



## **Perspective of Tourism Industry and Geographical Environment in Kalimpong , West Bengal**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Darjeeling Himalaya comprising of the three hill sub-divisions (Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong) is one of the least economically developed regions of West Bengal. All the countries are developing at different rates and from differing historical levels of achievement. Rapid growth of population has become the most critical development constraint Darjeeling & Kalimpong Himalaya. While growing populations have constantly multiplied land pressure, tremendous planning difficulties have been posed by unanticipated population increases, which have limited the per capita benefits of regional development. The variations in climate, soil, drainage patterns, cultural landscape etc. provide differential socio-economic conditions for human resource development in Darjeeling Himalaya. Its economy is largely based on tea, agriculture and tourism, where the former has played a significant role in the development of the region since the beginning.



**Key Words :** Tourism , Geographical Environment, Regional Development

### **BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

The development of an economy of Kalimpong is the consequence of certain economic and technological processes, but development itself brings about a chain of changes in the socio-economic structure of a society. The nature, magnitude and direction of these changes depend upon the nature and pattern of development itself. It is true that one has to make room for the growing population and in this pursuit he has to utilize every piece of land available. But the precautions that have to be adopted should not be neglected.

### **IMPOTANCE OF PROJECT**

All the countries are developing at different rates and from differing historical levels of achievement. Such development with a view to meeting the socio-economic needs implies that man must use nature in the process of development.



The study aims first, at understanding the complex relationship between human beings, social and economic structure of the region's economy in the light of understanding varied activities of the people in Kalimpong. Secondly, assessing and identifying the processes of regional development, in

terms of population growth and its impact on socio-economic development, and finally to working out a spatial developmental strategy for integrated development of the Darjeeling Himalaya with Kalimpong.

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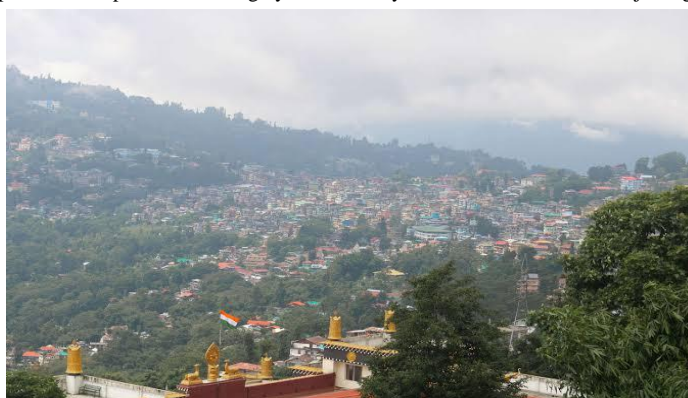
## BACKGROUND OF STUDY

When Darjeeling was acquired by the British as a potential summer resort, it was practically uninhabited. The process of development it into a „hillstation“ commenced around 1835(Darjeeling& Kalimpong ) Over the next 15 years, the town had grown sufficiently for the authorities to consider it reasonable to set up a municipality to look after the provision of civic amenities. Darjeeling Municipality was thus set up in 1850 when population of the town was around 10 thousand. Population in the township now exceeds more than one lakh and its pressures already exceed urban carryingcapacity.

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## TOURISM AND HUMAN IMPACT

The increased population associated with tourism also produces a growing volume of garbage and sewage, the disposal of which is fast becoming an area of major concern. Tourism also brings increased transportation activity and traffic, creating the new problem of environmental pollution. Tourism in Hill Areas of Darjeeling District offers the greatest scope for development. It is roughly estimated by the Tourist Bureau of Darjeeling that approximately at present, two lakhs tourists from different parts of the world as well as the country visit Darjeeling every year and the Tourist Business occupies a prominent place from the view point of scenic beauty. In spite of so many adverse effects of tourism in this tiny hill tract, there is no denying the fact that the economy still rests on its occupancy. The tourism potential, if properly planned can become a source of further income and regional development. Further expansions of tourist trade are immense if conceived on long-term perspective. Tiger Hill is one of the major attraction of Darjeeling and the Government of India has released 4 lakhs for its proper management. Gangamaya Park was opened to the public in the month of November 1999, more than 1.20 lakhs tourists visited till the end of May, 2000.



The park with lush green forest, well-planned garden and beautiful boating complex has become a must for every visitor to Darjeeling. Kaffer and Lava are two ecofriendly destinations in Kalimpong sub-division; both the places are very popular. The large floating population associated with tourism brings a tremendous load to bear on water-resources, atmosphere, vegetation and human settlements. For water supply, the Darjeeling town depends almost entirely on the Senchal lakes which lack capacity to provide even the volumetric water requirements of the local population. Thus the influx of seasonal tourists raises the problem to crisis dimensions.

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## TOURISM AND AGRICULTURE – ECONOMY

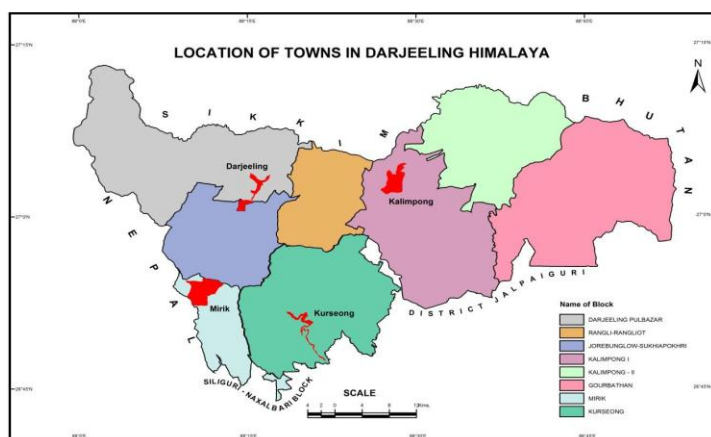
Despite improvement of agriculture in Hill sub-divisions most of the farmers are still languishing in poverty. The seasonal nature of job coupled with low wages is the main problems. Adoption of modern machines hardly reduces the scope of unemployment in such areas. The region is gradually growing more and more dependent on other areas for food supply. To increase the economic condition of the farmer a total approach or multidisciplinary co-ordinated approach in the Animal Husbandry, Small Scale Industries, Forestry and Sericulture should be taken.

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## TOURISM AND COMMERCIAL GROWTH

Today, tea is most widely consumed beverage. But at one time it was a very expensive proposition. In those early days, tea was kept safely in a box called Tea Caddy. On the few occasions when tea was served to important guest, the host/hostess unlocked the caddy, spooned out the tea, made and poured it, for it was like gold dust. But sadly the tea industry in this Himalayan region has been under threat for sometime now. The unethical use of the term, Darjeeling Tea, in the world markets and the low production from the very old tea bushes are some of the major problems. It came to notice that many a tea exporters indulged in packing the brand of substandard tea or mix with Darjeeling tea, thus making the adverse impact on indigenous Darjeeling Tea. Thus, the glory of Darjeeling tea is in the process of slowly fading away. If timely action is not taken, the glory of famous Darjeeling tea will soon vanish in world's market.





For this, there must be sincere effort by tea manufacturers and the State and Central Governments. The use of fertilizer and harmful chemical must stop forthwith and the method of using bio-organic fertilizer must be practiced in order to bring back the fertility of soil and thereby yielding indigenous quality tea. In the past, many birds in and around Mirik Tea gardens were found dead after consuming the poisonous chemical and pesticides which were used in the gardens. It is a great concern for the degrading ecological balance in the region. The contain of harmful chemical was also objected by the tea buyers of foreign countries at large in the past and considering all these facts, there is need for opting the method of organic fertilizer in the tea gardens of Darjeeling and must preserve its world market and improve economy in the hill.

### KALIMPONG AND LAVA-LOLEGAON-RISHYOP SECTOR AND TOURISM BASED INFORMATION

KALIMPONG is one of the four subdivisions of Darjeeling district and enriched with many attractions for the tourists. If you are a forest lover this sector is one of those which you should not miss any cost. Famous NEORA VALLY RESERVEFORREST is situated in KALIMPONG sub division. Pristine beauty, charming ambience and inviting location - these features set KALIMPONG aside from the other hill stations in the region. The tantalizing and enticing climate of the hill station is an added bonus for tourists visiting the place. Conquered from Sikkim by Bhutan in 1706, its name supposedly comes from 'kaleon' and 'pong' meaning 'minister's bastion or fort' since it did have the presence of a Bhutanesse governor for the period it remained under their rule. However, the Lepcha who were there long before are said to have called it 'kalibong' meaning 'the ridge where we play'. Today KALIMPONG has been developed as a popular tourist spot forming a triangle with its most illustrious neighbours, Darjeeling and Gangtok. KALIMPONG is located on an overlooking bridge of River Teesta, and is fast becoming a popular tourist destination of the region. Being close to the well known tourist town of Darjeeling gives it an advantage. The town is quite close to the Indo-China border. The Indian Army's 27 Mountain Division is located on the outskirts of the KALIMPONG town. KALIMPONG offers a breathtaking view of the snowy peaks of the Himalayan range that lies not far beyond it. The lush green valleys are a soothing sight. There are two things that strike one on reaching KALIMPONG.



These are its bustling bazaars that stand out in sharp contrast to the quiet atmosphere heightened by the several places of worship all around. The gushing rivers in the vicinity and bursts of green forests only add to the scenic beauty of the region. Another major attraction in KALIMPONG is the various nurseries abloom with exotic flowers and rare varieties of plants. KALIMPONG is known for its educational institutions many of which were



established during the British colonial period. KALIMPONG is also known for its cultural diversity. While ethnic Nepalis dominate the populace, the place also serves as home to indigenous ethnic groups like Newars, Lepchas, Bhutia, Sherpas, Limbus, Rais, Magars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Yolmos, Bhujels, Sunuwar, Sarkis, Damais and Kamis. Communication in KALIMPONG would not be a problem, as most of the people herein are multi-lingual, being fluent in Nepali, Lepcha, Limbu, Tamang, Kirat, Hindi, English and Bengali. DEALO HILL is one of the numerous hill destinations that warrant a visit. A picnic spot with a tourist lodge is run by the Department of Tourism. It offers an early morning view of the Kanchenjunga massif. This is 120 feet high ropeway located over the famous rivers Teesta and Relli. To enjoy the thrilling experience of this adventure ride tourists flock in large number round the year. Tourists can have spectacular view of the river under the ropeway and the lush green surrounding. The view is so fascinating that it will remain unforgettable experience for any travelers.

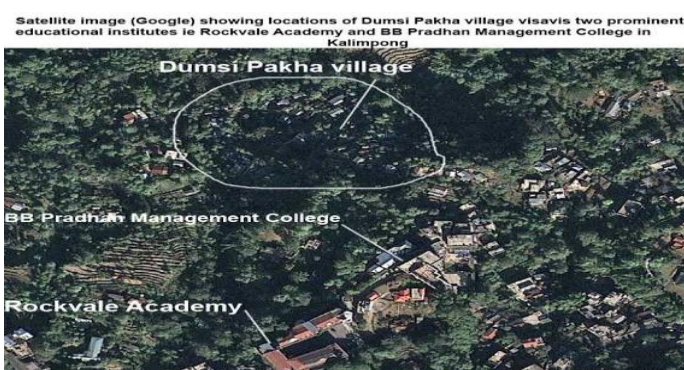
LAVA is situated about 3500 meters above sea level, among dense



forests of Birch, Juniper and Pine trees is a small secluded hamlet. Lava is one of the few destinations which still have to be discovered by the rest of the world. Lava is small village that is situated in the KALIMPONG district of the state of WeST Bengal. The place is well renowned for its beauty and it attracts nature enthusiasts and adventure buffs. The town is situated at an altitude and this makes it a perfect place for many outdoor activities such as trekking, hiking and climbing. There are several trekking routes in the nearby forests and these are worth exploring. The people of the village still follow a traditional lifestyle and they are friendly and welcoming. LAVA is just 32 kms from KALIMPONG, is at an altitude of 7755 ft. and remains hidden in the mists and clouds almost throughout the year. It stands against the backdrop of the Neora Valley National Park. Attractions approached from this unique landmark of bio-diversity are the emerald green valleys, lakes, waterfalls, the snow-capped mountain peaks and the unforgettable, ever smiling helpful villagefolks. The Tiffin Dara appears enchanting which commands a magnificent Panoramic view of Khangchenjunga. There are several picnic spots in the region and these are ideal for spending the day in the outdoors. You can also visit the old Buddhist monastery that is located amongst the hills of Lava. The Neora National Park can be reached from Lava and permits are available here. The Lava Monastery was built in 1987 on a hill. The monastery is a colourful building surrounded by dense forests and enveloped in mist thoughtout the year.



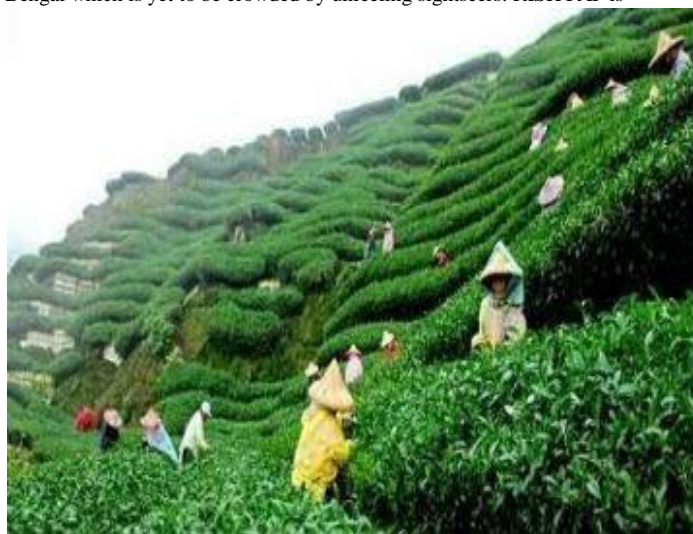
Lava is the gateway to the Neora National Park which is hidden in the clouds almost throughout the year at a height of 2350 meters. This Park is at the intersection of Sikkim, West Bengal and Bhutan. 6 kms south of Lava Bazaar is an organic tea garden which is popular for its panoramic sunrise view from Ghanti Dara. Monastery at Lava is also known as Kagyu Thekchen Ling Monastery and Ratnarishi Bihar Buddhist Gumpa. It is one of the prime sightseeing spot of Lava. Located on a hill, overlooking the snow-capped mountain range to the north, the Monastery is surrounded by dense forests and remains enveloped in mists for most of the year. RISHYAP is a Himalayan hamlet in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. About 2591 m above sea-level, it's a nice quaint village away from city crowds, with picturesque views of snow-capped mountains. The sun plays vermilion through the day. At night the big sky seems to come closer. Beneath the sky the twinkling lights of Gangtok & Pedong are similar to the twinkling stars above. Tourists are attracted by the natural beauty of Neora Valley National Park & TRIFINDARA. Both are enjoyed through trekking route which is a deep silent forest of pine, birch, fir & orchids with some soothing path following the chirps.



Undoubtedly, RISHYAP is one of the most beautiful hill-resorts in West Bengal which is yet to be crowded by unfeeling sightseers. RISHYAP is developed recently in 1998, is rapidly becoming a popular tourist point.

Situated over the Neora valley at an altitude of 2,360 m, this hill station at the foot of Tiffin Dara comprises a Lepcha hamlet and a few resorts. RISHYAP is a small village on the hill top can be reached from Lava on trekking ( only 4 kms) or Four Wheels ( 12 kms). But the bumpy road can make uncomfortable. Its main attraction is overwhelming 300 degrees view of nowcapped Himalayas including Kanchenjunga.

The meaning of the word Rishyap is 'mountain peak and tree' and it is located between the junctions of Sikkim, West Bengal and Bhutan. Rishyap's unique feature is that there is only empty space between this tiny hamlet and the KanchenDZONGa range standing on the horizon. The town is spread across a narrow ridge with valleys falling away on either side. RISHYAP is also enriched with variety of birds and dance forest enroot to TRIFINDARA.



RISHYAP is covered with DHUPI, pine and rhododendron trees. 'Ri' stands for Mountain Peak & some say it 'lofty' & 'shop' means Old aged trees. At RISHYAP the night sky is bright and clear. It may seem that the stars have come closer. Far below, one can view the lights twinkling in the nearby towns and villages.

## TOURISM AND ANALYTICAL PROBLEMS – PROSPECTS

The key problems originated with the expansion process of Siliguri Municipal Corporation are Environmental problem and Political turmoil in the Darjeeling district. There are some kinds of concern regarding environmental issues in Siliguri Municipal Corporation. Those are as follows:

1. The river Mahananda in Siliguri carry raw sewage created by the people .
2. In many cases dumpsites are located indiscriminately and not in the status of proper management.
3. Domestic waste water contains organic and inorganic matter which is in suspension, colloidal and soluble states in varying proportion. Various constituents of wastewater are potentially harmful to the environment or to public health in the Corporation.
4. The river water and sub-surface water are vulnerable to be polluted which is used by the consumer and thereby creating intestinal disease.
5. The data pertaining SJDA regarding land use clearly state that share of Agricultural land, Water bodies, vacant land, are with the expansion of town are going to be shortened. The said concern may lead to the threatening status of biodiversity and ecological components in near future and ultimately would become a triggering impetus of environmental and biodiversity degradation.
6. Gorkhaland issue and other regional issues lead to the political violence in the Corporation area.



## TOURISM AND COMMUNICATIONAL SCENARIO

Traffic and transportation problems have become most acute and the greatest concern for every traveler. The most aggravating traffic and transport problems of Siliguri are highlighted as follows:

- \* The major roads are connected in the heart of the town only where the commercial activities are restricted.
- \* Narrow roads are incapable of both ways heavy traffic and eventually frequent traffic congestion occur.
- \* Since the opening up of the new bridge over river Teesta near Jalpaiguri town, the entire traffic to and from North-Eastern India follow this shorter route along Siliguri Jalpaiguri State Highway avoiding the circuitous Sevoke Road route lead to overcrowded HillCart Road- to develop the network system in hilly region.

## TOURISM AND WATER SUPPLY SCENARIO

It is really astonishing that there is no proper organized system of water supply. Recently some steps have been taken by S.M.C. to supply the drinking water. There is cry for purified drinking water and P.H.E with its limited water supply system serves a little percentage of the local need. Only 10% of the areas are provided with protected water supply. Again, the supply of water having proper treatment is not equitably distributed all over the town. Since available of surface water is less, Underground water is required to be supplied. Due to presence of iron in the water, the underground water is not as clear as one likes it to be.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION



In the point of Kalimpong , Increased population is not necessarily a deterrent to economic growth. Land which remained fallow was used for cultivation. Land which remained waste was used for tea plantation. Further, the whole place was buzzing with activity. Better economic opportunity, changed way of life and increased availability of food must have been important in the increased resistance of the human host. The spread of medical facilities, improved hospital opportunities and the use of new drugs made a general improvement of economic productivity. The process of development could thus bring about several changes through inter-related factors. Therefore, the socio-economic development is a very complex process and there is no simple input-output law governing total development, nor is it an inevitable biological process in which there is a built in growth principle.

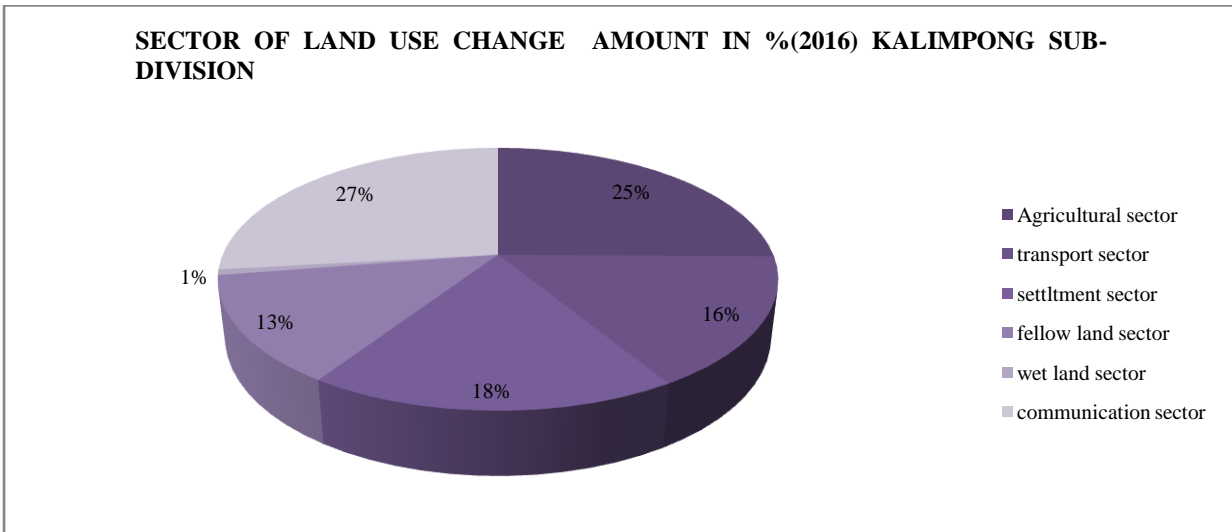
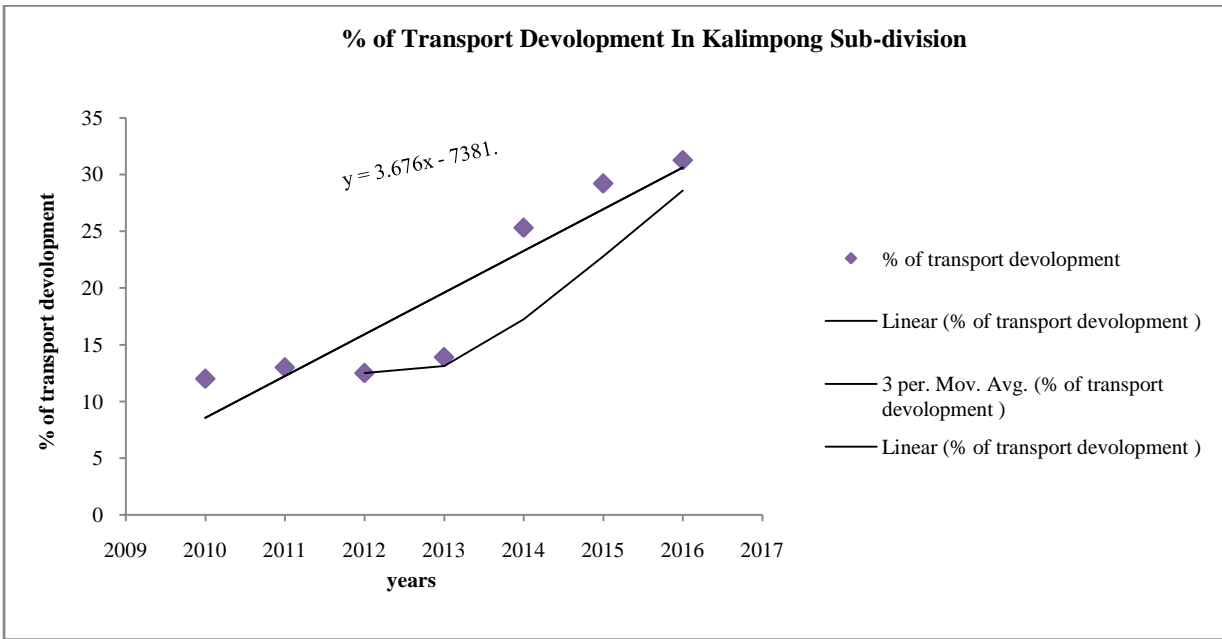


Table- 1

Every ten years	The concerned population
1931	6067
1941	10487
1951	32480
1961	65471
1971	97484
1981	153825
1991	338361

2001	472374
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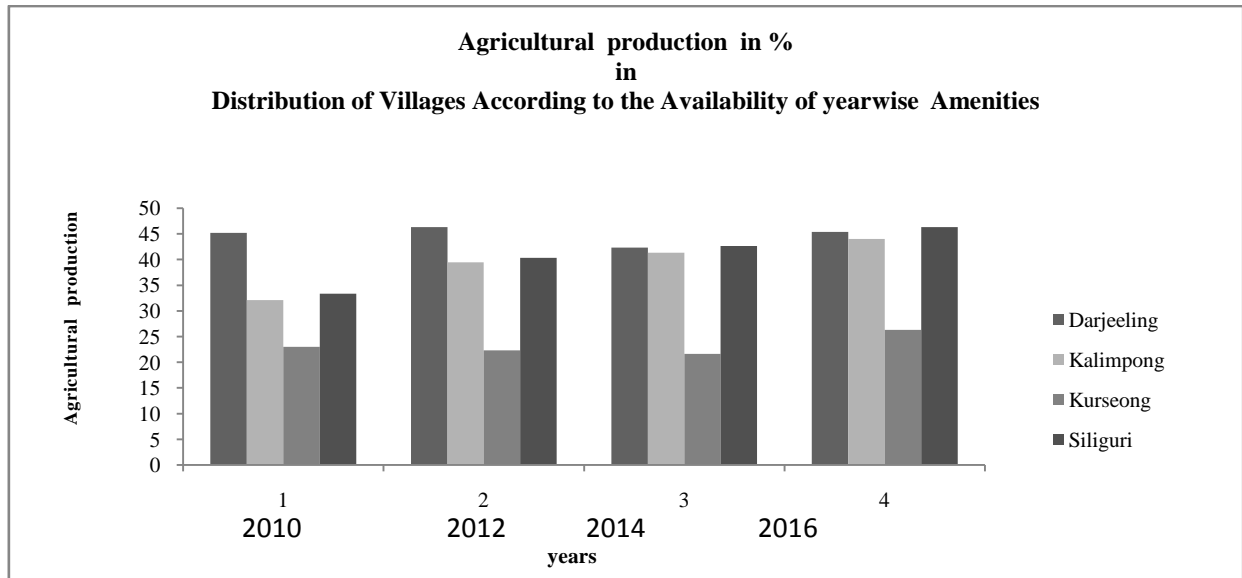


Table- 2

Ward no.	Area in acres	Area in Km2	Total population	Ward wise 2001 density of population	1991 density of population
1	570.5	2.3	17843	31.27	36.74
2	371.5	1.5	11436	30.78	32.64
3	251.25	1.02	11753	46.78	59.17
4	280.75	1.13	20028	71.34	97.79
5	301.05	1.22	15326	30.9	77.96
6	50.95	0.2	9023	177.09	114.06
7	81	0.32	9889	122.08	131.4
8	49.5	0.2	7843	158.45	215.22
9	70.5	0.28	7306	103.63	65.62
10	191	0.77	4720	24.71	52.33
11	41.05	0.16	2933	71.45	88.93
12	58.95	0.24	3772	63.99	72.64
13	69.25	0.28	5070	73.21	30.79
14	80.75	0.32	6407	79.34	102.12
15	84.05	0.34	8103	96.4	131.37



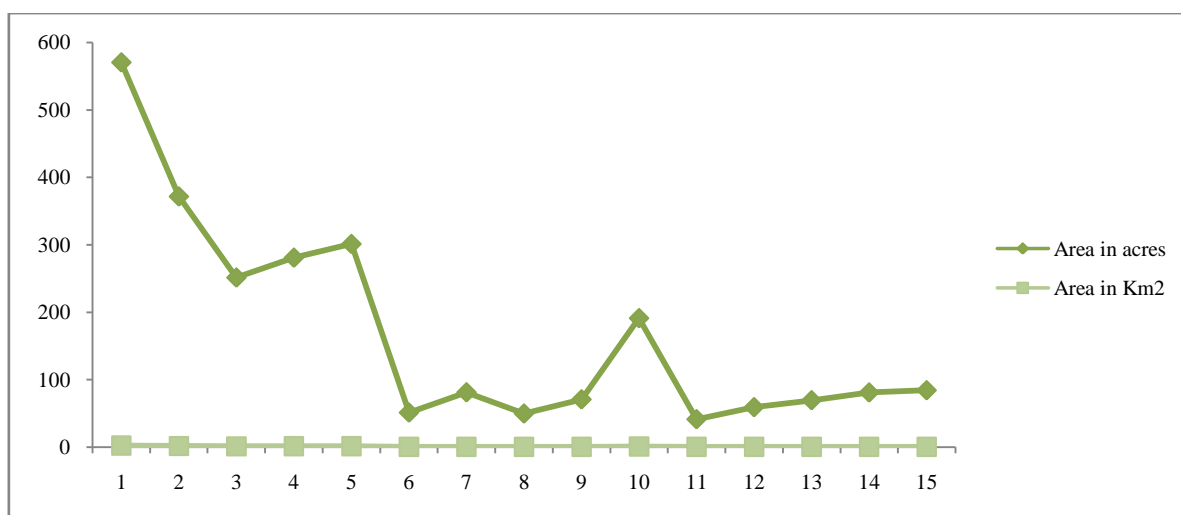


Table- 3

Year	% of Transport Development
2010	12
2011	13
2012	12.5
2013	13.9
2014	25.3
2015	29.2
2016	31.25

Sector of Landuse Change	Amount In %(2016)
Agricultural sector	36.8
transport sector	23.5
settlement sector	26.3
fellow land sector	19.3
wet land sector	0.98
communication sector	39.2

## SOLUTION AND RECOMMENDATION

### (a) To create Employment at Rural Level:

The chief responsible factor for urbanization is limited employment in villages. So, we should try to create more and more employment in rural areas itself. We should develop agricultural industries, rural industries, forests and rural skills in rural areas so as to provide employment as well as deteriorate the migration towards the cities.

### (b) The Development at Agricultural Level:



The main source of income and employment of villagers is based on farming. But unfortunately, even after 59 years of Economic Planning, we are unable to provide the irrigation facility to the useful land for farming. Where the farming is based only on Monsoon, in such areas, it has become difficult to live in such draughty condition. So the more development should be made in agriculture in rural areas .

**(c) The Development of Businesses based on Agriculture:**

With the development in agriculture in villages, we should start some business based activities on agriculture like animal husbandry, poultry, sowing trees so as to provide employment to the villagers in addition to agriculture. It will increase their income and that will change their attitude of migrating towards cities.

**(d) Use of Natural Resources of Villages:**

If we can use the natural resources of villages like land, water, jungles, human wealth, animals etc...in sufficient way, the chances for employment can be increased and that will decrease urbanization.



## CONCLUSION OF PROJECT

Impact of external forces on the fragile socio-economic structure of the Darjeeling Himalaya has been viewed from both negative and positive aspects. There have been remarkable changes in the socio-economic setup of Darjeeling Himalaya, basically due to external forces ever since the evolution of the region. These changes can be noticed and are reflected in the demography, economy and cultural attitudes. Development of the region's economy was based on tourism, forest resources, tea plantations, and agriculture. Further, tea industry is the only industry in hill areas but during the post independence period the growth is sluggish due to various reasons like transfer of ownership, mismanagement and low capital investment. Stagnation of tea industries is the result of bad management of the tea gardens by the planters. They used the gardens as a source of profit and that for too quick profit. As a result many tea



gardens become either sick or uneconomic, as soon as tea gardens become economically weak, the weakness of the urban centers in Darjeeling hill areas become apparent. In Darjeeling Himalaya, where sizeable lands are pre-committed to forests and plantations, the scope for rural absorption of migrant populations is limited. Consequently, high urban pressure is felt, both by existing municipal towns as well as by new and fast-urbanizing settlement nodes. Continuance of such migration trends would lead to the multiplication of the urban poor and slums, and rising levels of urban unemployment. Demographic planning for the region must include both population limitation and migration control, through a combination of socioeconomic incentives and legal controls.

## STRATEGY BASED SUGGESTIONS

The foregoing analysis has focused in detail the man's impact on socio-economic development of Kalimpong . The developmental strategy for this hill region, as it emerges from the study, the following suggestions

- Agro-based industries should also be established in the villages having potentialities.
- Needs of improving the productivity of local human resources
- Availability of local human resources should be brought so that no displacement of working population occurs.

- In view of the displacement naturally caused by the development of new economic activities, provisions would have to be made to maintain a balance between local resources and new opportunities.
- The potential for each settlement to develop market linkages with other neighbouring settlements would need to be carefully assessed and encouraged through the provision of proper infrastructural initiatives .
- Quick transportation and mobilization of agricultural products are essential, ensuring good return to the cultivators.
- Attention should be paid on the promotion of tourist interests as this would ultimately lead to the overall economic of the region.



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