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# GEOGRAPHICAL REVIEW OF INDIA

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## **Role of Rural Transport in Infrastructural Development of Indian Sundarbans**

**Biraj Kanti Mondal\*** and **Sukla Bhaduri\*\***

**Abstract :** *Rural Transport extends socially desirable communication and breaks isolation of villages by evoking social awakening in rural masses. Proper transport development exploits natural resources and also ensures proper distribution of available goods particularly for better living and sustainable rural growth. Transport and communication have always been the positive indicators of development and absence of these services in any region often leads to the stage of backwardness. The Indian Sundarbans is recognized as a backward region in terms of transport and communication with only 42 km of railway, 250 km of metalled road, and about 170 km of unpaved narrow roads. The navigable rivers and creeks form the principal means of transport in the Sundarbans since long. Though much emphasis was laid on the improvement of village roads under the various five year plans, still they remain under kutcha roads form most of which impassable during the rainy season. An attempt, therefore, has been made to assess the rural road development through up-gradation of rural infrastructure in Indian Sundarbans in the light of sustainable development.*

**Key Words :** *rural transport, connectivity, rural roads, boat-landing sites, isolatron*

### **Introduction**

In the era of globalization rural roads open much more prospect for villagers to travel and carry their own produce to the big markets, which positively affect income distribution, alleviate poverty and raise the standard of living of the rural people. Improved connectivity reduces transport cost of goods, promotes diversification of crops and creates non-farm employment opportunities and boost up rural income. About 70 per cent of India's total population depends on agriculture and allied services and Sundarbans is no exception (Mandal, 2003). Moreover, the ever-increasing growth of population in urban and industrial areas necessitates the movement of greater volume of food vegetables and milk to the towns in the other direction burdening the rural transport. Rural transport brings about socially desirable communication and breaks isolation of villages by evoking social awakening in rural masses. Moreover, proper transport development exploits natural resources and often ensures proper distribution of available goods particularly for better living and sustainable rural growth (Bhaduri, 1992).

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