

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF LANDSLIDE PROBLEMS IN AIZAWL TOWNSHIP, MIZORAM

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ABSTRACT

The landslides have caused great havocs in the townships of Mizoram, especially during the rainy seasons. The whole region falls amongst the most hazardous zones of the country and in the first instance; this factor seems to be responsible for the frequent landslides in the region.

A critical evaluation of the frequent landslides in and around the township of Aizawl, Mizoram has been done, in order to reveal the root cause of the problem. In the prima facie, heavy rainfall aggravates the natural causes like mudflows and landslides due to slope failure. The physiographic, climatic and geological features are the strongest control factor over the landslide problem.

Surprisingly, the earthquakes play a very little role in the generation of landslides. A detailed survey of the area around Aizawl reveals the fact that human activities are the most damaging factors. Aizawl, being the Capital of Mizoram has been growing as the most important urban settlement hub at an amazing speed. The township has now extended even to the most vulnerable parts of the outskirts of the city.

With craving to settle in the Capital, very rapid, unplanned and uncontrolled urbanization is going on in the region, without any concern for the safety of buildings, proper sanitation and environmental degradation. Rapid growth in the economic condition and sudden change in the urban lifestyle is another big fuel in the fire. Concrete buildings are fast replacing the typical mizo- type houses. Drawing rooms with the lucrative furnitures are increasing at the cost of cutting forest wood. The excess cutting has increased the rate of soil erosion & hence forth affected the slope stability.

The main rock types in the region, shales & mudstones are very prone to mud flow. The first prevention must be done to strengthen the steep slopes. These include the construction of retaining walls, concrete foundations and heavy plantation along the slopes.

Serious efforts are needed to check the uncontrolled urbanization. Government has to play major role in formulating Disaster mitigation measures such as "strict Urban Development Laws", hazard zone demarcation, rigorous plantation programmes, systematizing the housing patterns in vulnerable regions.

Last but not the least, is the training of people for disaster awareness and preparedness. No control measures could be effective without the active involvement of the masses.

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