

SHIFTING OF BUILT UP ENVIRONMENT: A PARADIGM FOR HISTORICAL TOWN CHANDERNAGORE, HOOGHLY, WESTBENGAL

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is an attempt to identify the way in which the housing of the Chandernagore town is changing over the period of time. Chandernagore town was a French colony from 17th century to mid-20th century. But after independence that classical Dalan houses and joint family culture had been lost and after the new economy policy of 1990s the traditional housing had been replaced by new set of built up environment which consisted of flat and apartment making. But after the introduction of 21st century, the flat and apartment culture has become a significant and powerful content of urbanism of Chandernagore city.

KEYWORDS: Built up environment, Colony, Hooghly

INTRODUCTION

In Social science, the term built up environment, or built world, refers to the human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging in scale from buildings to parks. It has been defined as the human-made space in which people live, work, and recreate on a day-to-day basis. The built environment encompasses places and spaces created or modified by people including buildings, parks, and transportation systems. In recent years, public health research has expanded the definition of built environment to include healthy access, food health, community gardens, mental walk ability and bike ability. Currently, built environments are typically used to describe the interdisciplinary field that addresses the design, construction, management, and use of these man-made surroundings as an interrelated whole as well as their relationship to human activities over time (rather than a particular element in isolation or at a single moment in time). The field is generally not regarded as a traditional profession or academic discipline in its own right, instead drawing upon areas such as economics, law, public health, public policy, management, geography, design, engineering, technology, and environmental sustainability. Within the field of public health, built environments are referred to as building or Renovating areas in an effort to improve the community's well-being through construction of aesthetically, health improved, and environmentally improved landscapes and living structures. Public health In public health, built environment refers to physical environments that are designed with health and wellness. In landscape architecture, the built environment is understood to mean a human-made landscape, as distinguished from the natural environment; for example, a city park is a built environment.

Chandernagar town of Hooghly district one of fastest growing town whose overall housing pattern has changed significantly in last 3-4 years. The Built up environment in particularly the nature of housing has shifted from personal own house to flat and apartment based residence.

OBJECTIVES:

The present study is all about detecting the nature of housing in Chandernagar town in Hooghly district of West Bengal, India. The objectives are:

- I) To detect the deduction of individual residential houses to flats and apartments.
- II) To identify the areas of the study area where the major flats and housing apartments are constructed.
- III) To find out the amount of people who came from other towns to reside here.

METHODOLOGY:

In order to conduct this research both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The quantitative data has been collected through questionnaire survey. Questionnaire, containing both open and close ended questions, was surveyed following simple random sampling. A questionnaire, containing series of affective questions, had been set out to gather information from the persons who are living in flats instead of individual houses. People, Govt. officials or representatives and all other concerned persons or authorities including previous researchers, academicians, and experts in relation to the matter of the undergoing study. News paper reports, literatures journals were studied vigorously before finalizing the design of the questionnaire. Quantitative data were collected by keeping a diary and taking essential notes on it during the field survey.

Some interviews and group discussions with local representatives, local leaders and aged persons were also conducted in the study complete the study. Secondary information used in the paper was collected from different national and international research papers, journals, articles, newspapers, Govt. published data and report including internet sources. 150 families are taken in order to complete this research work and door to door survey had been done to find those families origin or basic residence.

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA:

The present study is conducted in CMC (Chandernagar Municipal Corporation) which is urban body 37 km south from Kolkata Metropolitan city via railway services. The northern boundary of it marked by the Hooghly-Chuchura Municipality (HMC), the eastern boundary of it is occupied by Hooghly river, the west boundary of study area is occupied by some gram panchayats and the southern limit of it is marked by Bhadreswar Municipality (BM). The latitude and longitudinal extension of the study area is from 22°46'N to 22°53'N and 88°17'E to 88°23'E. This ULB has 33 wards in total. (Figure 1)

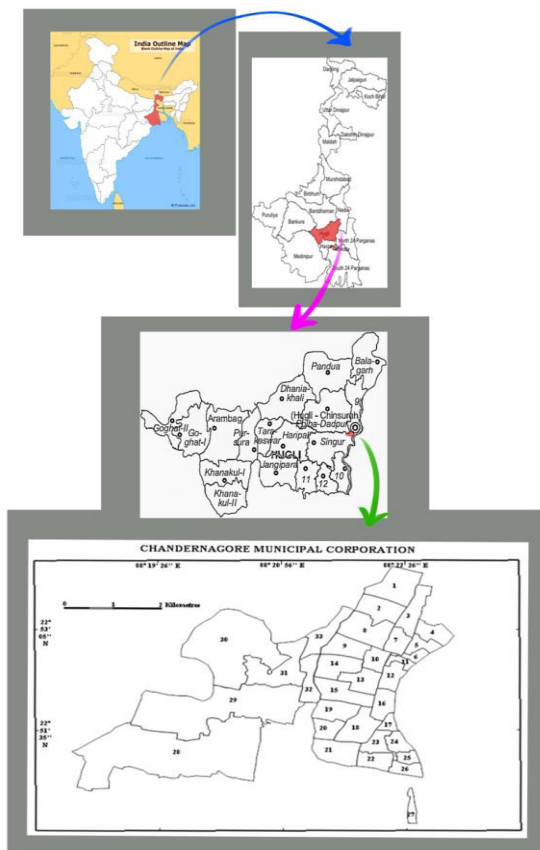


Figure:1 Location map of the Study area

CHANGING NATURE OF HOUSING IN CHANDERNAGORE:

Chandernagar is a town which has a great historical background in terms of every aspect. It was the French colony during 18th to mid 20th century. French established their colony in Chandernagore in 1673. Joseph François Duplex was the first governor of this town. At his time only 2000 brick houses were erected in the town and a considerable maritime trade was carried on. Being a one of the most commercial centre for the French in Bengal as well as East India the town had started to evolve in terms of its housing numbers, both Indian and European persons. In between 1756- 1900 this French colony had started to lose its commercial significance due to collision with English East Indian company. By the year 1900 the town has found former commercial significance and it had started to evolve little more than a Suburb of Calcutta with a population of 25000(1901). This European town was noted for its clean wide through fares, with many residents along the river bank. In 2nd Feb, 1951 it had got the independence from French rule and became a part of India.

After the independence of Chandernagore the housing was basically individually owned and it had been continued until in 2000s the whole scenario of this particular urban local body had changed abruptly. The SOL (Standard Of Living) of the urban residents had changed. People used to accustom with elite class flat living instead of individual own houses. Being a suburb of the metro city Kolkata , the elite class servicemen had started to settle down in Chandernagore especially in flats and big residential apartments.

A huge influx of people from the Peripheral region of Kolkata, from Burdwan had started to buy the flats in Chandernagore to reside for recreational purposes and spent retire life as well as several local peoples also have been shifting from their own individual houses to flats and apartments within this city. Considering this particular fact , the big housing promoters of this town and other surrounding areas have started to point out and select the old individually owned houses and gave a huge amount of money to the land owners and built up multiple housing complexes.

RESULT DISCUSSION OF SURVEYED DATA ON URBAN HOUSING:

As per the surveyed data is concerned a massive shift in housing pattern is observed after the 2013 where plenty of areas which are typically old monumental houses and heritage houses had been transformed into multi-stored buildings and housing apartments. A rapid increase is observed in the rate of housing transformation. The rate is shown in the given data table and diagram. A massive increase is found in percentage of Flats and Apartments in respect to total houses where in 2013

the percentage is about 15% that has been enhanced up to 31% in the year 2017.

Table:1 Percentage of Flats and Apartments in respect to total residential houses

Year	Percentage of Flats and Apartments in respect to total houses
2013	15
2014	18
2015	25
2016	27
2017	31

Source: Field survey

150 families had been surveyed based on a questionnaire of some open and close ended questions to find out the origin of those families who reside in those flats of Chandernagore. About 23% of the family are the local residents. Above all this 65% people came from Kolkata and its surroundings to get rid of high price tags of housing apartments and to get lower price rates of housing in Chandernagore town. Rest of the 12% came from surrounding cities like Burdwan, Chinsurah, Asansol, Bandel, Shrirampur.

It can be stated that Chandernagore has started to evolve from French colony which was based on the classical style of big Dalan houses with joint family in concentration to a truly modern day flat and apartment oriented city largely influenced by the Kolkata. A large scale migration from Kolkata has been observed for a good healthy housing environment in Chandernagore.

Table:2 Origin of the families

Origin of the families	Percentage of the families
Kolkata	65
Local Resident	23
Others	12

Source: Field survey

Figure 2

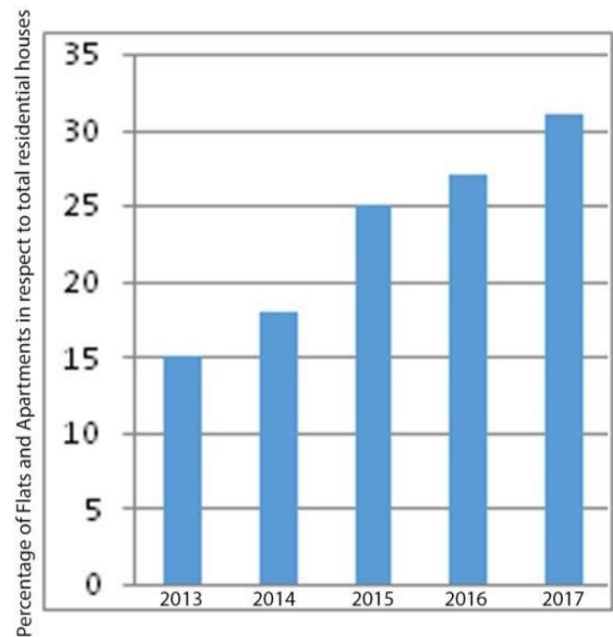


Figure 2: Percentage of Flats and Apartment

Figure 3

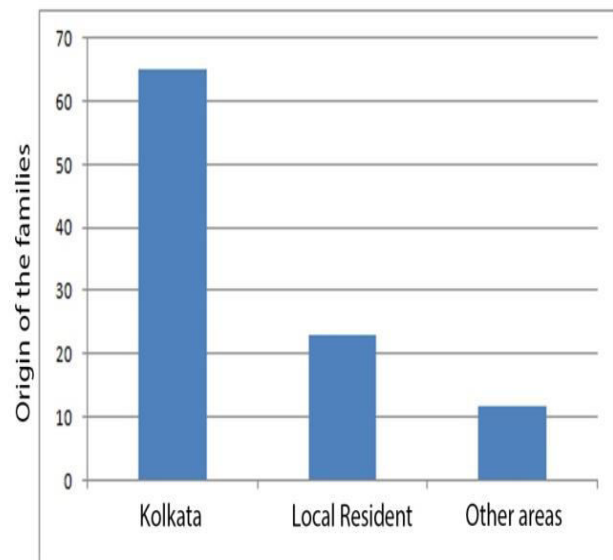


Figure 3: Origin of the families

CONCLUSION:

Finally it can be evaluated that Being a suburban region of Metropolitan city (Kolkata) ,Chandernagore is becoming big flat and housing apartment based residential town. The traditional nature of individual houses of Chandernagore has changed by the influence of Kolkata's flat

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based culture. Within short period of 5years a massive residential flats and apartment culture had begun to evolve in Suburban town like Chandernagore. In near future there will be very few percentage of individual houses in this city and majority of the houses will become flats and apartments.

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