

## **Changing Scenario Of Present Floriculture System & Associate Problems In Bagnan Blocks I And II, Howrah District.**

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**Abstract:** For diversification in agriculture one of the areas that have emerged as a fast growing sector recently in West Bengal is Floriculture. Bagnan I & II blocks of Howrah district have got importance for their Floriculture practice from the past. This floriculture practice has played a dominant role to develop the socio-economic condition of this region (Bagnan). This paper mainly deals with their present status of floriculture practice which is somewhat changeable and some socio-economic & natural situation which lead to some obstacles. Various statistical and cartographic techniques have been used for analysis this changeable and problematic situation. From the study it was observed that the present floriculture practice in Bagnan is going through a changeable situation and faces some challenges. These challenges are – flower market & cold storages are still not open, increase in the number of un hereditary flower cultivators leading to higher flower production & lower flower price, weather changes, lack of credit facility, increasing rates of fertilizers and insecticides etc.

**Key Words:** Flower Boom, Price Inflation, Kisan Credit Card.

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### **I. Introduction:**

At present Howrah is mainly known for its industrialization. Gradual increases of industries and gradual decreases of engagement of the work force in primary sector are the major signs of industrialization in Howrah. Out of this decreasing engagement in primary sectors, Floriculture occupies an important place. The important flower grown areas of Howrah district are Bagnan I & II blocks. A good percentage of primary workforces in Bagnan are engaged with Floriculture practice. Thousands of families are engaged with Floriculture practice from different Gram Panchayet like- Kantapukur, Orphuli, Sarat, Khajurti etc. Primarily they accept Floriculture as their main occupation.

#### **Study Area:**

Total geographical area of Bagnan I and II blocks of Howrah district is 160.53 square Km and its latitudinal and longitudinal extension is 22°25'37" North and 87°59'27" East.

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

- ❖ To examine the present status of Floriculture practice in Bagnan.
- ❖ To identify the major changes and shifts in Floriculture practice.
- ❖ To analyze the reasons behind such changes.
- ❖ To find out the obstacles in case of continuing the Floriculture practice.
- ❖ To prepare some suggestions regarding obstacles.

### **II. Methodology:**

A well defined methodology has been followed. Investigation were carried out to access the socio-economic changes of Floriculture practice (cultivators & businessmen) using a standard questionnaire. The primary data has been collected randomly. Various secondary data have been collected from District Horticulture Department, Articles & E-sources. This secondary data have been represented by various cartographic techniques. Productions of flower and area under flower cultivation have been shown by Line Graph & Bar Graph respectively. Time series analysis with Regression line has been used to compare the flower production trend from previous to present years. Line Diagram has also been used to shown the flower production per hectare of area in different years, and increasing rates of different P & K fertilizers have compared with normal price inflation.

#### **Reasons behind the Booming of Floriculture in Bagnan:**

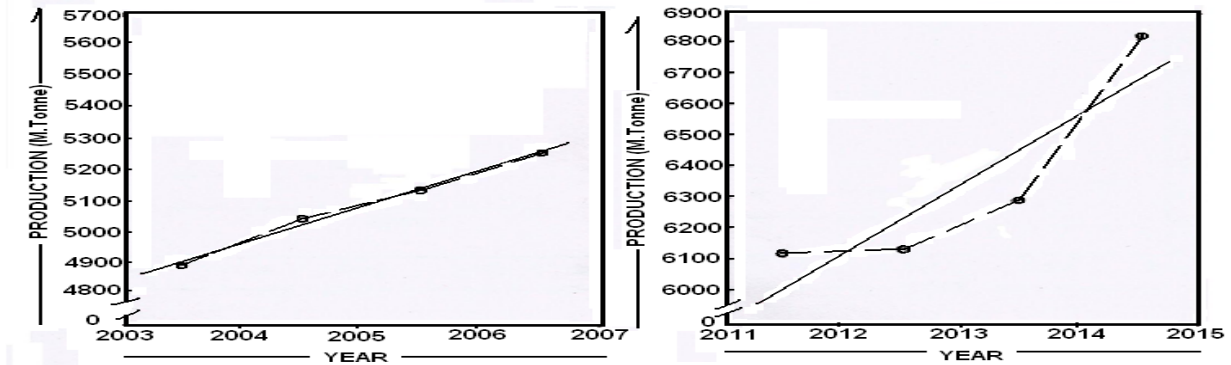
There are certain reasons behind the popularity of Floriculture in this region (Bagnan). These are- In the Ganga delta plain of the region the Rupnarayan River is in the western side and the Damodar River in the north eastern side which jointly form a well fertile alluvial soil. Climatically Bagnan region is under tropical

monsoon climate. Adequate rainfall which leads good irrigation facility and proper temperature both have played an effective role to flower grow. At present increasing demand of flower and indirect effect of Floriculture in East Medinipore district jointly help to develop the Floriculture practice in Bagan. Though there are many favorable conditions to enhance floriculture but some natural & socio-economic constraints create few challenges to Floriculture progress.

**Production and Income:**

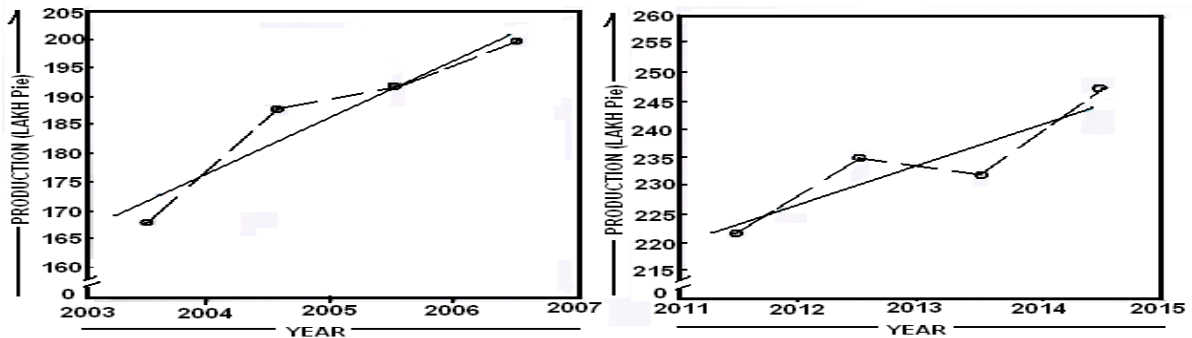
The major flowers which are cultivated in Bagan are Rose, Marigold, Jarbera, Gladiolus, Bela, Chrysanthemum, Dopati, Aparajita, Chinese Rose, Lotus, Tube Rose etc. Here the production of flower is sufficient. The productions of flower, area under flower cultivation & per hectare production are shown below.

**Fig: 1 Comparison Between Marigold Production In Bagan From 2003-07 & 2011-15.**



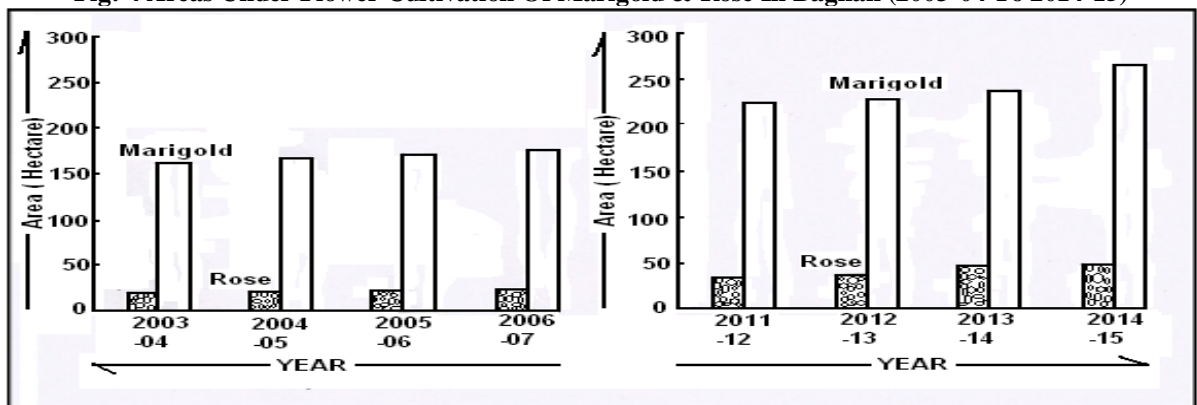
Source: District Horticulture Department

**Fig: 2 Comparisons Between Rose Production In Bagan From 2003-07 & 2011-15.**



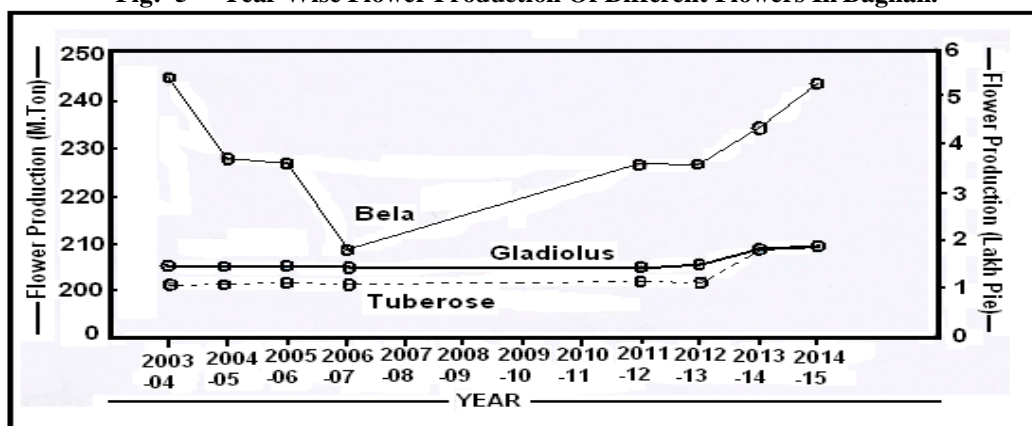
Source: District Horticulture Department

**Fig: 4 Areas Under Flower Cultivation Of Marigold & Rose In Bagan (2003-04 To 2014-15)**



Source: District Horticulture Department

**Fig: 5 Year Wise Flower Production Of Different Flowers In Bagnan.**



Source: District Horticulture Department

In the diagram Marigold & Rose production have been compared by Time series analysis with Regression Line from the year 2003-07 to 2011-15. Here it can be seen that in case of Marigold production the trend line in 2011 to 2015 is highly positive than the year 2003-2007. Another side for Rose production the trend line is slightly downward than from the year 2003-2007 but the production is gradually increasing because Rose is a most demanded flower. This slightly decreasing trend line occurs due to bad weather condition. Here raising trend of area under flower cultivation does not mean the total cultivable land has increased because fallen rice cultivation lands are transformed into flower grown land. Other flower like Gladiolus, Tuberose, Bela production and their area under cultivation not very much increase from the year 2003 to 2015.

In Bagnan the economic condition of flower cultivators & businessmen are more or less good. But their income sometimes fluctuates because of season wise fluctuation in the price level of flowers. Here peak season mean the season of Festivals, different kinds of program, marriages etc and lean season means the rainy season when demand is low and flower is not cultivated during that time. However the matter is the fluctuation in income not a new one in Floriculture practice in Bagnan.

#### Flower Businessmen in Bagnan:

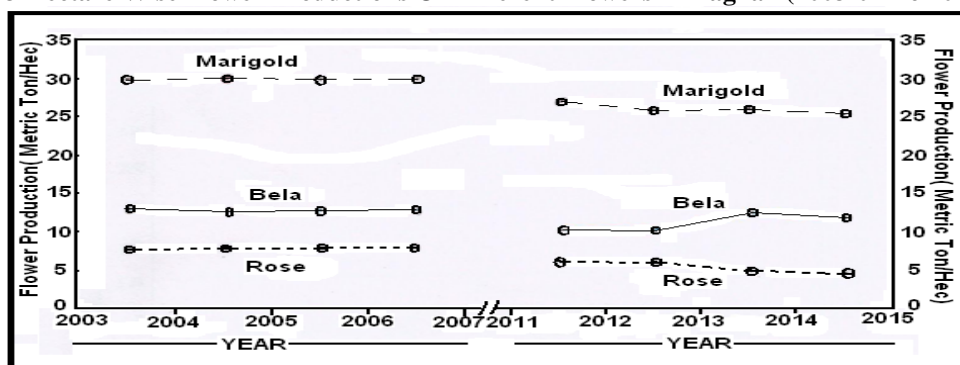
People of Bagnan who are not flower cultivators but earn money from flower business, not less in numbers. Mainly two types of flower businessmen are observed in this area- (1) one class collects flower from farmers and sells it to the market of Kolaghat or Mullickghat, and (2) another class collects flower from Kolaghat market and sells it to the Mullickghat market. Generally the price level of flowers at Kolaghat flower market is less than Mullickghat flower market. In this way flower cultivation & business are continuing in Bagnan.

#### Present Changing Scenario of Floriculture System:

Recently in Bagnan, some important aspects of Floriculture practice have arisen from direct experiences. This are-

- ❖ Those cultivators who are cultivating flower hereditarily, their children are showing more interest to different Government or non Governmental jobs instead of Floriculture. It may be assumed that the main reason of this situation is craving for livelihood and high social status.
- ❖ The flower cultivators who are recently increasing in numbers are not inherited of it. This matter is mainly found in case of Marigold, Chrysanthemum, and Dopati cultivation. From previous diagram it can be noted that the Marigold production between years 2011-15 has increased two times and area under flower cultivation also increase 3.5 times than the year 2003-07. That is the good indication of this situation. This lead to excessive flower production & disbalance of the price level. As a result the main flower cultivator's face uncertain loses.
- ❖ In recent years the hectare wise flower production of some flowers (Marigold, Rose, and Bela) are gradually decreasing. In the diagram Fig: 3 it gets clear that the hectare wise flower production trend gradually moving downward from year 2003-07 to 2011-15. Increasing number of non skilled flower cultivators & transformation of less fertile agricultural land to flower grown land are the best possible reason of this situation.

Fig: 3 Hectare Wise Flower Productions Of Different Flowers In Bagnan (2003-04 To 2014-15).



Source: District Horticulture Department

- ❖ One of the important aspects is that the major portions of flower come from East Medinipore & Howrah district to Mullickghat flower market. But in recent few years a large amount of flower is coming from Ranaghat, Thakurnagar area of North 24 Paraganas to the Mullickghat market, which somewhat effects the flower businessmen of Bagnan.
- ❖ These present situations of flower practice lead to over production of flower & disbalance of the price level. As a result in present inherent flower cultivators are taking interest to vegetable production along with flower because of gaining a well profitable income from it.
- ❖ This Floriculture practice also helps to enhance Gender Empowerment in villages. By making flower garland & picking flower the village women can earn a satisfactory level of money. This is one of the important aspects of flower practice in Bagnan.

### III. Problems:

In recent one flower market & cold storage have been built in Khalore to improve flower cultivation and marketing of Bagnan through associated strives of State Agriculture Marketing Department( Rajya Krishi Bipanan Daptar), Regulating Market Committee of Howrah (Niyantrita Bazar Samiti), and District Horticulture Department.

The cold storage was built before the Panchayet Election (2013) & the flower market was built in middle of year 2014. The main objectives of this new flower market was to give extra benefit to flower cultivators & businessmen of Bagnan and also the flower market was built-up as complement of Kolaghat flower market.

It is beyond dream to gain benefit from the flower market and cold storage because the market & cold storage are not open till now. The reason is that there is no direct road to come to the flower market from Bagnan Railway Station. That is why the flower businessmen have to travel long distance of divert route to come to the market. Most of flower businessmen who will take stall in flower market, come through South Eastern Railway, though the flower market & Railway Station are located very near to each other. So 500 meter direct road is needed to connect the market with the Station. But the problem is some invaders live forcibly in this place.

According to some flower cultivators of Bagnan, a flower market was built in earlier period of 1990's but it was discarded due to disagreement among flower businessmen to take stall. Even in 2006 The Government took enthusiasm to build a market but it became failure due lack of proper planning.

Like earlier days at present the cold storage & flower market do not still open due to lack of proper planning and management. Making building & market are not only the ways, but it is also needed to consider its surroundings situation, No one knows when the cultivators & businessmen will get benefits from this.

Another important aspect is the State Food Processing Industry & Horticulture Department jointly appointed a District Officer, whose work is to help the flower cultivators in different ways like using proper fertilizer or manures, using of good technology etc. By which cultivators can succeed to maintain the fertility of land, improve the quality of flower & increase flower production but the matter is the District Officer remains in the Zilaparisad Office, which is miles away from the block where such cultivation takes place.

In case of Kisan Credit Card it has been observed that many cultivators have Kisan Credit Card but they cannot get well benefit from it because many cultivators would not like to take loan by keeping land deed though their economic condition is stable.

Fig: 6 Comparisons Between Increasing Rates Of P & K Fertilizers With Normal Price Inflation

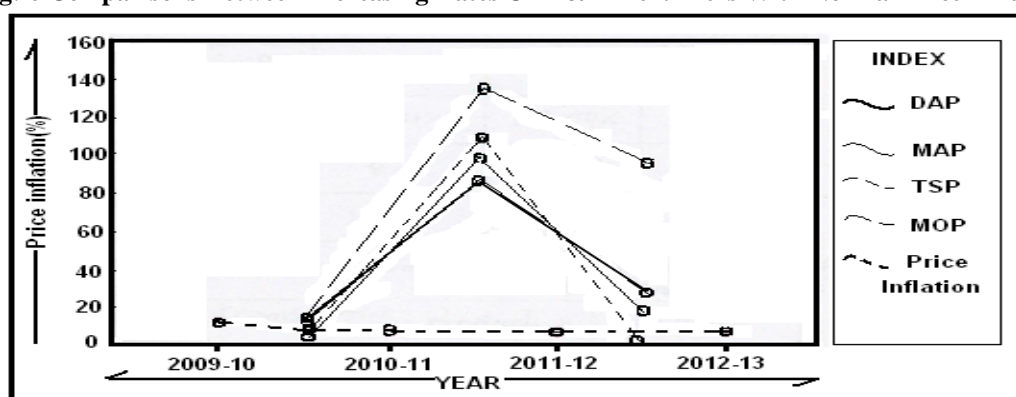


Table: 2 Highest Mrp (Rupees/ Metric Tonne) Of P &K Fertilizers From 2009-10 To 2012-13.

SL	FERTILIZERS GRADE	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
1	DAP 18-46-0-0	9350	10750	20297	26500
2	MAP 11-52-0-0	9350	9950	20000	24200
3	TSP 0-46-0-0	7460	8057	17000	17000
4	MOP 0-0-60-0	4455	5055	12040	24000

Source: World Bank, IDRD-IDA

Table: 3 Increasing Rates Of Mrp (Rupees/ Metric Tonne) Of P &K Fertilizers.

SL	FERTILIZERS GRADE	2009-10 TO 2010-11	2010-11 TO 2011-12	2011-12 TO 2012-13
1	DAP 18-46-0-0	14.97%	88.80%	30.56%
2	MAP 11-52-0-0	6.41%	101.00%	21.00%
3	TSP 0-46-0-0	8%	110.99%	0%
4	MOP 0-0-60-0	11.86%	138.18%	99.33%

Table: 4 Year Wise Consumption, Production And Imports Of Npk Fertilizers (In Lakh Metric Tonne).

YEAR	CONSUMPTION	PRODUCTION	IMPORT
2007-08	225.70	147.07	75.83
2008-09	249.09	143.34	101.51
2009-10	264.86	162.21	91.47
2010-11	281.22	163.78	123.63
2011-12	277.90	163.60	130.02

Table: 5 Year Wise Normal Price Of Inflation.

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013
NORMAL PRICE INFLATION	12%	8.9%	9.3%	10.9%

Source: Department of Fertilizers” Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, Government of India, Annual Report 2012-13

Another aspects like gradual increase of the rate of fertilizers & pesticides or insecticides in recent lead to increase of expanses in Floriculture. From the above data it get clear that the rate of some P & K fertilizers have increase over 100% in between year 2010-11 to 2011-12. Not only that the average rate of P & K fertilizers have increased every year (2009 to 2013) about 40-50% where as the normal rate of price inflation was 8 to 12% in that time.

Under NBS policy the Maximum Retail Price of P & K fertilizers are determined based on demand-supply dynamics. The Maximum Retail Price is open & fertilizer companies are allowed to fix Maximum Retail Price at reasonable level.

The country is fully depending on imports in potassic sector & subsidy being fixed, any fluctuation in international prices has effect on the domestic prices of P & K fertilizers.

Beside capricious effects of climate and increasing demand of plastic flower lead the whole Floriculture practice to a complex situation.

#### **IV. Suggestions**

- A well profitable and high in demand flower distribution system is needed to Bagnan flower market. If it does not then it will go on remaining only a small local market. But there is a good possibility for market because this area has a good connectivity through Railways (South Eastern Railway), highways (NH6) and State way also.
- Some supporting projects or schemes like Biofertilizers making scheme, Bioproduct making scheme should be connected with this flower market. It will help to reduce the wastage of surplus flower.
- Flower cultivators need a well training for using Chemical fertilizers to maintain soil fertility, and it is necessary to use biofertilizers more & more.
- It is necessary to build a direct 500 meter road to connect the market with Station. But if Government wants to root out the invaders then the Government would have to take necessary step for their rehabilitation.
- Also Government should control the fertilizers and pesticides rate.

#### **V. Conclusion:**

From the above discussion it can be concluded that some socio-economic changes occur in the Floricultural practice at Bagnan. However some positive aspects are also there. It is necessity to see that when the flower market & cold storage are open, then how far it is in favoring the socio-economic condition of the locality and also Floriculture practice in Bagnan. It is not only the matter to open the market but it does take a long time to adjust new Floriculture system from old one for both cultivators and businessmen. Moreover, throughout in recent few years some small industries have emerged in Bagnan and its surroundings. These attract many young working population and many people are already engaged to it. In near future, some areas of Bagnan will soon be transformed into corporation area. As a result of it, many industries and large number of residential houses would be increasing and gradually area under cultivation will come to reduce. So in near future, it is to be seen that how the Floriculture practice continues to maintain the balance with developing activities as the tradition of Bagnan.

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