PREFACE

My subject theme is urbanization and field of study is North Bengal. So the title is “Urbanization of North Bengal in Colonial Period”. On the basis of this theme we highlighted the historiography. Urbanization is not a new one. In the world as well as in India urbanization had taken place and is an ongoing process.

If we look into the world urbanization, we will see that Kingsley Davis who pioneered the study of urban demography spoke of world urbanization. So many theorists are there who have studied urbanization. Basically we have studied civic institutions of urbanization, which have a long history. In 14th Century civic polity or civic Republic had established in Italian cities like Milan, Florence, Venis and Pisa.

The British colonial authority brought this tradition in the places of North Bengal and made civic institution there. Municipality was the main of these. Apart from this Union Board, Local Board etc. were there in North Bengal. All these are an experiment of Local Self Government.

The study indicates the colonial policy and economy was superimposed on a pre-existing pattern. For that reason Old Malda was becoming less important town and English Bazar had emerged with a new trade zeal of the colonial authority. Industrial development in Britain had opened a new type of colonialism. Colonial North Bengal had seen the foundation of plantation economy specially tea industry in hill areas like Darjeeling and of Dooars; silk industry of Malda and Jute industry of Dinajpur. Darjeeling as hill stations developed by the colonial masters as recreational tourist centres (sanatorium) as well as administrative centres.

We have studied the civic architecture namely the formation of district administration, District Boards, Local Boards and finally Municipalities throughout the North Bengal. The study also framed a broad civic necessities. The British frontiers expanded towards Himalayas. So from strategic, political and
economic point of view the colonial administration needed a good road and railway communication in North Bengal. Thereby improvement of roads, porters’ and dandywallas management, Public Health and Hygiene like latrines, drainage, water supply etc and also education, street light facilities was much more important for the municipal administration and other civic wings.

We have studied trade and commerce gave North Bengal very much important economical status in colonial period. We have mentioned different plantation products made north Bengal a prosperous one. But of all these the most important was the tea industry which was profitable to the British for international demand.

People coming from different districts of Bengal increased the population and therefore the increased urban population appeared. It is argued that although urban population increased gradually in North Bengal, they were mostly migratory people. Therefore, the increase population did not see the increase of collection of revenues through taxation. The migratory people were mostly the plantation labour and coolies.
Bengal received many immigrants from West Asia, Central Asia, the Horn of Africa and North India during the sultanate and Mughal periods. Many came as refugees due to the Mongol invasions and conquests. Others found Bengal's fertile land suitable for economic production and commerce. The first European colonial settlement in Bengal was the Portuguese settlement in Chittagong. The settlement was established after the Bengal Sultanate granted permission to embassies from Portuguese India for the creation of a trading post. The Portuguese settlers in Chittagong included bureaucrats, merchants, soldiers, sailors, missionaries, slave traders and pirates. Colonialism, British colonization, colonial architecture, British period in Cyprus and Bungalow Houses are interrogated in the literature survey part. The existence of Bungalow Houses in North Cyprus is determined and existing 6 houses in different places in North Cyprus have been visited and examined according to the requirements of prepared catalogue. King, in his study of the bungalow form, states that, these kinds of dwellings are frequently located in Bengal. However, in some cases it occurs in different way. He mentioned that, Whether the multiplication of the single, simple hut in the Bengal peasant household resulted from structural limitations of bamboo building materials or other cultural factors is not clear (King, 1984 in Kramer, 2006). Colonial Period (1757-1947) It is indeed unique that the East India Company which was in trading contact with Bengal for about a century since 1650 and which sought extraction of wealth through trade and commerce in conformity with the spirit of mercantilism, finally turned itself into rulers. It may also be noted that the colonial state that the company built in Bengal was, in fact, the first event of the kind in the age of overseas expansions. Elaborating on this otherwise unique event many scholars West Bengal with colonial legacy presents an interesting course of transformation of traditional rural society leading to urbanization between 1901 and 2001, towns multiplied in number and from 74 to 446, urban area increased from 1.030/0 to 4.50/0 and urban dwellers increased from 2.06 million to 18.7 million. This clearly entails to speed and scale of population pressure to urban growth and urbanization and that situation may be accelerating the natural phenomena of West Bengal in two ways. 7. Levels of Urbanization in West Bengal. Generally the term urbanisation is taken as the percentage of population living in urban centre or increased number of urban centre. Urban influences on the amount. and structure of agriculture in the North-Eastern United. States. Contrary to popular impressions, the pace of urbanization in contemporary developing countries is no more rapid than were the patterns of a century ago in the West (Preston, 1979) While it is true that most third world cities are growing very rapidly often at rates of two or three percent per annum the pace of population growth in rural areas has been almost. Initially drawn as cheap labour for the tin mines and rubber plantations of the colonial economy, many Chinese and Indian immigrants and their children subsequently entered the urban economy as petty merchants.