PROBLEMS
The problems of urbanisation varies widely between different regions and at the same time within a region it varies between the individual centres. The problems of urbanisation is quite different in this newly born small state from the other parts of our country. Actually the problems of urban development is very complicated and it is more complicated in the Himalayan region where the entire human habitation is largely controlled by the natural environment. The unstable nature of terrain not only gives rise to a series of problems in the physical development of urban settlements but at the same time it complicates the situation in many ways.

The major problems of urbanisation in Sikkim may be taken up for discussion in the following order:

Growth and Distribution of the Towns
The uneven distribution and unbalanced growth of these small towns is the key factor for any problem related to urbanisation in this Himalayan region. It has already been mentioned that Gangtok alone accommodates about 72 per cent of the total urban population and the remaining 28 per cent are distributed among the 7 tiny towns. In considering the settlement size of the state, the size of Gangtok is exceptionally large. Gangtok has witnessed a three-fold increase of population during the last decades (1971-81).
This staggering growth not only has decreased the land-man ratio but also puts pressure on existing urban amenities. Besides Gangtok, some of the small towns also have witnessed a high rate of growth during the last decade, as for example Jorethang (414 per cent), Namchi (214 per cent), Mangan (136 per cent) and Singtham (125 per cent). The rapid growth puts pressure on land, particularly in the valley site towns like Jorethang and Singtham where favourable land for construction is totally absent in and around the urban settlement.

The spatial distribution of the urban centres is mostly guided by the topography of the region. It is interesting to note here that the administrative towns are located in the higher northern part and the non-administrative towns, mainly based on trade and commerce, are located along the river valleys of the lower southern margin of the state. Thus, the function of the centre selected such ridge-valley sites from where they can extend their services towards their rural surroundings. Under this function oriented location of the centre, the unidirectional flow system (north-south) and increasing freight charges towards north offer a very typical rural-urban interaction pattern where a smaller order centre may not be functionally dependent on the higher order centre of this state. At the same time, a good number of people remain highly dependent on the centres of the neighbouring state (Siliguri and Kalimpong of West Bengal).

Landuse

Unplanned nature of growth is one of the common features in the urban landscape of our country and this picture is not uncommon in Sikkim although the size of the town is very small. But in the reg-
17. Long view of Rangpo

18. Changing Land use (Gangtok)
ionai context they are large enough and such concentration of pop­
ulation at a small place puts great pressure on land. All the se­
ttlements, whatever may be the size, sustain on land. Thus, the land
or the site over which the settlement spreads, plays a vital role
for any construction over such unstable surface. The development of
town or city creates a new landscape which reflects certain chara­
cteristics of pre-existing landscape. But the problem arises when
the processes of physical development progresses without consider­
ing or just ignoring the landform character over which the town
develops. The large rate of growth, both in size and area, within a
short period encourages land degradational processes by destroying
the protective forest cover and construction over slope for the
accommodation of growing population and functional institutions.
The undulating nature of the terrain together with heavy and con­
tinuous rain encourage different types of land degradational pro­
cesses like erosion, mass wasting etc. Erosion by running water and
water assisted mass wasting are very common in and around the to­
1wss and it cannot be stopped by just expensive engineering measures.
The processes of land degradation (erosion, mass wasting etc.) and
their allied problems in land use varies among the towns of diffe­
rent localities. However, the problems of highland towns are dif­
ferent from that of the towns located along the river valley, at the
meeting point of the two rivers.

In the valley site towns, as mentioned earlier, two
sides are bounded by the rivers while the other two sides rise ab­s­

19. Land erosion for violation of civic rules (Gangtok)

20. Land erosion for violation of civic rules (Gangtok)
ruptly or gently from the flat river terraces over which the town is spread out. In these town river bank erosion, land slides and water-assisted mass wasting processes on the higher ground are active. Besides, there are towns located on the higher ground (Cliff and Ridge) where the availability of flat continuous surface is uncommon. In each case the older part of the town, mainly occupied by shops and shop-cum-residential houses, are located on the flat part of the sloping surface. In course of time the town extended beyond it to either the upper or lower slopes where favourable land is available. The direction of expansion is strongly guided by the topography where the towns located over the cliff (Gyalshing and Mangan) extends towards higher sloping surface as the other sides suddenly end by the deep gorge. In these towns the problems of land slide/slip over the hanging surface is very common.

Any construction over the unstable sloping surface leads to various forms of mass wasting and at the same time the pattern of infiltration totally changes over such surface which increase the shear stress so much that water-assisted flow occurs. Besides the construction of roads and buildings, the drainage line consisting of the žhora and the open drains mainly following the roads encourage land degradational processes where percolation of water through these channels leads to various forms of water-assisted mass wasting over the sloping surface. The shortage of flat surface and the higher cost of land improvement leads to vertical rise of buildings which further put pressure over the slope. In many cases the tall buildings cross the stipulated height proposed by the civic authority. As in cliff towns, the land degradational
processes are very active in the ridge top-towns (Namchi and Gangtok) where the urban area spread out vertically over the sloping surface. The problem is very acute in Gangtok where density of construction, both roads and buildings, is very high over the higher slopes. On the contrary, the gently sloping ridge top offers much stable ground for construction in Namchi. In several cases the construction over the up-slopes creates problem on its lower slopes through the deposition of silt washed from the up-slopes. In fact, the spread of urban establishments changes the geomorphic character of the land and initiates a series of land use problems some of them appearing very quickly while some others very slowly but in a much bigger way.

It has already been mentioned that the smaller size of the towns has not led to the formation of morphological zones in the urban areas except to a certain degree in Gangtok. In Gangtok imperfect morphological zones have started to appear very recently though large compact zones are totally absent due to sudden changes of slope. Thus, it is very difficult to propose any traditional land use plan within the framework of existing morphological pattern.

Urban Amenities and Administration

The towns are not merely an aggregate of buildings but also an aggregate of population and such a large concentration at a small place invites a series of problems in their way of life. The problems arise in residence, transport, medical, educational, recreational and above all public utility services like water, sanitation and drainage. The social and public institutions like, medical, educational, recreational etc. are not uniformly distributed among the towns. The location of such institutions varies accord-
ing to the size and modality of the centre. The higher order institutions are mainly concentrated in the administrative towns (District headquarters). The higher concentration of such institutions in a few centres creates the problems of availability for the scattered rural population with poor transport facilities. The capital town is well equipped with medical facilities and other social and public institutions. But the other towns are rather poor in this respect in comparison to Gangtok and a good section of the population of this region depends heavily on the neighbouring state (West Bengal) for this purpose.

The problems of shopping facilities has not yet appeared in the small town though the specialised shops are almost absent in them. In Gangtok, the picture is quite different where the local shops for different residential localities have not yet appeared in true sense and people have to depend on the main market, Gangtok bazar, for most of their daily consuming goods. In considering the population size and areal extension over the undulating surface the demand of such neighbouring centre is very much logical.

Generally, majority of the urban problems are related to over population of the centres as the rate of population growth is higher than the growth of housing, transport and civic amenities like water, sanitation, etc. Here again, the problem is very serious in Gangtok though the rest of the towns are yet very small in size to feel the effect. However, irrespective of size, the shortage of residential houses is a common problem in most of these faster growing towns. In Gangtok, the demand of accommodation is not only for the faster growing population but is also for the administrative offices and other institutes in this newly emerged state cap-

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Increasing density of residential houses together with unplanned construction over the slope, destroy the ground stability and invite a series of environmental problems. The shortage of favourable land for residential houses is very acute. This together with the higher cost of land improvement as compared with that in the plains and the soaring prices of the construction material raise the net cost of building construction. In many cases, to reduce the cost the builder ignores the cost-oriented engineering techniques and proper building plan particularly suited for such ecological background. The allotment of government land for private residence has totally stopped since 1983. Thus, the demand of private land (constitute 34.2 per cent of the total land in 1977/78 in Gangtok) is very high and totally dependent on the whims of the owners. Under such circumstances the house rent is very high as a result of which the density per residential room too very high. In 1984, 39 per cent of the families were having only one living room (Table - 76). There is no Rent Control Board in Sikkim and the fixing rent is totally at the mercy of the house-owner without considering the proper living facilities like size of the room, water connection, electricity, sanitation system etc.

Sanitation and drainage create a series of environmental problems including pollution. There is no problem of stagnation of water in these hilly towns as the sufficient slope is quite adequate to drain out the surface water. The volume of household waste materials, including water, is directly related to the size of population. In Gangtok, the open drains, mainly running along the roads, are connected with swift flowing jhoras (rivulets). On several occasions particularly after the heavy rains, the narrow channel of these jhoras gets blocked by the waste materials, stopping the flow.
for a short period, the stored water percolates through the weak surface and at the same time the pressure of the accumulated water faster the process of erosion along the two sides of the gorge. In the other towns such problems are not so active due to their location and size but the problem of sanitation is present everywhere. A good number of urban households of this state do not have their own latrines and they use either public latrines or go elsewhere. The number of public latrines is very small in all towns and particularly in Gangtok, the capital and the main tourist centre of this state.

The rivers and jhoras are the sources of water in the urban areas of Sikkim. The perennial jhoras, mainly the lower order channels of a river system, are the main sources for the potable water supply system. During the recent years, these sources are having a gradual reduction in their volume of water or are just drying up due to deforestation in the source area, mainly at higher elevations. The problem is very serious in Namchi where the existing sources are unable to meet the present demand. Gangtok faces similar problems occasionally now-a-days. In Gangtok, only 26.4 per cent of the households depend on public water taps and the rest on perennial jhoras(1984). The general reduction in the volume of the jhoras and the increasing rate of urban growth put tremendous pressure on the existing supply system. At the same time, the water-pipe network system faces some serious problems in this high land topography where the entire system ultimately comes to highly dependent on nature. The problem like the collapse of the reservoirs, sub-reservoir or the dislocation of the pipe-network due to mass wasting and landslide, particularly after heavy rainfall, is very common. On the other hand, illegal water tapping in some locali-
tier create another type of problem. The contamination of drinking water is the another serious problem in these hilly towns. At present, the drinking water is not properly treated. Moreover, many perennial sources get gradually contaminated due to the spread of settlements and the removal of vegetal cover at the source region. In many cases the lower part of these perennial channels form the major sources of water for household purposes.

The management of the local affairs of any urban settlement and to promote and provide for the civic amenities essential for the communities is the basic function and responsibility of the local government like, municipality, corporation etc. It has already been mentioned that at present there is no such local institution in the urban areas of Sikkim. The Local Self Government and the Housing Department look after Gangtok, while the Departments like the Public Works, Education, Health etc. jointly look after the other towns. Thus the local problems in relation to civic amenities are neglected due to the absence of any local supervision. The cost of construction and maintenance works is very high and regular maintenance of roads and drainage is necessary in such a dissected topography. Any small damage of roads, drainage or building may create a host of other problems in such a ecological setting. The maintenance of roads etc is the responsibility of the several government departments and generally in the absence of any proper coordination between them it takes very long to initiate the process. Over and above this, the frequent violation of construction rules is a common practice due to the absence any proper vigilance on the part of the local authorities.
PROSPECTS

Development under Different Plans

In Sikkim, the planned economic development was initiated in 1954 when a seven year plan (1954-62) was introduced with the help of Planning Commission, Government of India. This was followed by three successive five year plans (1961-66, 1966-71 and 1971-1976) while in May 1975, Sikkim joined Indian Union as one of its states. The last three plans—the 5th, the 6th and the 7th—have been formulated more comprehensively in considering its status as a new state together with its strategic location and physical background.

During the pre-merger plan period (1st--4th Plan) the schemes with direct impact on urban development were very limited. At that time emphasis was given on the construction of latrines, drainage and carpeting of the surface in various bazaars including the towns. All these schemes were allotted under the head of 'Market Centre' outlay. Besides this specific outlay, emphasis was given on education, medical service, water supply, roads and residential quarters for the employees under the general outlay of the plan as there were no separate allotments for the urban areas.

During the post-merger plan period, bulk of these outlays were provided for the different schemes of Gangtok in considering its size and status. A team of Indian experts visited Gangtok at the end of 1973 to prepare a project report for Gangtok Planning Area. At the

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2 Source: Planning and Development Department, Fourth Five Year Plan 1976-80. The report of the project has been published. (Malhotra, HU. Development Planning in Gangtok: A Study in Urban Problems. New Delhi, Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1977, p 87-110)
end of the 4th plan period, some recommendations of that team have been implemented.

The fifth plan was introduced just after the merger of the state in 1975 when the existing plan allocation not only was increased but also included a wide range of new schemes. Thus, the post-merger plan had a boosting effect on the processes of urban development along with the overall development of the state and at the same time development of different social and public institutions and public utility services was encouraged. The post-merger plan outlay of different schemes which had a direct impact on the urban development may be grouped under three major headings:

**URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

The municipality form of local self government was introduced in Gangtok in 1975. In view of the growing need of the newly born state capital, initially Rs.14.36 lakh was alloted for the establishment of Gangtok Municipality Corporation and at the end of that plan period the total outlay for this purpose was raised to about Rs.39.7 lakh. The schemes under the Gangtok Municipal Corporation were mainly grouped into (i) Drainage and sanitation, (ii) Improvement of shopping centres and (iii) Recreation. During the 5th plan period, 8 public latrines have been constructed in the areas like Tibet road and Kazi road, Chandmari, Sichey gao, Baluakhani, Burtuk, Tadong and Nayabazar. Besides, four public urinals and new drains have been constructed in different parts of the town as in Tibet and Kazi road, Sundri gao etc. During the same period there were separate outlay for parks at Tadong, Sichey gao, Baluakhani and
During the 6th plan period (1980-85) a sum of Rs. 112 lakhs has been allotted to assist the Gangtok Municipality Corporation in view of its growing size. There were 11 major schemes of which the multistoried Super Market Complex in the main bazar, one parking complex, garbage disposal, a few small shopping centres and environmental and slum improvement schemes represented the most important items. In the 7th plan fresh provisions were made for completing the ongoing projects. During the middle of that plan period, the population was estimated to be about 50,000 in consideration of which the government felt it necessary to prepare a fresh master plan for the capital town. "A master plan with a well-conceived land use pattern and adequate provision for future housing, roads, electricity, drainage and sewerage as well as water supply needs to be formulated and further growth channelized to fit into the pattern of such plan".

Prior to the merger of the state in 1975, there was no separate plan outlay for any of the small towns in Sikkim. Even in the post-merger period these 7 small towns and all the bazaars have been taken together and priority has been given to carpeting the bazaars, establishment of community hall in the district headquarters, construction of hat sheds and meat stalls along with the preparation of a master plan and steps to be taken for land acquisition for proposed construction. However, there were some programmes for the development of certain facilities featuring in diifferent...
rent five year plans for the small towns. For instance, in the 5th plan, following schemes were taken into consideration: (a) the construction of public latrines in Singtham,_Rangpo and Mangan; (b) drainage and sanitation improvement in Noyabazar, Singtham, Jorethang and Namchi; (c) construction of permanent hut shed for Singtham, Namchi, Mangan, Rangpo and Gyaishing; (d) construction of community hall in Gyaishing, Mangan and Namchi. At the end of the 5th plan period (1979-80) one Town Planning Cell started functioning under Local Self Government Department for preparing master plan, regulating construction works, making arrangement for beautification and environment protection of the towns, including Gangtok. In the 6th plan emphasis was been given on completing the ongoing projects and there was outlay for boundary pillar in the non-municipal towns when Jonthang was selected for centrally sponsored IMDF schemes. During the 7th plan period, Jorethang and Namchi received separate funds from the centrally sponsored IDMST schemes. Besides schemes like preparation of master plan for Namchi and Jorethang and construction of boundary pillar in Jorethang and also general improvement of civic services in the towns and bazars were taken up.

WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE

The surface water (river, streams and springs) are the main sources of water in Sikkim and each settlement has developed close to these sources. The demand of water increases with the expansion of the settlement whereas the supply available from such natural

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sources remain either constant or in many cases, get reduced. In Sikkim, separate outlay for water supply and drainage has been made for the first time in the 4th plan period. During that period water borne sewerage system was introduced in some of the towns and schemes for potable water supply in Namchi and Rangpo and water filtration in Gangtok were introduced at this time. In the 5th plan, the programme for water supply and drainage system has been further intensified, and about Rs.136.34 lakhs have been allotted for this purpose for the towns and bazars.

Needless to say that the major part of the outlay is confined to Gangtok Municipal Corporation where schemes of water reservoir with a capacity of 1 million gallon of filtered water at Selep, the intake work at Ratey chu source, the extension of pipe network and the installation of water meters has been taken up. At the same time a comprehensive water supply project for a projected population of 75,000 has been prepared and cleared by the CPHEERP with an estimated cost of Rs.3 crore. These schemes were installed during the 6th plan period with a total outlay of about Rs.310 lakhs and another Rs.150 lakhs has been allotted to cover the entire town during the 7th plan period for a projected population of 1 lakh at the end of the century.

In contrast the other 7 towns of this state received only 17 per cent of the total outlay during the 5th plan period when the schemes like spillover works for Mangan and Jorethang, and water treatment for Rangpo, Singtham, Namchi and Mangan and Jorethang have been taken into consideration. During the 6th plan period...

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augmentation works continued and some serious steps were taken for
the most problematic town—Namchi. "Some thinking has gone into the
matter of constructing basin type reservoir to be filled up both
artificially and naturally so that the growing requirement of the
town could be met." In Namchi, Rs. 5000 lakhs have been allotted in
the 7th plan period for the construction of 42 km long pipe line
from the source to the reservoir. During the same period (7th plan)
extension of pipe network, the construction of new reservoir,
and water treatment schemes have been taken up for the other towns.

The waterborne sewerage system was totally absent till
the end of 4th plan period. As mentioned earlier, at the end of
1973 a team of experts from Delhi prepared a project report on
Gangtok for an overall development of the state. During the 5th plan
period, some of the recommendations of that team were translated
into action including sewerage. In the 5th plan, Rs. 30 lakhs were
allotted for underground sewerage schemes including full treatment
system (approved by CPHEEO). This has been allotted for
the I phase of that scheme in the 6th plan period. In the 7th plan
another Rs. 140 lakhs has been allotted for the II phase of that pro-
gramme so that the entire town could be covered by the undergro-
und sewerage system. There is no specific schemes of sewerage for
the other small towns but money has been allotted to extend the dr-
ainage system and for the repairing works of the existing drainage
channels. It will be worthwhile to mention here that the mainte-
nance cost is very high in such an unstable ground together with
heavy rainfall and for this reason a heavy amount is required un-

—7 Sikkim Planning and Development Department, Sixth Five Year Plan: 1980-85, p. 172
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

There was no housing development scheme prior to the 5th plan period although different Government Departments have constructed various types of houses for their staff members and most of them are concentrated in the administrative towns. For instance, at the end of the 4th plan period about 400 buildings were constructed in Gangtok alone for different purposes, such as for accommodating school, hospital, and government employees, etc. In the 5th plan however, a sum of Rs. 57 lakhs was allotted for the establishment of a State Housing Board. According the Housing Development Board was set up in 1979-80 for the purpose of chalk ing out plans and the implementation of social housing schemes by utilising institutional finance. Another major scheme involving the removal and subsequent rehabilitation of the squatters in the major urban areas has been taken up during the same period. Besides, housing schemes for the Government employees in the urban areas like Gangtok, Gyalyong Namchi and Jorethang has been taken up. As a result of which by the end of 1979-80 'financial year', 1100 Govt quarters have been constructed for Government employees in the state. But the demand for accommodation is very high in these faster growing towns. In view of the huge shortage of Government quarters, the major objective of the 6th plan was "to increase the number of government quarters so that large percentage of the staff could be provided with the heads of repair and maintenance in each and every town.

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*Stiria Planning and Development Department, Sixth Five Year Plan 1980-85.*
with living accommodation" and "to promote social housing schemes particularly to benefit the economically weaker sections including industrial labourers and the downtrodden sections of the community". For the same plan period a sum of Rs. 230 lakhs were allotted for the construction of 792 staff quarters (excluding 114 police quarters) of which 340 in Gangtok and 188 in the district towns and 164 in the other places. Besides, a good amount was allotted for the completion of the ongoing schemes, provided in the form of loan for Govt. servants, found for Cooperative Housing and Housing boards. At the commencement of the 7th plan, about 1385 units of government quarters of various categories had been constructed. During the 7th plan period emphasis was laid on intensifying the existing schemes of house building with the assistance of HUDCO and LIC. A sum of Rs. 124 lakhs were allotted for Gangtok alone, Rs. 105 lakhs for 4 district headquarters towns in 7th plan period and at the same time grant was set aside for different ongoing schemes. In fact, Gangtok not only accommodates the largest number of urban population of the country but at the same time it faces many problems and these are totally absent in any other small town of this state. These problems are mainly associated with the land use, residence and civic amenities like water, sanitation and drainage etc. It has already been mentioned that a number of schemes have been taken up to overcome such problems and to improve the general quality of life in these centres. No master plan

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9 Ibid. p. 176
10 Ibid. 1980-85.
11 Sikkim, Planning and Development Department, Annual Plan 1988-89, p 121.
has so far been prepared for this capital town although in the 7th plan period (1985-90) attempt has been made to prepare such a plan. At present, the town sprawls over the upper part of the ridge. The proposed planning area will be cover the entire ridge, starting from the river bank to the ridge top, so that proper environmental protection programmes can be made useful in this unstable surface. At the same time an integrated land use plan is necessary for the other fast growing small towns so that the town can develop in the right direction without disturbing the environment.

**Future Prospects of the Towns**

In Sikkim, urbanisation is mainly concentrated in Gangtok, the state capital, and other seven towns are very smaller in size even remaining below the minimum level prescribed by the Census of India (5000). These small towns are nothing but the rural market places though some of them function as headquarters of the districts. Among the four major functions helping urban development—commercial, administrative, industrial and tertiary—the first two activities (commercial and administrative) are largely responsible for the growth and development of the towns in Sikkim. Those two functions jointly or individually contribute the process of urban development in this small Himalayan state. It has already been mentioned that, Nayabazar, Singtham, Rango, Mangan and Gyalshing have grown from a bazar or a rural market place of which Mangan and Gyalshing are functioning as district headquarters since 1963. On the other hand Namchi and Gangtok had the experience of administrative activities as headquarters of the local chiefs long before marketing activities started in these centres. At present, Gangtok, Namchi and Mangan function both as administrative and mar-
keting centres. The rate of growth is very fast in these towns. Restructuring of the administrative set-up, after 1975, encouraged further the process of development where concentration of several administrative institutions together with the emergence of a host of social and cultural institutions not only increased the size of the towns but also contributed to the increase of the centrality of these places. On the contrary, Gyalshing, the official headquarters of the West district, functions merely as a tiny market place when the new district secretariate has been constructed 5 km north of this centre for reasons not very convincing to an outsider. The interior location and smaller concentration of social and cultural institutions has slowed down the rate of growth as compared with that of the other towns in the state.

The commerce-based towns, such as Nayabazar-Jorethang, Singhatham and Rangpo, are located along the valleys and by virtue of their location they are functioning as good nodal points where the major roads follow the river valleys. Thus, the locational advantage together with the unidirectional (north-south) flow pattern jointly help in boosting up the trade and commercial activities of these centres. As for instance, Nayabazar-Jorethang serves commercially the entire western part of the state, Rangit basin, since all the transport routes of this region converge at this point, in virtue of its location. Nayabazar-Jorethang performs as a collection point for the entire Rangit basin area where all sorts of goods and passengers to and from Sikkim converge at this centre. Similarly, Singhatham dominated commercially in the eastern part of the state where all the major roads converge at this centre. Actually, the emerging transport network during the post-merger period has increased the nodality of these centres, contributing to the steady
growth of these centres. In contrast Rangpo, situated 12 km south of Singtham, loses its nodality inspite of its locational advan-
tage. In fact, the first break of movement for goods and passengers, to and from the eastern Sikkim, occur at Singtham. Previously, the importance of Rangpo as a border town, between West Bengal and Sikkim, was undeniable but the merger of the state has changed the situation. During the recent years steady improvement in the trans-
portation system has increased the accessibility between Siliguri and the higher part of eastern Sikkim as a result of which the com-
mmercial importance of Singtham and Rangpo has gradually decreased.

It is true that the urban character has not yet taken full
form in the towns of Sikkim other than Gangtok. In fact, the socio-economic level of this Himalayan region could not support too many big towns. By virtue of its administrative function as a state capital, Gangtok accommodates the bulk of the living am-
lenities of this state along with the largest number of urban pop-
ulation. During the last three decades (1951-81) the population of 
Gangtok has increased 10 times. On the contrary, the 7 other smaller
town are nothing but rural service centres for their immediate su-
roundings, all of them reaching the status of urban centres only in 1971, and having grown rapidly during the last decade. But in no
case they can compete with Gangtok and they are unable to exert much of influence on their rural surroundings. Nevertheless, inspite of small size and limited urban amenities, their role in the rural-
urban interaction pattern is very strong and commercially most of them are not at all dependant on Gangtok.

It has already been mentioned that the processes of urban development started at a faster rate since the merger of the
state. During the post-merger period Gangtok, the only urban centre
in true sense of the term, not only increased in size but also there was increase in the number of shops including specialised shops, industrial units and transport facilities. The impact of such development completely changed the urbanscape of this princely capital where traditional single-storied wooden buildings were replaced by the multistoried modern buildings; the narrow footpaths got converted into wide-metalised roads, and the traditional, indigenous isolated shopping areas turned into well-developed shopping streets with modern show rooms of specialised goods. At the same time, the post-merger period witnessed a steady flow of tourists, both other states and abroad, into this erstwhile princely state capital. During the last few years this Himalayan state not only has improved its transportation facilities but also has developed new sites and an increase in accommodation facilities for the tourists. At present, Gangtok is functioning as the second important tourist centre in the Eastern Himalayan region, next to Darjeeling, by virtue of its nodality. It is true that, still now Darjeeling is performing as the primary attraction for the tourists in the Darjeeling-Sikkim Himalayan region but it is expected that very soon Gangtok will replace Darjeeling. During the recent plans emphasis have been put on various tourist development programmes including the lifting of certain restrictions, both for home and foreign tourists. The total impact of such development together with other infrastructural facilities which help the flow of tourists has obviously been to the advantage of Gangtok increasing its importance as a tourist centre endowed with an outstanding natural beauty and cultural heritage.
Prospective Urbanhood

In Sikkim apart from the existing eight urban centres, there are altogether 32 Bazar or rural market places (Fig. 47). These bazaars are functioning as rural service centres along with other small towns and some of them have hat or weekly markets. It has already been mentioned that these bazaars play a vital role in the marketing activities of the state. The unidirectional flow system, the higher transport cost and the lack of well-developed marketing facilities in the towns, these bazaars function as local service centres catering to the needs of the rural habitations. The rural surroundings need a focal point for exchange their local products with the goods for daily consumption including food grains and agricultural implements and others. Among the bazars, the vitality is high in the bazars with hat. These hats play a very significant role in the interaction pattern in this Himalayan region with scattered population, poor purchasing capacity, inadequate transport facilities and extreme physical hardships in travel. The people prefer to attend the bazars once a week, that is the day on which the hat takes place. The overall development of the state and the growth of population have a positive contribution to the steady growth of these bazaars. By virtue of their location some of them, particularly those located in the southern part, have witnessed a steady development during the last decade. It may be interesting to observe here that some of these bazars like Melli, Rhenok, Zoreng, Ranipool, Rongli, Pakyong, Ravang and Chungthang exceed the size of Maishing, Mangan and Nayabazar and Namchi in terms of population. It, however, needs to be pointed out in this connection in consider-
ring the population of the bazar the entire revenue block consisting of a number of bazzars is included in the count as there is no separate census made for the bazzars in 1981. Thus, in most of the cases the population size of the settlement is large although the bazar itself occupies a part of the respective revenue block the latter happening to be the lowest unit for census in Sikkim like the villages in the other parts of India. Besides the location, some other factors are also involved in the process of development of the bazzars which vary widely among them. As for example Ranipool functioning as a satellite town of Gangtok maintains a steady growth where the price of land is cheaper and rent of houses is lower than that of the mother town. In the case of Melli, its gateway location and the establishment of a new distillery factory jointly have increased the rate of development. In Majitar, close to Melli, the process of development started recently with the establishment of a leather tanning factory and few other units. The interior location of Ravang and Chungtahng encourages the steady growth of these focal points in the vast rural surroundings. The older bazzars like Soreng, Pakyong, Rongli and Renok have entered into a new phase of development during the recent years. The above mentioned big bazzars not only serves as important retail market places but at the same time they offer better educational and medical facilities both of which appear to be the two most vital central functions of them.

In terms of population size, these bazzars are larger than the district headquarters like Gyalshing, Mangan and Namchi (Table - 98-99). At the same time the economic activities of the population of these centres are more diversified where majority of
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Bazars</th>
<th>Population (1981)</th>
<th>Types of Education institution</th>
<th>Status of Medical Facilities</th>
<th>Holiday per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burmik</td>
<td>1101</td>
<td>P, M</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chungthang</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>P, M</td>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
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<td>Damthang</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>P, M</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daramdin</td>
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<td>P, M</td>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Dentam</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dikchu (Old)</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dikchu (New)</td>
<td>1118</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hee</td>
<td>1252</td>
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<td>PHS</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>PHS</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitam</td>
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<td>Lagship</td>
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<td>Mazitar</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
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<td>Melli</td>
<td>1647</td>
<td>P, M</td>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>--</td>
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<td>Namthang</td>
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<td>Pakyong</td>
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<td>Penjong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ranipool</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>Rorathang</td>
<td>888</td>
<td>P</td>
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<td>Ravang</td>
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<td>Samdang</td>
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<td>PHC</td>
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<td>Sambaria</td>
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<td>Song</td>
<td>794</td>
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<td>PHC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soreng</td>
<td>1757</td>
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<td>Temi</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>P, M.H</td>
<td>PHC</td>
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<td>Utteri</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>P</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 1981

PUC = Higher secondary (10+2)
PHC = Primary health centre
PHS = Primary health sub-centre
D = Dispensary
M = Middle school
P = Primary school
H = High school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Bazars</th>
<th>Population (1981)</th>
<th>Education institution</th>
<th>Medical facilities</th>
<th>Male working population in non agricultural activity (%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chungthang</td>
<td>1779</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melli</td>
<td>1647</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>PHS</td>
<td>97</td>
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<td>Pakyong</td>
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<td>PUC</td>
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<td>Ranipool</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>Ravang</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>PHC</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>Rhenock</td>
<td>2564</td>
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<td>PUC</td>
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<td>Soreng</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>PHC</td>
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</table>

Source: Census 1981

PUC = Higher secondary (10+2)
PSC = Primary health centre
PHS = Primary health sub-centre
D = Dispensary
P = Primary school
H = High school
M = Middle school

# All activities except Cultivation and Agricultural labourers
the male working population is engaged in non-agricultural activities (Table -99). Thus, in respect of size, function and economic activities of these centres may, perhaps, claim to be more urban-oriented than the remaining bazars.