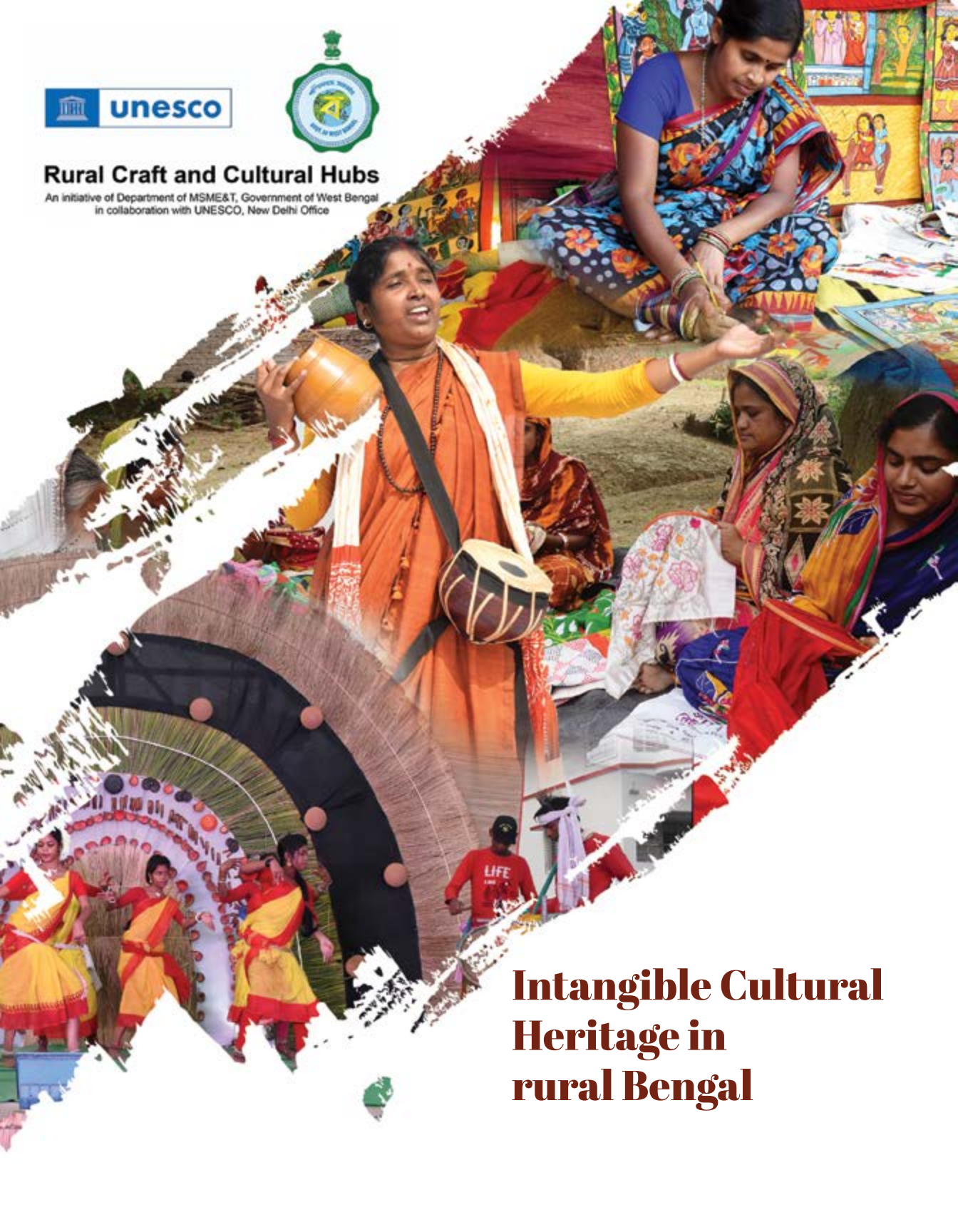




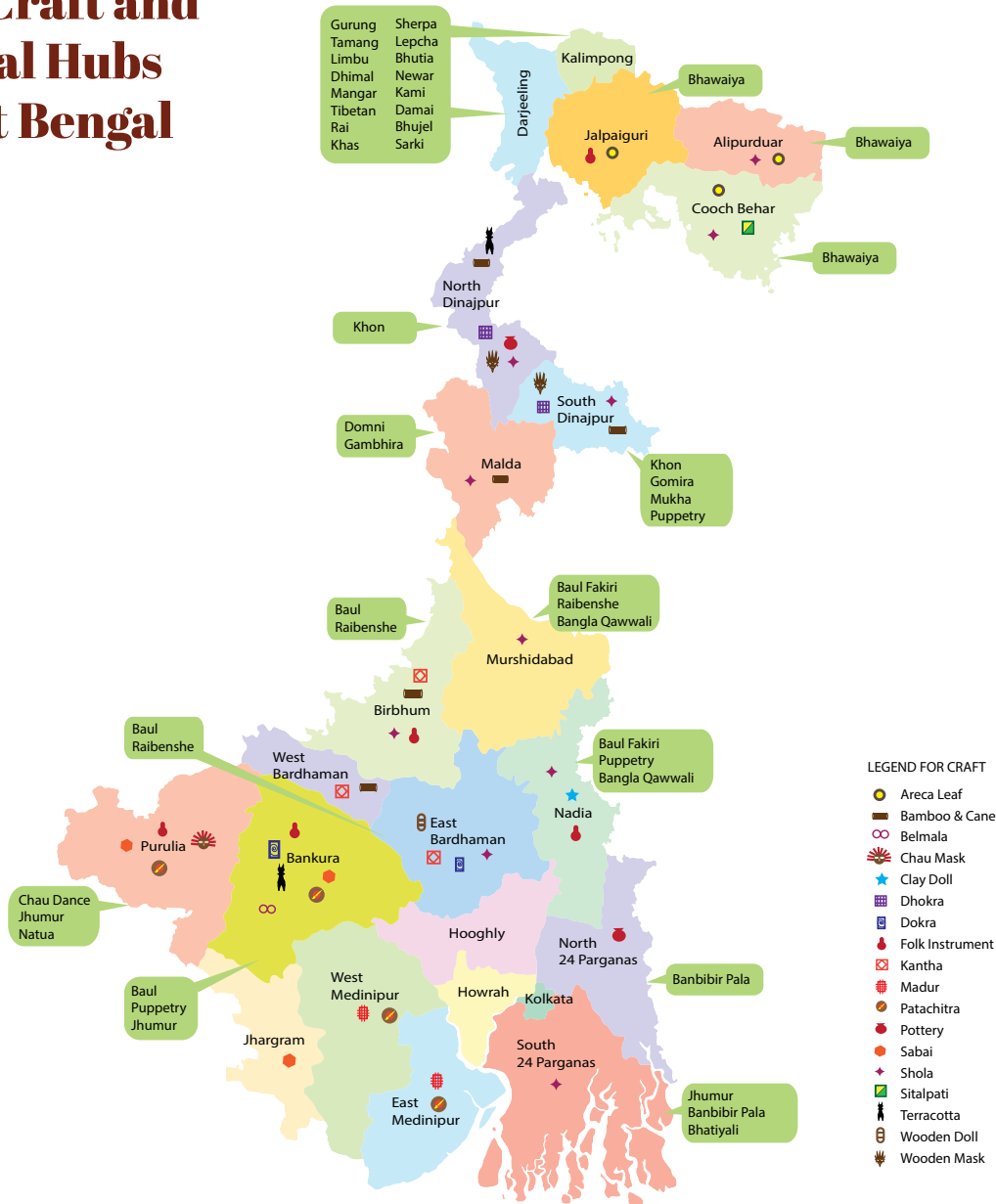
## Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs

An initiative of Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal  
in collaboration with UNESCO, New Delhi Office



**Intangible Cultural  
Heritage in  
rural Bengal**

# Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs of West Bengal



# Safeguarding Culture and Advancing Development

In West Bengal, villages of handicraft and folk artists have emerged as Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs embodying how culture is an enabler and driver of sustainable development. The Government of West Bengal has invested in strengthening the eco system for supporting transmission of traditional skills in art and craft, building capacity of the artists to unleash their creativity and supporting marketing and promotion to reach out to global audiences.

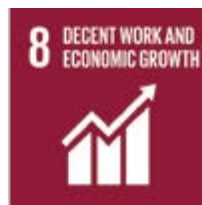
In September 2013, the Department of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Textiles (MSME&T), Government of West Bengal signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UNESCO, New Delhi to safeguard intangible cultural heritage of the state as a way to foster cultural sustainability and viability. The first project, Rural Craft Hub (RCH) from December 2013 - September 2016, covered 10 craft traditions and 3000 traditional crafts persons. Seeing the positive impact of the project, the Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs (RCCH) initiative was rolled out in 2016-19 as its successor to cover 15 districts and 12000 tradition bearers. Dept of MSME&T also supported West Bengal Khadi and Village Industries Board (WBKVIB) to develop Folk Art Centres at many of these villages for preserving and practicing respective arts and crafts. WBKVIB also supported rejuvenation of natural fibre-based traditions like Madur and Sabai between 2015 & 2019. Now the RCCH project is scaled up to cover altogether 50000 handicraft and folk artists across West Bengal.

The Rural Craft and Cultural Hub initiative has resulted in transformative change. Formerly, the crafts persons were largely wage based artisans while most of the performing artists had no income from their art. They faced challenges like lack of marketable design, market knowledge, market opportunities, standardization and quality etc. The makers, especially the women hardly venture out of their locality. Access to digital technology was practically nil. The initiative supported skill transmission from the masters to young people in different villages, created awareness through heritage educational programs at schools, fairs and festivals. Participatory documentation and inventorying led to revival and rejuvenation of lost styles, techniques, songs and dances. Use of natural colour making by Patachitra artists led to value addition. Oral traditions were safeguarded by documentation of songs and publication of books. Audio visual documentation supported training and learning.

*Safeguarding culture has contributed to progress towards several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*

Artist villages have now transformed to beautiful cultural hubs. Annual village fairs, live craft demonstrations and engaging workshops draw visitors here who revisit time and again. The hubs have folk art centres which act like shared community spaces for artists to engage and interact. These spaces are also beautiful living museums showcasing fine art works. Ideal for experiencing rural cultural tourism, these locations are ever-evolving bringing to spotlight the rich intangible cultural heritage of West Bengal. Village festivals and folk art centres have bolstered identity, recognition and pride of the tradition bearers. Rural cultural tourism has benefitted the larger community through new income opportunities.

Professionalization of traditional skills has led to development of cultural micro enterprise at the grassroots and fostered inclusive growth. Income has increased two to three times. Women lead artist collectives. The artists have bank accounts and enjoy credit linkage. Education and health are valued. Children are completing school education and villages have sanitation. Women, from being the ones within domestic walls, have successfully put their step forward to cross national boundaries.









# Folk Art Centres and Living Museums

Many of the villages of West Bengal now have Folk Art Centres embodying the way of life and cultural heritage of the community and these centres are now playing leading role in hosting practice, training, promotion, exhibition and collaboration. The community museums in craft villages showcase exemplary works of art and detail the process through interesting exhibits. They provide workspace for workshops, community meetings and networking. The living museums in the villages are shared community spaces for learning by younger generations. Artists, art lovers, students, researchers, photographers, bloggers, film makers and tourists enjoy visiting these cultural spaces for information, research, exchange, workshops and collaborations with the artists. The community museums are the pride of the people and are playing a key role in safeguarding heritage and promoting rural cultural tourism. They are managed by artist collectives. Cultural spaces like the folk art centres and the nucleus of the art form - the artists' houses and workspaces - have added to the charm of these locales.



## Resource Centre

- Bikna
- Chandipur
- Charida
- Dariyapur
- Ghughumari
- Gorbhanga
- Hariharpara
- Jalangi
- Jhargram
- Kushmandi
- Maldi
- Natungram
- Pakhiralay
- Panchmura
- Pingla
- Sabang









## Festivals

A familiar adage in Bengali is ‘banglaye baro maashe tyaro parbon’ (thirteen festivities in twelve months), signifying the multiplicity of festivals and celebrations in every month of the calendar. Apart from the prominent festivals like Durga Puja, Bengali New Year, Dolyatra, Rathayatra, Raash and Poush Parbon, rivers to rituals, trees to tradition, personality to play, there is nothing that Bengal does not have a gala around. The festival-crazy Bengalis have presented a pretty persuasive logic behind these celebrations. They give three reasons – festivals for an escape from drudgery, festivals for a satisfaction to the senses and festivals as not only an offering to the Supreme Being but to welcome, remember or be grateful to someone’s beloved. Recognizing this intrinsic strength of festivals, Rabindranath Tagore initiated the Basanta Utsav and Poush Mela in Shantiniketan and also social festivals like Raksha Bandhan.

What festivals do is sprinkle colours to the monotony in our lives; and in turn these festivals are made beautiful by the art and craft traditions of Bengal. The vibes of a festival roots from an amalgam of artistic contributions of our living heritages. Their amazing skills are admired and raved about at every celebration - pompous or not. While the Malakar decorate the festival premises with Shola, the floral artists decorate it with dainty flowers, the weavers weave garments for the festival and the village girls paint beautiful alpanas. People from far and wide are warmly welcomed at these merrymaking affairs. Festivals contribute substantially to the sustainability and viability of our art and culture as the tradition bearers earn from such festivals, fairs and purchases made for the many rituals.

In the rural cultural and craft hubs of Bengal, village festivals have evolved as a means to provide a new context for celebration of cultural heritage. Annual festivals are organized by the artist collectives in weekends between September and March. The festivals provide opportunity to experience the rich art and culture, understand and participate in the making of craft and listen to discourses on the meaning and value of heritage from the masters. Artist villages which had no footfall a decade back have now emerged as cultural destinations, where one can experience cultural tourism. Drawing crowds in thousands from the neighbouring towns and villages and also national and international visitors, some of the most prominent of these festivals are Pot Maya, Chau Jhumur Utsav, Dokra Mela, Baul Fakiri Utsav, Bhawaiya Mela, Charida Chau Mukhosh Mela and the Mukha Mela.

# Impact (2013 - 2019)

## Improved viability of ICH

- Grassroot training system is established.
- Young generation is participating in cultural enterprise.
- Tradition bearers are enjoying increased opportunity to performance and sale.
- New audiences and markets are created.
- Cultural skills have supported resilience building during Covid-19 pandemic.



## Improved income

- Income from the performing art forms was practically nil and income from craft was seasonal or low with artists working as wage based labourers. Artists now enjoy direct market linkage and connected to national and international networks.
- Identity has changed from unskilled daily labour to artist.
- Increase of income is 2.5 times for handicraft and twice for performing and visual art.
- 1000+ traditional bearers have participated in 150+ exhibitions and festivals.
- 150+ artists have travelled abroad, mostly to Europe, followed by Asia.

## Enterprise Development

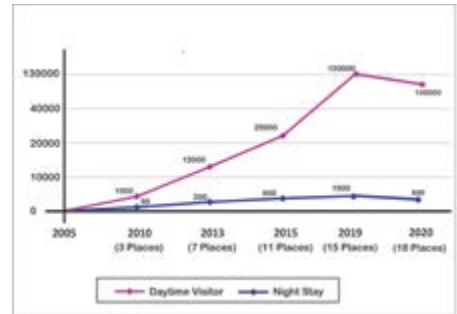
- Thriving entrepreneurs and cultural enterprises are created who are energising entire community.
- Artist collectives are managing quality production and supply.
- Intellectual Property Rights is protected through Geographical Indication. Madur, Chau Mask, Wooden Mask, Dokra, Patachitra, Terracotta collectives are registered users. 120 artists are registered with GI.
- Craftmark certification acquired for Sitalpati, Wooden Mask, Dokra, Chau Mask, Patachitra, Sabai and Madur.





## Villages transformed into cultural destinations

- Village festivals are calendarised and are held between October and March .
- Day time visitors have crossed 120000 per year and 1500 stayed overnight in last 2 years across 15 artist villages.
- WBKVIB has developed 15 Resource Centres and community museums strengthening village tourism at the art and craft villages.



## Fostered Sustainable Development

- Communities of artists are taking ownership in achieving SDG goals.
- 55% of artists have their own land.
- 93% of artists are linked to bank.
- 75% of handicraft artists and 22% of performing artists are credit linked.
- 99% of artist homes have electricity.
- 98% of artist homes have sanitation.
- Children of artists are completing school education.

Positive Change in %	Electricity	Education	Sanitation	Lifestyle	Savings & Investment habit
Handicraft	30	33	40	27	14
Performing Art	24	10	39	20	11
Visual Art	9	49	26	34	13

(Data from endline assessment in 2019)

## Women Empowered

- 67% of craft persons and 22% of performing artists are women.
- Women are enjoying improved production and marketing skills, increased income and mobility.



# Patachitra

Bengal has a unique oral –visual artform of scroll painting called Patachitra. The artists, called Patuas, are painters, lyricists, and singers – all rolled into one. They narrate the stories that are painted on the scrolls through their songs. Patachitra is known for its bold colours, lines and strokes and is done on different products like clothes, umbrellas, teapots etc. The artists continue the tradition of using natural colours made from flowers, leaves and stones. The Patuas (Patachitra artists) paint and sing on various themes like mythological tales (Ramayana, Mahabharata, Mangalkabya), historical and contemporary themes (biographies of great personalities, nuclear warfare) and social issues (women empowerment, child right, health, literacy, Covid-19). Patachitra of Bengal has received Geographical Indication (GI) status in 2018.



## Pingla, Paschim Medinipur

### *Patachitra Village*

Naya village in Pingla is home to 255 Patachitra artists. The village has a Folk Art Centre and Community Museum developed by the Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal, where one can learn about different kinds of scrolls, the stories and marvel at the wide range of diversified products like t-shirts, hand fans, lamps, bags, umbrellas etc. One can attend workshops on Patachitra painting, learn to make natural colours out of leaves and flowers from the Patachitra artists themselves.

If you are visiting Naya, you may also visit the nearby mat weavers hub at Sarta, Sabang.

**Trail:** Patachitra village, Madur village at Sabang and heritage places around Jhargram.



Stay at

One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Hazra Guest House - 9433239496

Zulfikar Guest House - 9438072926

Pingla Folk Art Centre - 9932851321

Artists

Mantu Chitrakar – 9733521335

Amit Chitrakar -7602006594

Swarna Chitrakar - 9732799107

Rahim Chitrakar - 9932851321





## Chandipur, Purba Medinipur

### *Patachitra Village*

Chandipur is a thriving hub of Patachitra painting in Purba Medinipur district. The artists have earned great respect for their work and has travelled to many locations across India.

Subha Chitrakar: 97326 12975

Abed Chitrakar : 81673 86211

Khokon Chitrakar: 97327 42028



## Majramura, Purulia

### *Tribal Patachitra Village*

The Patachitra tradition practiced in Majramura village of Purulia is known for its simplistic style and compositions, minimalistic background decorations and distinctive themes, which are strikingly different from the scroll paintings of Medinipur, Bankura, Murshidabad. The artists use stones for making of colours. There are 46 families practicing the tradition.

Khemananda Chitrakar: 78639 60028

Henadhan Chitrakar : 9641372269

Manik Chitrakar: 85098 88404



## Charida, Purulia

### *Chau Mask Village*

Charida, is a village of more than 300 skilled mask makers of the celebrated dance form of the region, Chau dance. It is an acrobatic martial art based dance form inscribed in UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This quaint village in the land of red soil is located at the scenic foothills of the Ajodhya Hills, about 5 kms from Baghmundi, Purulia.

The tradition of Chau mask making started in Charida about 150 years back during the rule of King Madan Mohan Singh Deo of Baghmundi. The Chau Mask has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The vibrant, colourful and elaborate masks convey the vigorous intent of the art form that portrays animals or characters from the epics. One can experience the process of making a mask directly from the artists. The hub has a Folk Art Centre and Community Museum developed by the Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal.

Trail: Charida - Chau mask village, Ajodhya hills, Chau village at Balarampur, Deulghata at Joypur. On the way back one can visit Garhpanchakot, Telkupi, Baran, Kashipur palace and the heritage around Bankura.

One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Malgudi resort (8945500559), Banjara Camp (9641858953), Murugama Dam – Palash Bitan (9674222670) and Bon Palashi (9874361951), Aangina at Charida (9732057183), Folk Centre at Balarampur (9064480856)

Bhim Sutradhar – 9635304740  
 Falguni Sutradhar - 9735129308  
 Dharmendra Sutradhar - 9673719388

Stay at



Artists







## Bikna, Bankura

### *Dokra Village*



Bikna village is close to Bankura town. It is home to approximately 150 artists practicing the primitive Dokra art. Dokra is the art of melting figurines through the extinct metal casting technique. Dokra is characterized by primitive simplicity, rustic beauty, imaginative designs and patterns making it a coveted collector's item. Dokra has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. The hub has a Folk Art Centre and Community Museum developed by the Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal.

One can plan a day trip to Bikna for a sneak peek into the lives of the artists and experience the craft making process. One can also visit Bishnupur, Mukutmanipur, Susunia from Bikna.

**Trail:** Dokra Hub, Heritage tourism around Bishnupur including Terracotta village at Panchmura, Susunia and Mukutmanipur.

One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Bishnupur Tourist Lodge (9732100950),  
Banalata Resort (9732111706), Panchmura  
Folk Centre maintained by artists cluster  
(9732187161) & Bikna Folk Art Centre  
(9932546842)

Harendranath Rana - 9932601095  
Somnath Karmakar - 9932546842



Stay at



Artists

# Panchmura, Bankura

## *Terracotta Village*



Terracotta of Bankura is one of the first attempts of man at clay modeling that has been perfected with time. Baked in sun and burnt in mud kilns with dry eucalyptus leaves, the earthly ensembles in dull ochre or red are beauteous caricatures. Terracotta has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

The simple yet dynamic terracotta artistry of Panchmura has its origin in religious ritual. The structure of the 'Bankura Horse' has been fashioned to symbolize a mark of devotion and valour. Panchmura offers a wide range of Terracotta products from animal to human figurines as well as utility, home décor and jewellery. There are around 270 Terracotta artists in Panchmura. One can participate in craft -making workshops, learn the history of the craft from the artists. Panchmura has a folk art centre developed by the Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal. The place is 23 kms from Bishnupur.

**Trail:** Heritage tourism around Bishnupur including Panchmura Terracotta village and Bikna Dokra hub in Bankura.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice,  
however here are few options:

Bishnupur Tourist Lodge

(9732100950), Banalata Resort

(9732111706), Panchmura Folk

Centre maintained by artists cluster

(6295443975)

Bhutnath Kumbhakar - 9732187161

Jagannath Kumbhakar - 8101737907

Stay at

Artists







## Maldi, Purulia

### *Chau Village*

Purulia is a pied panorama of nature, people, culture and heritage. It is the land of the spectacular Chau dance inscribed in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2010.

Chau is a colorful, martial mask dance of Eastern India. The performances, called Palas, begin with Jhumur song followed by Shehnai. The dance is marked by acrobatic twists and turns. The stories are based on mythological tales propagating moral and ethical values. Nearly 6,000 artists pursue this vibrant performing folk art tradition in Purulia. A Folk Art Centre at Maldi village in Balarampur has been developed by the West Bengal Khadi & Village Industries Board (WBKVIB) as part of Rural Craft and Cultural Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO.

**Trail:** Chau dance villages around Balarampur, Bandwan & Burrabazar, Chau mask maker's village at Charida, natural heritage around Ajodhya Hills.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Malgudi resort (8945500559),  
Banjara Camp (9641858953), Murugama Dam  
– Palash Bitan (9674222670) and Bon Palashi  
(9874361951), Hotels at Ajodhya, Aangina at  
Charida (9732057183), Folk Centre at Balarampur  
(9064480856).

Jagannath Chowdhury - 9064480856

Biren Kalindi - 8972679889

Shyamali Chowdhury - 9382143764

Stay at

Artists





## Gorbhanga, Nadia

### *Fakirs Village*

Gorbhanga village of Nadia district is the home of the Fakirs, the makers of soulful, mellifluous music. The village symbolises a quiet celebration of peace and free flowing Baul Fakiri music. Gorbhanga is home of well known Fakir/ Musicians like Arman Fakir, Khaibar Fakir, Golam Fakir, Babu Fakir, Nur Alam, Amirul Fakir and a lot of young & extremely talented young ones like Shah Alam & Ohidul, who are making ripples across the music world. At Gorbhanga you can stay at artists' houses, avail home cooked food, enjoy music throughout. If time permits, any day post lunch, one can also plan a short trip to Chhote Golam's ashram at Jalangi (located 45 minutes away).



Babu Fakir- 9733948841  
Arman Fakir - 9733956858



## Jalangi, Murshidabad

### *Fakirs Village*

Jalangi of Murshidabad district is the home of the Fakirs who have mastered the art of Bangla Qawwali. The village symbolizes a quiet celebration of peace and free flowing music - the elementary essence of the village. Golam Fakir, Mallika Akar are renowned musicians of the area. WBKVIB has developed a folk art centre at Jalangi as part of Rural Craft & Cultural Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO.

**Trail:** From Jalangi one can travel to other Baul Fakiri destinations like Gorbhanga, Goas, Chapra, Asannagar in Nadia, Hariharpara in Murshidabad.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Artists houses at  
Jalangi (9732917198)  
and one can also stay at artist's houses in  
Gorbhanga (9733948841)

Chote Golam - 9732917198

Stay at

Artists





## Santiniketan, Birbhum

Birbhum is the “The land of red soil (Lalbhumi)” also known as “the land of the brave” or Virbhumi. Remnants of civilizations add profound historical importance to this place. Several kings have dominated Birbhum since the beginning. Birbhum is noted for its topography and its cultural heritage which is unique and is somewhat different from that of the other districts in West Bengal. There is a great prominence of Bauls, martial art of Raibenshe, Shola craft and Kantha embroidery. Some of the prominent Baul akhras around Bolpur are that of Rina Das Baul and Rabi Das Baul.

Visitors interested to travel to Joydev can visit Baul Akhras. Raibenshe, the prominent traditional martial art dance form that combines acrobatic movements and balancing tricks is also prominent in Charkol, near Nanoor Kantha hub.

Trail: Santiniketan, Baul akhras in and around Santiniketan, Shola at Surul, Raibenshe village Charkol.

Stay at

One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Rangabitan and Santobitan Tourist Lodge : 9732100920, Guloncho Home Stay : 9831056023, Nayatara Home Stay : 9836814406/9831210861, Nibhriti Guest House 9823616967/9158900000, Tepantar Theatre Village : 9434646982 (located at other side of Ajoy, opposite Joydev Kenduli), Udashi Babar Akhra at Ballavpur (9830028621)



Rina Das (Paruldanga - Baul) - 9800120227  
 Rabi Das (Purbapalli - Baul) - 9614196848  
 Sadhu Das (Joydev - Baul) - 9732892009  
 Lakshman Das Baul (Joydev - Baul) - 8900441430  
 Rakshankar Pramanik (Charkol - Raibenshe) - 8016474415  
 Mongol Bittar (Ahmedpur - Raibenshe) - 9609711252  
 Sunil Thandar (Charkol - Raibenshe) - 9609620069  
 Kamal Malakar (Shola of Surul) - 9474009311  
 Kanchan Malakar (Shola of Surul) - 9563200730

Artists





## Dariyapur Dokra Village

### *Dokra Village*



Dariyapur, a village in Purba Bardhaman district, is popularly known for a unique craft, Dokra. One of the earliest methods of non-ferrous metal casting, Bengal Dokra has received the Geographical Indication (GI) tag. Artisans of the Dariyapur village settled here about 120 years back. Dokra has evolved from a household craft to one which is revered all over the world for its simple yet rustic appeal. One can witness live demonstrations of Dokra craft making, know about intricate designs and folk motifs and meet the practitioners in engaging workshops. Artists make a wide range of items starting from utility to decor. WBKVIB has developed a folk art centre here as part of Rural Craft Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO. Other than an elaborate display of the crafts and its making at the Dariyapur festival ground, you may also visit community museum and witness the rare collection of antique Dokra artifacts.

**Trail:** Dokra Hub, Ancient temples like Sat Deul and 108 Shiva Temple, Bhalki Machan.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice in and around Guskara, however here are few options nearby:  
 Bhalki Machan (9434537545)  
 Bannabagram Baul Ashram (9674295394)  
 Tepantar Theatre Village (9434646982)

Stay at

Subho Karmakar - 9153255955  
 Suresh Karmakar - 7872287512  
 Subhas Chandra Mandal - 9735228086  
 Gouranga Karmakar - 8001058766  
 Sanjay Karmakar - 9775369912  
 Ashok Karmakar - 9635673082

Artists

## Natungram, Purba Bardhaman

### *Wooden Doll Village*

Natungram is the hub of wooden doll makers. Carved out of a single piece of wood, these dolls from ancient folklore and mythology are characterised by their vibrant colours and distinctive ethnic style. The owl, considered auspicious as the escort of the goddess of prosperity, Lakshmi, made in Natungram, enjoys an iconic status among Bengal's handicrafts.

WBKVIB has developed a folk art centre at Natungram as part of Rural Craft Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO. The folk art centre has lodging facilities equipped with all basic amenities. Visitors at Natungram can witness the artists at work, explore the Folk Art Centre to learn about the craft and its technique and learn the stories behind it.

**Trail:** Natungram, Heritage sites around Kalna including Nabadwip, Katwa and Santiniketan can also be visited.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice in and around Kalna/ Katwa, however one can also stay at village folk art centre (7679099205)



Bijoy Sutradhar - 7872214736  
Dilip Sutradhar - 9333386501

Stay at

Artists



## Madur

Madur is a generic term for floor mats in Bengal. It is an integral part of Bengali lifestyle. Women of the household weave delicate and intricate mats. Madur products are also developed in looms. There are around 20 of these small units across Purba Medinipur. Madur of Bengal has received Geographical Indication (GI) status. The range of products varies from home décor, furnishing, and lifestyle products like bags, purses, and jackets. It is sold in the local markets for day to day use and also transported to adjoining states to be used for ritualistic purposes. With the shift in market needs, the weaves are now also used for making decorative and utilitarian items.



## Sabang, Paschim Medinipur

Sabang in Paschim Medinipur is known for its Madur tradition. There are around 10 units at Sabang developing exquisite Madur products. The Folk Art Centre and production centres were developed at Sabang for quality production and environment. There are more than 1000 weavers working on the craft, the majority being women.

**Stay:** The Folk Art Centre at Sarta, Sabang provides facilities for the stay of visitors to enjoy the age old craft tradition



Nisikanta Das : 9800314193

Akhil Jana : 9748137691

Tapash Jana: 9434942166

## Bhagawanpur, Purba Medinipur

Bhagawanpur block is the hub of Madurkathi weaving in Purba Medinipur, between Haldia and Digha. The place is well connected to Kolkata by bus and takes about 3 hours to reach there. The nearest railway station is Bajkul (Deshpran railway station) which is almost 1.5 km away from the place.

**Stay:** Hotels are available at Debra, Contai and Tamluk. One may also stay at the home-stay set-up by the Madur society at Bhagawanpur.

Ranjit Guhait : 9733486806

Biswajit Dutta : 9733804115



## Sundarban, South 24 Parganas

Sundarban is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is renowned for its bio-diversity, unique landscape and the iconic mangrove forests. This landscape of the Sundarban inspires the folk traditions of this land, such as Bonbibir Pala, a mythological play that revolves around the age-old conflict of man and animal. The mystic rivers of the Sundarban inspire soul-stirring Bhatiyali songs. Likewise, another local tradition, Jhumur dance and songs, resonates through time.

The land offers visitors an experience of a lifetime. The tourists can also visit artists' villages at Pakhiralay, Satjelia, Dayapur in Gosaba block and Jogeshganj in Hingalgaon block and experience folk forms of the delta region. There are more than 800 artists practicing the tradition of Bhatiyali, Jhumur and Banbibir Pala. WBKVIB has developed a folk art centre at Pakhiralay as part of Rural Craft & Cultural Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO.

**Trail:** Different islands of Sundarban.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Pakhiralay: Mainak/ Badaban - 9732820530

Satjelia: Riverside Holiday (8820444900),  
Sundarban Wild Camp (8017595380)

Bali: Sunderban JD Camp (9775517654)

Sajnekhali : Matla TP – (9836776010)

Jharkhali: Aranyak Home Stay (7865857711), Sarkar Home stay (9775621037), Mangrove Wild Home Stay (9748831356), Akash Home Stay (9733538463)

Rabindra Mondal /Putul Mondal - 8001953147 (Satjelia - Bonbibir Pala)  
Baburam Sardar - 9153854927 (Pakhiralay - Bonbibir Pala)  
Ramapada Mistry - 9564495574 (Kalitala - Bonbibir Pala)  
Dipali Sarkar - 9002730858 (Jogeshganj - Bonbibir Pala)  
Mitali Mondal - 8967632767 (Lahiripur - Jhumur)  
Bablu Sarkar - 8967670226 (Satjelia - Jhumur)  
Bishnupada Sarkar - 8159845715 (Kalitala - Bhatiyali)  
Manoranjan Koyal - 9800970287 (Kalitala - Bhatiyali)  
Rafikul Islam Gaji - 9775211605 (Sahebkhali - Bhatiyali)  
Artists cluster coordinator - Puranjan Mondal 9732820530





## Nanoor, Birbhum

### *Kantha Village*

Nanoor tells the story of powerful women making exquisite Kantha embroidery. Kantha is an age-old quilting tradition where women used to stitch together layers of old cloth and embroider with simple run stitch. There are around 10 women led clusters formed with 600 women who are weaving new dreams. Visit Tajkira Begum's workshop and learn about Kantha, collect a souvenir from wonderful exhibits. Come over to this beautiful village from January 15-17, 2021 between 11am - 5pm.

Kantha as a craft is unique in its ethnicity, traditional appeal and contemporary allure. The embroidery is also known as 'Dorukha', meaning, turning old pieces of cloth into things of beauty. The art work includes beautiful motifs, flowers, animals, birds and embodies themes of everyday activities.

Nanoor is also known for old terracotta temples of the Pala and Sena dynasty. The village is the home of famous 15th century poet, Chandidas. Nanoor is an hour drive from Bolpur.



Tajkira Begum - 6296761698  
 Lovely Bibi - 8372994373  
 Naziba Bibi - 8670081686  
 Lutfa Bibi - 7318767341



# Sabai

Sabai is a tufted perennial grass with basal sheaths woolly with whitish hairs. Sabai is primarily used as raw material to make ropes. The grass is found in forest fringe areas of Purulia, Bankura and Jhargram districts of West Bengal. The ropes are used in making local cots called Khatiyas and chairs. However, artists also make a wide range of products with Sabai. As the grass ensures income to the communities, it is often referred to as the money plant. It also narrates the story of empowerment of women of the forest fringe community.

The artists make utility items like cots, chair, table, carpet, door-mats, bags of different style, fruit basket, flower vases, coaster, tea container, bottle-holders, sofa set, table mats, wall hanging, photo stand etc. This grass is bleached, softened, naturally dyed and de-odorized for making various decorative items. Some handicrafts products made from Sabai grass are quite popular in the export market also. Sabai Grass products are eco-friendly in nature and hence are superior to synthetic products in quality.

## Bandwan, Purulia

Rajagram is a tiny hamlet nestled within Kuchiya Gram Panchayat, in Purulia's Bandwan block. The village has Ghatshila (East Singbhum) in the South, and the beautiful landscape of Duarsini in the West. Mrigichami is a tiny village that lies right in the middle of a dense forest in Purulia district, Manbajar-II Block now a familiar name in the field of handicrafts.



Ashima Tantubai : 9749173911  
Baby Munda: 93827 16921  
Dilip Mura: 9907026586

## Jhargram

In Jhargram district, the villages of Chandabila, Narda, Raishol and Purnapani in Nayagram is surrounded by dense forests and is known for the making of Sabai products. Mednipur has some ancient temples made of incredible Terracotta designs. Tapoban temple attracts a lot of tourists for their ornate beauty. Rameshwar Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is also in this area and the local belief is that it was built in a night, using colossal chunks of stone. The weekend destination will be held at the Centre of Excellence of Sal & Sabai built by West Bengal Khadi & Village Industries Board at Jhargram.

Heeralal Mahato : 9064542734  
Rekha Mahato : 9547767078







## Ghughumari, Cooch Behar

### *Sitalpati Village*

Cooch Behar is the abode of Sitalpati (Cool Mats) weavers, around 3000 artists exist.

Mat making involves slicing, weaving and processing cane. A simple natural colour variation of brown and white along with the weavers' creative patterns bring about the most intricately simple yet unique designs.

WBKVIB has developed a folk art centre at Ghughumari as part of Rural Craft Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO. The Folk Art Centre in Ghughumari has a community museum, workshop space and simple accommodation facility.

Trail : Ghughumari is just 20 min from Cooch Behar town so visitors may also enjoy tours of the Royal Palace, the magnificent Madan Mohan temple, the nearby Chilapata forest and the rivers.



Pintu Dutta : 9064745638

Santosh Bhowmick : 6296703152



## Gajol, Malda

## Kushmandi, Dakshin Dinajpur

## Kunoor, Uttar Dinajpur

## Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur

Kushmandi is the home of Wooden Mask makers, Dhokra weavers, Pottery and Basketry artists. Mahisbathan in Kushmandi is famous for its Wooden Mask. Kulator and Dehat are rich in Dhokra. Kunoor is the Pottery Hub. Raiganj in Uttar Dinajpur & Gajol in Malda have basketry clusters and Bamboo Mask is made at Baishyapara in Ushaharan.

Interact with artists, participate at workshop and see Community Museum at Kushmandi folk art centre developed by WBKVIB as part of Rural Craft Hub initiative by Government of West Bengal's Department of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises & Textiles (MSME&T), in association with UNESCO. Wooden Mask is accredited with Geographical Indication (GI).



### Kushmandi

Paresh Chandra Sarkar : 8637535554

Shankar Das : 7319043649

### Kunoor

Dulal Ray : 9775632391

Rishikesh Ray : 7908606232

### Gajol

Sreenath Tudu : 9002662588

Sujata Das : 7501121068

### Raiganj

Minati Das : 9614557745

Gouri Sarkar : 7718169083





## Ausgram, Purba Bardhaman

### *Kantha Village*

Ausgram located in Purba Bardhaman is the hub of Kantha artists. There are more than 1000 artists living in around Ausgram. Bannabagram village in Ausgram, located near Guskara railway station, has an active Baul ashram for practice and promotion of Baul music. There are also Jhumur and Chadar Badar (tribal puppetry) artists in the region.

Kantha is unique in its ethnicity, traditional appeal and contemporary allure. The embroidery sessions are an opportunity to socialize and a welcome break from the drudgery of everyday chores. The craft is customary of rural women and the end products are exemplary in beauty and skill.

**Trail:** Dokra Hub, Ancient temples like Sat Deul and 108 Shiva Temple, Bhalki Machan.



One can stay at any place of his/her choice, however here are few options:

Bannabagram Baul Ashram (9674295394)  
Tepantar Theatre Village (9434646982)  
Bhalki Machan (9434537545)

Jagannath Chandra : 9932861168  
Saiful Molla : 9674295394

Stay at



Contact



# Possible Accommodations around Art & Cultural Villages of West Bengal

One can stay anywhere at his/ her preference, but here are a few possible options:

## Near Pingla Patachitra village, Paschim Medinipur

### At Pingla

1. Hazra's Baganbari Homestay have 3 rooms of 2/4 occupancy, contact : Hazra Babu - 9433239496
2. Jahangir's Guest House have 5 rooms of double occupancy, contact : Zulfikar - 9438072926

### At Kolaghat

1. Regal Guest House - 9800211130 / 03228-231945
2. Star Village Resort - 9800462870 / 9804753753
3. Pratyasa guest house
4. Hotel sonar bangla - Mr. Abhishek Pal Choudhury, Owner of Sonar Bangla Group – 9830278236, 9051266260

### At East Mednipur

1. Monchasha Paushi - 9477476376
2. Mahishadal Rajbari - 9830275928

## Near Dokra village at Bikna and Terracotta village at Panchmura, Bankura

### At Bankura

1. Hotel Saptaparna - 9434108611

### At Bishnupur

2. Hotel Annapurna, 3 Star Hotel
3. West Bengal Govt. Tourism Lodge – 9732100950
4. Lakshmi Park - 03244 256 353
5. Heritage Hotel – 8961965081
6. Siddhi Vinayak Guest House (Mr. Partha Sarathi Banerjee, Owner – 9836108764
7. Monalisha Lodge – 9434392072 / 03242-252934
8. Hotel Bishnupur - 09434520275
9. Bonolota resort – 9732111706
10. Moulisha Resort - 8584894917

### At Mukut Manipur

1. Aranyak resort -
2. Peerless Resort - Mr. Pallab Sengupta, Manager – 9932787993
3. Aparajita
4. Amrapali - +91-3242-253272/ 251052



### Hotels near Charida/Maldi, Purulia

1. Aangina which is in Charida Village. Contact: Pinaki Ganguly - 9732057183
2. Community Resource Centre in Maldi, 2 bedrooms (non AC), Contact Jagannath - 9064480856
3. CADC Tourist Lodge - 03252-225726/ 9163036057 (CADC KOL)
4. Kushal Palli - 81450 01000 / 9831260606
5. Khairabera Eco Camp (Gaven: 9748984053)
6. Chhowburu, and Anmona (Sujit: 9732294515)
7. Akash Hilltop – Banti 9735144155
8. Kanka Lodge -
9. Sonkupi Banjara Camp (Sujit: 9732294515)
10. Ramprastha hotel
11. Rama Residency
12. Panchet residency – 8335881000
13. Bonpolashi Resort - 9830009370
14. Malgudi Resort (Akash Mahato : 8945500559 / 8101562985)
15. Nature Hut (Jiban Mandal – 8001703373)
16. Sprangle Wings Resort Pvt. Ltd (Booking: 7278565659 / 7980930079)
17. Charulata Resort also known as Aranye Dinratri, Gar Panchakot  
(Swarup Pati : 9593855050)
18. Paryatan Kendra, Joychandi hill (Kartik barui : 6296435510)
19. Garpanchakot Govt. Tourist Lodge - 033 2335 0064
20. Garpanchakot Forest Dept. Lodge - 033 2335 0064
21. Holiday Panchakot
22. Nimdih Gandhi Ashram (Contact : 9661464540/ 8420106396) 9 cottages (Non AC) with double occupancy and 4 rooms with 4-5 capacity (attached toilet)

### Hotels near Shantiniketan, Bolpur, Joydev-Kenduli, Natungram, Ausgram

#### At Santiniketan, Bolpur

1. Ram Shyam village resort - 07076319664
2. Hotel Royal Bengal - 09007982002
3. Mitali home stays - 09433898067
4. Shakuntala village resort - 09232637439
5. West Bengal Govt Tourist Lodge - 9732100920/ 8697984960
6. UDASIN Homestay - 9830054533
7. Choupahari, Daronda - 9831140670
8. RareEarth Homestay - 080173 20752
9. Babli (Nature Resort) - 9932665515
10. Mayas Resort – 9830173905/ 7980136497
11. Maharshi Niwas - 097756 33633

12. Mark & Meadows - 094340 07777
13. Chhuti Resorts - 094340 12872
14. Royal Bengal Hotels - 090079 82002
15. Raktakarabi Karugram Hotel - 096742 14101
16. Aaro Aakash Hotel - 9830181462
17. Home Stay World - 074328 73009
18. Village View Resort (Homestay) - 062963 98205
19. Probas And Basa (Homestay) - 097482 91476
20. Upasana B&B, Daronda - 9831073626
21. Guloncho Home stay, Deer Park - 9831056023
22. Nayantara Home stay, Deer Park - 7003159608/ 9836814406/ 9831210861
23. Nibhriti Guest House, Prantik - 9823616967/ 9158900000
24. Dancing Lights, Prantik - 9836455507
25. Udashi Babar Akhra, Ballavpur (mud house with 2 rooms and a tree house) - 9830028621
26. The mud house - 093335 14989
27. The creek - 090025 38677
28. Deer park eco-home - 089261 84699
29. At Paruldanga - Rina Das Baul's house
30. Mahulboni (Daronda : 9433040177, 9433039997)

#### **Hotels near Joydev Kenduli**

1. Aruni Spiritual Ashram - 9477484136
2. Kheyatori Resort - +91 974 800 1268 / 905 171 9903 / 983 028 6088
3. Tepantar Theatre Village offers 7 cottages with double occupancy (Non AC) and 5 big rooms of 8-10 occupancy (attached toilet) (Contact : 9434646982)

#### **Ausgram**

1. At Bannabagram Baul Ashram (Contact: 8420106396)
2. Aranya Sundari, Valki Machan - 9153420133
3. Morbandh - 8371954525

#### **Natungram**

Community Resource Centre which offers 4 twin-shared bedrooms (non AC),  
contact: Bijay Sutradhar - 7872214736, Dilip Sutradhar - 9333386501

#### **Near Katwa**

Belun eco-village resort - 9051212225



### **at Katwa**

1. Hotel Priyadarshini - 03454 255615 / 9732076690
2. Panthonir guest house - 7797675718

### **at Memari**

1. Shree Hari Guest house - 98304 49947 / 97327 39924

### **Stay options in and around Mursidabad**

1. West Bengal Govt. Tourist Lodge – 9732510031
2. Cossimbazar-the Palace of Roys – Mr. Pallab Roy – 9831031108
3. Bari Kothi Heritage Hotel, Azimgunj – Ms.Divya: 9051200800
4. Fame Hotel – 9734923388
5. Hotel shinesine – Mr. Arijit, Manager – 9593055558
6. Hotel Nandini – 7477799394
7. Hotel Sonali Bangla – 8373052209
8. Homestay at Gorbhanga (1.5 hours from Baharampur) -8515861968

### **Stay options in Sundarban**

1. West Bengal Govt. Tourist Lodge – 9836776010
2. Sundarban Tiger Roar Resort – 9003977265
3. Sunderbans Jungle Camp, Balidip (9733000404, 9831031980, 9733000444)
4. Sundarban Mangrove Retreat – 9051212225
5. Aranyak Homestay, Jharkhali - 7865857711
6. Sarkar Home Stay, Jharkhali - 9775621037
7. Mangrove Wild Home Stay, Jharkhali - 9748831356
8. Akash Home Stay, Jharkhali - 9733538463
9. Tora Eco Resort & Life Experience Center - 9830021706
10. Mainak Lodge & Badaban - Puranjan 9732820530
11. Sunderban Tiger Safari, Sonagaon -9874459647
12. Sunderban J D Camp, Bali - 9775517654

### **Stay options in Kaliyagunj**

1. Ashirbad Lodge – 03523258207

# Rural Craft & Cultural Hubs

**Experience** Bengal's folk traditions in rural hinterland.

**Partner** with the creative entrepreneurs.

**Organise** Heritage Education tours.

**Learn** about cultural heritage in the Folk Art Centres.

**Enjoy** the Village Festivals at the hubs with friends & family.

**Innovate** in art and design residencies with traditional artists.

**Indulge** in creative photography.

**Promote** cultural diversity.

**18** Craft  
Tradition

**13** Performing  
art traditions

**22** District

**17** Folk Art  
Centres

**15** Village  
Festivals



## Rural Craft and Cultural Hubs

An initiative of Department of MSME&T, Government of West Bengal  
in collaboration with UNESCO, New Delhi Office

### Contact

[www.ruralcrafthub.com](http://www.ruralcrafthub.com) | [www.rcchbengal.com](http://www.rcchbengal.com) | [www.naturallybengal.com](http://www.naturallybengal.com)  
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