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1. Contextualizing Topophobia: Perceiving 'Fear of Crime' in Neighborhoods of Kolkata.

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### **Contextualizing Topophobia: Perceiving 'Fear of Crime' in Neighbourhoods of Kolkata**

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#### **Abstract**

Places are not mere areal extents of activity spaces. Being humanized space-places entail myriad of emotions associated with lived experiences of various spatial phenomena. Thus, places-public or private, apart from their activity domain, also get branded by the emotions associated with them. Such emotions could be pleasant or of despise. The horrific emotions associated with certain experiences of public or private places result in *topophobia* or fear of places. The study of *topophobia* takes the approach of phenomenology based on emotions emanating out of experiences. The present work makes an attempt to understand *topophobia* through fear of crime. This study has been conducted in diverse neighbourhoods of Kolkata. It outlines perception on spatial risks of potential crime victimization in some common public and private places which result in different types of emotions about those places. These perceptions about the spatial risks create apparent sites of *topophobia* in different neighbourhoods of the city. Further, this endeavour seeks the causes of fear of crime and how resultant sites of *topophobia* have impacts on access and mobility to various

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