Preface

There is a close co-relationship exists between land potentiality and the quality of life of people. Evaluation of land and its various properties would lead us to the opportunities and limitations of land to produce common agricultural crops and plants virtually on permanent basis. Land potentially evaluation enables the farmer to use the land according to its potentiality. The capacity of land to produce the basic needs vary to a great extent amongst other things, on the agro-ecological setting. These include soils and its various properties, climate, topography, vegetation etc. In a hazard prone district like Purba Medinipur, environmental hazards in various forms and manner also affect land and more importantly agricultural land use pattern. Land use opportunities and problems stem from both land and people in the district of Purba Medinipur. For agriculture is not just livelihood to a farmer of the district but his lifestyle. If his lifestyle is changed, his family is ruined forever.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the people of Purba Medinipur District. It forms the backbone of the economy of the district and it has the direct bearing on the life of mankind. The significance of agriculture in the district arises from the fact that the development in agriculture is an essential condition for the development of society. Accordingly agricultural development should be given greater emphasis in the district. Purba Medinipur District is characterized with low alluvial flat surface. Physiographically this low flat land has some depressed basins also. The southern portion of the district is situated in the coastal regions. About 74 percent of the land area is cultivated plain and about 54 percent of the working people depend on agriculture. Due to variations in the inherent characteristics of
land, agricultural land use pattern also differs resulting into different types of standard of living.

The district is characterized by high density of population. With such a growing population, to increase the standard of living of the people it is essential to use the basic resources viz. land as per their potentiality, to ensure ever increasing basic needs of the people of the district. Land potentiality alone can not ensure better standard of living in the district. Land of the coastal areas is potentially better than the other areas of the district but the living standard of people is very poor. Most of the people of these areas are remain idle and engaged in some rigorous and unproductive work. They are under paid and living in below poverty line. So apart from land potentiality there are several factors influencing standard of living of the people of the district.

To improve the condition of the farmers, it is essential to mobilize, to the maximum extent, the abundant labour force engaged in agriculture. Keeping in mind, the soil, the basic determinant of agricultural productivity in the district has been studied in great detail in the present analysis. The qualities of life of the people with respect to land uses have also been analyzed. And lastly proper planning has been formulated with an aim to utilize better promising areas, by reducing the size of agricultural population depending on land and at the same time create fuller employment opportunities in other activities in the district.

In the present study Chapter-I introduces location of Purba Medinipur District, objectives and methodology of this work, previous literature on this field of study as well as the importance of the present study. As ecological aspects draw
special attention in such study, Chapter-II, III and IV refer geological setting, landforms and drainage and impact of climate. As the present study is mainly concerned with the land and it's most important and essential component soil, Chapter-V discusses this aspect in detail. Chapter-VI deals with environmental hazards affecting the land use pattern in the study region. Land use pattern is dealt in Chapter-VII. Chapter-VIII deals with land potentiality evaluation of the district. Chapter-IX gives emphasis on impact of land potentiality on society. Chapter-X gives an insight into the relationship that exists between land and society. The last Chapter-XI incorporates conclusion and recommendations as well as glossary, bibliography and appendix.