

PREFACE

Bheri is a local name of a typical inland aquaculture in rural West Bengal. It is unlike other aquaculture such as ponds, lakes etc. Bheries are generally cultured with brackish water which is found in estuarine Bengal. The most valuable product in bheri is shrimp which earns ample foreign currency on export. Considerable fish is also produced in these bheries. It again helps in supplying cheap animal protein to the people in our country in general, generation of considerable employment particularly in rural belts, reclamation of city-sewerages to some extent etc. Ofcourse, bheri has developed at the cost of agriculturable lands in many areas.

In WB bheri mainly exists in three districts vide North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur. Out of these North 24 Parganas alone covers more than 70% of WB's bheri-area. Hence, bheries in North 24 Parganas contribute a lot in economic condition as well as in social aspects. However, the principal purpose of this research work is to study the manifold impacts of bheries in North 24 Parganas on socio-economic conditions.

The thesis has been divided into seven different chapters. The first one gives an introduction to the general outline of the study with the logics for selection of the topic and the study area, delimitation of the study area, objectives, methodology, literature reviewed etc.

Chapter II deals with origin of the district and general physical set up like topography, geology, physiography, climate, drainage, geohydrology,

flora and fauna, land use, agro-climatic and agro-ecological classifications, demography, soil, aquatic resources etc.

Chapter III studies spread of bheri over the globe and its general classifications.

Chapter IV is concentrated on historical background, spread, farming procedure, status of farming etc of bheri in North 24 Parganas district.

Chapter V focuses on the spatio-seasonal variation salinity of bheri i.e., how salinity of bheri-water varies location-wise and season-wise in the district.

Chapter VI is the key one which is devoted to the study to delineate multifarious socio-economic impacts of bheries in North 24 Parganas. Nineteen criteria have been selected for the purpose. These are percentage of net sown area to total area, cropping intensity, percentage of household with shortage of food security to total household, percentage of workers to total population, percentage of agricultural labourers to total workers, density of cattle, per capita income, percentage of BPL household to total household, percentage of household with electricity lighting to total number of household, population density, percentage of scheduled tribe population to total population, occurrence of decoitee in bheri, law and order situation related to bheri, interference in the localities for existence of bheri, acquiring of lands for bheri-fishery, impacts of bheri on economy, adverse effect on livelihood of local folks due to advent of bheri, loss of control over the lands and shifting of rural power to periphery and willingness of the local people towards

bheri. In the last chapter i.e., chapter VII highlights the main observation cum suggestion and formal conclusion of the entire study.

At last, reference and bibliography have been cited and questionnaire, several tables etc have been included in the form of appendices.