DUNE CHANGES AND ITS IMPACT AT DIGHA COAST OF WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT
Coastal zones are geomorphologically dynamic, ecologically sensitive, biologically productive and environmentally hazard prone under the events of cyclones and tidal waves. In present day the coastal areas stands as a collision course between the two ways changes – expected natural changes and human related developmental changes. The developmental activities in coastal areas are introduced for many purposes like tourism, construction of sea port and fishing harbours etc. contributes to habitat loss in many ways such as destruction of dunes, wetlands, coastal vegetation, soils and by filling and dumping of wastes. Viewing these aspects, Digha coast as an important sea resort of West Bengal has been taken as an important area of study for both natural changes and changes due to anthropogenic activities. The cyclones and tidal waves caused a significant lowering of beach surface of Digha coastal area. The changes of dunes and lowering of beach at Digha coastal area influenced on the permanent settlements of the coastal villages. The changes and alteration of dunes has been analyzed from both natural and anthropogenic view point and shows its impact on shelter-environment problem of coastal villages.

KEY WORDS: Coastal dunes, beach lowering, anthropogenic activities, shelter-environment problem, coastal zone management.

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