

ENCROACHMENT OF SLUMS CAUSED MASSIVE DEGRADATION OF URBAN FORESTS – AN OVERVIEW OF KHARAGPUR CITY, WEST BENGAL

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Abstract

The growth of slums in cities is deteriorating the urban forests and it creating environmental crisis in the form of spread of diseases, ill- health and have become a threat not only in the metropolitan or million cities but also in the developing class I cities like Kharagpur located in south–western part of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal. Kharagpur city is the fourth biggest city and the fifth most populated city of West Bengal with an all-out populace of 2,93,719 (2011) located in south-western part of Paschim Medinipur District, West Bengal. The study is based on Primary data collected from 5 slum wards of Kharagpur city. The objectives of the present study are to analyze the rapid growth of the Urban slums and its degraded impact upon the natural vegetation in the slum areas of Kharagpur city, West Bengal. Poverty is an inseparable part of slum dwellers. So, the slum population is backward socially and economically. Because of the industrial growth by multi-national companies the under deprived, distress, overcrowded population, migrants from the neighbouring states of Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa migrate to the Kharagpur city for job opportunities. Fringe areas of forested land are accumulated by congested settlement of urban population. Hence, better employment opportunities, expansion of social education have to be adopted for the slum improvement and bettering of well being.

Key notes: Natural Vegetation, Slums, Urbanization, Urban Landscape

INTRODUCTION

The development in the growth of urbanization has bought its wake a vital problem and have become a threat to the urban environment. Slums are the expressions of the ‘culture of poverty’ and deteriorating phenomena of squatter settlements. The employment, educational opportunities have attracted the surrounding rural population which in term create acute problem in residential congestions. Besides immigration from Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa also from Pakistan and Bangladesh have from time to time poured an excess amount of population into the city. The encroachment of the slum areas has a degrading impact upon the natural vegetation of Kharagpur city, West Bengal. The increasing overcrowding in the city has given rise to slums and have caused an urban threat in an around the city.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rudaliar (1961) studied the vegetation impact upon the slums of Madras city. Md. Minnazaffur (1963) conducted a survey of the Bengaluru slum areas which came into existence during the industrialization process due to the migration of the rural areas. Samira Khan (1992) studied the “Impact of Slums among the dense forest of Pench district, Madhya Pradesh”. Dr. Jyotsana Sharma

(1993) studied the “Impact of forest upon the level of Nutrition of the Muslim slum dwellers of Raipur City”. Dr. Z. T Khan (1996) studied the “Changes in the Socio- Economic Conditions of the Immigrants in Raipur city: A Case Study of Rehabilitation Camp Mana”. G.D. Suttles (1999) studied “The Social Order of the Slum of Chicago”. Manju Sharma (2013) studied the “Socio-Economic level of the Muslim slum dwellers of Kurukshetra City”. A Household Survey was conducted by Somenath Halder (2013) to “study the socio-economic level in English Bazar Town, Maldah District, West Bengal”. Mohd, Kaish (2014) studied the “Challenges of the Muslim slum dwellers related to socio- economic conditions of Aligarh city”. Harini Nagendra studies the nature and poverty and vegetations in the slums of Bengaluru city. Jayarami Reddy (2017) carried out a study of the “Socio- Economic status of the Slum dwellers in Hyderabad City”. Ramalingam (2018) give emphasis on “the socio- economic problems related to a poor level of income in the slums dwellers in Aurangabad”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the present study is to analyze the rate of encroachment of the slum areas among the natural dense forest of Kharagpur city, West Bengal. Attempt has been made to evaluate the slum development policies and programmes taken by the government for the welfare and redevelopment.

HYPOTHESES

The research hypothesis are as follows:

1. Rapid growth of population is directly related with the level of urbanization.
2. Encroachment of the slum areas is directly proportional with the rate of depletion in the natural dense forest in an around the Kharagpur city.

STUDY REGION

On the basis of area, the fourth largest city of West Bengal is Kharagpur and on the basis of population the fifth most populated city of West Bengal located at 22°17'30''N - 22°30'N latitudes and 87°15'E - 87°22'30''E longitudes, covering an area of about 127 square km located in south – western part of Paschim Medinipur district. The total population of Kharagpur municipality is 293,719 as per as census 2011. Kharagpur municipality is divided into a total 35 municipal wards.

SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Primary data-based study collected through interview, schedule from 5 slums of Kharagpur city. Purposive method of sample is chosen from the fringe areas. Keen observations were made to identify their cause of depletion related problems

Secondary data was collected from the Kharagpur Municipality Office, Agriculture Department & Meteorological Department Kolkata, Survey of India Kolkata, Geological Survey of India, Kolkata, D.M office of West Medinipur, Census Handbook, and District Statistical Handbook etc.

PROCESSING OF DATA:

The different types of statistical methods like percentage, “t” Test, “F” test, correlation been used. The information along with different data have been tabulated, proceed and analyzed using computers and various statistical methods. The data have been represented with the help of suitable maps and diagrams.

The Sample Slums

In view of these 5 numbers of slums selected purposely for comparative study. Dhobi ghat, Pal para, Turi Para, Gopali Basti, Salua Basti are selected from the fringe areas of Kharagpur city having dense vegetation. Medicinal plants, herbicides plantation are there along the forest cover areas.

Population of the Sample Slums

The sample size of surveyed area is 96. Total population of these sample is 1150 in which 618 are male and 532 are female.

DISCUSSION

On the basis of purposive sampling the total 5 slums been taken from the fringe areas named Dhobi ghat, Pal para, Turi Para, Gopali Basti, Salua Basti are selected on the basis of having dense vegetation. It has been found applying the formula of Product moment correlation coefficient showing a positive correlation of + 0.65 where the rate of population if been increased with an upliftment in the level of the urbanization. The positive growth in the encroachment of the population growth rate deplete the natural vegetation creating an adverse impact in the loss of bio diversity rate.

CONCLUSION

In the concluding part the local government, municipality, different types of schemes National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), Valmiki Ambedkar Malina Basti Awas Yozana (VAMBAY), Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP), Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY), Slum areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act taken by the government to eradicate this current problem and to shift these fringe areas settlement to an equably suited areas where there is no loss in the bio diversity. Growth of new slum areas should be prevented. Recreational facilities, Anganbadi, School should be built for the social welfare in the slum areas.

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