. The job opportunity and the economic growth can be achieved through installation of industrial units in the outskirts. Cooch Behar town has a potentiality to develop tourism, but needs proper planning and initiatives by the authorities. The morphology of the town has been changing as old buildings are replaced by new structure and rural land is converted to urban uses. Cooch Behar town is expanding towards North and Eastern Directions. For the around development, the town needs proper planning and effective implementation of those plans. Along with this the residents of the town should take initiative in making the town economically efficient socially equitable and environmentally sustainable in future.

7.4. Conclusion:

In West Bengal, small and medium towns play a vital role in this pace of fast urbanization. Cooch Behar, the headquarter in Cooch Behar District is also experiencing the same, although it has distinguished itself from the general trend of urbanization as observed in India and West Bengal as a whole. There are some definite reasons like geographical, historical, commercial, transport, administrative, religious etc. behind the emergence of most of the urban centres in the country. But Cooch Behar did not fulfil any of the above mentioned characters to reveal itself as an urban centre. On the other side, it was not an economically generative town. At present it is neither an industrial nor a large scale trade based urban centre. Not only that the urban fabric of the town is almost rural in nature. But it is the fact that Cooch Behar experiencing a phenomenal urban growth since its birth as a municipal town. Actually it is purely resulted due to the political factor and later modified itself as an urban centre with an administrative identity. During independence it was merely a capital of Koch Dynasty and after that this settlement of North Bengal witnessed rapid urbanization without the truest sense of urbanism.

However, such growing urbanization throughout the country has some definite positive sides to the society. Towns and cities are the constituent elements of a developing economy and the feature of growing urbanization has been reflected in the growth of urban economy in India. Without strong performance in urban activities, countries do not grow quickly. In India, the contribution of the urban sector to the national economy has been grown substantially in the recent past. Similarly in West Bengal, the State Domestic Product (SDP) has been showing consistent growth in

recent years. The structural change being experienced in the economy of the State in terms of increasing share of secondary and tertiary sector in the SDP would further facilitate the process of urbanization. On the other hand, society has to pay off some definite costs for such rapid urbanization. Vulnerability to the environment and ecological balance is increasing day by day. Agricultural as well as forest lands are rapidly swallowed through the process of urbanization. As a result, the rural economy is becoming weaker and the villagers are often come to the urban areas in search of new jobs, better quality of life and security. Thus the towns and cities facing enormous pressure of population and it will increase even at a faster rate in near future.

Cooch Behar, a Class-II urban centre of North Bengal witnessed rapid urbanization without the proper sense of 'urbanism'. The population of the town has grown very rapidly particularly in two phases-during post independence and during Bangladesh liberation war. But the urban fabric of the town is predominantly rural in nature. Economically it is not a generative town as it is neither an industrial nor a large scale trade based urban centre. Socio-political relations are of a pre-industrial nature there. The conduction of municipal administration and management was followed mainly by the 1930's 'Bengal Municipal Act' till the end of the mid 1990s. Envisaging the needs of urban development from the angle of a new outlook, the then State Govt. imposed new 'Bengal Municipal Act' in 1993 with several plans, policies and enhancement of grants in urban development. It increased the flow of developmental activities in many towns particularly from the starting of the new century; Cooch Behar is no exception of that. There is no denying that in comparison to other towns of North Bengal, Cooch Behar experiences the growth of population which provides various opportunities for the town to develop, though accompanying problems of urbanization are observed simultaneously. Other towns of North Bengal have been given more attention and priority during policy making while Cooch Behar being over-crowded and over-burdened, always neglected due to its typical geographical location. However, the municipal authority has tried their best with their limitations. Introduction of good quality road transport and rail communication with the rest of the country brought more socio-economic prosperity for the town. Simultaneously, it is desired that the vast rural hinterland of Cooch Behar district will open more opportunities for Cooch Behar to have its considerable infrastructure of trade and commerce in the coming future which will surely make the further shaping of the urban land use. There is plenty of

developable land available in and around the existing town area. Naturally the available physical infrastructure can sustain more population, though not in a very desirable quantity. The town being an urban centre, within a large track of interior rural region, is likely to have a pull factor on the surrounding villages for urban facilities, services and job opportunities.

The future growth will have to depend mostly on tertiary economic activities and marginally on small scale industries. This is true that a sincere effort will have to be made deliberately to induce the industrial activities on the basis of available raw materials from agricultural as well as marginal forest products. However, considering the past growth trend and future prospect of population of this town, provisions will have to be made for additional land for future land use including filling in the gaps of existing shortage in infrastructural conditions. However, such situation will definitely attract them government as well as the capitalists to establish several kinds of agro-based and small scale industries in and around Cooch Behar town.

It is very difficult and practically impossible to change a worn-out urban sewer and drainage system completely with the demand of the time. The town Cooch Behar experienced several unplanned phases of urban expansion over the decades. As a result, flood vis-a-vis water-logging becomes one of the chronic problems for the town which ultimately resists the acceleration of socio-economic and cultural prosperity of Cooch Behar. Hence, it is clear that as the population increases, the problem of water-logging also increases simultaneously. Since 2001, the situation became the worst because of natural factor coupled with the human factor have aggravated the menace of inundation and water-logging in the town. It is true that river Torsa has undergone several shifting of her courses upon this gradational plain over the last 200 years. It is expected that the age-old problem of water-logging in Cooch Behar town may be mitigated comprehensively through developmental. Citizens as well as the municipal administration are very hopefully looking forward to overcome this menace in near future.

However, in case of Cooch Behar town, Solid Waste Management (SWM) consumes a significant proportion of municipal budget but revenues from the service are nil. The Town is also often understaffed and lack of adequate number of vehicles to transport wastes. Disposal of waste is becoming an even more serious problem as the existing

dumping yard is going to be unable to take more waste in the future while the availability of land within the accessible distance becoming scarce. Management of municipal waste is a service which needs efficiency and also substantial financial support in order to bring about improvement in the service. But the present situation in respect to SWM in Cooch Behar town is far below the wanted level. The huge amount of waste generated every day makes a severe threat to the urban environment of Cooch Behar and this is a burning problem like all other towns of West Bengal. Three essential components are required in this ground on regular basis-Collection, Transportation and Disposal of such wastes with keen attention and probable innovation wherever necessary.

Urban centres grow from the pre-urban spatial form, but such growth seldom resembles one another. The drift from rural to urban has been a common phenomenon and urban centres in most cases have some rural background. As a consequence, urban growth has been polymorphous in nature.

Growth of urban centres stems mainly from the conjunction of the social, economic, political administration and geographical factors. Different forms of urban development stems from different models of interaction among them. So, from symptomatic perception of different forms of urban growth, experts have stated them in various terms, such as 'pre-industrial urban development', 'industrial urbanization', 'pseudo-urbanization', 'dependent urbanization', 'subsistence urbanization' etc.

In a colonial setting, urban centres grow to serve the colonial interest. Throughout the world, colonial onslaught on the backward societies has destroyed their old urban order and also side by side generated urban development, conducive to their interest. Urban growth in the backward regions of the world after their colonial contact has been moulded to streamline the flight of resources from the periphery to the centre. In India, Peru, Mexico, the Middle East and china, where indigenous urban civilization had already developed, urban forms were radically altered under the impact of European expansion. For instance forts and coastal settlements were the stimuli for urban growth in most part of the traditional world. In India, cities like Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, created under the impact of colonialism, Outstripped the erstwhile prominent cities like Allahabad, Lucknow, Varanasi, Murshidabad, Mathura, Ayodhya etc. the ancient and medieval cities like Delhi, Jaipur, Hyderabad due to some growth impetus survived in a modified form.

However, relevant to the present study is the growth of small and tiny urban centre, which have grown from some rudimentary stages of population settlement. Conjunction of social, economic, political administrative and geographical factors acts as the catalyst for urban development. Urban growth then is the sum total of the interplay between economic, social, political administrative and geographical variables. So, the urban centres are not the casual growth, but the fall-out of a transition. Union of the forces of change leads such transformation. This is true to all urban or pro-urban growth as found in the city in history (Lewis Mumford 1961) in which the evolution of towns from the primitive cave shrines and burial tombs of Palaeolithic man to the sprawling megalopolis of modern times has been traced.

However, despite the prolonged backwardness indication for the growth of Cooch Behar can be noticed from the increasing rate of population growth during the subsequent decades, before the partition Bengal. The prominence in Cooch Behar may be attributed to the improvement in production, economy, infrastructure and the installation of administrative centre.

Urban centres grow as a result of specific change, brought through the interplay of different factors, mentioned in the previous section. Different factors work together to facilitate a change from rural to urban spatial form. However, in certain cases like in the remote areas of the backward societies, it is sometimes found that geographical factors are profound in comparison to other causes of urban growth. So, the areas having specific geographical advantage, supplemented by some economic spurt, have advanced ahead of others. Amongst the favourable geographical conditions, rivers play a key role in the transformation by the river side unknown areas into growing centres. So, it has been appropriately noted that population settlements throughout the world to a large extent grew up in the irrigable regions and the rivers have often been corridors of advance into the unoccupied territory. This process of population settlement enabled the growth of Cooch Behar along with the villages like Guriahati, Khagrabari etc. on the bank of river Torsa, in the middle of the erstwhile district of Cooch Behar in west Bengal.

Cooch Behar is one of the important towns of the region. The population of the town and adjoining area are growing sharply without considering the existing infrastructure. So, a large number of people and economy of the region depend on it. So, an all round

development plan is urgently required not only for the development of the town but also development of the region. Thus, the economy and living condition of the people will rise with the development of the town in future.

The findings of the study have illustrated a complete illustration of the issues it has searched for. But it can say that the findings have highlighted some problems which are to be solved with great interest and care. The future researcher and policy makers shall be benefited by the findings of the study.