INTRODUCTION

Migration is a complex, dynamic and historical process in which persons moves from one place of residence to another. The distance covered may vary from a few kilometers to several thousand kilometers. Similarly, the duration of stay involved in the new residence may also vary from a few hours to several years. A large number of movements are causal such as commuting to and from the place of work, shopping, visiting, and traveling for business or for pleasure etc. Such movements do not involve a permanent change of residence and therefore have to be distinguished from migration which involves a change of place of original (birth) residence and taking up the life to a new place. Out of different kinds of migration, the movement of people within an administrative boundary (e.g. state or national boundary) is the dominant form of migration all over the world which we call internal migration with respect to a state or a nation respectively.

Migration is one of the vitally important attributes of population. It is responsible for population redistribution, nature and degree of demographic mobility and exerts a conditioning influence upon all demographic phenomena and processes. Population may be increased in size by in-migration and may also be reduce by out-migration in any area at any point of time. It affects not only the size of population but also the composition of population. These in- and out-migration are selective to people with particular demographic, social or economic characteristics e.g. young age group people move out of the origin to city place for education or labour work. It can also change ratio of rural/urban population as well as age and sex structure of the people of a region. Sometimes it also adversely affects both the area of their origin and destination. Thus, the movement of population is important component for population distribution and determines the growth of population of any area.

Internal migration is one of the important paradigms of the changing socio-economic conditions at the national level and also a sign of disparities in overall conditions between the origin and destination of migration, especially in developing countries. Internal migration redistributes people in terms of resources, work participation, industrial attachment, job opportunities, housing facilities etc which in turn minimizes disequilibrium in population distribution among different areas as well as helps maintain demographic, socio-economic, cultural and political equilibrium among diverse communities in a country.
Migration may also provide the information about the carrying capacity of the areas which accommodate the incoming people by offering them better economic opportunities. The out-migration from an area indicates poor resources and negligible job opportunities in that particular area. In-migration areas attract more migrants by the pull factors such as job opportunities, stable socio-economic and cultural condition etc whereas the areas with unemployment, unstable socio-economic and cultural condition push the migrants out. Migration may be considered as a symptom of basic social changes. Further the magnitude of migration often reflects the expansion of economic potentialities and diversification of economic activities in a region. Migration is a cause as well as effect of socio-economic transformation. It affects not only the area of provenance and destination but also the people involved in the process of migration.

Migration consists of a variety of movements i.e. rural-rural (R-R), rural-urban (R-U), urban-rural (U-R) and urban-urban (U-U) that can be aggregated as an evolutionary and development-fostering process operating in time and space. When migrants are more skilled than those living in the regions of destination, it may break the cake of custom enveloping migrants and makes the latter a dynamic force. Migration also carries human capital to regions of destination (giving rise to migrant remittances), entails investment in the employment of migrants, permits acquisition of new skills, and accentuates economic cycles.

Migrants at the place of their arrival cause some environmental, social and political chaos which lead to overall deterioration of quality of life. Heavy migration creates urban unemployment, scanty housing, inadequate water and electricity supply, poor sanitation, shortage of transport and other services. It also affects the place of origin by drawing away their more dynamic and possibly educated people. Thus, a study of migration problem is of greater importance not only to geographers but also of great importance and interest to demographers, population geographers, human geographers, anthropologist, economist, sociologist, political scientist, legal departments, policy makers, planners, public administrators and social psychologists.

Demographers consider migration as one of the significant factors affecting the structure, distribution and growth of population in a given region. Geographers with their concern for spatially expressed processes are obviously attracted to the
study of relocation of people. Economists are interested to study the migration because it is related to business cycle, supply of skilled and unskilled workers, growth of industries and occupational employment status of the migrants. Planners and policy makers keep eye on migration studies because it is associated with socio-economic development of an area. Town planners are concerned with rural-urban migration as a factor generating several urban problems such as overcrowding, slum-dwelling etc. Sociologists and social psychologists study the migration because they are interested in studying the social and psychological problems associated with it. Data on age, sex, mother tongue, education, occupation of the migrants are useful to sociologists.

Analysis of migration pattern is very important to understand the changes taking place in the people’s movement within the region. Migration is the most volatile component of population growth and the most sensitive to economic, political and cultural factors. The gradual development of economy of certain places and the requirement of specific skills in different kinds of industries and services along with changing policies of selective welcoming of a particular genre of human have resulted in emergence of new patterns of migration. As a facet of population growth and development, assessing the patterns helps to understand the dynamics of the socio-economic condition of the origin and destinations. Proper understanding of the patterns of migration would help in the estimation of future population redistribution. The reliability and dependability of these estimates depend much on the consideration of all the temporal factors of birth, death and internal migration on which population grows in its finest precision. Elaborate theories of migration have been formulated on the subject; policy interventions are designed to reduce or take care of the effects of migration. The trends of migration would be valuable to existing schemes and also to formulate new programmes to prevent rural-urban migration by creating economic opportunities close to their place of residence. It would also provide an empirical basis for better urban planning. I hope this doctoral thesis would be useful in some way to the planners, policy makers, academicians and researchers.

Internal migration has greater potential for poverty reduction, meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and contributing to economic growth in developing countries. This is because of four things. First, internal migration streams from a broader base where smaller sums of money are evenly distributed to specific areas and poor families through internal remittances. Second, it is likely that internal
migration will continue to increase at a faster rate for all sections of population. Third, it involves poorer people from poorer regions and has a strong role to play in achieving the MDGs. Finally, it is an important driver of growth in many sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, construction, coastal economies and services. This study of economic migrants is very interesting because it covers the study of spatial variation and gender discrimination in terms of economic opportunities. This is a general theme that for economic reasons male migration dominates over female migration.

Migration has always been an important and contentious issue in India. In the light of present population and migration scenario, there is an urgent need to evaluate and address the trend and pattern of migration in India in general and the state like West Bengal in particular. In the course of the study following question are to be addressed.

- What is the emerging trend of internal migration in West Bengal?
- What is the pattern of internal migration in West Bengal?
- What are the emerging reasons for migration?
- What are the differences among migrants in West Bengal?
- Is internal migration influence socio-economic transformation in West Bengal?

The major objectives of this doctoral work are as follows:

- To find out the trends of internal migration and migration stream i.e., rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-rural, and urban-urban in West Bengal by three distance categories i.e. intra-district, inter-district and inter-state level from 1971-2001.
- To understand the pattern of internal migration and migration streams in West Bengal in respect of intra-district, inter-district and inter-state for two different time periods i.e., 1991 and 2001.
- To examine the migrants by age, sex, education, marital status and occupation.
- To find out the reasons of internal migration in West Bengal.
- To explain the internal migration and socio-economic transformation in West Bengal.
Intra-state as well as inter-state migration flow to West Bengal (an eastern state of India) is an old and important phenomenon from earlier to present day period. West Bengal has been selected as an area for detailed study because it is second most densely populated state in India (census, 2011) and third most mobile population states (census, 2001) based on place of last residence. Census 2001 records 21 million internal migrants in total amounting 26.91 per cent of the total population of the state. Internal migration involves 14 million intra-district migrations, accounted for 18.12 per cent where inter-district and inter-state migration account for 5.68 per cent and 3.11 per cent respectively of the total population of the state.

This study is based on the secondary source of migration data the last one available to the author, which has been collected from migration D-series table of Census of India Publication. Other socio-economic data of West Bengal has been collected from the government official reports like Statistical Hand Book, Statistical Abstract and Economic Review of West Bengal.

The present thesis entitled ‘Trend and Pattern of Internal Migration and Socio-Economic Transformation in West Bengal’, has been organized into nine chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. First chapter elaborates the basic concepts of internal migration, determinants and socio-economic implications. Second chapter highlights literature review and methodology. A detailed geographical account of the study area has been discussed in third chapter. Fourth chapter illustrates the trends of internal migration by distance, characteristics of internal migrants and the comparison of NSS 55th and 64th rounds report with census of India publication. Fifth chapter describes the regional pattern of internal migration. Sixth chapter illustrates regional pattern of internal migration streams. Seventh chapter highlights regional pattern of out and net migration and also inter-state in and out migration. Reasons of internal migration have been examined in the eighth chapter. Ninth chapter discusses the linkage between internal migration and socio-economic transformation in West Bengal. Finally conclusion has been drawn.