The study of relationship between landform and settlement is increasingly becoming the prime concern of geographers inasmuch as it helps in identifying not only the present distributional patterns but also the future spatial trends which form a basis for any economic planning in the region. It is with this objective in view that some endeavour has been made in finding out the relationship between landform and settlements in the district of Bankura, West Bengal. The macro-level (District as a whole) and micro-level studies (case study areas of Saltora and Patrasair Police Station) in regard to the relationship between landform and settlement indicate that there exists a close relationship between the two with minor exceptions in locational (areal) context.

A thorough and careful study of landform relating to the settlement in the district where more than 92 percent people live in rural areas depending on agriculture and associated activities reveals that because of diversified terrain ranging from hills, rolling undulations to plains and monotonously flat plain, settlement is unevenly distributed. A well-developed regional variation in the distribution of settlements is prominent which varies mainly from the lateritic (hilly) west to the alluvial east (plain). Accordingly the density of settlement, spacing of settlement, dispersion of settlement and so on are not uniform in character throughout the district.
It has been observed that among the land forming attributes which have contributed to the (siting) spreading of settlements in the district - the relief, slope and drainage are noteworthy. In other words the man-made cultural landscape i.e. settlements or human habitation is highly controlled by physical landscape. The low values of different landform attributes are more convenient for human habitation, that is, the number of settlement increases with the decrease in landform attributes values (Chapter-III). It is also observed that other factors influencing siting of settlement include scarcity of drinking water, occurrence of floods, presence of laterite/lateritic and alluvial soils (mainly), the caste prejudices, the system of land tenure and new socio-economic changes etc. Recently, the Government has started giving house-sites and plots of lands to land-less agricultural labourers who have built new houses in the areas away from the old inhabited sites.

As the majority of the total population (92.37%) in the district resides in villages, rural planning will be the backbone of all-development programme. Unplanned growth of settlements not only create problems for the people themselves but also increases the liability of the Government when people are in distress. 'Planning is an organised, conscious and continual attempt to achieve specific goal' (Sen, et al) and thereby bridge the gap between reality and expectations. It is also an effort towards attaining self-sufficiency and narrowing the intra and inter-regional disparities and preparing ideal conditions for the overall development. No rural plan would be complete unless it provides suitable residential acco-
modation to village dwellers.

On the basis of relationship between landform and settlement as is traced in the district, the following strategies may be adopted in the existing sites of settlement, otherwise, that would give rise to a number of additional difficulties including huge expenditure.

1. The whole planning procedure should be reoriented to more physical bias.

2. The Government should take socialistic outlook in planning as the growing pressure of population, increase in literacy, class consciousness etc. are the present day rural phenomena.

3. The existing rural settlement pattern in the district has low transport accessibility and with the construction of new rail-road networks it is bound to promote dispersion. The construction of link-roads will provide access path for innovations and technological changes to villages.

4. To avoid congestion in urban agglomerations new industries (small-scale and agro-based industries) should be localised in semi-urban and countryside depending on the available resources (man and material) which will ultimately be helpful for balanced regional growth.

5. The haphazard and unplanned way of extending the settlements which will rapidly diminish the available or existing farm
areas should be checked. Therefore, the emphasis should be placed on micro-level planning which should begin from village clusters instead of individual village and should act as complementary to district, state or national planning. The existing village Panchayat system may play a dominant role in this respect. But the planning should be in such a way that no part of the district remains inaccessible and the benefits of planning must be uniformly distributed throughout the area excepting few areas of rugged topography where Nature is a real constraint.

6. The settlement sites should be brought under drinking water scheme by boring tube wells and laying down pipe lines. Gobar Gas Plants may be utilized for lightening and cooking purposes. Though the scheme for drinking water is already in operation in the district but the steps taken by the Government is, however, negligible as compared to the need of the people.

7. Lastly, encouragement should be given to research organizations for thorough study of rural problems (including settlement) in relation to landform and suitable remedial suggestions. A close contact should be maintained between rural planners and such organisations for the application of latest scientific techniques in the fields of industries, agriculture, rural health, sanitation and above all housing.