



Urban Governance and Development.... Initiative Taken by Panihati Municipality for the Development and Progress of the Wards under Its Governance

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ABSTRACT

The concept governance is not new. It refers to the exercise of political, economic, and administrative authority in the management of the country's affairs at all levels. This paper focuses on the initiatives taken by Panihati Municipality in order to develop the wards under its governance and to enhance better standard of living and improve social well-being of the people residing here.

KEYWORDS: Governance, initiatives, Panihati Municipality, better standard of living, social well-being.

INTRODUCTION

Governance refers to the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of country's affairs at all levels. Governance comprises of the complex mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, mediate their differences, and exercises their legal rights and obligations (UNDP). Governance involves interaction between the formal institutions and those in civil society. Governance refers to a process whereby elements in society wield power, authority and influence enact policies and decisions concerning public life and social upliftment (British Council). Governance in the urban areas of town and cities is generally termed as Urban Governance. A governing body in a urban area works for the development of that area in almost all the spheres of economic, political, institutional, health, education, and others. All round development and enhancement in uplifting a society for a better place to live in, is an indication of good urban governance.

RELEVANCE OF URBAN GOVERNANCE IN URBAN GEOGRAPHY

Urban Geography has the co-relation with the development of the urban areas. Development of the urban areas include development in all the spheres of economic, political, institutional, health, education, and others. To bring about an all-round development and to make the society a better place to live in, urban governance in very essential.

SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA

The area of study has been selected as the area under Panihati Municipality. The place of Panihati lies in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, India. Its latitudinal and longitudinal co-ordinate is 22°41'0"N and 88°22'00"E. Panihati Municipality was established on 1st day of April in the year 1900 covering Panihati, Agarpura, Sukchar, Ghola, Natagarh and Sodepur and some adjoining mouzas with an area of 19.43sq km which is the largest municipality not only in the Barrackpore Subdivision but also in the undivided 24 Parganas district. At the very beginning there were 6 wards only and population was about 11000. Presently there are 35 wards and above 400000 people.

This place is getting developed in almost all spheres as the Municipality has taken initiative for all round development of the society. To analyse this initiative and to get a perception of urban governance on this particular area, this place has been selected.

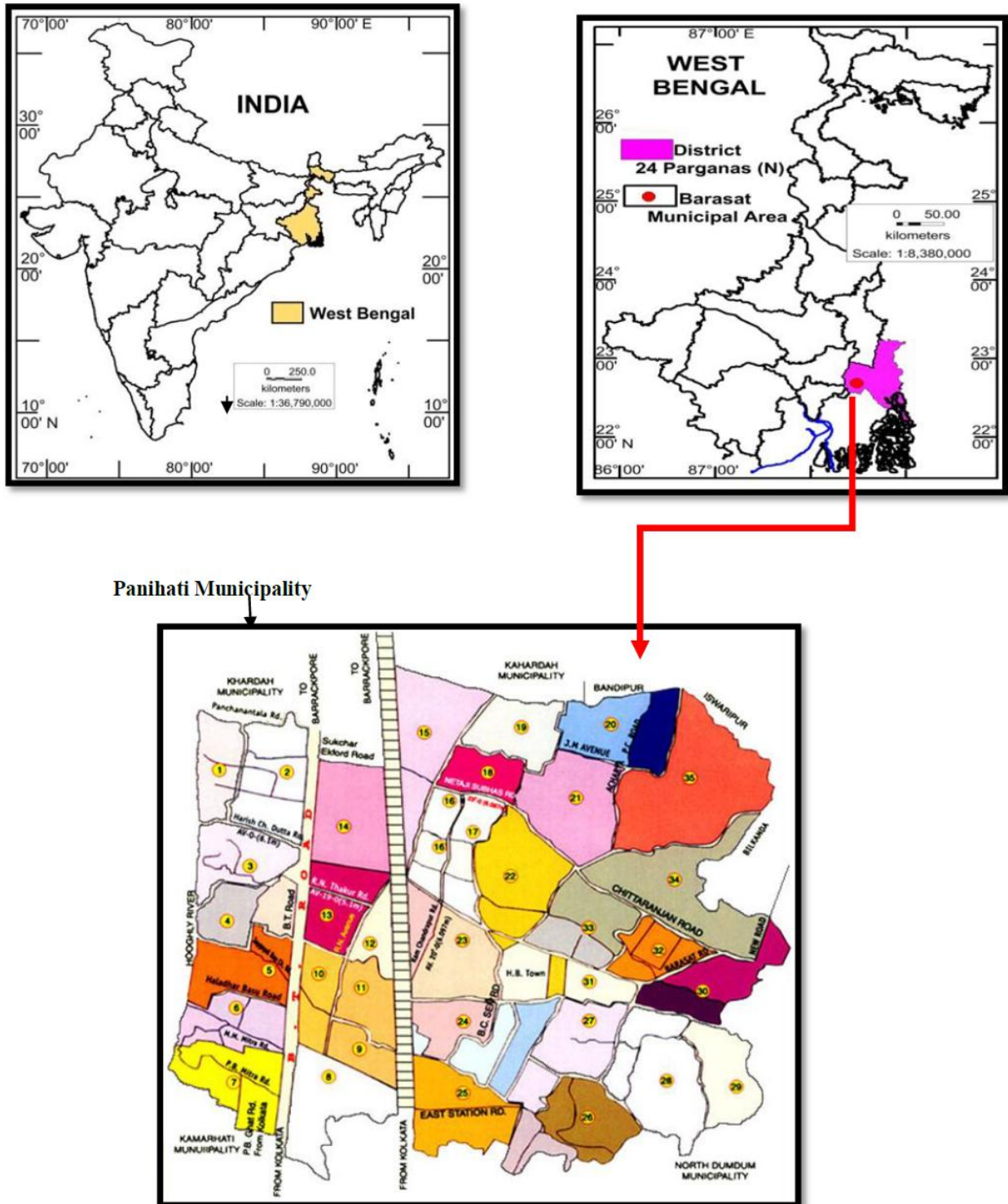


Fig 1: Location Map of study area

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- To trace out the major and minor projects undertaken by Panihati Municipality.
- To find out the progress of the undertaken projects on spatial and temporal basis.
- To review the people's satisfaction regarding projects either completed or ongoing.
- To find out the problems of the projects in the field of implementation.
- To provide some suggestions for the betterment of civic-life of the urban dwellers in Panihati Municipality area.

DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary database has been used. Secondary data related to ward map, land use map, projects undertaken has been collected from the municipalities; population related data collected from Census Of India; satellite image from Google earth. Primary data collected from detailed field survey to check the land use zones, field measurement of road width, area of household plots in different wards of the municipal area.

The present paper has been prepared following a systematic methodology. Some accounts on this topic have been studied and considered. Collection of primary and secondary data has been done. The data collected has been analysed

using simple statistical methods and various statistical diagrams are drawn to represent these data. The diagrams are interpreted to depict the real situation.

Physical setup: Panihati is a city and municipality under khardah police station of Barrackpore subdivision in North 24 Pargana district in the Indian state of west Bengal. It is a part of the area covered by Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.

Panihati has an average elevation of 18 metres(42 feet). It is situated just beside the river Hoogly. Panihati experience quite a hot and humid climate.

Panihati covers the important railway stations from Sealdah north main section line-

1. Sodepur- a densely populated urban city connected to Kolkata by Barrackpore Trunck road and wih Barasat via sodepur road through Madhyam Gram.
2. Agarpara

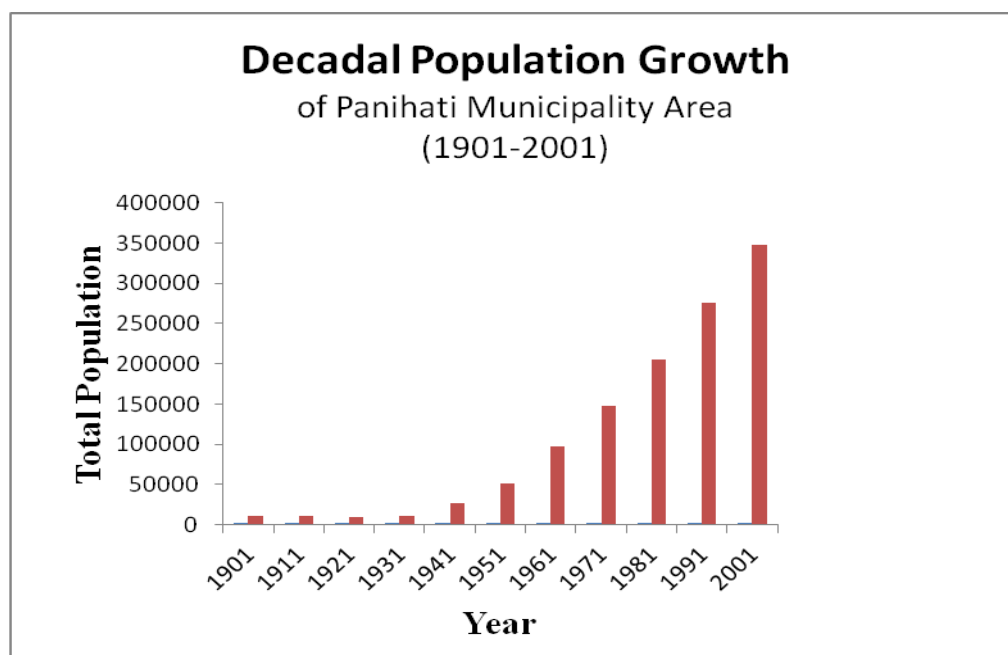
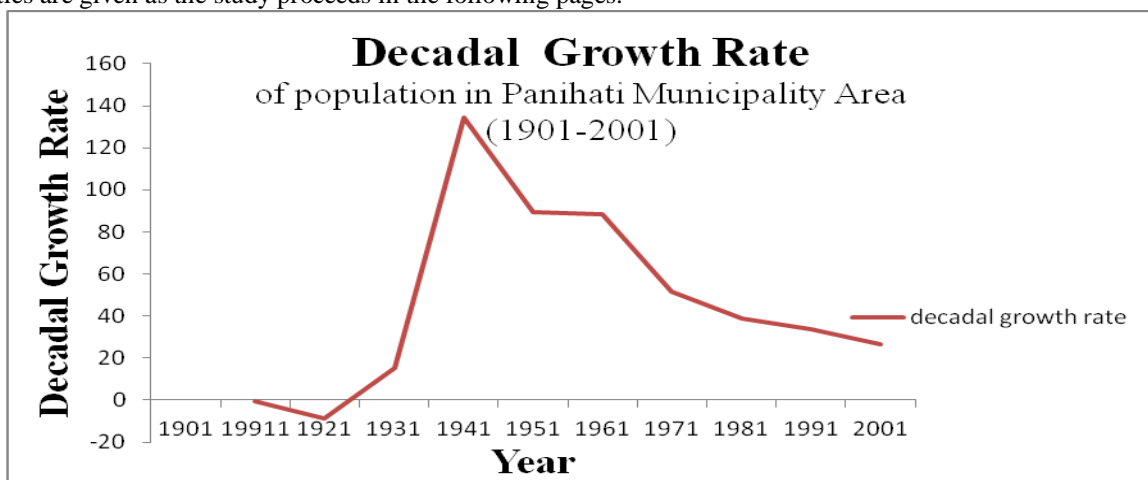
Panihati Municipality is located on B.T Road at the western side of Sodepur Rail station.

Cultural set up: As of 2001 Indian Census, Panihati had a population of 348,379. Male constitute 52% of the population and females 48%. Panihati has an average literacy rate of 89%, higher than national average of 59.5%. Male literacy rate is 85% and female literacy rate is 79%. In panihati 8% of the population is under 6 years of age.

It is established in 1990. It covers he area of 19.5 sq km and is divided into 35 wards. It has a slum population of about 35.5% and 18 % (approx) population in below poverty level.

The area under Panihati Municipality is getting developed day by day under its governeance. The population are enjoying the betterment of both qualitative and quantitative increase of civic amenities. Buildings, schools, roads, drainage, system, markets, hospitals, libraries and all other facilities are increasing day by day. It is an area of cultural interests. Temples, entertainment, halls, service halls, swimming pools, parks, playing grounds are also present to boost civic life.

The list ward- wise, area and population table, population growth, and decadal growth rate of population and basin amenities are given as the study proceeds in the following pages.



From Fig- 2 , we see the decadal growth rate is decreasing and Fig- 3 represents that population is increasing this two figures depicts that although he decadal population growth is increasing in Panihati Municipality area, its decadal growth rate is decreasing. Decadal growth rate is maximum during the period 1911-1921.

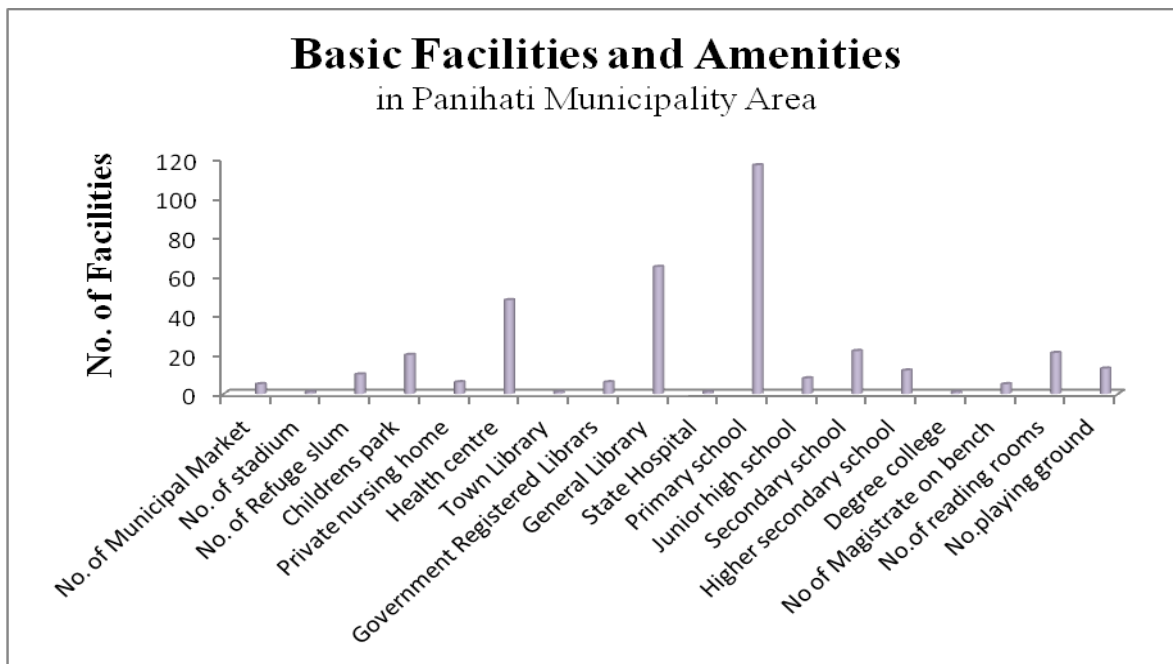


Fig 4: Basic Facilities and amenities

From the figure- 4 we found out about the basic facilities and amenities in Panihati Municipality area.

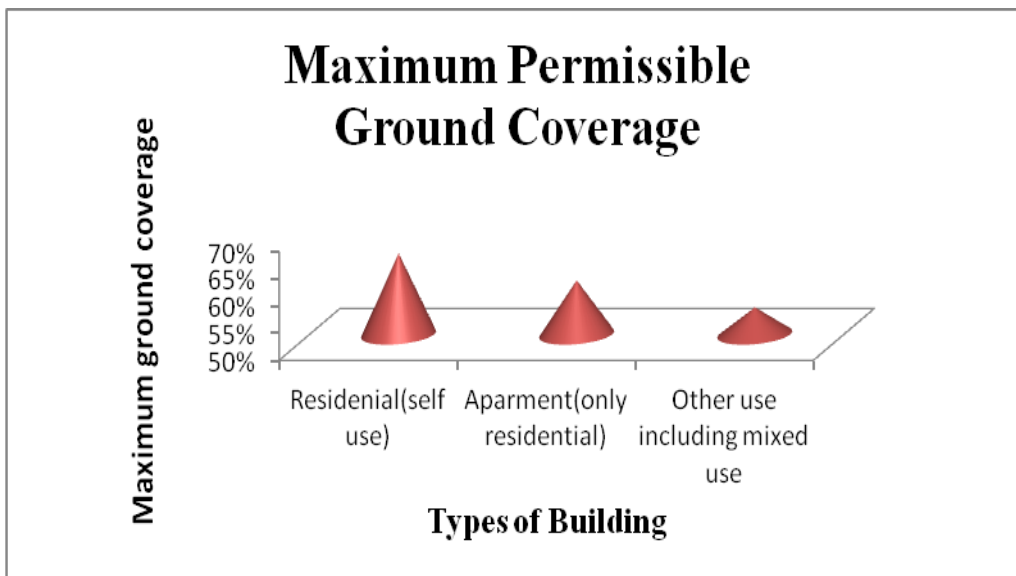
Major projects and work done by Panihati Municipality:

Panihati Municipality has taken up many major steps for the development of the area under it. Many projects were taken up, many rules and regularities were set to make the area a better place to live in some of such measures have been mentioned below:

Layout of Buildings: Construction of building under Panihati Municipality is regulated as per provision of the- The West Bengal Municipal (Building) Rules,1996.No piece of land shall be used as a building site in Municipality unless the Board of Councillors is satisfied that:

- a. Land record is in conformity with the proposed construction.
- b. The level of land is not lower than the level of the nearest public street.
- c. The land is capable of being well drained by means of drainage facilities to existing public drains or drainage channels.
- d. The soil of the site is likely to contain or sustain the construction of the building there on.
- e. Where he site is within 5.00 ms of any side of a tank, the owner will take such measures in order to prevent any risk of drainage from such building passing into the tank.

Many other works to be done as application of approval of site of a building, permission to construct or re-construct, permit of building, notice of completion, granting or occupancy certificate. Some rules have been set for the construction of buildings. They are depicted in the following diagrams:



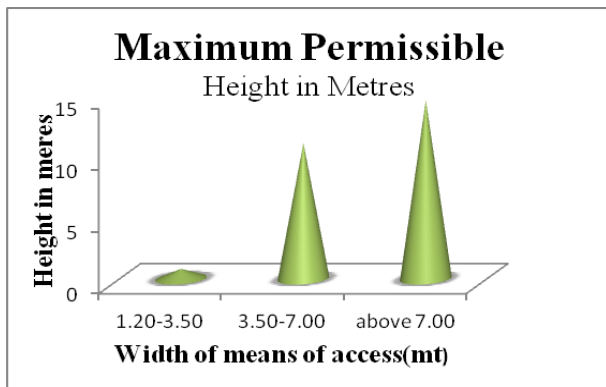


Fig 6: Permissible Height in mt

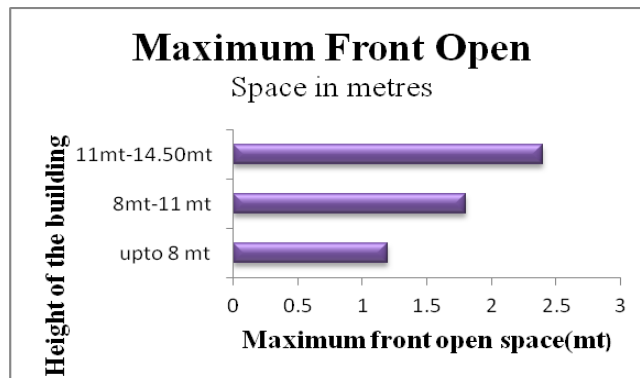


Fig 7: Front open space

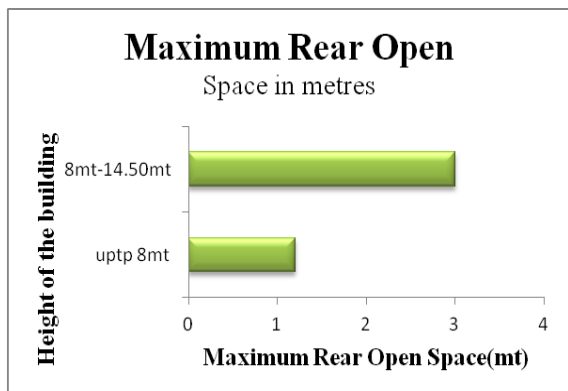


Fig 8: Rear open space

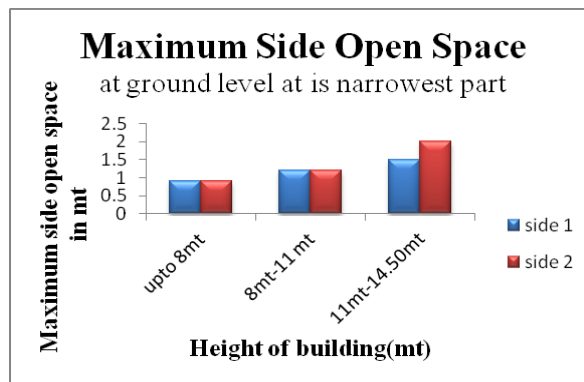


Fig 9: Side Open Space

Construction of Roads

Many projects have been taken up for the construction of the new roads and the repair of the existing ones. At many a place the kachha road have been constructed to pucca ones. Required amount have been sanctioned under various schemes. Following diagrams depicts the present condition of the road:

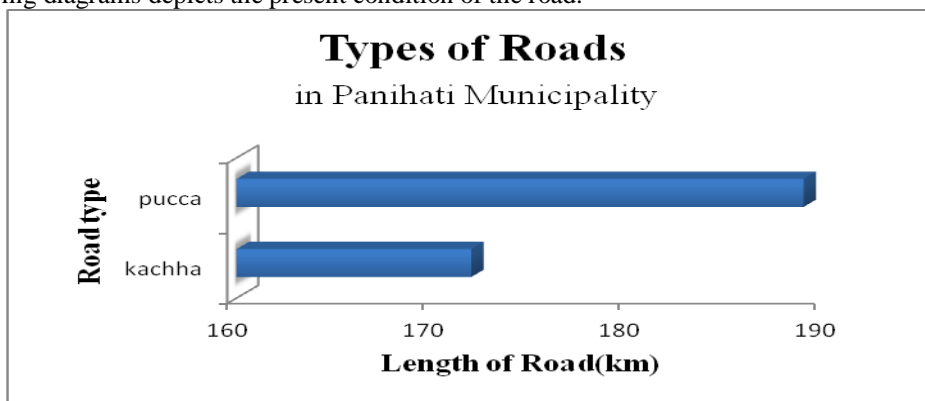


Fig 10: Types of Roads

Drainage System

Many drains are built by the Municipality. Drains are measured in Kilometres (length). They are both Kachha and pucca. Many culverts are constructed on drains. Following Diagram depicts share of kachha & pucca drains:

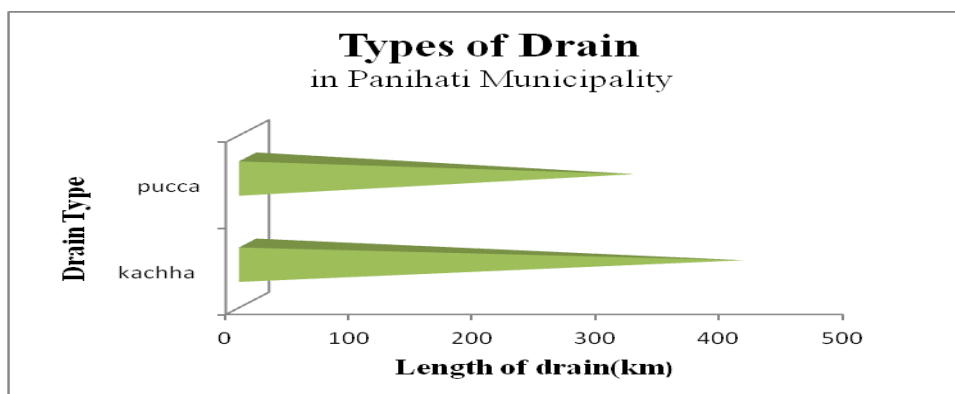


Fig 11: Types of Drains

Water Supply

The main function of Municipality in this sector is to lift ground waters and supply o the consumers. Service provided is operations and maitainence of pumps and water supply pipe line.

With the approval and recommendation of the higher authority and also the Assistant Engineer of the Water Supply Department, services are given by several employees(Mechanics, Helper) in different areas of this Municipality to maintain the pipelines, Hand tube well and also control and operate the rests related to pump House to maintain the water supply in the vicinity.

Diagram shows water supply system in Panihati Municipality

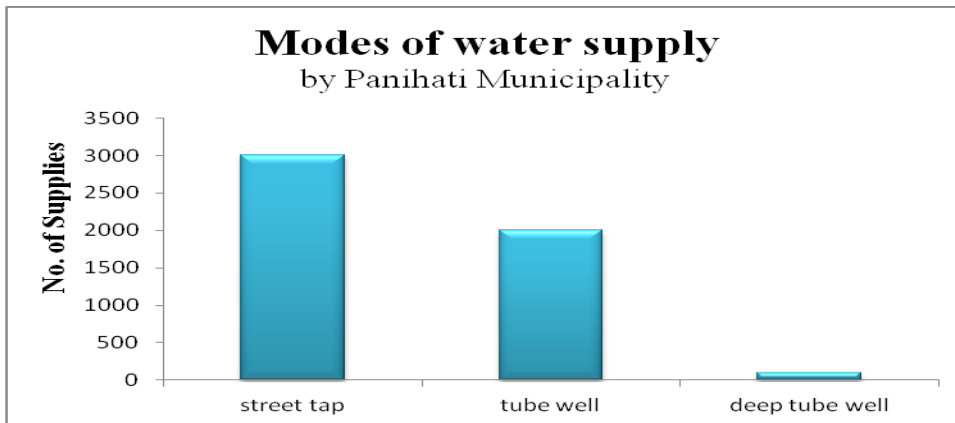


Fig 12: Modes of Water Supply

Provision of Water Treatment Plant under consideration of west Bengal government through K.M.D.A.

Garbage Clearance

Panihati Municipality provides with a no. of dustbins at different places in every ward under its governance to dispose solid wastes. These solid wastes are also cleared by the vehicles to the dumping grounds. This vehicles are also provided by the Municipalities.

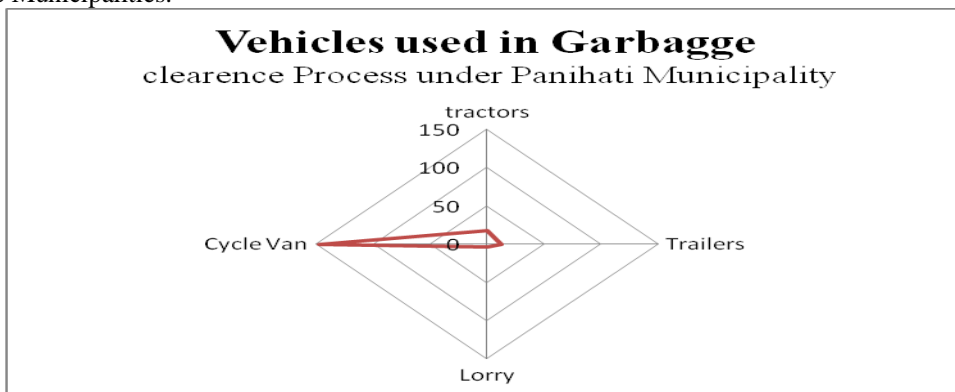


Fig 13: Vehicles used in Garbage Clearance

Health Services

There are 3 ambulance 28 I.P.P- 8 centre, 185 I.C.D.S center,3 hospitals ,25 beds, 8 nursing home under panihati Municipalities. Many clinics and pharmacy are there under the area of its governance. The municipality provides free medical camps,free medicines. It spread awareness of different diseases and other health issues.

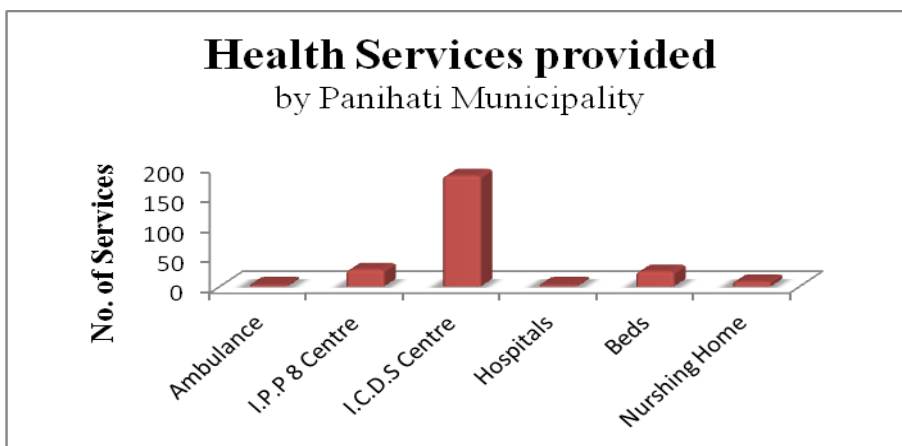


Fig 14: Health Services

Education

One of the striking part of governance of Panihati Municipality is its education system. There are plenty of schools in this municipal area. Education for the poor is also encouraged. Midday meal system has been started in order to help and attract children towards school.

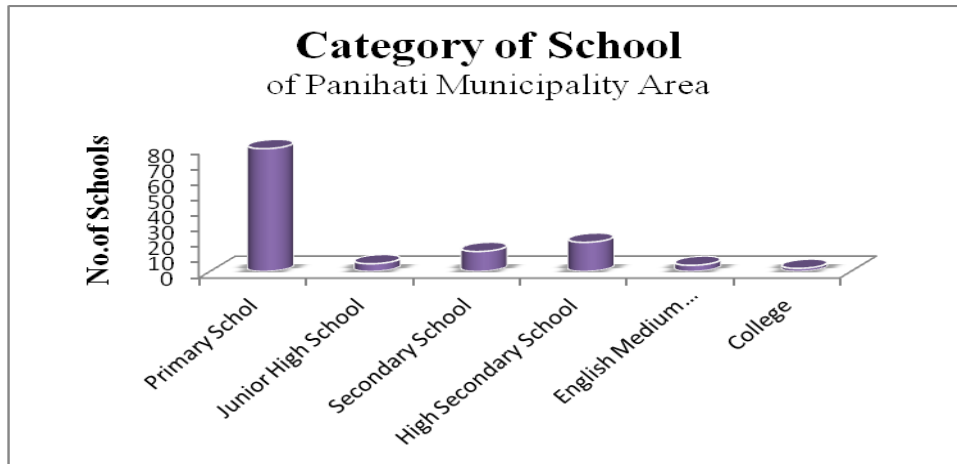


Fig 15: Category of School

Community Development

Panihati Municipality developed actively encourage community development society and women empowerment. Many programmes are on the progress under community development society, Development of women and children in the Urban Area, BUSP, National Health Care Group(NHG), National Health Care corporation(NHC) and other NGO's.

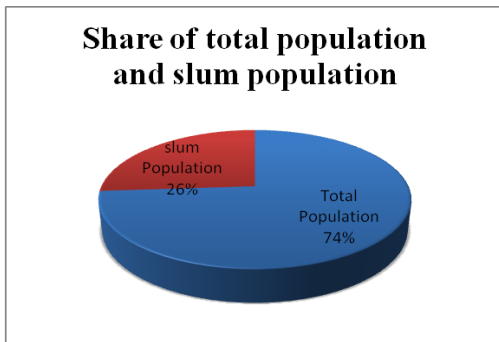


Fig 16: Share of slum & total population

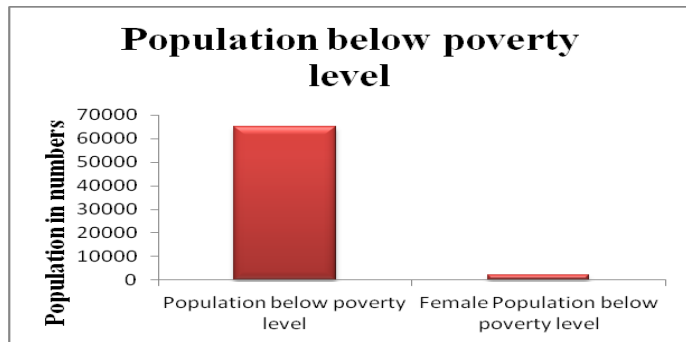


Fig 17: Population below poverty level

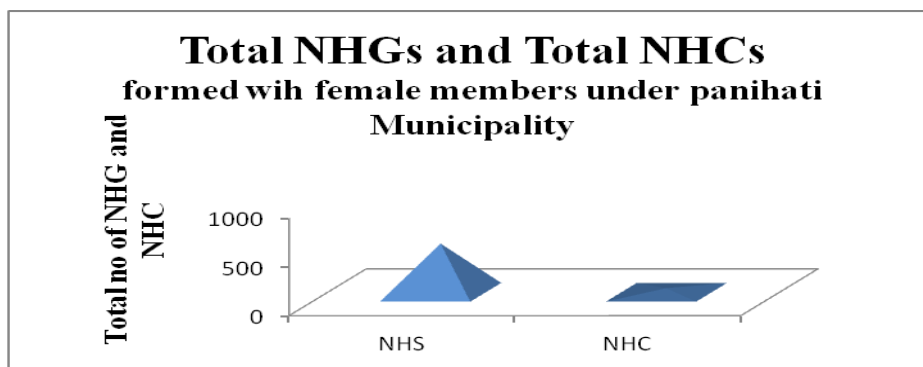


Fig 18: Total NHGs & NHCs

Conclusion

Thus we get an overview about how the area under Panihati Municipality developed and further developing under its governance. The projects are being implemented in a proper way and the rules and regulations are being maintained thus making it a better place to live in. The initiatives taken by the municipality proved beneficial to the residents of this area. The area has become more developed and organised than before. The initiatives and projects have been planned keeping in mind the improved standard of living and social well-being of the residents. Such initiatives and projects are encouraged for further development.

Acknowledgement

It is of great pleasure to express our experience of preparing this paper on urban governance by Panihati Municipality. We would like to thank the Chairman of Panihati Municipality and the staffs who readily agreed to provide us with the data and information required to do this research.

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