PART- 2: UNORGANIZED SECTOR

CHAPTER- II: CENTRAL MARKET AREAS
Almost every city, town or district headquarters in every state of India have localized central market areas. Often referred to in common parlance as “Sabji Mandi”, these are primarily large wholesale markets that cater to the needs of the retailers, general customers and on going commuters. The central market areas house innumerable products in bulk quantities ranging from a variety of raw vegetables to sacks of rice and wheat; sacks of pulses; spices and condiments.

In case of small towns, these goods are brought from nearby villages in different types of carts early in the morning or late in the afternoon, whereas, in big cities, including the metropolitan cities, they are carried in trucks from far distances and are unloaded in the specified central market areas manually at different times of the day or more so during the night. Consequently the central market areas of metropolitan cities are always bustling with large population and a state of commotion persists throughout the day and night.

Most often in big cities there are specially designated central market areas engaged in storage of specific products. In West Bengal, particularly in Kolkata, several such markets exist noted for their products.

The present study was conducted in a large central market area situated in the heart of the city of Kolkata. This market dealt with the wholesale storage of raw vegetables. The place is always extremely congested and buzzing with people.
A large number of MMH workers work in this market—some are migrants of neighbouring states, while others have come from remote villages of West Bengal. They stay in this market due to their erratic work schedule and are engaged in unloading the raw vegetables from trucks, carrying them overhead for a certain distance through the market and depositing them to the specific site of storage. They are mostly illiterate and have to toil hard for every penny. They have no social security, no medical benefits and leave facilities.