

THE CATASTROPHIC FLOOD OF 1968 AND ITS DEVASTATING EFFECT ON THE DISTRICT OF DARJEELING AND JALPAIGURI (WEST BENGAL): A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The district of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri are intersected by numerous rivers. The lateral distance between two rivers is ranged from 3 k.m to 30 k.m. The incidence of floods is not an uncommon phenomenon in this region. From very earliest times, the region is facing the problem of natural calamities especially floods. The incidences of flash floods are a very natural phenomenon but from very recent past the incidences of flash floods has increased tremendously particularly in the district of Jalpaiguri. Unlike flash flood, the incidences of catastrophic floods are not a common one. The flood of 1968 was a kind of catastrophic flood which did a great damage and destruction in the larger part of Jalpaiguri district and in some sections of Darjeeling district. The huge damage, destruction and deaths of lives (Human and livestock) had made the society and economy of the region crippled for a time being.

KEYWORDS: *Natural Calamities, Flood, Catastrophic, Damage, Destruction, Deaths, Loss*