



# AGRO-ECONOMICAL STATUS OF MUNDARI SUB-CASTE OF BAGDAH BLOCK UNDER THE DISTRICT 24 NORTH PARAGANAS , WEST BENGAL

- 1 **Bipul Chakraborty** , Ph.D research scholar , Department of education , Swami Vivekananda university , Barrackpore , West Bengal .  
Assistant professor , Kolkata teachers' training college , 24 paraganas (north), west Bengal .  
Academic Counselor , Indira Gandhi National Open University , ( Ignou ) , Rishi Bankim Chandra College For Women. (28157). North 24 Parganas , West Bengal .
- 2 **Dr. Amitava Bhowmick** , Assistant professor , Department of Education , Swami Vivekananda university , Barrackpore , West Bengal.
- 3 **Dr. Debashis Dhar** , Adjunct profrrsor , Department of Education , Swami Vivekananda university , Barrackpore , West Bengal .
- 4 **Sanchita Chakraborty Das** , Assistant Professor , Department of Education , Global Institute Of Education , Nadia , West Bengal .

If agriculture goes wrong , nothing else will have a chance to go right . **M.S SWAMINATHAN**

## **ABSTRACT**

The introductory section of this paper gives an overview of the Mundari agriculture and describes how productivity in agriculture of west Bengal has increased due to use of modern seeds, chemical inputs and extension of irrigation. The paper states that the growth in agricultural production has been achieved largely banking on ground water extraction. This has caused resource degradation in the country and it is now putting a threat to the sustainability of growth in the west Bengal and also in north 24 paraganas . So, the conservation of natural resources has become very crucial for future growth of argo economy for the Mundari people . In the conservation of the resources, the recent developments of technology have significant role to play in Mundari agricultural aspect . In the objective of the paper , it has been mentioned that the issues like soil degradation, excess depletion of ground water, crop diversification, rain water harvest, major aspects of technological change and their impact on productivity and resource conservation, alternative uses of land and food security will be analysed in a very comprehensive and interrelated manner reference of Mundari society in west Bengal . The analysis will be based on sound theoretical and graphical frameworks and the theoretical prepositions will be empirically verified by agro- economic works based activity on Mundari agro-economical data of 24 north paraganas , west bangal .

**KEY WORDS** : Agro-Economy , Agricultural Production , Socio-Economical Development



### **About Mundari Tribes**

The Munda people are an Austroasiatic speaking ethnic group of west Bengal and India. They have predominantly speak the Mundari language as well as their native language, which belongs to the Munda subgroup of Austroasiatic languages . The Munda are found mainly concentrated in the Chhotanagpur Plateau region, which covers most of Jharkhand, as well as in neighboring regions of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal. The Munda also reside in adjacent areas of Madhya Pradesh as well as in portions of Bangladesh and the state of Tripura. They are one of India's largest scheduled tribes. Munda people in Tripura are being also known as Mura, and in Madhya Pradesh they are often called Mudas.

### **About Study Area**

North 24 Parganas or sometimes North Twenty Four Parganas is a district in southern West Bengal, of eastern India. North 24 Parganas extends in the tropical zone from latitude 22° 11' 6" north to 23° 15' 2" north and from longitude 88°20' east to 89°5' east as a location . It is bordered to Nadia by north, to Bangladesh (Khulna Division) by north and east, to South 24 Parganas and Kolkata by south and to Kolkata, Howrah and Hoogly by west. Barasat is the district headquarters of North 24 Parganas. North 24 Parganas is also West Bengal's most populous district and also (since 2014) the most populated district in the whole of India. It is the tenth-largest district in the State by area.

### **About the study area block**

Bagdah is located at 23°13'N 88°53'E. Bagdah CD Block is bounded by Maheshpur Upazila in Jhenaidaha District, Chaugachha Upazila and Sharsha Upazila in Jessore District of Bangladesh in the north and east, Bangaon CD Block in the south and Hanskhali and Ranaghat II CD Blocks in Nadia district located in the west. Bagdah CD Block is part of the Ichhamati Raimangal Plain, one of the three physiographic regions in the district located in the lower Ganges Delta. It contains soil of mature black or brownish loam to recent alluvium. The Ichhamati flows through the eastern part of the district. The Ichhamati, Kodara and Betna flow through this block. Bagdah CD Block has an area of 233.47 km<sup>2</sup>. It has 1 panchayat samity, 9 gram panchayats, 140 gram sansads (village councils), 108 mouzas and 106 inhabited villages. Bagdah police station serves this block. Headquarters of this CD Block is at Bagdah. Gram panchayats of Bagdah block/ panchayat samiti are: Asharu, Helencha, Malipota, Bagda, Koniara I, Ranghat, Bayra, Koniara II and Sindrani.

The North 24 Parganas district Human Development Report opines that in spite of agricultural productivity in North 24 Parganas district being rather impressive 81.84% of rural population have been suffering from shortage of food. With a high urbanisation of 54.3% in 2001, the land use pattern in the district is changing

quite fast and the area under cultivation is declining. However, the bagdah block , agriculture is still the major source of livelihood in the rural areas of the district.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To know the relation between price of food – grain and agricultural goods production of bagdah block .
2. To know the infrastructural and all – round socio-economical development of bagdah block by agro-economical status .

## **HYPOTHESES**

1. There exists no significant difference between price of food – grain and agricultural goods production of bagdah block .
2. There exists no significant difference between socio-economical development and agro-economical status of bagdah block

## **METHODOLOGY**

Method of descriptive research design is used for the presents study .

## **SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

Non – probability sampling technique which includes purposive sampling is used for present study .

## **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY**

200 mundari people of Five gram Panchayats under bagdah block was taken for the present study .

Gram Panchayats under 24 north paraganas	Frequency of sample
ASHARU	30
BAGDA	50
BAYRA	40
HELENCHA	25
KONIARA-I	55

## **TOOLS OF THE RESEARCH**

Questionnaire tool is used for the present research .

## **AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

As a country develops economically, with nature of the relative importance of agriculture declines. The primary reason for that was shown by the 19th-century German statistician Ernst Engel, who discovered that as incomes increase, the proportion of income spent on food declines. For example, if a family's income were to increase by 100 percent, the amount it would spend on food might increase by 60 percent , if formerly its expenditures on food had been 50 percent of its budget, after the increase they would amount to only 40 percent of its budget. It follows that as incomes increase, a smaller fraction of the total resources of society is

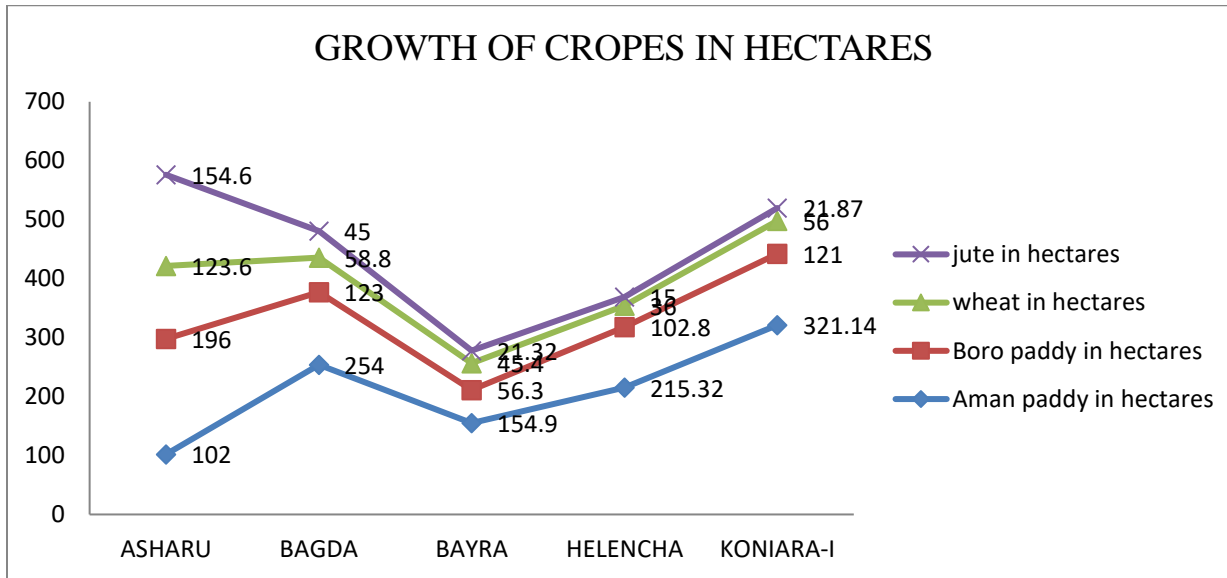
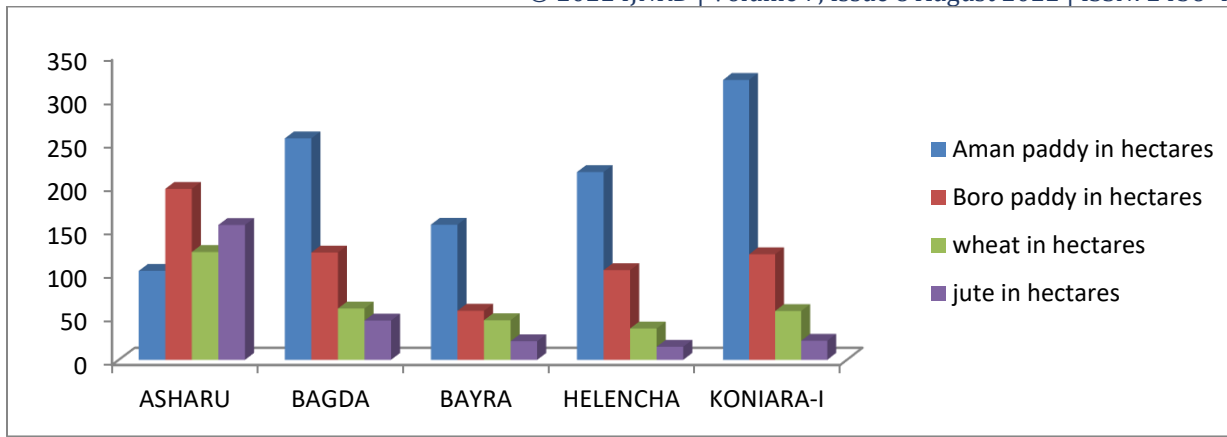
required to produce the amount of food demanded by the population. One characteristic of undeveloped peasant agriculture in 24 north paraganas and bagdah block is its self-sufficiency. Farm families in those circumstances consume a substantial part of what they produce. While some of their output may be sold in the market, their total production is generally not much larger than what is needed for the maintenance of the family of local study region . Not only is productivity per Mundari worker low under those conditions, but yields per unit of land are also low. Even where the land was originally fertile, the fertility is likely to have been depleted by decades of continuous cropping of crope production in bagdah block . The available manures are not sufficient, and the farmers cannot afford to purchase them elsewhere.



In Bagdah CD Block in 2011, amongst the class of total Mundari workers, like cultivators numbered 23,355 and formed 24.92% of the total workers, agricultural labourers numbered 39,348 and formed 41.99%, household industry workers numbered 5,031 and formed 5.37% and other workers numbered 25,975 and formed 27.72%. in fact of Total workers numbered 93,709 and formed 38.57% of the total population, and non-workers numbered 149,265 and formed 61.43% of the population.

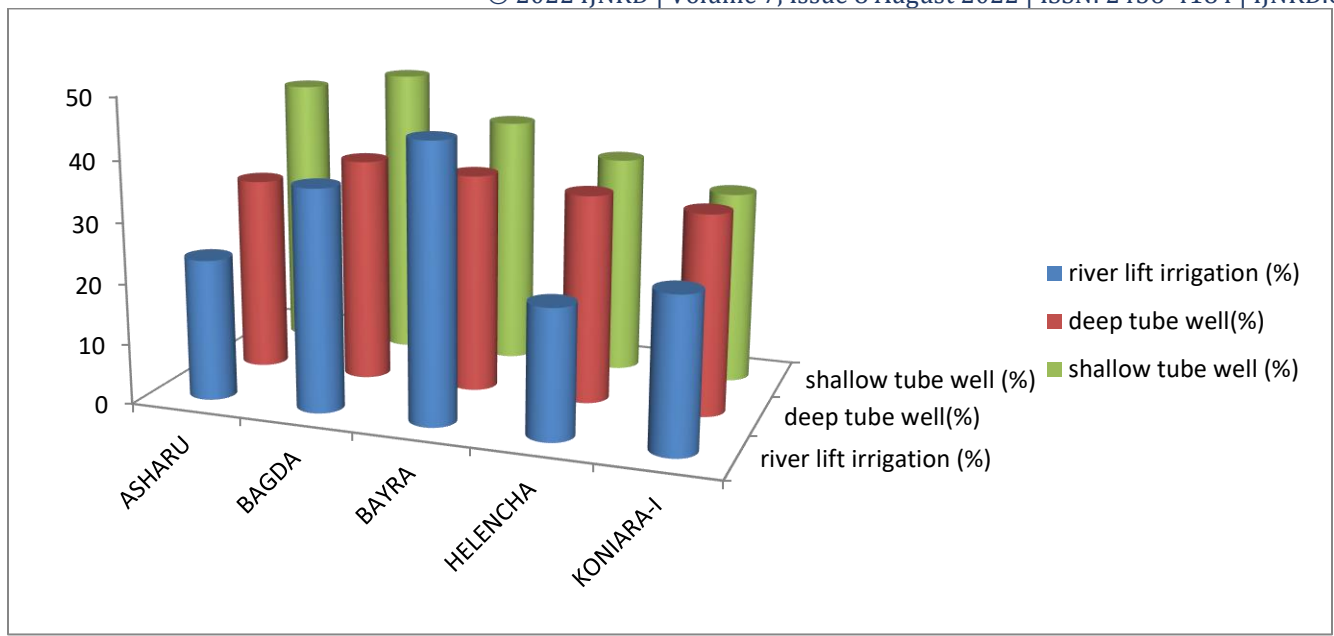
In more than 30 percent of the villages in North 24 Parganas, and bagdah block the agriculture or household industry is no longer the major source of livelihood for the main workers there. The CD Blocks in the district can be classified as belonging to three categories of Mundari population in border areas, Sundarbans area and other rural areas. The percentage of other Mundari workers in the other rural areas category is considerably higher than those in the border areas and Sundarbans areas.

Panchayats under 24 north paraganas	Aman paddy in hectares	Boro paddy in hectares	wheat in hectares	jute in hectares
ASHARU	102	196	123.6	154.6
BAGDA	254	123	58.8	45
BAYRA	154.9	56.3	45.4	21.32
HELENCHA	215.32	102.8	36	15
KONIARA-I	321.14	121	56	21.87



### TOTAL AREA IRRIGATED IN BAGDAH CD BLOCK

Panchayats Under 24 North Paraganas	River Lift Irrigation (%)	Deep Tube Well(%)	Shallow Tube Well (%)
Asharu	23.32	32.21	45.32
Bagda	36.54	36.96	48.21
Bayra	45.32	35.98	41.21
Helencha	21.36	34.25	36.21
Koniara-I	25.32	32.87	31.85



## **DRAWBACKS OF AGRO-ECONOMY IN BAGDAH BLOCK**

### **Instability Of Prices**

The instability of farm prices results from several factors. One is the relative slowness with which farmers are able to respond to changes in the demand for their product in study area . Mundari Farmers generally must produce on the basis of expectations, and if their expectations turn out to be wrong, the resulting surplus or shortage cannot have been corrected until the beginning of the next production cycle. Once a crop is planted, very little can be done to increase or decrease production in response to market prices. As long as prices cover current operating costs, such as the cost of harvesting, it pays farmers to carry through their production plans even if prices fall to a very low level. It is not unusual for the prices of particular farm products to vary by a third or a half from year to year. That extreme variability results from the relatively low responsiveness of demand to changes in price from the fact that in order to increase sales by 5 percent it may be necessary to reduce the price by 15 percent.



## Instability Of Income

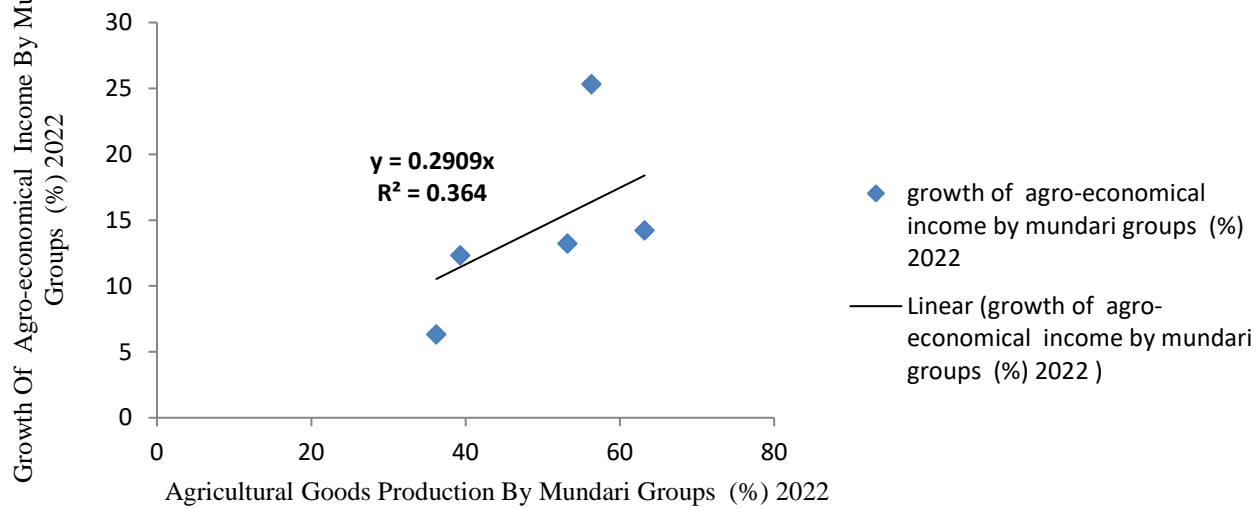
The instability of farm prices is accompanied by instability of farm income. While gross income from agriculture generally does not vary as much as do individual farm prices, Net average income may vary more than prices. In modern agriculture, costs tend to be relatively stable of bagdah bock.

The Mundari farmer of the bagdah villege are unable to compensate for a drop in prices by reducing his payments for machinery, fertilizer, or labour. The incomes of farm workers are generally below those of other workers. There are two major reasons for that inequity. One is that in most economies the need for farm labour is declining, and each year large numbers of farm people, especially young ones, must leave their homes to seek jobs elsewhere. The difference in returns to labour has been required to bring about that transfer of workers out of farming; if the transfer did not occur, farm incomes would be even more depressed. The second major reason for the income differences is that farm people generally have less education than do nonfarm people and are able to earn less at nonfarm jobs. The difference in education is of long standing and is found in all over the block , developed and undeveloped and it also exists whether the villege skilled based education system is highly decentralized, in study area block under 24 north paraganas .

Panchayats Under 24 North Paraganas	Agricultural Goods Production by Mundari groups (%) 2022	Growth Of Agro-Economical Income of Mundari groups (%) 2022
Asharu	63.21	14.21
Bagdah	53.21	13.21
Bayra	36.21	6.32
Helencha	39.32	12.32
Koniara-I	56.32	25.32



## Correlation Between Agricultural Goods Production By Mundari Groups (%) 2022 And Growth Of Agro-economical Income By Mundari Groups (%) 2022



### Government Intervention

Governments have employed various measures to maintain the village farm prices and incomes above what the market would otherwise have yielded. They have included tariffs or import levies, import quotas, export subsidies, direct payments to farmers, and limitations on production. Tariffs and import quotas can be effective only if the block normally imports some of its supply. Export subsidies result in higher prices to domestic consumers than to foreign purchaser of karanga and jupo villege and their use requires control over imports to prevent foreign supplies from entering the domestic market and bringing prices down. Direct payments to farmers have been used to maintain prices to consumers at reasonable levels, while assuring the Mundari farmers a return above block - market levels. Limitations on production, intended to reduce supply and thus increase prices, have been used in different district of west Bengal .



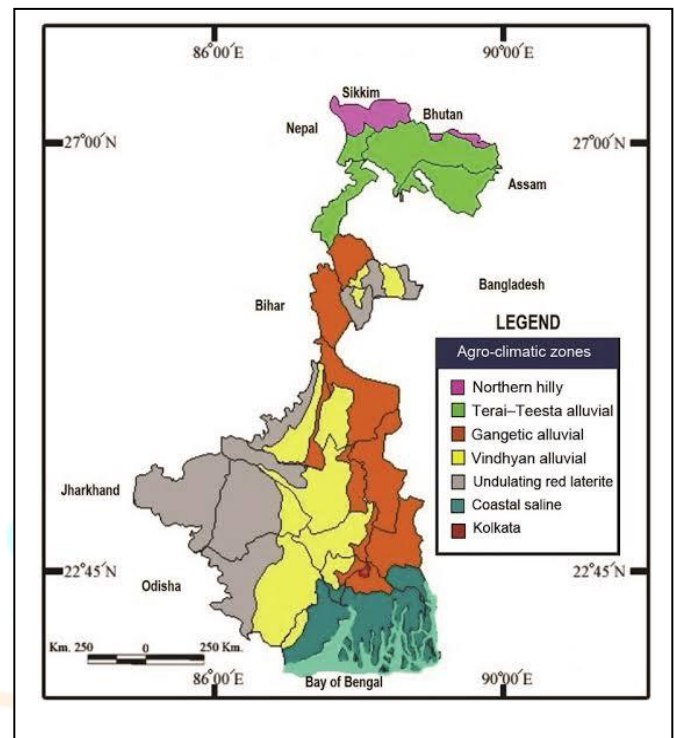
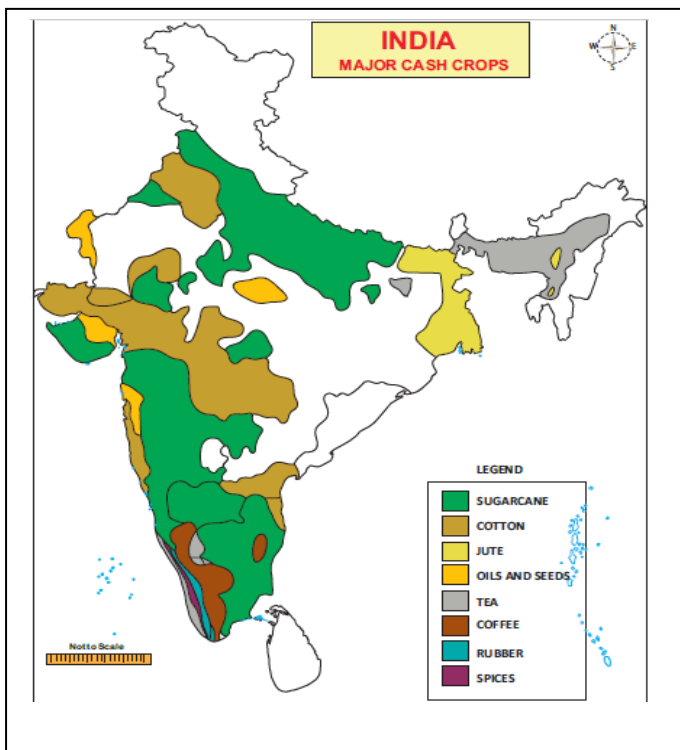
Panchayats Under 24 North Paraganas	ASHARU	BAGDA	BAYRA	HELENCHA	KONIRAI	Mean Value	S.D (Sigma)	P Value	T - Test Value	Correlation (r)	Significant Level
Agricultural Goods Production By Mundari Groups (%) 2022	63.21	53.21	36.21	39.32	56.32	49.65	6.168	0.5	0.0009	0.618	Significant At 0.05 % Level
Growth Of Agro-Economical Income By Mundari Groups (%) 2022	14.21	13.21	6.32	12.32	25.32	14.27	10.244				

## CONCLUSION

agriculture must be able to produce a surplus of food to maintain the growing non-agricultural labour force. Since food is more essential for life than are the services provided by merchants or bankers or factories, an economy cannot shift to such activities unless food is available for barter or sale in sufficient quantities to support those engaged in them. Unless food can be obtained through international trade, a country does not normally develop industrially until its farm areas can supply its towns with food in exchange for the products of their factories for development of agro-economy in bagdah block .

Economic development also requires a growing labour force. In an agricultural block , most of the workers needed must come from the rural population. Thus agriculture must not only supply a surplus of food for the towns, but it must also be able to produce the increased amount of food with a relatively smaller labour force for Mundari farmer . It may do so by substituting animal power for human power or by gradually introducing labour-saving machinery in differnts villege like koranga , koniara, jupo and bagdah as a study region .

Agriculture may also be a source of the capital needed for industrial development of agro-economy for the extent that it provides a surplus that may be converted into the funds needed to purchase industrial equipment or to build roads and provide public services for development of agro-economical aspect of Mundari farmer in bagdah block .



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