

REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL EXCURSION TO CHALSA-MAHABARI, WEST BENGAL BY THIRD YEAR GEOGRAPHY HONOURS STUDENTS

STUDY AREA: CHALSA-MAHABARI, WEST BENGAL

DURATION: 02/11/2016 to 09/11/2016

OBJECTIVES:

- To find out the relationship between physical and cultural landscape etched out of the interaction between man and environment.
- To understand the demographic profile, income and occupation, availability of basic amenities and the overall condition of living.

LOCATION

The study area, **Chalsa-Mahabari** (26° 53' N, 88° 47' E), is a Census Town located in C. D. Block Matiali of Jalpaiguri district in West Bengal. The nearest railway station is Mal Junction which is about 8 km away from the study area. This town is also connected with all major cities of West Bengal. NH – 34 connects the town with Kolkata, at a distance of 317 km. The settlement comprises of four habitations namely Chalsa, Mahabari, Upper Chalsa and Kurti Para.

FIELD WORK

Actual field work done by the students involved the following:

- i. Questionnaire survey was conducted on household level based on a detailed and structured questionnaire. Through the questionnaire different types of information was collected on population composition, level of education, occupation, income, house type and household amenities, agricultural practices, standard of living.
- ii. Collection of cadastral map from the Land Records section of the Block Office and preparation of a land use map by plot to plot land use survey.
- iii. Dumpy level survey along a portion of the mauza for preparing a longitudinal profile and noting the land use pattern along the profile.
- iv. A perception study of the surveyed households regarding living conditions.
- v. Taking photographs of the various aspects of the village

POST FIELD WORK

The data collected through field survey and from secondary sources were compiled and analyzed for preparing the field report. Various maps and diagrams have been prepared and a comprehensive report has been written to show the relationship between physical and socio-economic condition.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

Located in the Dooars region in the district of Jalpaiguri, the town of Chalsa-Mahabari, is an important junction connecting Kolkata and the important towns of North Bengal, Siliguri, New Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar. The town enjoys Tropical monsoon climate. Located amidst tea gardens and the forested tracts of North Bengal, the town enjoys a breath taking scenic beauty that is known to attract tourists from distance places. The local population encourages the development of tourism activities as it generates employment opportunities, contributes to a higher income and improves infrastructural facilities. The total population of Chalsa-Mahabari is 4973 persons according to the Census of India, 2011. Out of 4973 persons 2461 are male. The town comprises of Chalsa, Mahabari, Upper Chalsa and Kurti Para. While Chalsa has urban characteristics because of its location along the highway, Mahabari is predominantly agricultural while Kurti Para houses the population of lower income groups in slum like condition. The age-sex structure resembles that of developed countries with low birth rate. The sex ratio is in favour of females and is above 1000 in Chasla, Mahabari and Kurti Para. Literacy rate is high with male literacy rate above 90%. The workforce participation rate is 32.83%. Tertiary sector is the most important, tourism and trade being the two most important source of livelihood in this town. 97.83 percent workers are employed in the tertiary sector in Mahabari, 97.22 percent in Chalsa, 92.55 percent in Kurti Para are employed in tertiary sector. The level of income is low with most household earning an annual income of less than 2 lakh rupees. The annual per capita income is less than 75,000 rupees for nearly 90 percent of the total population. The type of house structure that predominates in Chalsa-Mahabari is of semi pucca or mixed structure. 54.84 percent of the houses in Chalsa, 59.84 percent in Mahabari, 61.11 percent in Upper Chalsa and 61.29 in Kurti para are semi pucca in structure. Most of the houses are with personal toilet and electricity. The average family size varied between 4 to 8 persons. Tap is the most important source of drinking water in all the habitations except Mahabari and LPG is the main source of fuel. The condition of living is good and most people are highly satisfied with the services and facilities available here.

List of Students and accompanying staff members who participated in the Field Study

Sl. No.	Roll No.	Name of the Students	Age	Sex
1	1401	Gopa Bharati	19	F
2	1402	Disha Gayen	19	F
3	1403	Sushmita Sarkar	20	F
4	1404	Rajita Das	19	F
5	1405	Sanchita Mondal	20	F
6	1406	Moumita Sarkar	20	F
7	1407	Salma Khatun	20	F
8	1408	Suchandra Saha	19	F
9	1409	Saheli das	20	F
10	1410	Tanima Banerjee	19	F
11	1411	Shatavisa Modak	19	F
12	1413	Trisha Banerjee	19	F
13	1414	Kanaklata Mondal	20	F
14	1416	Ambika Halder	20	F
15	1417	Kakali Mondal	20	F
16	1418	Rumki Sarkar	19	F
17	1419	Roma Ghosh	19	F
18	1420	Archita Dey	19	F
19	1421	Snigdha Saha	20	F
20	1422	Munmun Ghosh	20	F
21	1423	Amrita Dutta	19	F
22	1425	Kaushiki Biswas	20	F
23	1426	Anindita Naskar	19	F
24	1427	Debangana Bhattacharya	19	F
25	1428	Sanchayita Pramanik	20	F
26	1430	Sudipta Sardar	19	F
27	1432	Ahana Roy	20	F
28	1433	Anushree Mishra	19	F
29	1435	Lalita Mahato	22	F
30	1436	Ankita Mondal	22	F
31	1438	Shreya Samadder	22	F
	Sl. No.	Name of the Staff	Age	Sex
	1	Dr. Bhaswati Ray	42	F
	2	Dr. Sriparna Bose	56	F
	3	Mr. Ganesh Jay Singh	39	M
	4	Mr. Chandan Das	31	M



Group photo of excursion to Chalsa-Mahabari

REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL EXCURSION TO CHAPATALI MAUZA NEAR ALIPURDUAR TOWN, WEST BENGAL BY THIRD YEAR GEOGRAPHY HONOURS STUDENTS

STUDY AREA: CHAPATALI MAUZA, WEST BENGAL

DURATION: 09/02/2017 to 15/02/2017

OBJECTIVE:

To gain firsthand experience of how fieldwork for a micro level geographical study is conducted and to prepare a report on the basis of primary and secondary data collected.

LOCATION

The study area, **Chapatali mauza** (26° 31' N, 89° 29' E), is a village situated near Alipurduar town in the northern part of West Bengal. The village is located in the Alipurduar Police station of the newly created Alipurduar District (formerly part of Jalpaiguri District) on the Duars Plain along the bank of Kaljani River, at an altitude of less than 50 m above mean sea level. The village covers an area of 543.53 hectares and has a total population of 3649 as per 2011 census.

FIELD WORK

Actual field work done by the students involved the following:

- i. Observations of landform and physical characteristics of the region.
- ii. Collection of cadastral map from the Land Records section of the Block Office and preparation of a land use map by plot to plot land use survey.
- iii. Dumpy level survey along a portion of the mauza for preparing a longitudinal profile and noting the land use pattern along the profile.
- iv. Collection of primary data on various demographic and socio-economic aspects through questionnaire survey of households of the selected mauza.
- v. A perception study of the surveyed households regarding living conditions.
- vi. Taking photographs of the various aspects of the village

POST FIELD WORK

Post field work involved compilation of the final report on the basis of various data and information collected from the field as well as further reference work to supplement the field notes. The report prepared presents a profile of the physical and cultural landscape of the village, investigates the relationship between the different physical and cultural elements as well as highlights the quality of life enjoyed by the residents through analysis of the various facilities enjoyed by them and finally their perceptions regarding general living conditions in the village.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

The report is prepared on the basis of the field visit and the findings are summarized below:

Chapatali mauza is a typical rural settlement of the North Bengal plains situated near the dense forests enjoying a tropical monsoon climate with abundant rain.

Analysis of demographic trends shows that population is growing steadily and in the recent decades the sex ratio is also improving. The age sex structure of population shows that the proportion of children below 10 years is comparatively low. This trend is also reflected in the prevalence of nuclear families consisting of 4 to 5 members.

Literacy levels are fairly high though there is still a considerable gender gap. Presence of primary schools in the village as well as nearness to Alipurduar town has ensured that majority of the inhabitants have education up to the school level. Occupational pattern shows that most of the workers are engaged in agricultural activities and less than one fourth are working in the secondary and tertiary sectors. Though agriculture is the main economic activity of the village most of the villagers are marginal farmers owning landholdings less than 0.05 hectares in size. The cropping pattern is again a reflection of the climatic and soil conditions of the area. The intensive nature of the farming is also reflected in the diversity of crops cultivated during the year.

Thus villagers live in harmony with their physical environment adapting their requirements to the natural resources available. However increasing pressure of population, availability of other means of livelihood, improving communications are gradually changing their lifestyles as well as preferences. Income levels and standard of living computed on the basis of material possessions show considerable disparity. Majority of the households show a low standard of living and the proportion of households with moderate or high standard of living is relatively low.

The results of perception survey show a moderate level of satisfaction regarding different aspects except for drainage and waste disposal which is felt to be a major problem by the respondents. Thus further investigation into these problems and remedial measures are urgently required.

List of Students and accompanying Staffs who participated in the Field Study

Sl. No.	Roll No.	Name of the Students	Age	Sex
1	1401	Koushani Chakraborty	20	F
2	1402	Ayushi Roy Mondal	20	F
3	1403	Projukta Das	19	F
4	1404	Tama Saha	19	F
5	1405	Monideepa Gayen	19	F
6	1406	Arpita karmakar	20	F
7	1408	Sreyashi Sarkar	20	F
8	1409	Damini das	19	F
9	1410	Payel Mondal	19	F
10	1411	Riya Raptan	20	F
11	1412	Paramita Purkait	19	F
12	1413	Kiran Mondal	20	F
13	1414	Mobassarrah parveen	19	F
14	1415	Poulami Karmakar	19	F
15	1416	Peu Kundu	20	F
16	1417	Megha Paul	20	F
17	1418	Maumita Gharami	19	F
18	1419	Misti das	19	F
19	1420	Atrayee Mukherjee	20	F
20	1421	Dolon Dalapati	19	F
21	1422	Anwasha Dutta	19	F
22	1423	Debleena Mondal	20	F
23	1424	Titli Dasgupta	19	F
24	1425	Afshina Qamar	20	F
26	1427	Tania singh	20	F
27	1428	Bunti Sarkar	19	F
28	1429	Binita Das	19	F
	Sl. No.	Name of the Staff	Age	Sex
	1	Dr. Hasibur R. Molla	30	F
	2	Dr. Sriparna Bose	57	F
	3	Mr. Ganesh Jay Singh	40	M
	4	Mr. Chandan Das	32	M



Group photo of the excursion to Chapatali, West Bengal



Students conducting house hold survey