

Socio-Economic Panorama of the Slum Arena At Berhampore Municipality of Murshidabad District within West Bengal - A Spatio-temporal Anecdote

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ABSTRACT

The present paper deals with holistic analysis of urban infrastructure as well as amenities in selected slum-pockets of Berhampore Municipality in Murshidabad District, West Bengal. Berhampore, being the oldest municipality of Murshidabad District was specified in the year of 1869 and then was established permanently in the year of 1876. Berhampore Municipality is encompassing total twenty-three wards the cumulative population-strength of which is more than 1.5 lakhs. A good number of wards in the municipality are slum-infested and here the slums are categorized under four broad subdivisions namely a) slums situated beside river Ganges, b) slums adjacent to the non-slum localities, c) slums beside the railway lines or the railway slum-colonies and d) slums comprising of minority communities and slums of the extremely backward categories of population that are suffering from acute economic marginalisation. In the current research, those specific slums only have been studied which are akin to the river holy Ganges. In the pre-field phase of the study, the Draft Development Plans (published from the end of Berhampore M), selected journals, Government reports and records etc have been come across to conceive a concrete idea on the specific research-problem. Thenceforth, a perception study has been conducted in selected slum-units where the purposive stratified sampling technique has been taken into consideration to select the target population. In the last phase, databases procured from the questionnaire survey, have been compiled, analysed thoroughly and certain inferences have also been drawn through manifold quantitative techniques. Side by side of the quantitative dealings, the qualitative surveys have also been accomplished herewith in order to know the public-repercussions regarding Government's performance in providing urban-infrastructure and amenities into the slum-ambience of Berhampore ULB. Poor educational infrastructure for the slum-dwellers, hindrances in attaining higher-education for the economically challenged people, inadequate parks and play-grounds for the slum-children, insufficient public-toilets for the slum-inhabitants, lacuna in municipal health-care services, problems of traffic and transport and some other burning issues have come in the fore-front through the primary survey. At last, the researcher has also recommended some fruitful planning measures by adopting which, the local self Government of Berhampore may be able to eradicate miscellaneous infrastructural ailments from the affected slum-areas and improvise upon their socio-economic scenario to a considerable extent in future.

Key Words: - Slum and Non-slum area, Perception-Study, Public Opinion, Facility-Utility Services.

1. INTRODUCTION

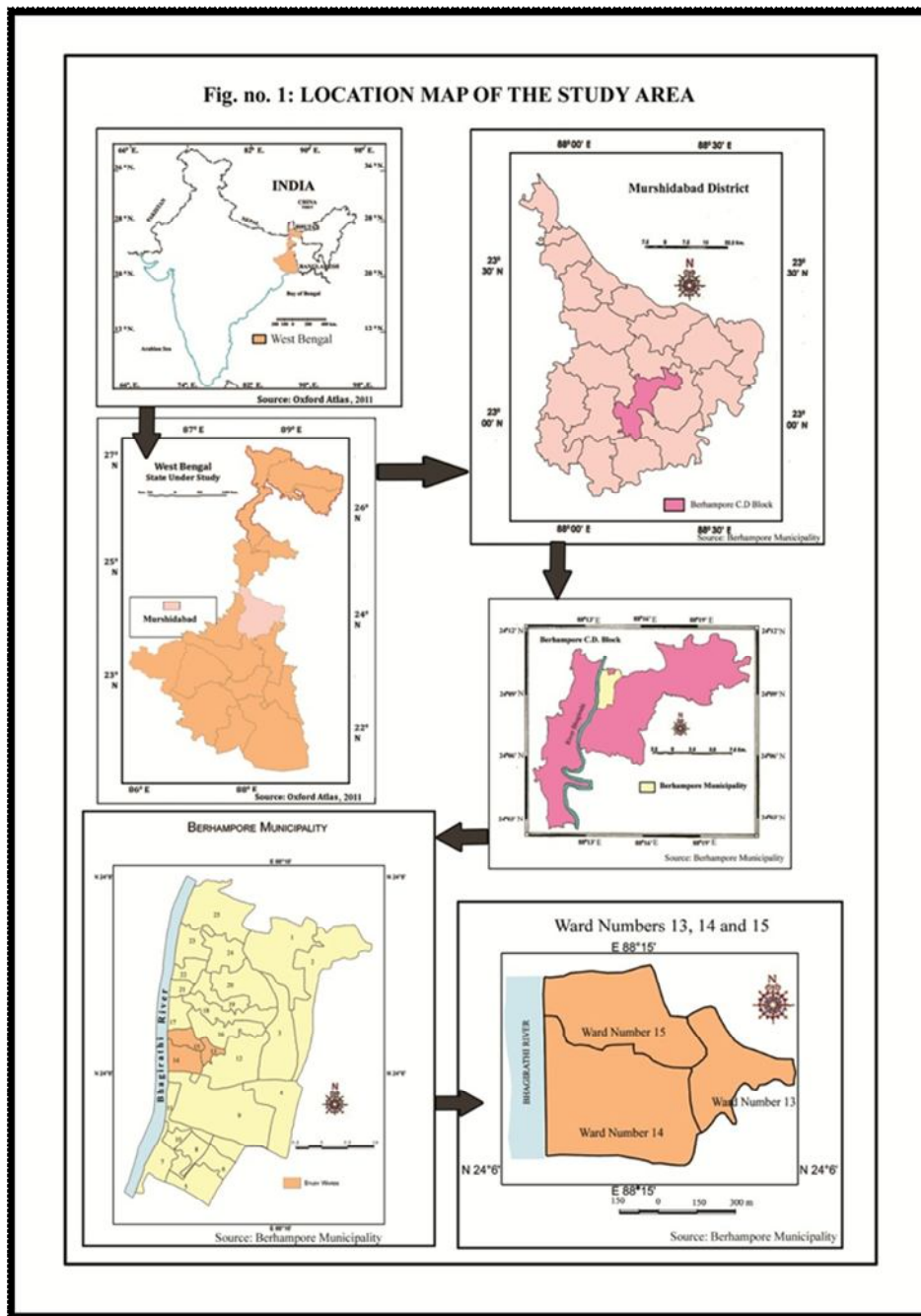
In the current research-work, the holistic Socio-economic conditions of the Slum environs at Berhampore Municipality of Murshidabad District, WB have been portrayed with almost all minute geographic details. The work is based on both secondary as well as primary data analyses. Socio-Economic condition connotes to the overall condition coherent to the living of inhabitants of a particular arena, like educational status, occupational structure and health care facilities and so on and so forth (Desai, 1970). In this detailed oriented survey, an attempt has been made to corroborate the socio-economic scenario of the slums and shanties particularly of Berhampore Urban Local Body. Here the spotlight is thrown on the principal socio-economic indices including urban amenities, access to basic services extended to the urban paupers etc. The followings do contain the list of assignments that have been carried forward through the entire discussion:

- Slum Survey
- Slum Profiling
- Livelihood Survey
- Household Survey

Slum-data analysis is one of the effective ways of addressing poverty and quality of life by assessing the basic life-situation of the economically marginalized people, based on the selected indicators concerning to the slum-ambience and household-level information and that is also encompassing minute explanation on existing as well as ideal infrastructure, reactions of different age cohorts, workplace-distance with reference to economic

strengthening and so on and so forth (Danda, 1995). Here the job has been accomplished through thorough focus onto the ‘Bustees’.

Study area with justification of selection:-

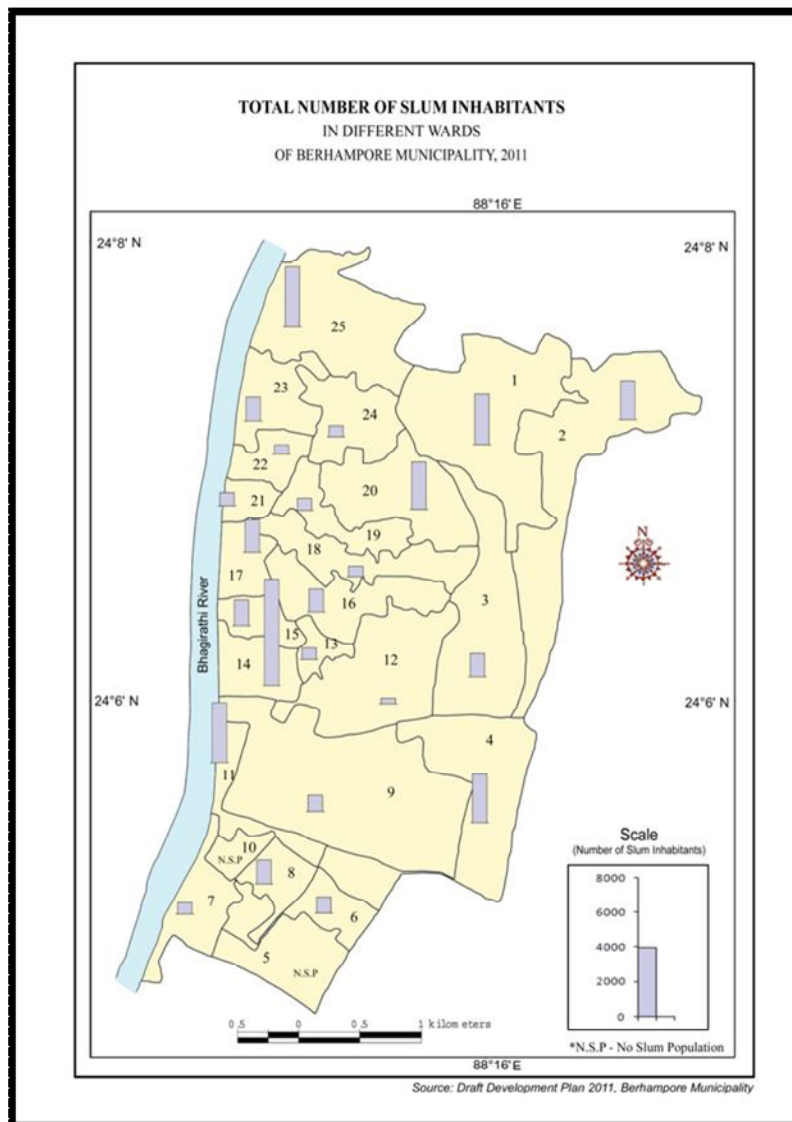


Berhampore Municipality is one of the oldest municipalities in entire West Bengal. Many eminent and respected personalities, including Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandi and Maharaja Srish Chandra Nandi chaired this municipality in different time periods which made this institution a heritage one. The areal boundary of Berhampore Municipality was specified first in the year 1869 and in 1876 for the second time with some modifications. Berhampore Municipality was delimited finally with specific administrative boundaries in

1876-77. In the initial stage, the British Government did not leave the governance of this municipality completely in the hand of Non-government folks as after the Sipoy Mutiny in the year of 1857, when a large number of British army people stayed at Berhampore Cantonment area. Therefore the Municipality was constituted with both the government and non-government people from the very early periods.

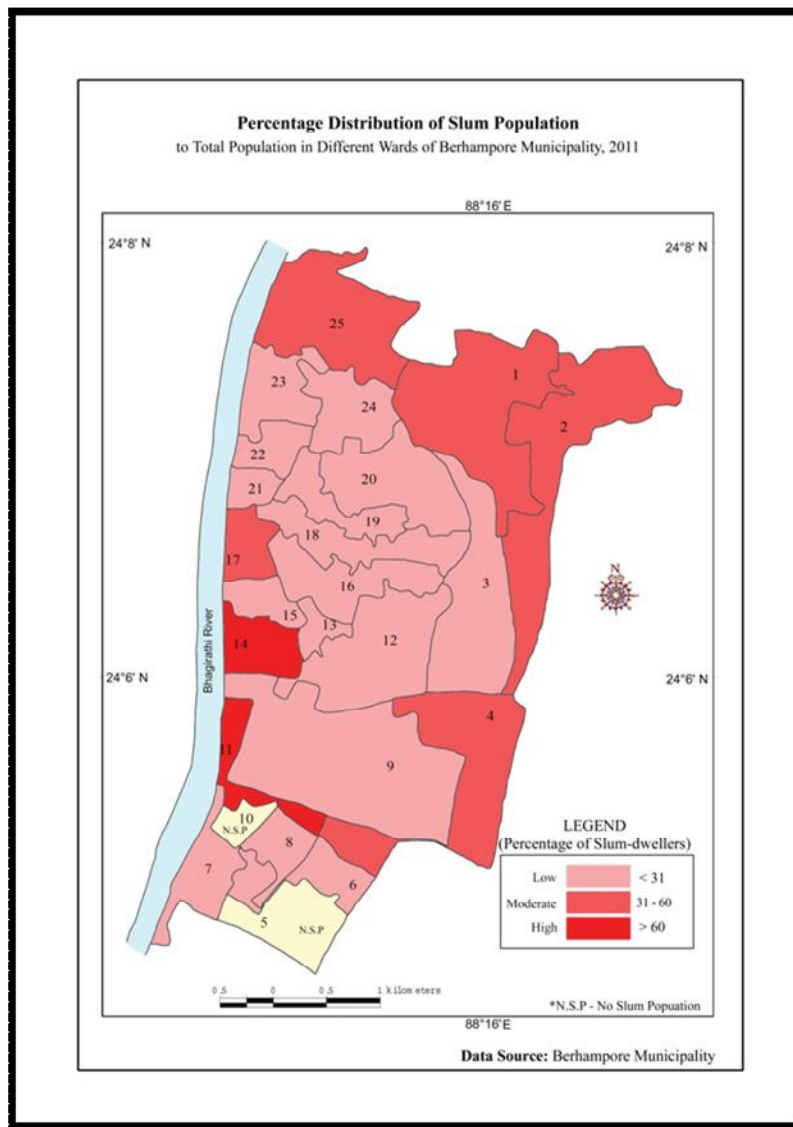
The municipal board was constituted initially through the presence of 14 non-governmental members and 5 government-nominated members as well and therefore total 19 members were forming its integral whole. This trend was continued up to 1884. The District Magistrate acted as the President of the Municipality during this very tenure. In the year of 1884, according to “Bengal Municipal Act, 1876”, finally the Administration and management of Berhampore Municipality was handed over to 14 elected and 5 government-nominated members. The first Chairman of Berhampore Municipality (1884) was Ray Bahadur Baikuntha Nath Sen, who was a reputed Advocate and the President of District Bar Association as well. During that time, the area of Berhampore Municipality was divided into 6 wards only and those were as follows:

1) Gorabazar, 2) Cantonment, 3) Berhampore, 4) Khagra, 5) Saidabad and 6) Cassimbazar. The numbers of elected members from each ward at that time were as follows: 3 from Gorabazar, 1 from Cantonment, 4 from Berhampore, 3 from Khagra, 2 from Saidabad and 1 member from Cassimbazar ward. Now the Municipality is comprised of total 23 micro urban units (better known as wards) and one elected member from each ward represents the respective unit. Total area of this municipality is approximately 31.42 Sq.km and it has a total population-strength of 1, 60,168. Berhampore is the District Head Quarter of Murshidabad.



Executive Engineer designed the whole system with great dedication. Main objective behind the construction of this drainage system was not only to channelize the polluted water out of

the town but also to utilize the water for the purpose of irrigation and Pisciculture. Lakshmijola drainage, Osmankhali Drainage, Khagra sluice and Bibiganj Sluice were constructed under this scheme. All these are connecting all the slum-infested arena of this Municipality in a very systematic manner. The plan was framed mainly to channelize the dirty, adulterated water through the drains and sluices and to release them into the water bodies outside the Berhampore-area. It was thought at the very beginning that total drainage system would be flashed into the River Bhagirathi but this 100-year old drainage network system is now almost abandoned. The water supply system of Berhampore Municipality was constructed in the year of 1894 and it was a century old system pleading in favour of a wonderful instance of old-engineering. Maharani Swarnamoyee Devi donated 2, 00,000/- for the construction of this Water work system. This system is still working today but it needs proper reconstruction for more improved and wider water supply according to the growing population pressure on the town, especially to the extremely congested belts in the ‘Jhopris’ at Berhampore.



In the year of 1927, the then “Director of Public Instruction” undertook a proposal for implementing Primary Education scheme in different Municipal areas (Ray,1986). That time Maharaja Kumar (Afterward Maharaja) Shrish Chandra Nandi was the chairperson of this Municipality. At first, this new scheme was implemented by only three municipalities in undivided Bengal and Berhampore Municipality was one of them. Berhampore Municipality then constructed buildings for 5 Free Municipal Primary schools at wards of Saidabad, Khagra, Berhampore, Gorabazar and Cassimbazar with the donations from Cassimbazar Rajbati and other eminent persons of Berhampore. It is very conspicuous to mention that in all those primary educational institutes, a good number of children from the

slum-dwellers’ families got admission. That time, Berhampore Municipality had a collection of 4,500/- as educational tax and government used to give equal amount of money as Grant under the aforesaid scheme. In 1932, electricity came into the town and Berhampore

Municipality arranged for 400 electric light posts without any electricity-tax and here also most of the slum-areas were illuminated by the street-lamps. From the very beginning, it has been noticed that all the urban governances in Berhampore, were almost uniformly distributed amongst its slum and non-slum units. 130 years ago, this municipality was established but till 1941, it did not have own administrative building. In the year of 1941, separate land was acquired and in the year of 1956 on Republic day, the Municipal building was inaugurated ultimately. From the very dawn, Berhampore Municipality aimed at holistic development of every section of people within this town irrespective of any differentiation between its patrician and plebeian groups. Berhampore Municipality always desired to provide mandatory municipal services to all its citizens within limited financial and infrastructural capacity. Berhampore Municipal area remains an ideal example of “Unity in Diversity still today with a unique assemblage of people of different caste, creed and religion residing and assembling together in peaceful integrity.

Geographical Uniqueness of the Berhampore Municipality in a nutshell:-

Berhampore Municipality is extended between 24°6' N latitude to 24°10'N latitude whereas its longitudinal extension is from 88°15'E to 88°19'E. Here the annual maximum temperature remains near about 38.6 °C and on the other hand, the minimum temperature touches 7.8 °C. In Berhampore, the annual average rainfall is >1500 mm and its altitude a.m.s.l. is approximately 19 metres. The major fluvial system in Berhampore is Bhagirathi, (DL 17.22 meters, EDL 17.83 meters). Berhampore is 200 Km distant from Kolkata and is connected with it through the railway services between Lalgola and Kolkata. The main stations are Berhampore Court and Cassimbazar. Khagra Ghat Road is another station, akin to Berhampore Municipal area, which is following the Howrah- Azimganj railway route. National Highway-34 that is Kolkata-Siliguri road is also serving the Berhampore town. This is such a unique Municipal area that has its three side boundaries with different Gram Panchayats whereas the river Bhagirathi is flowing through its western stretch.

Objectives behind the study:-

In order to draw certain clear inferences about the livelihood/standard of living of the slum dwellers at Berhampore, the entire research was conducted and the focal objectives behind the study are mentioned below:-

- To review the characteristics of slum population in Berhampore Town and to search for the reasons behind the proliferation of such patterns.
- To analyse the persisting socio-economic condition of the slums and shanties in Berhampore.
- To enumerate the characteristic features of the housing of the slums and their surrounding physical environment as well.
- To comprehend about their exiting land-use pattern and associated dynamics.
- To examine the nature of urban governances available to the slums of Berhampore.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Data Bases:-

Both primary as well as secondary datasets have been acquired to lay the foundation for the analytical study. Detailed household survey on the basis of structured questionnaire schedule has been done to acquire adequate primary data. Databases related to land holding and other

ward-based details, have also been collected from Municipality office. The data related to the economic activity, educational status, food structure and basic amenities available were also collected from the field as well as from the Administration. Census data and municipal records have been utilized as conspicuous secondary data sources.

Methodologies adopted:-

The methodologies adopted during the study are enlisted below:

Step I: The available literatures regarding slums have been consulted to conceive sufficient ideas for the research and here the updated Draft Development Plan (DDP) of the Municipality has been gone through meticulously.

Step II: A reconnaissance visit or a pilot survey was made to the Slum areas of Berhampore Municipality and special thrust was given on Ward numbers 13, 14 and 15. These wards were chosen because during the rendezvous with the Chairman of the Berhampore M, it was found by the researcher that these three units are the most demanding ones with respect to their desire for speedy fulfilment of several infrastructural needs. All the households were enlisted along with number of male and female residing in each of them. Here based on cumulative monthly income of the families, three specific economic groups were identified for perception study and total hundred households were surveyed from each target wards of Berhampore Municipality. So in one word, the very purposive stratified sampling technique has been followed over here for primary survey. 50% data have been collected purposefully from those who were suffering from tremendous poverty.

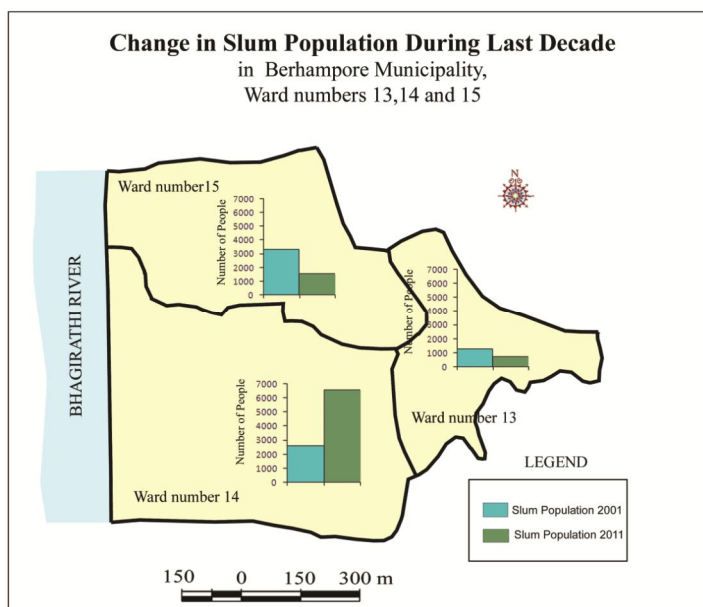
Step III: All the maps and diagrams with special reference to the perception survey have been constructed based on the dataset procured from master table.

Step IV: With these map-representations and the same questionnaire schedule, a second visit was made in the same target units for a cross-checking.

Step V: Lastly, through the thorough analyses of the tables, maps and thematic diagrams, definite inferences have been drawn in this particular research-spectrum.

3. OVERALL LAYOUT OF THE SLUMS IN BERHAMPORE

Scenario of Slums and Shanties in Berhampore Municipality:-



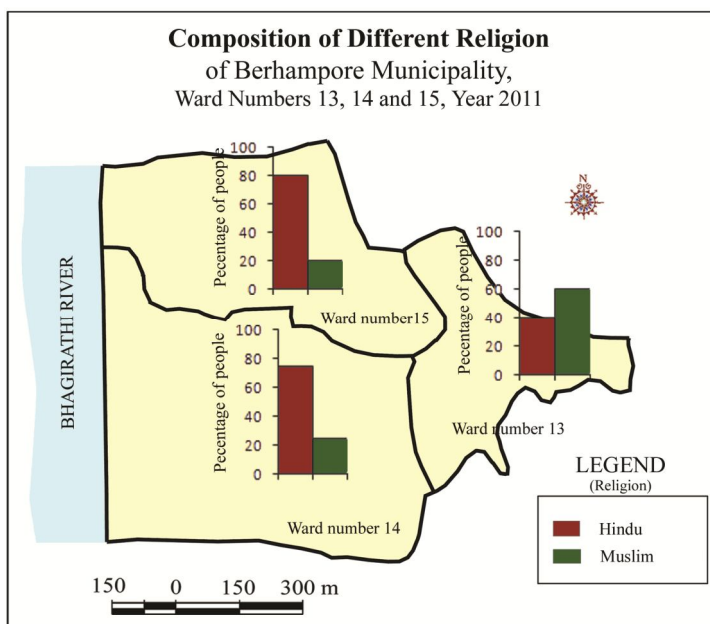
According to the UNESCO report (1952), “a slum is considered as an area characterised by overcrowding, deterioration in sanitary conditions or absence of facilities or amenities which endanger the health, safety or morals of its inhabitants” (Jain, 2008). There is no general agreement on the definitions of slum. Some writers regard slum as a special type of disorganized area. Burgel (1955) and Anderson

(1959) described slums as “areas of the city where housing is substandard, deteriorated and degenerated”. The second set of definition considers the slum dwellers to have a marginalized lifestyle characterized by a sub-culture of their own which prevents their integration with the rest of urban society. Generally the slums are the registered residential units under the umbrella of local administrations (Badami, 2005).

According to Census 2011, it has been proposed that the following areas will have to be treated as ‘Slum’: -

- All areas notified as ‘slum’ by State/Local Self-Government and Union Territory (UT) administration under any Act.
- All areas recognised as ‘slum’ by State/Local Government and UT administration, which have not been formally notified as slum under any act.
- A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructural facilities (Ahuja, 2001). Such areas should be identified personally by the Officer-in-Charge of the respective localities and also to be inspected by an officer nominated by Directorate of Census Operations (DCO). This fact must be duly recorded in the urban charge register.

As the 74th amendment of the constitution and West Bengal Municipal Act 1993, the municipalities have been perceived as the third tier governance providers and are entrusted upon the job of comprehensive and integrated development in the urban units. Being the primary level of government, municipality deserves the direct involvement in the development of the marginalized sections and grassroots. The concentration of poor and marginalized people in Municipal areas or the urban areas are found in the slums. So, to provide a comprehensive and holistic development, it needs to pay adequate attention in Slum areas and also in order to ensure minimum civic amenities for the slum people.



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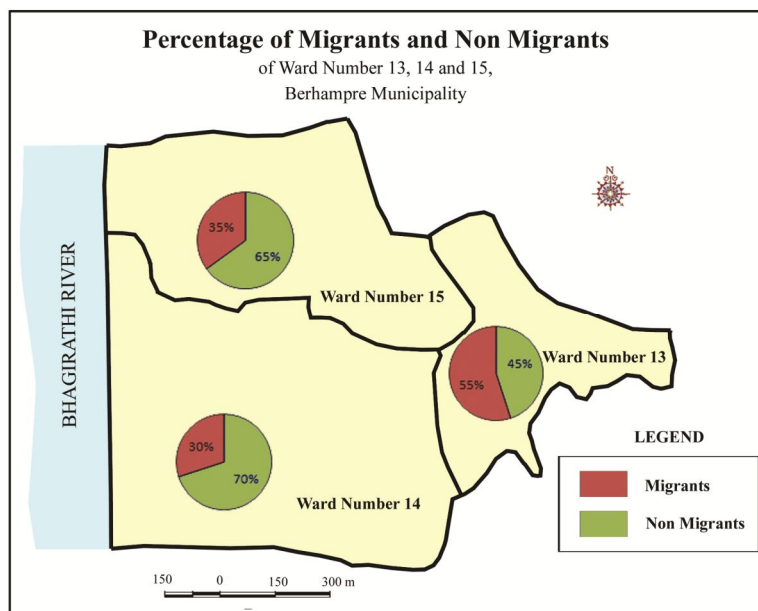
Slums have been defined as a cluster of hutments with dilapidated and infirm structures with or without common toilet facilities suffering from lack of basic amenities, inadequate drainage and disposal of solid wastes. Under section- 3 of the Slum Area Improvement and Clearance Act, 1956, slums have been defined as mainly those residential areas where dwellings are in any respect unfit for human habitation by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements and designs of such buildings, narrowness of streets and lanes, lack of ventilation, light or sanitation facilities or any other combinations of these factors that are detrimental to safety, health and morals to the residents. In Census of India 2011, slums have been defined as compact areas of at least 300 populations or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with

inadequate infrastructure and lacking in mainly proper sanitary and drinking water facilities. According to KUSP (Kolkata Urban Slum Project), a slum is a cluster of at least 15 poor families densely inhabiting in huts of mud wall or thatched houses in a land-stretch measuring 1 Katha minimum and 1 Katha and a half maximum.

Categorization of Slums in Berhampore:-

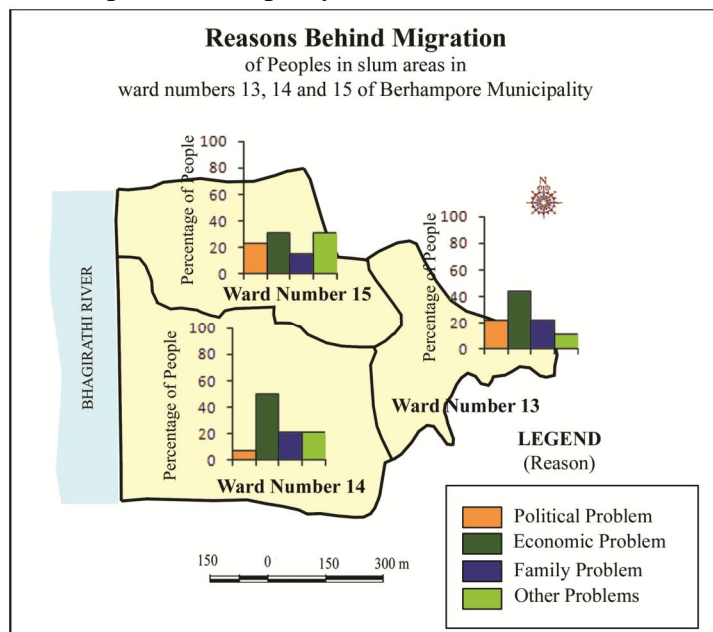
- Slums situated beside the river Ganges,
- Slums adjoined with the non-slum locality,
- Slums developed in a linear manner beside the railway lines,
- Slums of minority community and backward population.

Although Berhampore Municipality has undertaken significant slum development activities in the past but yet these are piecemeal efforts.



In this present scenario of rapid and modern urbanization and steep population escalation, it is very important to make the efforts much more comprehensive in nature. Therefore, Berhampore Municipality has tried to make a comprehensive and integrated Slum Development plan involving infrastructural, social and livelihood development aspects under different significant development

programmes for all the slums. Berhampore Municipality has followed all the guidelines provided by CMU and KUSP in respect to prepare the slum improvement projects and with the help of secondary data, Stake holder's feedbacks and Socio-economic survey in Berhampore Municipality, here the researcher has tried to conceive a totalistic idea regarding



the condition of the slums in Berhampore. Slum Infrastructural Improvement Plan has also been prepared roughly keeping in view the objectives of ensuring basic infrastructural services to all the slums, giving priority to those having worst social and physical conditions, enhancement of community participation, operation and maintenance of infrastructure in slums etc. The projects have been undertaken according to three

themes emphasizing, operation and maintenance, capital investments and community participation.

Detailing on distribution of Slums at Berhampore Municipality:-

Enclosed herewith is the vivid ward-wise list of the slums under Berhampore Municipal Area along with the population in each of them.

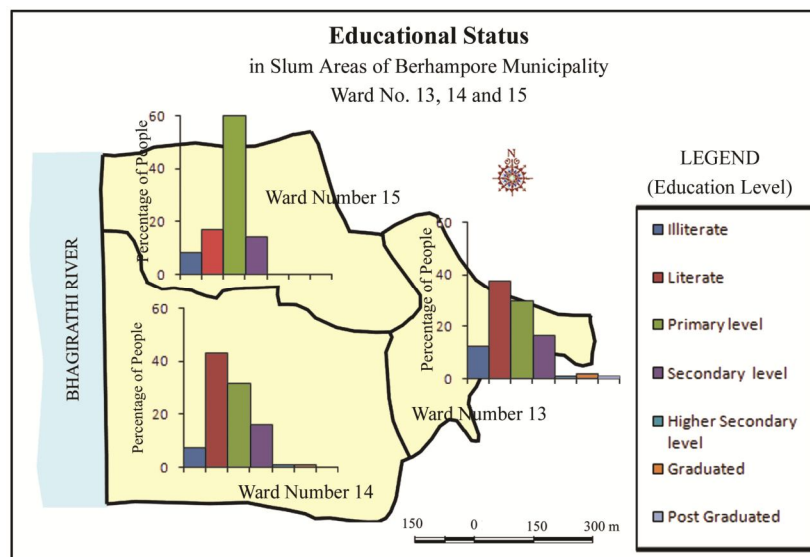
Table: 1 Ward-wise Distribution of Slums in Berhampore along with their absolute population-strength (2011 Census)

Ward no.(s)	Population in total	Name of the Slums
1	728	Cassimbazar, Harijan Bustee
1	707	Kalikapur Bustee
1	502	Rose gang Bustee
1	556	Cassimbazar Nutan Bustee-1
1	528	Cassimbazar Nutan Bustee-2
2	446	Chander Bagan Bustee
2	777	Sharmapara Bustee-1
2	409	Sharmapara Bustee-2
2	721	Daman Daptari Lane Bustee
3	810	Raipara Bustee
3	162	Firm Gate Bustee
3	442	Bishnupur Rail Bustee
4	428	N.H Bustee-1
4	473	N.H Bustee-2
4	316	N.H Bustee-3
4	366	N.H Bustee-4
4	348	Subhas Pally Bustee-1
4	289	Subhas Pally Bustee-2
4	339	Subhas Pally Bustee-3
4	361	Subhas Pally Bustee-4
5	423	Kishan Ghosh Bustee
6	573	Mushahar Bustee
7	725	Bhagirathi Lane Bustee
8	853	Naya Sadak Harijan Bustee
8	585	K. K. Banerjee Harijan Bustee

9	589	Gandhi Colony Main Bustee
9	410	Dhopoghati Bustee
10	603	Gandhi Colony Bustee-1
11	683	Gandhi Colony Bustee-2
11	819	Gandhi Colony Bustee-3
11	540	Gandhi Colony Bustee-4
11	502	Gandhi Colony Bustee-5
11	468	Gandhi Colony Bustee-6
12	341	A.C South Bustee
13	318	Kshetra Hazra Bustee
13	385	Kadai Harijan Bustee
14	871	Braja Saha Lane Bustee-1
14	632	Subhas colony Bustee-1
14	430	Subhas colony Bustee-2
14	677	Subhas colony Bustee-3
14	477	Subhas colony Bustee-4
14	543	Subhas colony Bustee-5
14	572	Subhas colony Bustee-6
14	735	Subhas colony Bustee-7
14	322	Subhas colony Bustee-8
14	720	Subhas colony Bustee-9
14	601	Braja Saha Lane Bustee-2
15	477	Radharghat Main Bustee
15	295	Radharghat Nutan Bustee-1
15	798	Radharghat East Bustee-2
16	454	Nutan Para Bustee
16	432	Mollagarh Harijan Bustee
16	506	A.C Road Baramuri Dhar Bustee
17	831	Sasadhar Tarka Churamoni Bustee
17	566	Netaji Road Bustee
17	571	Nilmoni Ganguly Bustee
18	638	Jelepara Harijan Bustee
19	747	Muchipara Bustee

20	644	Dayanagar Nutanpara Bustee
20	733	Lichubagan Harijan Bustee
20	835	Kantanagar Harijan Bustee-1
20	636	Kantanagar Harijan Bustee-2
21	806	Dom Para Bustee
22	555	Gopal Ghat Bustee
23	518	M. N. K. Road Ganga Dhar Bustee
23	384	B. N Sen Road Bustee
23	550	Kapil Math Bustee
24	674	Girjapara Bustee
25	534	Kunjaghata Gangadhar Bustee-1
25	574	Kunjaghata Gangadhar Bustee-2
25	569	Kunjaghata Gangadhar Bustee-3
25	644	Kedar Mahato Bustee
25	681	Churasi Para Bustee
25	633	Ring Road Bustee
Wards (1-25) →	41,390	← (Total Slum-Population)

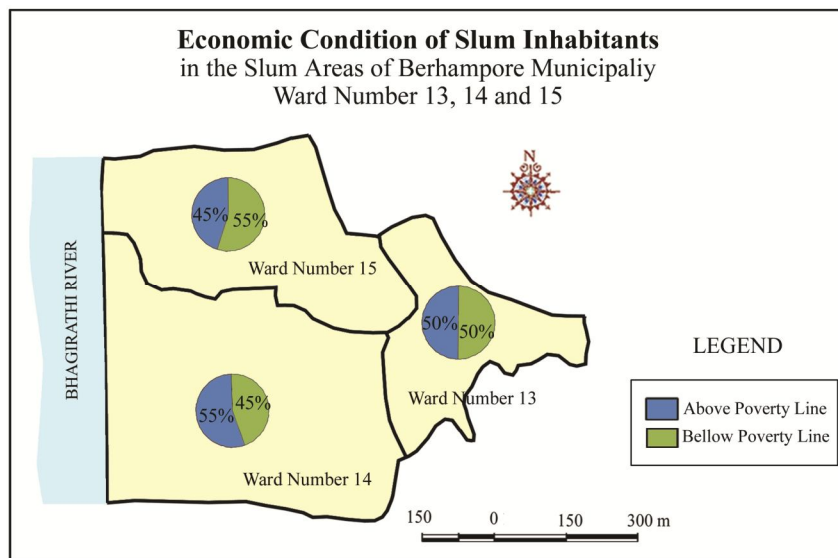
Source: - Berhampore Municipality



The objectives of the slum improvement programmes in Berhampore are mainly to improve the standard of living of the slum dwellers and here the thrust was on the following missions:-

- To create alternative ways of income.
- To improve the condition of existing infrastructure within the slum.
- To create more improved and standardized infrastructural facilities for them.

- To generate awareness amongst the slum people to maintain the assets within the slums.
- To introduce better as well as job-oriented non- formal educational system in slums.
- To make the slum people aware in keeping the local environment clean and healthy.
- To introduce both-way co-ordination machinery between the municipality and the slum dwellers regarding maintenance of infrastructural and environmental protection.



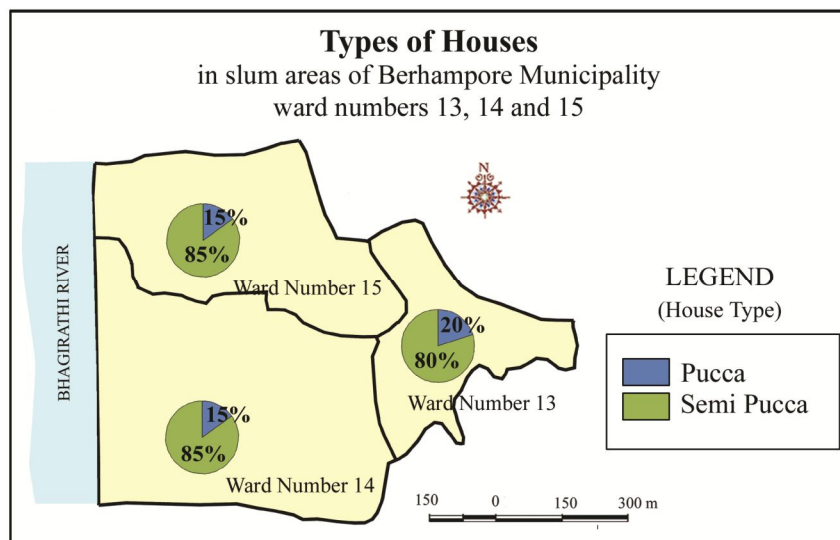
There are 74 slums existing under the Berhampore Municipality as of now. Different infrastructural improvement works have yet been carried out in these slum areas. During the tenure of '07-'08, the ongoing projects were mainly focussed on the access to road network, water supply, construction of drains, SWM etc under infrastructural

development and implementation of SJSRY scheme, non formal education and basic health services delivered by HHWs (Household Hazardous Waste Management) under social and livelihood development aspects. But these were piecemeal efforts. So to deal with the slum problems in a comprehensive way, need-based and problem-oriented approaches are the needs of hours. To get into this integrated way of solving slum problems, scientifically the gap-identification was needed. One of the important ways of identification of gap is to review the on-going projects in different slums.

Ward-wise Percentage Distribution of slum population in Berhampore (M):

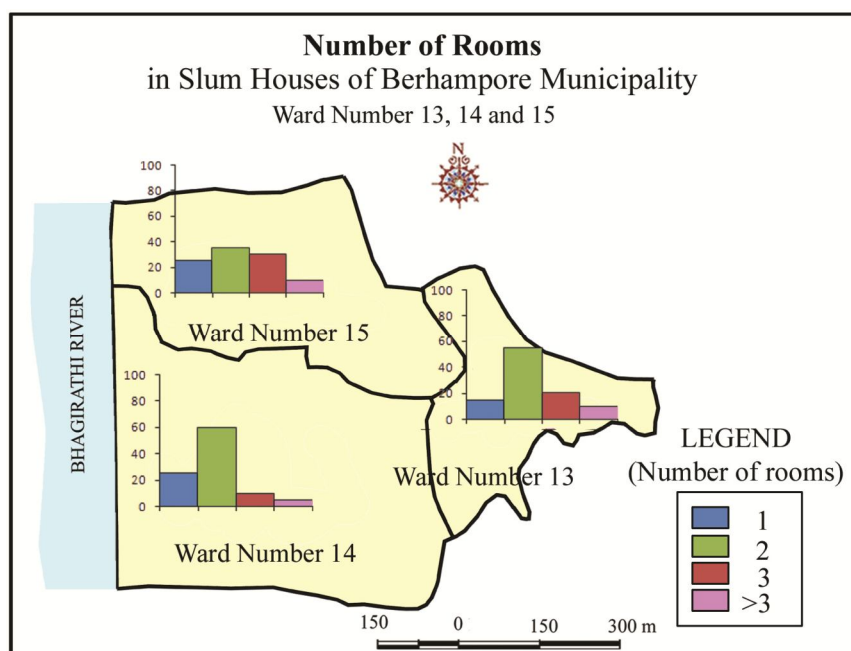
The ward-wise “Percentage of Slum Population to Total Population” map has been drawn for the year 2011 based on the census data, in order to portray the recent slum-scenario in the study-arena. It is evident from the figure that ward number 14 has the highest slum population, followed by ward number 11. Lowest slum-population density is found in ward number 12 followed by ward number 24. Remaining wards have moderate density of population.

Characteristics of slum-population:-



Ward nos. 13, 14 and 15 have been selected in order to get the detailed view of the socio-economic condition of the slum dwellers. It is evident from figure that the slum population has been increased during last decade for ward number 14 from 2,615 to 6,580 whereas the slum population for ward numbers 13 and 15, have been decreased a lot in

the meanwhile. For this reason, it can be said that as ward number 14 is just beside the National Highway 34 and therefore due to good connectivity, people prefer to live in this place more than the other wards. And as many other good facilities like hospital, nearby market, bus stop, educational institute are over there, people do like to stay in these places than the other. For the same reason, people that are coming from surrounding places and people living in any other local slums for a considerable period but gradually getting attracted towards this particular site/location do represent a bulk quantity. So ultimately the slum population of this place goes on enhancing a lot with passage of time.



It is envisaged that 40% people are Hindu and 60% people are Muslim in the total surveyed sample population of ward number 13. As this place has many mosques, the Muslim people like to stay in and around this place. As religious factor is prevalent here, the percentage of Muslim population in this place is quite high. For ward number 14, it is 75% Hindu population and 25% Muslim population.

And in ward number 15, there are 80% Hindu and 20% Muslim population. It can be stated that after independence, many Hindu people came here from Bangladesh and started living here. They chose the place near the river Bhagirathi as their basic occupation was fishing what is fully dependant of riverine resources.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

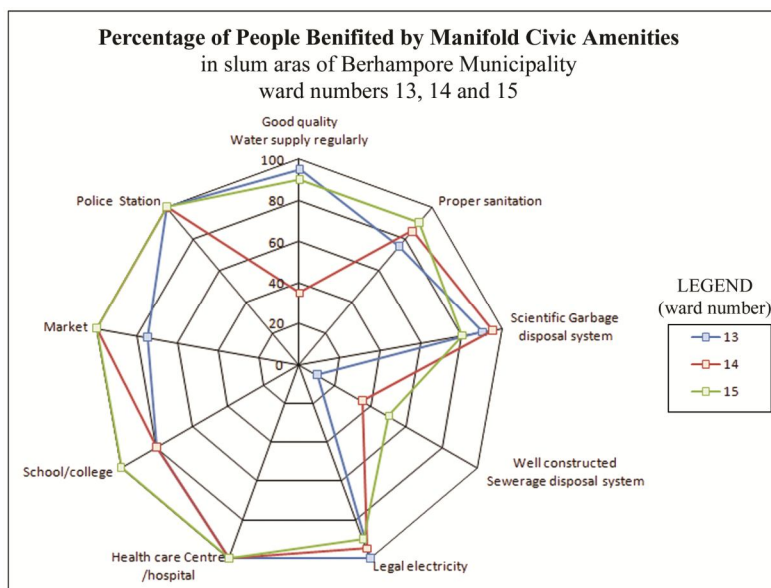
Ownership Pattern:-

Ownership pattern of the houses is shown in the figure where it is found that maximum people of these slum areas have their own houses. In case of ward number 13, 90% people have their own houses and 10% people live in rented housing. In the case of ward number 14, the ratio is 8:2. And in Ward number 15, 95% people have their own houses where only 5% people live in rented houses. Maximum people of these places live here for more than 30-40 years. That’s why the maximum portion of people resides in their own houses ultimately. A very few people who had come here in last 10 years, don’t possess their own houses. They live mainly in rented housings. For this, the percentage of ownership houses is much greater than the rented houses.

Scenario of Migration:-

It is prevalent that the slum dwellers of ward number 14 are not so old in total year of staying as compared to ward numbers 13 and 15. The year of staying of the surveyed slum population in ward number 14 is up to 40 years. As ward number 14 has the greater amount of civic amenities available than that of ward numbers 13 and 15, people coming from different places do prefer to live in this ward than other places. Also during last decade, the slum population of this place has escalated a lot. Most of the people of this place are newer in comparison with ward number 13 and 15. In ward number 13, it is found that 45% people have come from other places where 55% people are old and traditional residents of this area. In case of ward no 14, 70% people are migrants and only 30% people are non-migrants. In ward number 15, the migrants are 65% and non-migrants are 35%. As the people prefer to live in ward number 14 than in ward number 13 and 15, the percentage of migrant people in ward 14 is much higher than rest of the wards. It is found that more than 30% of the migrant people in these slums of ward numbers 13 and 14 have come from other parts of this town. Maximum people in these slums came from different districts of West Bengal and other states of India, mainly in search of better job opportunities, improvised standard of living etc. Significant proportion of immigrants is observed to have come from Bihar. As this is the district headquarter of Murshidabad, this town enjoys many facilities. Hence people have come to this place from many sides of West Bengal, in search of better economic opportunity and better living conditions. Reasons for migration have also been shown in the given spatial construction. Economic Problem plays a crucial role in the case of migration of slum people in the ward numbers 13 and 14 whereas in ward number 15, other manifold reasons are responsible for migration.

Educational Attainment:-



The educational attainment of male slum dwellers and female slum dwellers has been corroborated distinctly. The literacy rate is higher for the surveyed male dwellers of ward number 13 than ward numbers 14 and 15. In ward number 13, the economic condition of the people is much better than other wards

and that's why people are more interested to make their children educated. Most of the females do not go to school as they do other household works. The percentage of surveyed male slum dwellers and female dwellers completing primary education is quite high in ward number 15. The percentage of secondary level educated persons is high for ward number 13. A substantial portion of total literates have not completed the Madhyamik examination or secondary level education yet. Number of graduates and post graduates is also microscopically minor in numbers. The highly educated people are few in number and only found in ward number 13, as the economic condition of the people of this ward is much better. The school dropout rate is almost nil in this place. Some people, who have completed their post graduation, are also found here. In other wards like 14 and 15, the males and females are busy to help their family economically and therefore highly educated people are not found in ample number in those places. In ward number 14, the percentage of school dropout is 60% and in ward number 15 the percentage of school dropout is 80%. As the economic condition is good for the people in ward number 13, the school dropout rate is less in this ward, but in ward numbers 14 and 15, most of the people are economically challenged. The males of this locality join in job after a definite age and females are also bound to join in household works or in some other household industries. They are pressurized actually from their family to get married and it has been noticed by the surveyor in considerable number of cases. For this, the dropout rate in these wards is much higher.

It is seen that the percentage of male dropout is more than female in ward number 13 but in case of ward number 15, the number of females are more in the dropout list. In ward number 13, females are more socially open but in ward number 15 females are mostly confined due to religious orthodoxy. This is the reason for which in ward number 13, females can get education in a free manner. At the same time, females of ward number 15 marry at their early ages. In case of ward number 14, the male and female dropout rate is same and the reason is definitely the poor and pecuniary condition. No one can dare even to opt for higher education for their poor economic status and low income of their parents. The reason for school dropout is shown also. It has been noticed that in most of the cases the reason behind school-dropout is poverty. The people don't have enough money to provide better education to their children. Most of the people join work after secondary examination to help their family. And in case of females, it is mostly seen that early marriage is the reason behind the sudden stoppage of their school education. The reason for school dropout is almost same in rest of the wards as well.

Economic conditions:-



The economic condition for the people of slum areas of ward number 13, 14 and 15 in Berhampore municipality has been analysed. In ward number 13, it is seen that half of the slum population is above poverty line and another half is below poverty line. As many people of this ward are in business, therefore their income is quite high but the ratio of APL and BPL are almost same here surprisingly. In case of ward number 14, 55% people are falling within the

BPL category and 45% people are within APL category. Most of the people in these wards are new migrants and most of them don't have any job in their hand and that's why the percentage of BPL persons is quite high in this area. And in case of ward number 15, the BPL people are 45% in proportion whereas APL people scores 55%. Here most of the people are old residents of Berhampore and engaged in prestigious and permanent economic domains. For this, the economic condition of this ward is pretty satisfactory.

The occupational structure of male slum dwellers and female slum dwellers has also been investigated. In terms of workers, it is found from the surveyed work that 25% people of the ward number 13, 35% of the ward number 14 and 20% of the ward number 15 are the main workers. The remaining or the left over workers are basically the marginal workers. The occupational type broadly reveals that a good number of the surveyed male persons are engaged in service sector. Maximum number of the male workers of these slums are Rickshaw pullers, van pullers etc. A very few people are main workers over there. The females are engaged either in selling vegetables in green-grocer's shops, or they are engaged in household works.

Males are more engaged in economic activities than females in these slums. In ward number 13, 87% workers are male and only 13% workers are females. In case of ward number 14, the male workers are 72% and female workers are 28%. In ward number 15, the percentage is 72 for male and 28 for the female. So it can be inferred that females of ward number 13 are less active in economic ventures than other wards. The social barrier is responsible for this. The females are not at all allowed to do work outside like males. The prejudices are predominately present in Muslim families. They are only allowed to work either in grocery shops or in household premises. Some old females work at tea stalls as marginal workers.

In Ward number 13, half of the people are engaged in secondary activities whereas another half is in tertiary sectors of economy. In ward number 14, 40% people are secondary workers and 60% people are tertiary workers and in case of ward number 15, the secondary workers are 20% whereas 80% people are involved in tertiary activities. Most of the slum dwellers are rickshaw puller or green-grocers.

From the analyses of the occupation pattern of the people in slum areas of Berhampore, it can be said that more than half of the working population are engaged in small scale and household industrial sectors in all the wards. The numbers of people, who are in business sectors, are also very low in proportion in these slums. As most of the people in the slums are not educated upto an optimum extent, therefore they can't get involved in a prestigious Govt. job. They are engaged in small scale or household industries or in any other small scale businesses.



Development of middle income housings

Job satisfaction level amongst the people has also been taken care of by the researcher. It has been followed that all over the slum, most of the people are dissatisfied with their present jobs. The picture is same in all the wards. As the income of the people is very low and with this they cannot live happily with their family, they prefer to do in such a working

sector would give them better economic returns.

Monthly family income of the families shows that 15% of the surveyed families of ward number 13 have monthly income less than Rs. 3,000 per month. 50% of the families have monthly income ranging between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 6,000 per month and 35% of the families have monthly income more than Rs. 6000 per month. 30% of the surveyed families of ward number 14 have monthly income more than Rs. 3000 per month and 60% families have income between 3,000/- and 6,000/-. In ward number 15, 50% family earns between 3,000/- and 6,000/- and 25% people earn more than 6,000/- monthly. In general, the average monthly family income is relatively good amongst the slum dwellers of the ward number 14. Few people are there in the slums who don't have any work in their hand and their income is nearly Rs. 2,500/- per month. Most of the peoples' income lies between Rs. 3,000/- and 6,000/- and they are engaged in small scale economic activities. A very few people are engaged in permanent jobs and their income is more than Rs. 6,000/month.

It is evident that in ward number 13, 70% peoples' expenditure is between Rs. 3,000/- and 6,000/- whereas 25% peoples' income is more than Rs. 5,000/month. Very few people are there whose monthly expenditure is less than Rs 3,000/-. In case of ward number 14, 15% houses do spend less than Rs 3,000/-, 50% houses spend Rs 3,000/- to 5,000/- and 35% people spend more than Rs. 5,000/month for fooding and lodging. In ward number 15, the percentage is 25 for less than 3000/- monthly income group. The number of persons who save money nearly Rs 500/- to 1,000/- per 6 months has been noticed in a good number in the surveyed wards. But a very few people who can save money more than 2,000/- per 6 months, have been found in the surveyed blocks. Most of the peoples' income is so low that they can save only a very meagre amount of money after all of their expenditures. Some microscopically minor portion of people with relatively better earnings; can save money more than 3000/- per 6 months.

Most of the people save money in their own custody. But few people save their money in Bank, Post Office and also in chit funds. In selected cases, savings is so small, that they cannot save even a single farthing.

Housing condition:-

The slums in the ward no. 13, 14 and 15 are moderately developed. The structures of the houses are mainly Semi-pucca in nature; as most of the people are belonging to the lower middle income class, therefore a very few people have pucca houses in all the slums.

Most of the houses are made up of brick. Some of the houses are made up of thatch and other types of building materials. Roof types of the houses vary from tin, tile to cement. The two-room houses are more in number in these slums. But 1 room and 3 room houses are also found in these slums and small families specially reside here. 80% of the surveyed slum houses of ward no. 13 have only one window for ventilation system. Maximum numbers of surveyed slum houses of ward no. 14 and 15 have also the ventilation facilities with only one window or two windows maximum. Only the fully pucca houses have ventilators along with window for luxuriant ventilation.

Civic Amenities:-



It is clear that most of the people get good quality water supply regularly as municipality supplies water here in a regular basis. There are many projects of municipality to supply good quality water in different parts of the town. But in case of ward no 14, the regular good quality water supply is not that much available. In this area, the water supply system of municipality has not yet been built up properly and scientifically as well. Most of

the People get proper sanitation facilities in rest of the wards. Almost in every locality, a community latrine is found and by taking only Rs. 500/-, municipality has made the sanitation system in every house of these slums. Scientific garbage disposal system is also available in these wards. Every day, municipality-worker comes and collects the garbage and sends them for recycling, composting, vermiculture etc. In ward no 15, 50% people get good sewerage system but in ward no.s 13 and 14, the percentage is 10% and 35% only. Municipality has also made many drains in slum areas. But this drain system is not made up beside each and every unmetalled road of the slums. All the people of ward number 13 have sources of authorised electricity and in ward numbers 14 and 15, the percentage is more than 90. In maximum portion of Berhampore, almost 95% to 100% electricity-coverage is found. Most of the people have legal electricity. All the people of these wards get good health care facilities also. All people of ward no. 15 get the opportunities of education and in ward 13 and 14; the coverage is near about 80%. Most of the people do get market in close proximity to their slums. All the people of these slum areas are satisfied with the activities of the police station; so far the question of safety and security is concerned.

Consumer Goods:-

Most of the people of slums of ward number 13, 14 and 15 have television, cable, mobile phone and two wheelers as well. They also have iron almira in their personal possession. But percentage of people having music system and tape recorder is very low. The lower middle class families are more in number in slums. So they have an average or below average quantities of goods or belongings in their custodies. The people, who are economically bit stable, have more number of personal belongings or goods.

In ward number 13, 65% people have mud made oven in their kitchens and 20% and 15% people use stove and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) in their kitchens. In case of ward number 14, 50% people have mud made oven in their kitchens whereas 24% and 26% people use stove and Liquid Petroleum Gas in their kitchens. And in ward number 15, it stands as 55%, 20% and 25% respectively.

Ration Shops:-

In ward number 13, 55% people have at least two ration shops in close proximity of their houses. And other people in other wards also have two to three ration shops in their nearby localities. In case of ward number 14, 60% people have two ration shops in their locality and they are quite close to each other. In ward number 15, 90% people have only one ration shop in their localities. Most of the people of these slums visit ration shop every week. But the people dwelling in rented houses don't have their names in list of the ration dealers.

Sources of potable drinking water:-

Municipal tap water and tube well are the principal sources of drinking water in the study wards. Tube well is more frequently used in ward no. 15 than in ward no. 13 and 14. As the number of tap is very few in ward number 15, the municipality has made here many tube wells. In ward number 15, it is seen that a very small portion of people purchase water for their good health. As good quality of water is not available all the time, they prefer purchasing water but their portion is only a very few.

Recent Picture of Sanitation:-

It is seen that 90% people of ward number 13 defecate in their own house-latrines and they have their own sanitary latrines. Only 10% goes to the public latrine. In ward numbers 14 and 15, the percentage of people having the facilities of defecation in their personalised latrines at housing premises is 75% and 25% respectively. People in both the wards to a significant number also go to the public latrines or community-toilets. Only a few houses are there where they don't have sanitary latrine in their own houses. They go to public latrines in that case. It has also been noticed that a considerable number of people in almost all the target wards, are still habituated in open-air defecation. In ward number 13, 90% people have septic tanks in their houses but 10% of people do not have the same even today. In ward number 14, the percentage of people who have septic tank facilities in their own houses, are found to be near about 75% and 70% people in ward number 15 have septic tank in their houses.

5. SUMMARY AND POLICY SUGGESTIONS

Major Findings from the work:-

From the thorough survey conducted in the study wards of Berhampore Municipality through a previously framed questionnaire, some facts have been revealed and those have already been discussed with all the minute details. Now some significant findings from the research work have been enlisted below.

- There is good number of tube-wells in selected localities but not all the slum areas of the municipality are endowed with this advantage and therefore they become bound to cover a long distance for collecting potable drinking water every day.
- Still now, there are some slum dwellings which don't have tap connection in their houses for regular use of water (needed for washing and cleaning purposes mainly).
- In most of the cases, it was found that the slum dwellers inhabiting in rented houses, don't find their names enlisted in the list of the ration shop and that's why they don't get ration from those outlets at subsidized rates.
- Though some of the slum dwellers use LPG as fuel for cooking but in majority of the slum houses, they use low cost ovens for regular cooking even today.

- In selected wards of Berhampore, the Municipal water supply is not at all up to the expectation limit and due to obstruction in the pipeline; the water comes in very small quantity over there.
- Due to extreme shortage of land and at the same time, for excessive burden of population, the slum housings are very small in size and at the same time, the slum-arena is very much congested. Hence their standard of living in some cases, is not at all up to the mark.
- The economic condition of the slum dwellers in most of the surveyed areas is very much under challenge and a very good number of people are still residing quite below the poverty line.
- Educational enlightenment is not that much widespread amongst the females anywhere of the slum-infested wards of Berhampore Municipality and this is a matter of serious concern in modern context. Work participation is there for the females but the scenario of women-empowerment is not at all prominent there.
- Though a mammoth percentage of people in the Municipality have septic tank in their houses, but still a considerable share of population do not have such facility and as a result of which they are compelled to use the community latrines which are not cleaned-up regularly.

Policy Suggestions

In order to get rid of the aforementioned problems, some recommendations have been put forth and these are as follows:-

- Septic tanks should be constructed immediately in those houses that are still devoid of this facility.
- Females of the slum housings should come in the forefront spontaneously, so far their issue of educational enlightenment is concerned and the Local Self Government should take strong initiatives to enhance the involvement of the females in universal literacy programme through proper campaigning.
- Formation of Some self help groups (SHGs) in more numbers is the need of hour in the Municipality for women empowerment and these may help a lot in the enhancement of family-wise cumulative monthly income of the extremely poor slum dwellers. If this effort becomes successful, then the standard of living of the slum-dwellers will be much more improved within a short stipulated time.
- Faulty or defective pipelines should be repaired by the Municipality for uninterrupted as well as free flow of water in each and every slum-housing.
- Tube-wells should be constructed in good numbers in those areas where people generally cover a long distance regularly for fetching unadulterated drinking water still today.

6. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

In conclusion, it can be said that slums of ward number 13, due to its location, is much more developed than the slums of ward number 14 and 15. The slum of ward number 13 is lying in

the inside arena and the slum of ward number 14 and 15 are lying in the outskirts of Berhampore Municipality. In the case of broader context of civic facilities and accessibilities, slums of ward number 14 and 13 are more privileged than the slums of ward 15.

The study reveals that the physical and socio economic conditions of the slums with respect to the selected parameters like percentage of educated persons, percentage of earning members per family, average family income, number of persons depending on a single sanitary latrine, number of persons depending on municipal tap etc are better in the slums of the core area than the slums of the outskirts of Berhampore Municipality. Therefore, constructive initiative should be taken from the end of the Local Self Government to create balanced development within this Municipality. If some non-governmental organisations also go hand in hand with the Urban Local Body regarding alleviation of the burning socio-economic problems (prevalent in the selected slums of Berhampore mainly), then it is expected that within a very few days, the socio-economic malaises will be eradicated upto a considerable extent and if this reform goes for a long time, then in Future, the socio-economic status of this Municipality will be much more improvised and glorified as well.

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