The local self government in India was not foreign to the genius of the people of India. The map of India changed its color frequently but local self-government survived. The basic difference between the local government in ancient India and its modern counterpart is that the former was born out of social and traditional condition and it was more or less independent of state action. But in modern times the local self government is borne out of state action. The modern municipal administration in India was related to the Section 158 of the Charter Act, 1793 which established Municipal corporations in the three Presidency towns. The financial stringencies of the East India Company and the spread of epidemic in 1861, paved the way for the growth of Municipal administration. Meanwhile the Indian Act, 1861, decentralised legislative powers and the provinces were given authority to pass local legislations. This stimulated the growth of local institution and local self government.

 Entire study has been reported in 7 chapters. The chapter wise observations are briefly discussed here under:

The first chapter entitled “History of the land and composition of the population of the region” covers historical background of Cachar with reference to Silchar, its geographical location and composition of population. It also covers how Silchar expanded in terms of area and population during the period from 1882-1990 A.D.

The second chapters entitled “Development of Silchar as an urban centre and growth of its society and economy” is devoted to the detailed discussion about the emergence of Silchar town after the annexation by the British. Here it covers how Silchar emerged from a cantonment town to a administrative headquarters, during the British regime. It also covers how the town expanded in all directions and became largest metropolis in South Assam as well as the most important interstate town of North-East India.

The third chapter entitled “Municipality in early form - problems and perspective” discusses how the Local Self Government developed in this country. It majorly covers the developments that took place in North-East region of India and specifically Silchar. It also covers how Silchar Municipal Board adopted measures
for the greater well being of its dwellers and how the nucleus of the modern Silchar town was actually laid down during this period.

The fourth chapter entitled “Enactments from time to time and their enforcement” is devoted to different acts passed from time to time for the better functioning of the Municipalities. It also covers the enforcement of these acts that have some implications with regard to the functioning of Silchar Municipality.

The fifth chapter entitled “Municipality as a manifestation of social cross-currents” and in this chapter emphasis is given to trace the significant agencies of this social dynamics. It also covers how Silchar Municipality made contribution towards social, educational and cultural development in Silchar town.

The sixth chapter entitled, “Citizens consciousness and impact of political developments on Municipal politics” is devoted to the growing political consciousness among the people of this region after its annexation by the British. It also covers the impact of the feelings of growing of nationalism on Silchar Municipality. It also discusses the participation of different political parties in the municipal politics and their efforts to improve the condition of the Municipal dwellers.

The seventh chapter entitled “Conclusion” covers the glimpse of the Silchar Municipal Board which has a chequered history of ups and down with some features.

In the appendix it covers the brief life sketch of some Chairmen of Silchar Municipality, who played important role to develop the Silchar Municipality.

Place: Silchar
Date: 17. 8. 09

Kismat Sultana
(KISMAT SULTANA)