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DEDICATED
TO
MY TEACHERS
&
MY FAMILY
Sally A. S.

Preface

Twenty-first century is the age of urbanization, particularly for the developing countries. India is no exception of this process. Although India has been slow to urbanize than the other major developing countries like China, Indonesia, Mexico, Brazil etc. But it can't be denied that India is considered one of the key players in this pace of urbanization. Rapid shift of rural population to the towns makes it possible much faster increase in urban population in the country during the last few decades. Such migration provides to give birth numerous number of Class-I towns throughout the country and the trend of urbanization in India is now moving towards such towns rather than big cities. However, such rapid urban growth extended several opportunities for many settlements to emerge themselves as statutory towns which were merely a village only few decades ago. But most of them grew with a haphazard and unplanned manner and has brought in their wake a number of social and economic problems with inadequate infrastructure.

Dakshin Dinajpur is one of the backward districts of West Bengal, demarcated by international border with Bangladesh on its three sides has witnessed huge migration of refugees from erstwhile East Pakistan since independence and the flow drastically got mileage during and after Bangladesh liberation war. Balurghat, the district headquarter is the proximate result of this migration. It was only a tiny hamlet with less than 5000 population during 1947 got the status of a Class-I town only within three decades through a phenomenal growth rate. So, background of partition was the principal driver behind the conversion of this village to an urban centre. Heavy influx of immigrants in the recent past and later shifting of people from the vast rural tract of this District to this town due to its pull factor as an administrative headquarter made it possible to get the status of a Class-I town within a short span of time. But it creates an immense pressure on the existing urban infrastructure of the town and has also shortened the basic civic amenities to some extent. Simultaneously, the associated problems of unplanned urbanization are manifested.

The backbone of a well-functioning town is its infrastructure like good road network, distribution of water supply and electricity, alleviation of urban poverty, waste removal, scientific sewerage and sanitation, sound health-care facilities, smooth traffic, healthy socio-economic-cultural background and pollution free environment. Therefore, proper planning demands attention from all who are concerned with the well-being of the town for its all-round development. The present researcher comes from this town which made it possible to know the problems intimately and to think few probable strategies to overcome them.

Dated The 10th August, 2012

Raja Rammohunpur

Prabir Kumar Kundu
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STATUTORY DECLARATION

The material embodied in this thesis '*Problems and Prospects of Balurghat Municipal Area in Dakshin Dinajpur District, West Bengal*' being submitted by myself (Prabir Kumar Kundu) to University of North Bengal, P.O.—Raja Rammohunpur, Siliguri, District—Darjeeling, West Bengal is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other diploma or degree of any university including associateship, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition. The work of other authors or any other organizations/agencies wherever made use of, in this study have been duly acknowledged at relevant places. The published works either in the form of direct or indirect utilization have also been used with proper courtesy. Any mistake in doing so is purely unwanted and subject to the proper acknowledgement to the concerned author(s), organization or agency etc.

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