

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled **A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF SLUM DWELLERS IN ALIPURDUAR MUNICIPALITY, WEST BENGAL** has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Arindam Basak, Associate Professor of Department of Geography and Applied Geography, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Purbasha Paul has prepared the thesis entitled **A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY OF SLUM DWELLERS IN ALIPURDUAR MUNICIPALITY, WEST BENGAL** for the award of Ph. D degree in Geography & Applied Geography of University of North Bengal under my guidance. He has carried out the research work at the Department of Geography & Applied Geography, University of North Bengal and the thesis has been prepared based on the extensive field study for collection of primary data and secondary sources of information.

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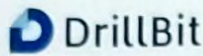
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PREFACE

A society's transformation from agrarian economy to industrial economy along with variety of heterogenous activities, from a homogenous to heterogenous mass and from confined to a broader area of functions can be considered as a process of urbanization. More clearly and precisely, urbanization alters the demographic, social, economic and administrative functions.

The growing urban centers results into blending of new social groups with the existing one. The new urban population comes from a different background and this are the result of migration streams moving towards the cities to avail better employment, business or social opportunities.

The growth of informal and squatter settlements is becoming indispensable for the process of urbanization. Thus, the urban poor with no or lower affordability of land and high-cost housing, accepts the low-cost living near workplace or uninhabitable areas with unhygienic living condition. This informal settlement and improper structure give rise to what we call slums, Census of India define the same as residential areas where dwellings are unfit for human habitation by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements and design of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of street, lack of ventilation, light, or sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to the safety and health. Thus, slums are the irresistible part in urbanization process which profoundly impacts on demographic, social and economic aspect. The planning and development process also get hampered with such proliferation.

Therefore, it becomes necessary to study slums and their growing pattern. The district Alipurduar is the only statutory town and it bears a huge pressure of administrative, business, trade activities and population from the surrounding region. There is an increasing informalization of urban economy and seasonality in employment opportunities can be observed across all categories of urban centers in the country and with no exception the district also reflects a similar further leads to proliferation of slums. Thus, the slum pockets in the municipality needs a special attention and the living condition of the slum dwellers need to be emphasized.

The work has been done systematically by diving the complete structure into eight chapters.

Chapter 1- Introduction: The chapter starts with the concept of urbanization and its process. Slums being a part of the process and also a consequence of urbanization requires immediate attention and therefore the study becomes vital. Slums with causes of formation, its

characteristics, definitions by different organizations are explained and provided. The study area has been defined and the statement of problem has been discussed. Subsequently, the chapter explains various literature review related to every living aspect of the slum dwellers and related issues which is followed by objectives of the study, hypothesis, database and methodology of the research work, Chapter organization etc. Thus, the chapter highlights the proper organization of the study.

Chapter 2 - Background of the study area: The second chapter comes with the general physical background incorporating the physiography, elevation, slope, drainage, vegetation etc. to have a detailed understanding of the physical set up. Next comes the description of various demographic attributes, social and cultural aspects of population of the study area where secondary sources of data have been used. The information of the district with special emphasis on the municipality has been provided.

Chapter 3- Socio- cultural condition of the slum dwellers: The social and cultural aspect of the slum dwellers has been given emphasized. This completely takes into account the surveyed slum population of various slum pockets in different wards of Alipurduar municipality. To know precisely, total population with male and female percent, their sex ratio, age structure, age at marriage, literacy rate, educational level, distribution of caste, religion, mother tongue etc. has been given weightage.

Chapter 4- Economic condition of the slum dwellers: The type of livelihood, their type of occupation and level of income is important to study the economic status of the slum dwellers. A thorough study has been done by considering earning and dependent members, average household income, expenditure related to food, fuel, clothing, health and education. Different relations are also significant which has been computed systematically. Further, overall economic status has been focused for a wider perception and understanding of upcoming chapters that are intrinsically related to level of income or economic status.

Chapter 5- Housing and Environmental aspects of the slum dwellers: Information on house structure and the surrounding environment has been accentuated. Moreover, the level of pollution in the study area has been measured and information collected. This surely gives the overall living condition of the slum dwellers as this aspect is deeply connected to the previous chapters of social and economic status.

Chapter 6- Health status of the slum dwellers: To know the health, food consumption pattern and dietary habits has been given emphasized. Further, Information on health services like

vaccination program has been collected. The health condition of women and children of 0-6 years has been studied. The overall health has been assessed and diseases prevailing among the slum dwellers has been taken into account.

Chapter 7- Levels of development in slums, problem identification and suggestive measures: This chapter shows the levels of development by computing composite index with relevant indicators taken to measure the development in various slum pockets of different wards in the municipality. Thereby, the problems are identified and suggestive measures are discussed.

Chapter 8- Conclusion: This chapter comprises with major finding and conclusion of the complete study. Thorough study has been done on the previous chapters, this chapter is the conclusion of all the preceding works. This also provides an idea regarding the scope for further study as well as it also retains suggestions given for the improvement and development of the study area.

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