CHAPTER-III

TOURISM RESOURCES IN THE STUDY AREA
3.1) Introduction:

Attractions play a major role as a motivator to visit a particular destination. Visitors’ attractions are always depending on some factors i.e. physical factors, cultural factors, religious factors, historical factors etc. A typology of four different types of visitor attractions those are very much significant for tourism development of the study area concerned is presented in figure no. 3.1.

![Visitor Attractions Diagram]

**Figure 3.1: A typology of visitor attractions (modified after J. Swarbrooke, 2010)**

The study area Purba Medinipur and Paschim Medinipur have plenty of diversified tourism resources or attractions in terms of nature based attractions, cultural attractions, religious attractions, archaeological and historical attractions, folk based attractions and recreation based attractions. Spatial organization of such tourism resources have been prepared with the help of GIS using Vornoi polygon technique from which a number of destination zones are derived.

3.2) Tourist Destination Zones:

To fulfill the requirement of the objectives of the present study, the tourist destinations of the entire study area have been classified into several zones of tourist destinations. At first the clubbed tourist destinations have been identified by using vornoi polygon. Then, as per the agglomeration of tourist destinations and the network linkages facilities among the tourist
destinations, the five tourist destination zones have been demarcated. The tourist destination zones namely:

I. Coastal Zone (Purba Medinipur)
II. Eastern Zone (Purba Medinipur)
III. Central Zone (Paschim Medinipur)
IV. Northern Zone (Paschim Medinipur)
V. Western Zone (Paschim Medinipur)

Figure 3.2: Voronoi Polygon showing the concentration of Tourist Destinations
Figure 3.3: Voronoi Polygon showing the concentration of Tourist Destinations
Figure 3.4: Tourist Destinations Zones of Paschim Medinipur and Purba Medinipur
3.3.) Tourism resources in Purba Medinipur:

**Classification of Tourist Destinations in Purba Medinipur district**

![Map of Purba Medinipur with tourist attractions marked]

**Figure 3.5: Tourist Attractions of Purba Medinipur**

The major tourist destinations of Purba Medinipur district are classified as follows:
3.3.1.) COASTAL ZONE TOURIST DESTINATIONS:

3.3.1.1) Digha:

Digha is the most popular sea side resort which was described as “Brightons of the East” by Warren Hastings, the explorer of it in his letter (1780 A.D.) to his wife. It was originally known as ‘Beerkul’ during Warren Hastings time. It is located at the southern most point of Purba Medinipur. Digha has shallow sand beach with low gradient extending upto 7 km in length and has an average elevation of 6 meter with gentle rolling waves. Old Digha (Digha’s old beach) is facing a severe problem of soil erosion. To pertain the erosional problem big stones and concrete steps are used. To resolve the problem and to satisfy the visitors a new beach has been developed just 2 km away from the Old Digha sea beach namely New Digha. The New Digha sea beach is much bigger and secure than Old Digha sea beach.

Digha is a weekend destination of the domestic visitors. The charming and alluring scenic beauty of the beach makes it overcrowded most of the time during a year especially in peak season (from July to March). The shallow depth of sea water and the gentle rolling slope of sandy beach are the attracting features for the sea-bath lovers. The entire area from Old Digha to New Digha is endowed with casuarina plantations which attracts visitors and also act as the stabilization force for the sand dunes. The casuarinas are extremely useful for the coastal protection.
plantations offered as a magnificent and majestic view along the coast and enhancing its beauty. The safe bathing experience in the shallow depth sea makes the beach very popular. Digha is also offering a variety of recreational facilities which also enrich Digha’s attractivity and popularity. These are:

- Digha Beach Festival
- The Marine Aquarium and Research Centre (MARC)
- Amarabati Park
- Water sports and Paragliding
- Children Park
- Udaipur
- Subarnarekha River

3.3.1.1.1) **Digha Beach Festival**:–

Beach festivals at Digha are regularly organized by the West Bengal Tourism Development Corporation Limited (WBTDCL), in collaboration with the Tourism Ministry of the State and the Digha Sankarpur Development Authority (DSDA) under the Urban Development Ministry with a number of attractive events (table no. 3.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENTS</th>
<th>EVENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arrangement of Sand Art</td>
<td>Bengali Adhunik Song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inauguration of Festival</td>
<td>Classical Ragas in Hindi Films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagore's songs</td>
<td>Toto-Rava Nritya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display of traditional items of various states</td>
<td>Classical Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Dance item: Creation</td>
<td>Musical performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance and Music Fusion</td>
<td>Beach sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical performance</td>
<td>Sit and Draw / Live art competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach marathon</td>
<td>Prize distribution of Beach sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach sports</td>
<td>Odishi Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kite Festival</td>
<td>Chhau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz (Final round)</td>
<td>Musical performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prize distribution of Beach sports</td>
<td>Fireworks and closing ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengali song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: DSDA*

**Table no. - 3.1: PROGRAMMES IN BEACH FESTIVAL**
3.3.1.1.2) The Marine Aquarium and Research Centre (MARC):-

The Marine Aquarium and Research Centre (MARC) is another attraction of Digha. The Marine Aquarium and Research Centre is the largest inbuilt marine aquarium in the country which was established in the year 1989. It shows the marine biodiversity of the region and works as a research centre. The aquarium has 24 big sized (15×10×10') marine tanks and 8 fresh water tanks (3×2×2') which display marine floral and faunal diversity.

3.3.1.1.3) Amarabati Park:-

Amarabati Park added another attraction with its recreational facilities in Digha’s tourism. The park maintained by DSDA offers the facilities like boating, toy train, ropeway (an upcoming project). The beauty of the flower garden and the amusement facilities make the park very attractive.

3.3.1.1.4) Water sports and Paragliding:-

Being the most popular sea beach of West Bengal, Digha also offers sea water sports and paragliding facility. Water sports like jet ski and boating is already started and other water sports like water ski, parasailing, wind surfing will be the next upcoming
events at Digha. Paragliding, another beach recreational facility is already started which adds more adventure flavor in beach water sports.

3.3.1.1.5) **Udaipur**:-

Udaipur is just 2km away from Digha and it is almost virgin and spectacular beach. The silent beach beauty and the casuarinas plantations are the major attractions of the area. Bike rides on beach is an additional recreation. It is situated in Bengal-Odisha border where the mighty Subarnarekha merges into Bay of Bengal and forming delta is another attraction. The red crabs are found in the beach.

3.3.1.1.6) **Subarnarekha River**:-

The mighty Subarnarekha River merges into Bay of Bengal. The quite place is another attraction of Digha.

3.3.1.2) **Sankarpur**:

Sankarpur, the virgin beach, is located around 10 km away from Digha. The clandestine beach and the beauty of the casuarinas plantations are the major attractions. Sankarpur is also known as the largest fishing harbor of West Bengal. It also added an additional attraction. Besides that recreational facilities like boating, fishing club, children’s park – including circular swing, flying butterfly, sliders, merry-go-round, see-saw, road-rush, rocking boat, tri basket and also beach games are arranged by private entrepreneurs to attract more visitors.

3.3.1.3.) **Mandermoni**:

Mandermoni sea beach is compared with Goa’s famous beaches. Goa is beach tourists’ paradise. The calm beach, the experience of sea with its gentle rolling waves and the beauty of the sea side resorts are among the major attractions of Mandermoni. Recreational facilities like boating, indoor games, swimming pool, caterpillar, bull ride, chair lift, aqua valley park, road train, musical fountain, toy train, ship house are already developed. Some water sports
activities for enriching the sea experiences including water ski, jet ski, parasailing, windsurfing, boating, beach rides by different type of cars have been introduced by the private entrepreneurs.

3.3.1.4.) Tajpur:

Tajpur sea beach is overwhelmed with innumerable natural beauty which attracts visitors’ attention. Now, Tajpur is one of the new weekend destinations of West Bengal. The major attractions are:

3.3.1.4.1.) Sea Beach:

The long and elongated beach with its gentle slope gradient and the tranquility nature of the beach environment makes the area as an attractive tourist destination.

3.3.1.4.2.) The mesmerizing Sunrise & Sunset:

The mesmerizing view of sunrise and sunset gives an additional attraction to the visitors.

3.3.1.4.3.) The presence of Red crabs:

The presence of red crabs at Tajpur sea beach is another major attraction.

3.3.1.4.4.) Estuary:

It is an additional natural attraction. Tourists enjoy the place where the river meets to the sea.

3.3.1.4.5.) Beach festival:

Beach festival has been started in a few years ago which lasts for 3 to 4 days. Several events like beach oriented events, some cultural and music oriented events have been organized. A fair is also been organized simultaneously with beach festival.
3.3.1.5.) **Junput:**

Junput is another resort in coastal Purba Medinipur. Pisciculture for spawn has been widely practiced in Junput. The wide and long coast is the major attraction. Besides that, there is a museum of Department of Fisheries, Govt. of West Bengal.

3.3.1.6.) **Dadanpatrabar:**

Dadanpatrabar is another sea beach of coastal Purba Medinipur. The 5km long stretch of coastal casuarinas plantations is the major attraction. The Govt. of West Bengal has decided to make a ‘tourism hub’ at Danapurtrabar in the land of the closed salt factory. This is a historical site also as this salt factory was established by Acharya P. C. Roy in order to join in the movement against British in 1935 under Mahatma Gandhi.

3.3.1.7.) **Bakiput:**

Bakiput is located very near to Junput and known as the unexplored beach of coastal Purba Medinipur. The sea, sand and silence of the beach are the major attractions. The Bakiput beach is also known as “*Horizon-Kissing*” beach – a habitat of red crabs.

3.3.1.8.) **Dariapur Light House:**

Dariapur is just 7 km from Bakiput. There is a fully operational light house which is the major attraction. The light house was established in the year 1968.

**Technical specification of Dariapur Light House:**

- **Name of the manufacturer:** M/S chance brothers, United Kingdom
- **Panels:** 4
- **Duration of flash:** 1.4 sec
- **Effective beam intensity:** 85000cd
- **Range of visibility:** 19 sea miles
- **Tower:** High concrete tower (black and white bands)
- **Rank:** 19 nautical miles
- **Illuminant:** 230v 70w lamp

*Photo 3.8: Dariapur Light House*
Source of energy: 12 v batteries charged by spv modules dc converted to 230vac through inverter.

Other aids: RACON (code ‘G’)

The 96 feet high light house gives the visitors a rewarding experience. One can climb to the top of the light house and see the excellent panoramic and picturesque view of the entire region.

3.3.1.9.) Kapal Kundala Temple:

There is an almost ruined age-old temple with a literary history, situated just 2 km away from Dariapur called Kapal Kundala Temple which is famous for its association with Bankim Chandra Chattopadhayay’s famous 19th century novel ‘Kapalkunadala’. Nabakumar, the hero of the novel was captured by the Kapalik (Tantrik) for human sacrifice in the “Kapal Kundala Temple”. In the first week of April every year, a fair namely ‘Bankim Mela’ has been organized by the villagers near the temple. The ‘Bankim Mela’ is near about 100 year old.

3.3.1.10.) Hijli – Masnad–E–Ala:

Hijli, a village in Kanthi Sub-Division, situated on the left bank of the Rasulpur river close to the sea, is the religious tourist destination of coastal Purba Medinipur. The ‘Mosque’ and ‘Mazar’ of Masnad–E–Ala, who was the king of Hijli during Mughal Empire, is the prime attraction. The uniqueness is that both Hindu and Muslim pilgrims come together and pray here which designates it as a secular religious place. A myth is present behind the
development Hijli as a secular religious place centering ‘Asabari’ – an iron stick about 60 kg weights which is preserved in the mosque campus. It is believed that if one can carry the stick, his wishes are to be fulfilled. An annual festival of Masnad–E–Ala, called ‘Jalsa’ is organized by the local people on the first Saturday of the Bengali month Chaitra. It was started from 1949. A huge gathering of pilgrims (about 50 to 60 thousand) has been noticed in the festive occasion. In spite of that, the natural beauty of casuarinas plantations of the area attracts visitors.

3.3.1.11.) Khejuri:

Khejuri is a historic place. Till 18th century, it was a famous port of Bengal. The first telegraph line of India was established at Khejuri in 1851-52.

3.3.1.12.) Kaukhali Light House:

From 1923, the light house is not in use. Now it stands as abandoned state. The five storied light house with a height of 80 feet is the prime attraction of the area.

3.3.1.13.) Monchasa:

At village Paushi, Purba Medinipur a project on sustainable ecotourism called ‘Monchasa’ was started in 2012 to market the village culture, tradition, and way of life. Accommodation units of the project Monchasa are purely made up of local products as hogla, khor (straw), bans (bamboo), tal (palm tree), Jhau (tamarisk) and the local labour and artisans are also involved. Alternate power generation, water harvesting, organic cultivation are among the important characteristics of Monchasa. To apprise the visitors, the followings have been introduced:

- Angling
- Children activity
- Demonstration of fish netting
Cultural activities
- Purchasing of local handicrafts directly from local artisans
- Leisure activities

To experience the rural life of Bengal, Monchasa is an ideal place which has further added some activities in recent time like ‘Sahajija’ – the handicraft centre, the live pottery demonstration by the local potters and the making of heritage temple architecture.

Photo 3.12: Local Newspaper Reports on Coastal Zone Destinations
3.3.2.) **EASTERN ZONE TOURIST DESTINATIONS:**

3.3.2.1.) **Tamluk:**

Tamluk is the district town and headquarter of Purba Medinipur district, located on the bank of the Rupnarayan River close to the Bay of Bengal. Historically, Tamluk is the most interesting place of the district. The history of Tamluk was experiencing the complex combination of indigenous Buddhist, Jain, Hindu and Islamic culture. It is mentioned in Fa-Hien’s and Huen-Tsiang writings that once Tamluk and its adjacent area was a Buddhist *Tirtha*. It is also mentioned that Fa-Hien had spent two years in Tamluk and visited twenty two monasteries. It is the place of religious and archaeological importance. In ancient time it was a port called ‘*Tamralipta port*’. In ancient India, the port town ‘*Tamralipta*’ was used by the merchants and other for journey to Ceylon. But gradually, Tamluk lost its importance as a sea port due to shifting of the sea as well as the silting up the channel.

Now, the present day Tamluk is a religious and historical tourist destination. The tourism resources in Tamluk are as follows:

3.3.2.1.1.) **Devi Bargobhima:**

The temple of Devi Bargobhima, who represents *Tara* or *Kali*, one form of *Sakti*, is the major attraction of the town. The temple is nearly 1150 years old and is one of the 51 *Sakti Pithas* of Indian subcontinent. The word ‘*Pitha*’ means seat. According to *Puranas* the small finger of the left feet of *Sati* fell
here. The temple is divided into three apartments viz, the Baradeul - the inner sanctuary, the Jagmohan – the hall of audience and the Natmandir – the dancing hall. A small passage called Jnan Mandap is between the Baradeul and Jagmohan. The temple is on a raised platform consisting of 22 stairs. The idol or deity represents Tara or Kali. Two more deities are found in the same platform, one is Lord Shiva and another is Dasabhuja Mahishasuro Mardini. The temple is made up of Odishian style of architecture.

The days of events associated with major festivals of Devi worshipping in the temple are:

- First day of Baishakha (Bengali month)
- Akshay Tritiya
- Falaharini Kalika Puja
- Bipattarini Brata Puja
- Sri Sri Saradiya Durga Puja
- Sri Sri Jagadhatri Puja
- Bargabhima Matar Puja
- Ratanti Kalika Puja
- Annapurna Puja

3.3.2.1.2.) Tamluk Rajbari:

A ruin of the Rajbari (Palace) is another attraction of the town.

3.3.2.1.3.) Archaeological museum:

There is an Archaeological museum called Tamralipta museum in Tamluk running under the supervision of Archaeological Survey of India. The museum has preserved the inscriptions, templates, artifacts, stone items of different ages.

**Table No. 3.2: Preserved materials at Archaeological museum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Preserved materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paleolithic Period</td>
<td>20000 – 10000 B.C.</td>
<td>Stone Hand axe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stone Scrappers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stone Cleaver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesolithic Period</td>
<td>10000 – 5000 B.C.</td>
<td>Chart Blade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td>5000 – 2000 B.C.</td>
<td>Chalcedony Scrappers, Jasper Cone, Stone Celt, Bone Knife, Bone tools, Bone Harpoons, Bone Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chalcolithic</td>
<td>2000 – 400 B.C.</td>
<td>Stone and Bone material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouryan</td>
<td>400 – 200 B.C.</td>
<td>Terracotta artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunga</td>
<td>200 B.C. – 100 A.D.</td>
<td>Terracotta artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kushan</td>
<td>100 A.D. – 300 A.D.</td>
<td>Terracotta artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gupta</td>
<td>400 A.D. – 600 A.D.</td>
<td>Terracotta artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pal – Sen</td>
<td>900 A.D. – 1200 A.D.</td>
<td>Terracotta artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th Century</td>
<td>1800 A.D. – 1900 A.D.</td>
<td>Paper manuscripts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey at Tamralipta Museum

Apart from these, the Tamralipta museum has preserved some Buddha heads and figures, terracotta heads and figures, stone scriptures, stone images, scroll paintings (Pats) and potteries artifacts of different centuries.

3.3.2.1.4.) **Rakhit Bati:**

Rakhit Bati is another place of historical attraction. A statue of Sahid Khudiram Basu, who was a great freedom fighter, is here. Once it was famous as the secret centre of the revolutionary party ‘Anusilan Samity’ and ‘Gupta Samity’.

3.3.2.1.5.) **Matangini Sahid Smarak:**

Matangini Hazra was a great freedom fighter participated in Quit India Movement. She was died by British Police who

Photo 3.15: Matangini Sahid Smarak
opened fire at Tamluk when she led a procession of six thousand supporters of Quit India Movement. In the spot where she was killed, a statue has been erected on her memories called Matangini Sahid Smarak. To appreciate the bravery of Matangini Hazra, Mahatma Gandhi entitled her as ‘Birangana’ (the great female fighter).

Tamluk has also some other shrines which are also considered as attraction for the visitors e.g.

- Harir Mandir
- Sri Sri Jagannath Deva Mandir
- Jishu – Hari Mandi
- Ramkrishna Mission Sevashram

3.3.2.2.) Haldia:

Haldia is a modern port town of Purba Medinipur district. It served as a major sea-port of Eastern India located approximately 50 km southwest of Calcutta Port. Haldia is situated near the mouth of Hooghly river and developed as a major trade centre as well as an industrial city with several factories, including South Asian Petrochemicals Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Exide, Shaw Wallace, Tata Chemicals, Haldia Petrochemical, Hindustan Lever, Mitsubishi Chemical Company (MCC), Dredging Corporation of India Limited (DCI) and the ancillary industries of Haldia Petrochemicals. The industrial and port town Haldia with its recreational facilities is the prime attraction. Besides that the other attractions centering Haldia are:
A park is situated where River Rupnarayan join Hooghly. The natural beauty of the place attract visitors.

Nayachar: Nayachar is the delta of river Hooghly very near to Haldia. An eco-tourism project is started at Nayachar.

3.3.2.3.) Balughata:

Balughata is the river side resort near Haldia. The natural beauty of Haldi River and the calm and clandestine environment of casuarinas plantations in its bank are the basic attractions of Balughata.

3.3.2.4.) Kukrahati:

It is 21 km away from Haldia and 14 km from Tamluk. Kukrahati is a village lies in Sutahata block. To enjoy the river beauty, it is the ideal destination.

3.3.2.5.) Geonkhali:

Geonkhali, a village in Purba Medinipur district, is situated on the right bank of river Hooghly. It is now a popular picnic spot. River Hooghly, Rupnarayan and Damodar join here. The scenic beauty is the prime attraction of Geonkhali. The launch services from Geonkhali to Gadiara (in Howrah) and Geonkhali to Nurpur (in South 24 Paragana) attract attention of the visitors.

The other attractions at or near Geonkhali are:

- Ramkrishna ashram
- Raghunath Baba Mandir
- Kailash Mandir
- Church
3.3.2.6.) **Natsal:**

Natsal is an Archaeological destination. It is an excavation site of Archaeological Survey of India. Several ancient stone items, images, artifacts and scriptures have been found from here. Some of these items now are preserved in Tamluk Museum.

3.3.2.7.) **Kolaghat:**

Kolaghat is a town in Purba Medinipur district, situated on the bank river Rupnarayan. A thermal power plant is situated here. The natural beauty of the river Rupnarayan is its attraction. Besides that, Kolaghat has a museum, namely ‘*Kolaghat Folklore Research Institute and Museum*’ which exhibits materials on folklore, literature, archaeology, history and performing arts.

3.3.2.8.) **Panskura:**

Panskura is another destination in Purba Medinipur district. Sosaneswar temple and Raghunath Jiu temple near Panskura are the major attractions.

* **Sosaneswar temple:** It is situated at Mahatpur near Panskura. The temple architecture is very much beautiful. The major festival held at Sosaneswar temple during *Chaitra Sankranti.*

* **Raghunath Jiu temple:** It is situated at Raghunathbari near Panskura. The temple established in 1759. Sri Ram, Sita, Lakshan, Hanuman are the deities of the temple. The temple is built by Kashijor Royal family. *Rathajatra in Bijaya Dashami* is the major festival of the temple.

3.3.2.9.) **Moyna:**

Moyna is a village in Tamluk Sub-Division and located 15 km away from Tamluk town. It has an old fort, namely Moynagarh, situated on the bank of the river Kasai. According to folklore, the fort was originally constructed by the legendary King Raja Lau Sen (10\textsuperscript{th} century). In 1561-62 A.D. Moyna kingdom was taken over by Bahubalindra family (L.S.S.O. Malley, 1911). The fort is an island within an island. It was constructed by excavating to moats, like lakes which encircled the fort and makes the two island one is the inner island and other is the outer island. The inner island comprises of fort buildings and temples. The structure of the fort is unique in nature. The picturesque environment of all around
Moynagarh is the major attraction. Besides that, Moynagarh has a rich cultural heritage. It is to be seen in inner island the temple of Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakta cults. Here also found the temple of Shyamsundar Jiu who is the family deity of Bahubalindra family. Rasjatra* is the major festival of Moyna but despite this Janmastami, Nandotsav, Radhastami, Jhulan Yatra are held as auspicious ceremonies at inside the fort.

*Rasjatra in Rasmela: Rasjatra is the prime attraction of Moyna. The unique nature of ‘Boat Ras’, its antiqueness and age old tradition is the major importance of Rasjatra. The festival starts from the full moon day of Kartik (Bengali month) which is approximately more than four hundred and fifty years old. In this night, the family deity Shyamsundar Jiu (combined deities of Krishna and Radha) sets out on a journey to the Rasmancha on the boat with the concert of drums, khol, pipe, gong of bell-metal. The magnificent and majestic event of ‘Boat Ras’ on the full moon night is very much spectacle and memorable.

3.3.2.10.) Mahishadal:

Mahishadal is located 16 km away from Tamluk town and 8 km away from Geonkhali. The word ‘Mahishadal’ means a swamp covered with forest and was once used as a pasture land for ‘Mahish’ (buffalo). Another opinion is that the name ‘Mahishadal’ came from ‘Mahishya’, a Hindu caste of the locality (Manna, S., 1994). Mahishadal has a
historical importance and also has a rich cultural heritage. Several shrines and temples are scattered here and there at Mahishadal. Several Vaishnava festivals are also performed here like Rathajatra, Ras-utsav, Jhulan Yatra. Among them ‘Rathajatra’ is the major attraction of Mahishadal. The ‘Rathajatra’ or the chariot festival of Mahishadal is very famous on the eve of which the well decorated five floored chariot makes a journey on the road. Mythologically, it is said that Lord Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra are placed on the Rathas for a journey to the Masibari.

Despite this, Mahishadal Rajbari (Palace) is another attraction. Janardan Upadhayay was the pioneer of the Mahishadal Royal family. Mahishadal Palace has two complexes covering more than 100 acres of land. The oldest one was established in 1840 A.D. and the newer one was established in 1934 A.D. The spectacular beauty of the place makes the area as a picnic spot. The sculptures of this Rajbari are also very much attractive. In the Rajbari complex an age-old Gopal Jiu temple added more religious importance of the place. The temple exhibits Nava-ratna style of architecture (Odishian style of architecture).

3.3.2.11.) Basudevpur:

Basudevpur is small village situated in Purba Medinipur district. The pure and fine mats are produced here by using ‘Madhur-Kathi’ which is the basic raw-material of mat industry. These types of mats have international demand which is increasing day by day. Almost all the people of the village are found engaged to produce mat and Basudevpur is now designated as the craft village. The craft of the villagers in making of soft and fine mat from ‘Madhur-Kathi’ is the basic attraction which makes Basudevpur a tourist destination.

A scheme of classification of already mentioned tourist places is given in table no. 3.3 located in the district of Purba Medinipur.
Table no.- 3.3: Classification of Tourist Destinations of Purba Medinipur

Nature-based e.g.
- Digha
- Sankarpur
- Tajpur
- Mandermoni
- Dadanpatrabar
- Junput
- Bakiput
- Hijli
- Balughata
- Haldia
- Nayachar
- Kukrahati
- Geonkhali
- Kolaghat

Archaeological and Historical e.g.
- Dariapur
- Kaukhali
- Tamluk
- Moyna
- Mahishadal
- Natsal
- Kolaghat
- Kaukhali
- Khejuri

Religious-based e.g.
- Hijli
- Dariapur
- Tamluk
- Moyna
- Mahishadal

Folk-cultural e.g.
- Basudevpur
- Moyna
- Mahishadal

Village-based e.g.
- Monchasa

Source: Literature and Field Survey
3.4.) **Tourism resources in Paschim Medinipur:**

The district Paschim Medinipur has also diversified tourism resources by virtue of its nature-based, religious, archaeological and historical, cultural as well as folk-cultural tourism resources (figure no. 3.6).

![Classification of Tourist Destinations in Paschim Medinipur district](image)

**Figure 3.6: Tourist Attractions of Paschim Medinipur**

The major tourist destinations of Paschim Medinipur district are classified as follows:
3.4.1.) CENTRAL ZONE TOURIST DESTINATIONS:

3.4.1.1.) Midnapore:

Midnapore is the district town and headquarter of Paschim Medinipur district. It also acts as the district headquarter until the partition of Midnapore. The name Midnapore or Medinipur was derived from the name of a local deity ‘Medinimata’ (literally “Mother of the world” a Sakti incarnation). The historic attractions, cultural distinctiveness, entertainment facilities and religious beliefs and festivals are among resources of a tourist destination like Midnapore. The major attractions of Midnapore town are:

3.4.1.1.1) The Jagannath Temple at Natun Bazar: The Jagannath Temple at Natun Bazar was built in 1851 near the bank of Kasai River. The temple is of ‘Pancharatna style’.

3.4.1.1.2) Sitala Temple: The Sitala Temple is a 200 years old temple, situated at Barabazar and is notable for its antiquity.

3.4.1.1.3) Hanuman-Jeu Temple: The Hanuman-Jeu Temple at Mirbazar is another old temple built in 18th century.

3.4.1.1.4) Habibpur Kali Temple: It is also an old and famous temple of the Midnapore town.

3.4.1.1.5) Rukmini Temple: Rukmini temple at Natun Bazar was built in the 17th century and is one of the oldest temples.

3.4.1.1.6.) Radha Kantajiu Temple: It is notable for its terracotta artistry.

3.4.1.1.7.) Jora Masjid (Twin Mosque): Jora Masjid (Majars along with dargah or Masjid) is another attraction. Urs is the main festival and is celebrated in the veneration of Maulana Syed Shah Murshed Ali Al Quadri Pir Saheb.

3.4.1.1.8.) Gop-Garh: Gop-Garh Heritage Park has a great recreational value by the virtue of its natural beauty. It is also named as “Gop-Garh Eco-Park”. Ruins of a 17th century old fort remain here.
 Besides these, the tomb of John Pears in Judges, St. John Church at Seikhpara, Roman Catholic Church and the beauty of the bank of river Kasai are the other attractions of Midnapore.

3.4.1.2.) **Kharagpur:**

Kharagpur is an industrial as well as commercial and transport town of Paschim Medinipur district. Being a transport town Kharagpur is very much accessible by rail and road transport. Kharagpur also served as an important railway Junction of South Eastern Railways. Most attracting is that Kharagpur railway station is being remarked as the longest railway platform in the world and also having one of the biggest railway workshops in India. As the industrial hub, Kharagpur has several industrial units such as ASO cement Ltd., Flende Macneill, Humboldt Wedag, SE Railway workshop, Tata Bearing Ltd., Tata Davy Ltd., Tata Metaliks Ltd., and Wellman Wacoma Ltd. etc. It is very much well accessible by rail and road and the availability of urban facilities and other factors influencing it to be designated as the tourism hub. From the tourism point of view, there are some other attractions prevailed. The major attractions are:

3.4.1.2.1.) **Kharagpur railway station:**

Kharagpur railway station has the longest railway platform in the world. Being a model station it serves tourists as a point of rest and relaxation.

3.4.1.2.2.) **Kharageswar Temple:**

It is an old Lord Shiva temple called ‘Kharageswar’ with the mythological importance located at the outskirts of Kharagpur.

3.4.1.2.3.) **Birsingha Garh and Sola Dighi:**

The fort was built by Birsingha in 14th century. Within a half mile away from Birsingha Garh, there is found a lake called ‘Sola Dighi’ having an area about 33 acre. Most amazing fact is that from a distance the lake looks like divided into 16 parts.
3.4.1.2.4.) **Dashera Festival:**

According to the local people, Dashera festival is the major attraction of Kharagpur. Kharagpur town has one more station namely ‘Giri Maidan’. Dashera festival held at the ground near ‘Giri Maidan’ station. On the day of Bijaya Dashami (the last day of Durga Puja festival), Dashera is organized by the local people. Noteworthy to say, it is the largest Dashera festival of West Bengal. Approximately 65 feet height of an idol of Ravan is made. Atas-baji (magnificent lighting show) is also a great attraction in Dashera festival. Besides that, a fair is organized by the local people during this occasion.

3.4.1.3.) **Malancha:**

Malancha is famous for a Kali temple, called as ‘Dakshina Kali Mandir’. Malancha is just 9 km away from Kharagpur. In 1634 Sakabda (1712 A.D.) the temple ‘Dakshina Kali Mandir’ was established by Nanda Ram Roy, descendant of Madhab Ram Roy family. The structural style of the temple is of At-chala formation. Goddess Kali is the worshipping deity of ‘Dakshina Kali Mandir’. The appearance of the deity is like a tribal deity. The special worshipping day is the day of Maghi-Purnima, the birth day of the Mother. Kali Puja and Poush Sankranti are the other important worshipping day. During this time a special offering called ‘Chakrabhog’ (also known as Matsyabhog) is arranged. Sacrifice of animal is another ritual of the temple. The
rituals, customs and the marvellous architectural style with outstanding terracotta artistry are its attractions.

There are some other temples in Malancha which are also very much attractive. The temples are:

- The temple of ‘Kharageswar Mahadev’
- Nandaneswar Shiva temple (built with laterite in 1719)
- ‘Siddheswari Mandir’
- ‘Balaji Mandir’

3.4.1.4.) Pathra:

Pathra, simply known as a village of temples, is located just 10 km. away from Midnapore town and 25 km. away from Kharagpur on the bank of the river Kangsabati. Pathra is an archaeological, historical and religious based tourist destination. There are 34 temples in the village, almost all over 200 years old which are the manifestations of folk architecture of the region. Especially famous for the terracotta art 28 out of 34 temples are now maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). It becomes possible for the rigorous effort of Md. Yasin Pathan, who is the pioneer of the NGO Pathan Archaeological Preservation Committee and successfully persuaded to Archaeological Survey of India to restore and maintain the temples. From archaeological point of view, Pathra is a destination full of rich cultural heritage. The architectural forms of the following temples are the attractions e.g.:

- **Navaratna Temple:** The temple is 250 years old with Navaratna style with numerous terracotta panels on its walls.
- **Kalachand’s Dalan:** Laxmi Janardan is the worshipping deity. The temple’s structural style is unique in nature.
❖ **Sitala Temple**: It is a ‘Rekh-Deul’ structured temple and known as ‘Buri-Maar-Than’.

❖ **Durga Mandap**: Built with Makhra rock (lateritic crude). Devi Durga is the main deity worshipped in the temple.

❖ **Durgeshwar Temple**: Some inscriptions and scriptures like Puranic Dasavatara or Mithuna Sculptures are found on the walls.

❖ **Das Mahavidhya Temple**: Terracotta panels of different Goddesses are found on temple walls.

❖ **Shiva Temple**: 
There are total six Shivalaya and fifteen Shiva temples present at Pathra. The temples are Pancharatna (five towered) style temple with magnificent terracotta decoration on their walls.

Besides that the Rasmancha, Dharma temple, Raj-attalika and some other temples add more attractions.

The beauty of river Kangsabati gives more attention to its choice as a nature based tourist destination. The magnificent view of the river course and the beauty of the bank of river Kangsabati are the major nature based attractions.

3.4.1.5.) **Karnagarh**: 

Karnagarh, a village in the Sadar sub-division, is situated 10 km. distance from Midnapore town and 25 km. distance from Kharagpur. It is a historical and religious tourist destination. Remains of an old fort, rampart, castle, temples, barracks and lakes are the major historical attractions. The fort was established by Raja Mahabir Singh at about 500 years ago. The remains of an old castle narrate to the history of Chuar Rebellion (1798) in Bengal under the leadership of the brave queen Rani Siromoni who fought with the British army is found here. Another aspect of Karnagarh is its religious aspect. About a mile from the fort, there are

Photo 3.25: Dandeshwara Temple at Karnagar
two magnificent modern temples. On the South of this fort, there is temple of Anadilinga Dandeshwar Mahadev and the Mahamaya temple is just beside it. The Odishian style of structure is found in the temple. Mythologically, Karnagarh is very much interesting. It is believed that once Karna (of ‘Mahabharata’) ruled this land. The Dandeshwara temple is subdivided into three parts viz. Garbhagriha, Jagmohan and Porch. Durga Puja, Guru Purnima Utsav, Poush Sankranti are the major festivals celebrated here.

3.4.1.6.) Keshiary:

Keshiary, a village in the Sadar subdivision, is situated 16 miles away from Kharagpur. Devi Sarbamangala Temple is the prime attraction of Keshiary. Uma or Parvati is the mother goddess here who has many forms and thousand names like Ambika (mother), Mahamaya (great illusion), Durga (inaccessible), Shakti (female energy), Kali (black), Chandi (violent furious), Lalita (Playful), Annapurna (giver of food and plenty), Sarbamangala (even - auspicious) etc.

In India, there are different forms of Devi Sabamangala in different temples. Some of them are-

- Mata Sarbamangala temple Burdwan : It is a Shakti Pithas among 51 Shakti Pithas.
- Sarbamangala temple in Gaya, Bihar.
- Sarbamangala temple in Korba
- Sarbamangala temple in Muragacha, Nadia
- Sarbamangala temple in Garhbeta, Paschim Medinipur.
- Sarbamangala temple in Keshiary, Paschim Medinipur.
- The temple of Sri Palli Kondees – Warar and Goddess Sarbamangala, Sorutupalli, Andhra Pradesh.

Photo 3.26: Sarbamangala Temple
At Keshiary, it is a late medieval temple, built in 1526 Sakabda (1604 A.D.). According to the temple classification of David J. McCutchion, Keshiary Sarbamangala temple is of traditional Odishian Pirha style temple made up of lateritic crude. The temple has three segments viz. Naatmandir, Jagamohan and Main temple which is Pyramidal tiers with steps. Method of worshipping the deity with tantric rituals is the attraction of the visitors. Durga Puja is the main occasion celebrated here with enthusiasm.

Besides that there are some other attractions at or near Keshiary. These are –

- **Kasheswar Jiu Temple:** It is situated at the entrance of the Sarbamangala temple and it is a Pirha Deul structured temple built in the last half of the 17th century.
- **Jagannath Temple and Sitala Temple:** A Rekha-deul structured temple which is situated at Tal-Keshiary.
- **Gopalpur Suddha Vakti Niketan Math:** Radha-Gobinda is the worshipping deity, situated a very short distance from Jagannath temple. Rath-Yatra, Danda-Utsava, Janmasthan, Rakhi-Purnima are the special occasions.
- **Tal-Keshiary Shiva Temple:** It is an ancient Mahadev temple built in Odishian Architectural Style.
- **Kurumbera fort, Gaganeswar:** It is situated 4 miles away from Keshiary. Ruins of Kurumbera fort and the ancient Shiva temple are the major attractions.
- **The century old Kesheshwar Jiu fair:**
  A 21 days fair starts from Akshaya Tritiya (in Bengali month Baisakha) in front of the temple. The fair once took place at an interval of every five years but the interval period presently to eight years duration.

3.4.1.7.) **Dantan (Mughalmari):**

Mughalmari is a village situated at Dantan-I Block in Paschim Medinipur district. It is an archaeological excavation site with historical importance. The excavation started from 2002-03 under the
supervision of Professor Ashok Dutta of Calcutta University. Several phases of excavation were attempted at the site of Mughalmari village. The site is locally known as “Sakhisenar dhibi”. From the excavation, the presence of a Buddhist monastery dated between 6th to 12th centuries is revealed. Several artifacts, Buddha image on slate stone, a long wall covered with stucco decoration, terracotta tablets, gold coin and Brahmi inscriptions clearly indicate that the site was a prominent monastery (vihara) of at time.

Figure 3.7: Excavation site at Mughalmari
Several antiquities like stucco heads, stone female deity, stone sculptures, stucco decorative elements, decorative bricks and potteries, copper coins have been found from the excavation. Besides such antiquities, some terracotta lamps, stucco fragments, sprinklers, iron nails, footed bowls, hopscotch, spouted bowls, potteries and terracotta votive tablets have also been found there. A local club is situated at the excavation site serving presently as a museum centre. Some of the excavated artifacts and antiquities have been preserved here. The museum has preserved materials like:

- Decorative bricks.
- Non-decorative ancient bricks.
- Bow.
- Pottery (Red and Orange).
- Post-Gupta decorated pottery.
- Grey pottery.
- Pottery.
- Ornamental stucco and seal matrix.
- Different types of stones.
- Plate showing terracotta lamps.
- Scriptures.
- Stone model of Buddha.

3.4.1.8.) **Sarasanka Lake of Dantan:**

Sarasanka lake is located at Dantan and is covered an area of 500 × 2500 sq. feet which is one of the largest lake in West Bengal. ‘Sarasanka’ is named after Sasanka, the great King of Bengal and the creator of the lake. The natural beauty of the lake and its surrounding are the attractions.

The other attractions of Dantan are –

- **Samoleswar Mahadeb Temple**
  which is a very ancient temple.

Photo 3.28: Sarasanka Dighi
Bidhyadhar Puskarini which is another beautiful lake.

3.4.1.9.) Sabang (Mat industry):

Sabang is located at the South-Eastern part of the district Paschim Medinipur. Its production of mat (called Madur) is now undertaken on an organized scale by weaver of the Mahishya caste. The madur mat is woven on a simple bamboo frame loom. The wrap is cotton thread and the weft a thin soft reed. Madur Kathi cultivated in the Sabang and Ramnagar areas of Medinipur district is the raw material of it. Three types of madurs are made in Medinipur: ekrokha, dorokha and masland. Dorokha with a double madur kathi, weft is thicker than the simple ekrokha and is more comfortable to the users. Ekrokha is used for general purpose. The masland is a very fine textured mat made with carefully selected reeds. It has two borders of beautiful geometric designs, sometimes in a deep magenta, but most often in self colour, the design showing up through the texture of the patterns only. Weaving of mats is an important cottage industry that helps to generate employment and helps the rural people to earn subsistence income. The uniqueness of mats production in Sabang for which it has been developed as a craft centre may attract tourists’ interest to experience the mat making process.

3.4.1.10.) Pat-art:

A large concentration of Patua community is found in the Naya village of Paschim Medinipur district of West Bengal. Presently their culture has emerged as a popular culture for its unique characteristics. Etymologically in Bengali, the word ‘Pat’ means ‘picture’ and the word ‘Patua’ mean ‘Chitrakar’ or ‘painters’. The artists generally use ‘Chitrakar’ as their surname claiming them an antique scroll painter. The pictures are called as ‘Pat’ which depict the information of mythological stories, tribal folklores, social messages and contemporary issues. The song called ‘Pater Gan’ is used for the illustration of ‘Pat’ (subject matter of the painting). The procedure of ‘Pat’ making is unique in nature which is associated
with singing i.e. ‘Pater Gan’. The antique nature of ‘Pat’ and ‘Pater Gan’ and the way of life of artisans together attract the visitors.

‘Pattachitra’:

Bengal ‘Pattachitra’ are well endowed with the wealth of humour, emotions and visualization of natural surroundings. On the basis of the shape and size of Bengali ‘Pattachitra’ can be classified into two types-

I. **Ekachitra:** The ekachitra Pat in square in size which contains a full story. The ‘Chakkhudan Pat’ of Santal society is an example of Ekachitra Pat.

II. **Dighal Pat:** Dighal Pat contains a number of paintings putted serially and rolled in nature. The individual painting indicates parts of a story that has been drawn on a cloth orderly in manner. The length, Dighal Pat ranges from 5 to 15 feet and its width is 1 to 3 feet.

The different colours used in the making of ‘Pattachitra’ are prepared by the natural substances. This is among the unique characteristics of this tradition. The natural substances are used to make various colours are as given below:

**Table No. 3.4: Ingredients used for making different colours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the colour</th>
<th>Ingredients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red colour</td>
<td>New leaves of Segun tree, Seeds of Saffron, Betel leaf, Lime and Catechu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue colour</td>
<td>Aparajita flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White colour</td>
<td>Kusum Mati (a special type of clay) and the White Stones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The handmade brushes are used for painting. They are made up of natural elements. Initially to make a brush, a wooden stick and the hair of goat or squirrel are used. A cotton thread (usually made up of fabric of an old sari) is used to bind the stick and hair. Recently they have been shifted to artificial brushes available in market, particularly after getting the exposure of fairs and festivals incorporating them.

**Theme of Pattachitra and Pater Gan:**

From the ancient time to the present, the themes of ‘Pattachitra’ have been subsequently changing from the scenario of the dynasty to the different religious myth and other contemporary issues. Simultaneously the song sung by them demonstrating the ‘Pattachitra’ has been changed accordingly. Themes were based on the epic stories or folklore earlier, but at present their themes are diversified centring the different issues like social issues, health issues, different lifestyle of different community, and also to promote public welfare. To make different issues in a figurative manner called ‘Pattachitra’ is the unique nature of their folk art. The song called ‘Pater Gan’ written by them has different on different issues. The songs are sung by them also. The figurative paintings of any issue along with such song postulates a clear imaginative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green colour</td>
<td>The leaves of Kundri, leaves of Seem or Flat Beens and Runner Beens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle Green colour</td>
<td>Bharanda and Kesut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow colour</td>
<td>Turmeric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown colour</td>
<td>The matured leaves of Segun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black colour</td>
<td>Oil lamps, Cooking fires, Burnt rice grains, Burning bamboo and the dirty lorry exhaust pipes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violet colour</td>
<td>The seeds of ‘Pui’ plant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey*
picture, very much appreciated by foreigners as evident in newspaper report on American musicians jam with Patuas.

3.4.2.) **NORTHERN ZONE TOURIST DESTINATIONS:**

3.4.2.1.) **Chandrakona Town:**

Chandrakona is a religious based tourist destination in northern part of Paschim Medinipur district. Chandrakona is known as the ‘temple town’ having the largest collection of temple with a variety of styles. Historically, Chandrakona is also significant and some of its ancient monuments and shrines still exist now e.g.:

- Ramgard and Lalgard fort.
- Raghunathgarh fort.
- Baro-Duari: a fort having 12 doors.

An Odishian style of architecture has been prominent in most of the temple. The early temples are made up with laterite (coated with thick plaster) while the later temples (19th century) are made up with brick and decorated by plaster or terracotta. Most of the temples are Odishian Rekha-deul style of Char-chala and At-chala types. But some of the temples are Ratna style e.g. Pancha-ratna and Nava-ratna style. The major temples are:

- **Lal Jiu Temple:** It is a large rectangular At-chala design temple established in 1655.
- **Malleswara Mahadev Temple:** It is a Pancha-ratna temple of Malleswara Shiva with a thick stucco decoration of different sculptures of Krishnalila.
- **Khalsa Shiva Temple:** At-chala style temple.
- **Navarath Jiu Mandir**: It is a Navaratna structured temple with fine terracotta artistry.
- **Ram Mandir**: In February, 2012, Sri Rama Temple was opened for the visitors. It is also a centre of ‘Sriman Narayana Chaturveda Pathsala’ or Bengal Institute of Vedic Studies. Ram Mandir is situated at Jayantinagar, Chandrakona town. Ram Mandir complex consists of two storied Ram Mandir, Original homestead (Veda Bhavan), Ananda Bhavan, Yagansala, Well, Hanumat Kunda, Tapovan, Gosala, Tulshi Mancha, Shiva Temple (Ramanathaswami Dakshinamoorthy), Navagra and Memorial fountain. Rathjatra (chariot festival) is the major festival of the mandir. A fair held on for 8 days during this time. At present the temple is considered as one of the major attraction of Chandrakona town.

In spite of that there are some other temples like –

- Jagannath Mahadev Temple
- Santinath Mahadev Temple
- Parbatinath Mahadev Temple
- Laxmi-Janardan Temple
- Satinath Mandir
- Radha-Gobinda Mandir
- Raghunath Mandir

Besides that Bhagwat Asram, Udashini Math and ‘Asthals’ (monastery of Hindu Saints and Devotees) add more attractions to Chandrakona. The ‘Asthals’ are three types i.e. *Choto Asthal, Majhari Asthal and Baro Asthal* (i.e. small, medium and big).

### 3.4.2.2.) **Parimal Kanan Park:**

Parimal Kanan Park is situated at Chandrakona road which is the junction point of road ways and railways. It is situated a quite far distance from Chandrakona town. Parimal Kanan Park added a great recreational value at Chandrakona road. The park has covered an area approx 130 acres. The park is also serving as a picnic spot for the entire area. The park provides several recreational facilities including:

- picnicking
- toy train facilities
• boating
• bird sanctuary
• children’s park
• museum centre
• rose garden
• guava garden

3.4.2.3. **Prayag Film City:**

Prayag Film City is going to be the world’s largest film city in terms of its area and facilities and also known as Midnapore film city or Chandrakona film city. Prayag film city is also going to be the one stop destination for every film maker and is the first a kind of film-making arena with mega size integrated complex in Asia. The film city has A to Z facilities which are required for making a film. The film city is divided into three zones – Film Zone, Entertainment Zone and Hospitality Zone. Prayag Film City offers a set of facilities for the film makers like – air-conditioned and sound proof studio floors, latest lights and lighting equipments, production offices, make-up rooms, permanent out-door and in-door sets, dubbing studios, helipad, railway station with bogies, beautiful landscape gardens, parks, golf course, swimming pool, water bodies, tree house, restaurants, cottages, 3-Star and 5-Star hotel and luxury resorts, manicured parks, special zone for television programmes and reality shows club house, convention centre with banquet hall and other necessary aspects. This is comparable with Ramoji Film City of Andhra Pradesh which is already a well known tourist destination. The miniature world created is interesting and amazing. The beauty of film city as well as the miniature world is not only the attraction but also the management has arranged a mock-shooting session for the visitors to enjoy the flavour of filmy activities. Every visitor can participate in mock-shooting by paying requisite fees. Besides mock-shooting, film city has also organized some other recreational activities for visitors viz. –
Ghost House, Museum, Thrilling Rides, Fun Packed Water Games, Tram Rides, Boat Rides and many more beautiful things as a package of recreational facilities to the visitors.

3.4.2.4.) Khirpai:

Khirpai – a town situated 7 miles away from Chandrakona town, is noteworthy for its age old temples. The place was once famous for indigo plantation. The temples* were built in 19th century mostly by brick and most of them exhibits Pancha-ratna style with terracotta works. The magnificent terracotta artistry is very much attractive which depicts *Krishnalila*, *Dasavatara* and the battle of Ram Ravana, hunting scenes and floral ornaments.

Photo 3.35: Temple at Khirpai

Table No. 3.5: Different temples at Khirpai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Name of the Temple</em></th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Speciality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radha-Madhav Temple</td>
<td>Pancha-ratna style</td>
<td>Temple of Madan Mohan and richly decorated with fine terracotta arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kharageswar Shiv Mandir</td>
<td>At-chala style</td>
<td>Famous for its panel and terracotta works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umapati Shiv Mandir</td>
<td>At-chala style</td>
<td>Built in 19th century with the panel of terracotta works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitalanda Tin Temple</td>
<td>At-chala style</td>
<td>Terracotta specimen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalan-Mandir</td>
<td>Ordinary</td>
<td>Oldest temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttamananda Ashram</td>
<td>Pancha-ratna style</td>
<td>Notable for its terracotta works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakshmi-Janardan Temple</td>
<td>Ordinary</td>
<td>Terracotta artistry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey*

3.4.2.5.) Birsingha:

Birsingha is the birth place of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who was a philosopher, academician, educator, writer, translator, publisher, entrepreneur, reformer, philanthropist
and a pillar of Bengal Renaissance. His vast knowledge in all subjects and for his Excellency he was given the title “Vidyasagar” (‘Vidya’ means knowledge and ‘Sagar’ means ocean or sea). Besides his subjective knowledge, he was also remarkably known as a social reformer who initiated reform concerning widow remarriage to uplift the status of women in India. He reconstructed the Bengali alphabet.

Birsingha, as the birthplace of famous and notable person named Vidyasagar, is very much significant from the domestic tourism point of view. Annual fair named ‘Vidyasagar Mela’ held at Birsingha with the objectives of spreading education and increasing social awareness.

3.4.2.6.) Ghatal:

Ghatal is a municipal town also headquarter of Ghatal Sub-Division located on the bank of river Silabati in the north eastern part of Paschim Medinipur district. It performs as an entry point of northern zone tourist destination. Pontoon bridge, locally called Bhasa Pool, developed by British Emperor is the major attraction of this area. Besides that, several temples especially ‘Sitala’, ‘Shiva’, and ‘Kali’ temples are attractions of that area. Sitala puja is the special festival of Ghatal. Most of the temples are At-chala, Char-chala and Navaratna style temple full with terracotta artistry that may attract tourists. The important temples are:

- Jagmohan temple
- The Kali temple
- Siddheshwari Kali temple
- Sitala temple
- Ghatal Yogoda Satsanga temple
- Sri Sri Ramkrishna Sevashram

3.4.2.7.) Raskundu:

Raskundu is a village famous for its unique Ganjan festival held on Chaitra Sankranti (Bengali month) i.e. in the month of April. An age old Shiva temple is the place where the festival is organized. A fair is also organized by the local people which lasts for 30 days. A holy pond is situated just behind the temple. On the day of Chaitra Sankranti all the devotee bath into the holy pond. After taking bath they reach the Shiva temple by crawling. Such ritual is somehow different or unique comparing to other places. A huge crowd of pilgrims and visitors can be found here.
3.4.2.8.) **Garhbeta:**

Garhbeta, a town in Sadar sub-division, is situated about 37 miles north of Midnapore town and has great tourism attractions. In the epic of Mahabharata, Garhbeta was called Bakadwip (the land of Bak Rakshasa) under the jurisdiction of Bakasur. According to history, as the land was ruled by the Bargi Rajas, therefore Garhbeta is known as the capital of Bargi Paragana. The major attractions of Garhbeta are:

**Sarbamangala Temple:**

Sarbamangala temple is almost six hundred and fifty years old is the prime attraction of Garhbeta. The temple is a renowned Hindu pilgrimage destination. According to the legend, the temple was built by Raja Vikramaditya at about three thousand years ago. Afterward, Raja Gajapati Singha Bahadur (the first king of Bargi kingdom) reconstructed the temple. The deity named Sarbamangala, an enchanting form of Maa Durga, is the worshipped in this temple.

- **Brief description of the temple and temple complex:**
  The famous Sarbamangala temple is an example of Odishian architecture with Garbhagriha, Jagamohan and Natmandir. The well decorum of various idols of ancient God and Goddess like Naaga Murti, Singha Murti, Hostimurti, 64 Yogini and Yakkhya Yakkhini are found over the body of the temple.

- **The statue of Lord Vairaba:**
  According to the legend, Lord Vairaba is the door keeper Sarbamangala, the Mother-Goddess.

- **Stony structure of Cuckoo Bird:**
  It is said that, during an auspicious dawn, when the temple up-welled breaking the ground, a cuckoo bird sounded badly, which resells the Goddess to become angry on it and cursed to convert it into a still, immobile, stony structure. Now, it is found just opposite side of the entrance of the temple.
Bone of Bakasura:  
In the ancient time, when the Panchapandava were spent their Vanabasa in this place, a battle was held between Bakasura and Bhima. A piece of bone of Bakasura is well preserved in the temple.

Bura Shiva Temple:  
There is a Bura Shiva Mandir at just front of Sarbamangala Mandir.

The Holy Pond:  
The holy pond is situated just beside the temple associated with legend that a magical performance is held in washing of utensils used during annual Durga worship believed by the followers.

Festival:  
Durga Puja is the major festival. Saptami, Astami, Nabami and Dashami are the important days of the festival. In the day of Nabami, the ritual of animal sacrifice is performed. A fair which lasts for 15 days is organized by the local people around the temple complex in this occasion.

The other attractions of Garhbeta are:

- **Kameswara Temple:**  
  It is a pyramidal structured Jagmohan like Shiva temple. The most remarkable feature is the massive five-segmented triangular arch above the entrance.

- **Radhaballav Temple:**  
  It is an At-chala style of temple made up with laterite stone.

- **Raykota Fort:**  
  In Raykota (the ancient capital of the Bagri Rajas), the ruins of an old fort still exists. The fort has four entrance gates called Lar Darwaja, Pesha Darwaja, Hanuman Darwaja and Ratna Darwaja. In the northern side of the fort there is found seven silted-up tanks, those were excavated between 1555 A.D. and 1610 A.D. by the Chauhan Rajas of Bagri namely Jaltungi, Indrapushkarini, Pathurihadua, Mangala, Kabeshdighi, Ampushkarini and Hadua.

3.4.2.9.) **Gangoni:**

Gangoni is famous for the bad land area located at the bank of Shilabati River in Paschim Medinipur. Creativity of nature can sometimes go beyond the imagination of human minds. Gully and rill erosion takes place throughout the bad land area. Ravines are also formed due
the water and wind action giving an appearance of a canyon. The mesmerizing and speechless beauty of the bad land topography with canyon like appearances and the curvaceous Shilabati River bank and exposed lateritic rock structure relinquished the area as a prosperous nature tourism destination. The area is already famous as a shooting spot among the film makers.

3.4.2.10.) Bagri Krishnagar:

According to the mythology, after a long battle between Bhim and Bakasur, Bhim killed Bakasur. Then Sri Krishna came from Dwarka to congratulate Bhim. To memorize Sri Krishna, Yudhisthir set up an image of Sri Krishna there. It is believed that the image of God Krishna Rai Jiu in the village of Krishnagar is the same image set up by Yudhisthir.

Bagri Krishnagar is located just six miles away from Garhbeta. The temple of Krishna Rai is the main attraction. It is a Pancharatna style temple situated on the left bank of the Shilabati River. The fine sculptured image of Krishna Rai is made up of black basalt. Dol-Jatra is the major festival of the temple. The Dol-Jatra festival of Krishnagar is very famous in Paschim Medinipur as well as in West Bengal. The numerous pilgrims visit the place at that time.

3.4.3.) WESTERN ZONE TOURIST DESTINATIONS:

3.4.3.1.) Jhargram:

Jhargram is a sub-divisional municipal town of Paschim Medinipur district. Jhargram division is covered an area of 620 sq. km in the western part of Paschim Medinipur which is the paradise for nature lovers and also the treasure house of art and cultures of different tribal communities. It is noteworthy that Jhargram division is the ideal eco-tourism destination in the region which intricately amalgamates the rich natural flora and fauna with the uniqueness of the resident communities from cultural standpoint. The different communities (like- Santal, Lodha, Sabars, Mahali, Kora, Bhumij etc.) and their arts and cultures (like- Tusu,
Bhadu, Jhumur songs and Bhuang, Chang, Chhau, Panta, Ranpa Dances etc.) are described in the section of 3.6 and 3.7. The attractions of Jhargram town and its surroundings are:

- **Jhargram Raj Palace:**
  Jhargram Raj Palace bears the history of Jhargram. Once, this area belonged to Malla kingdom of Bishnupur Raj. The architectural design of the Rajbari with its unique garden is the major attraction for the visitors. A part of Rajbari complex (Raj Palace) is now converted into a heritage hotel to serve the tourists. Radharaman Mandir and Shiva Mandir in the Rajbari complex are added attractions to the visitors.

- **Divine temple of Deity Sabitri:**
  Raja Sarbeshwar Malla Deb, the first king of the royal dynasty of Jhargram, set up this temple in the middle of 17th century. Devi Sabitri is a replica of Goddess Durga. A large tank is found just behind the temple. Daily worship of the deity in this temple has been continuing for more than 350 years as revealed from field survey and interview of the temple personnel.

- **Jhargram Museum:**
  Jhargram museum is another attraction of Jhargram town. Several artifacts, sculptures, items used by the communities and several items which depict art and culture of the region are preserved in the museum. A short list of preserved material at Jhargram museum is outlined below:
  - Different types of puppet
  - Lac puppet and paper puppet
- Dokra
- Burned earthen pot and toys
- Ranpa
- Different items made of Bamboo
- Different items made of Wood
- Different items made of Brass
- Different items made of Iron
- Different items made of Jute
- Stone sculptures and images
- Wooden sculptures
- Mats of Sabang
- Tribal cloths
- Tusu idols
- Wooden Chhau Masks – Specially used for Chilkigarh Chhau as a form of different idols (almost 180 years old)
- Paper and clay based Chhau masks – used for different type of mask making
- Instruments used for Chhau
- Traditional materials

**Jhargram Mini Zoo (Deer Park):**

Jhargram mini zoo, also called as a deer park is established in 1983. The total forest area of Jhargram mini zoo is 34.5 hectare. It is a centre of excellence for ex-situ conservation. Conservation and breeding of endangered species, generating awareness among the local people about the animal, developing conservation education and fulfilling the amusement purposes of the visitors are the basic objectives of the mini zoo. The mini zoo conserve the animal species like Spotted Deer, Barking Deer, Black Buck Deer, Himalayan Black Bear, Sloth Bear, Jackal, Fox, Jungle Cat, Monitor Lizard, Star Tortoise, Crocodile, Rhesus
Macaque, Common Langoor, Guinea Pig, Fishing Cat, Pea-Fowl, Hawk, Parrot, Pigeon, Crane, Duck, Owl, Dahuck, Python etc.

**Kalaboni (Medicinal Plant Garden):**
A medicinal plant garden is initiated by the Govt. of West Bengal in the year 2000-01 under Jhargram Research Range (Silviculture(s) Division Research Circle, Directorate of Forest at Kamarbandhi, Jhargram) has an attraction to visit. It is an ex-situ conservation site of medicinal plant species covering an area about 2 hectare.

**Radha-Krishna Temple at Alampur:**
Situated on the way of Jhargram to Belpahari in Alampur village, it is a popular temple. Radha and Krishna are the main worshipping deities in the temple. Dol-Jatra and Ras-Mela are the major events.

**Kendua:**
On the way of Jhargram to Chilkigarh, Kendua Lake is situated. It is a large and beautiful lake of Paschim Medinipur. Thousands of migratory birds come here in season.

**Dahijuri (MPS Resort):**
As an initiative of agri-tourism, an eco-tourism resort was established the village called Dahijuri (7 km away from Jhargram) by the business house in the name of MPS Greenfort Resort which attained ISO certification. The eco-events arranged by MPS Greenfort Resort are Rain Dance, Boating, Cow Cart, Decorated Rickshaw, Fish Angling, Cycling, Adivasi Dance in Natural Garden, Bon Fire with Bar-B-Que, Natural Picnic, Kite flying, Fish Netting, DJ Night. In the eco-tourism resort, tourist can enjoy the organic fruits and vegetables and firm fresh livestock. The MPS Greenfort Resort also gives the facilities like-

- luxurious accommodation facility
• swimming pool
• gymnasium
• tree house
• ground wedding
• doctor on call
• uninterrupted power supply
• open air theatre
• indoor and outdoor games
• conference rooms
• restaurant facilities

There are some upcoming facilities also. These are organic herb therapy, bird sanctuary, natural spa, steam bath, sound therapy and nature therapy. The management is planning to develop ropeway, water park, artificial ocean, water ride, musical dance floor, toy train, mini golf course, speed boat, agro-tourism, cave house, hanging house and boat house for providing further recreation to the visitors.

3.4.3.2.) Gopiballavpur:

Gopiballavpur (22°13′N and 86°54′E) is a rural settlement in Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal with the legacy of Prabhu Shyamananda, one of the three eminent leaders of second generation Vrindaban School of Vaishnavism in the beginning of 17th century. Born in 1485, Sri Chaitanya initiated a religious movement in Hindu society based on Humanism and Socialism. The effects of this movement continued up to 18th century in eastern India particularly with the able leadership of the second generation followers of Sri Chaitanya who believed in viewing ‘Guru’ as visible living incarnation of their deity. The Goswamis of Vrindaban accepted Chaitanya as the dual
incarnation of Radha and Krishna and thereby developed the Vrindaban School. Disciples from various parts of the country used to come to Vrindaban to study the Vaishnava literature under the guidance of Vrindaban Goswamis (also called ‘Sada Goswamis’ including the scholars like Krishnadas Kapriaj, Jiva Goswami, Raghunath Das, Gopala Bhatta, Rupa and Sanatan). Dukhi Mandal of Medinipur was one of such devotees who went to Vrindaban and trained by Jiva Goswami on Krishna-lila tattwa. He was given the name “Shyamananda” probably by Jiva Goswami after he discovered the deity of Sri Shyamsundar and narrated the story of earning a new Noopur Tilak from Radha by returning Her anklets. It is believed that the beautiful deity of Shyamsundar emerged from Radharani’s heart and housed in one of the seven main temples of Gauriya Vaishnava sect (followers of Chitanyakism) for everyday darshan in Vrindaban, the holiest of all holy places for Vaishnavas.

The folklore on the success of Shyamananda to get direct access to Radharani is amazing and is enough to create religious tourist interest on him. He had the opportunity of clearing sacred groves of Seva-Kunj in Vrindaban and after rendering his service about twelve years, one day he dreamed that his Lord Krishna with Sri Radha was engaged in dancing in the grove. During the dance the left foot anklet of Sri Radha slipped down on the ground. On the next day while clearing the grove, he found it and when Sakhi Lalita, the friend of Radharani came to him and asked him for its return, he expressed his desire to see (darsan) of lotus feet of Sri Radharani. By chanting the Radha Mantra as directed by Lalita, he was able to enter the Nikunja Temple of Sri Radharani in the disguise of ‘Manjari’. By touching the anklet, his Hari Mandir Tilak was changed into the so-called Noopur Tilak which Sakhi Lalita renamed as ‘Shyam Mohan Tilak’. Vishaka another companion of Sri Radha named him as ‘Kanak Manjari’ to designate such special impression on his body. Against his wish to remain there for serving Her lotus feet, Sri Radharani ordered him to go back to the material world with the deity of Sri Shyamsundar which was extracted from Her lotus heart and remain engaged in the devotional service of the deity. Since his service was for earning pleasure (Ananda) of Shyamsundar i.e. Lord Krishna, the new name Shyamananda was given. Listening all these from his disciple, Sri Jiva Goswami not only recognized the name Shyamananda but also referred the very special Noopur Tilak as Shyamananda Tilak (Goswami, 2004).

Shyamananda with his two senior scholars- Sri Narottama Das Thakur and Srinivasa Acharya returned to Bengal with the objective of making effective compromise between various conflicting Vaishnava sects and lead Vaishnavism by making new disciples with emphasis on attracting influential classes of the society. Srinivasa for example converted the Royal family
Bishnupur from Sakta to Vaishnava. With the active support of the local Rajas, Shyamananda spread the religion in Balasore and Mayurbhanj area of Orissa centering from Gopiballavpur (then under the Mayurbhanj Princely State). Various land-lords such as Rasik Murary Patnaik (renamed Rasikanda after the special ceremony of initiation called “Diksha”) of Rayanigram, Udanda Roy of Nrisimhapur or Nabakisore of Dalbhum were among the followers of Shyamananda.

Rasikananda (1590-1652) was Shyamananda’s chief disciple who was given, the charge to worship Govinda at Gopiballavpur. From the age of 18, he was the disciple of Shyamananda. The image of Gopiballava-Ray was restored by him while he was settled at Kashipur village. According to the names of the deities, the village was renamed as Gopiballavpur (Lahiri, 1993). A book “Rasika-Mangal” written in the year 1660 A.D. by Gopijanaballava Das, one of the disciples of Rasikananda, is considered as a valuable source to know the activities of Shyamananda and his followers for the spread of Chaitanyaism. At Gopiballavpur temple, Rasik Roy is a deity worshipped with Radha-Krishna and Madan Mohan. The significance of the place from the standpoint of cultural tourism lies in the authenticity in maintaining the Vaishnava legacy in the rituals followed as evident in the temple calendar (Table: 3.6):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of occasions celebrated</th>
<th>Most attracting event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Magh</em> (January-February)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>‘Pushyavishek Yatra of Sri Krishna’ (consecration ceremony of Lord Krishna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Falhgun</em> (February-March)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>‘Maha-Mahotsava’ (the special temple festival)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chaitra</em> (March-April)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>‘Dol-Utsava’ (the festival of spring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Baisakh</em> (April-May)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>‘Chandan Yatra Utsava’ (special treatment of deity using sandal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Jaistha</em> (May-June)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>‘Dando-Mahotsava’ (special twelve day festival)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ashar</em> (June-July)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>‘Purna Yatra of Sri Jagannath’ (chariot festival of Lord Jagannath)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Shrabon (July-August)**

10  ‘Jhulan-Yatra’ (celebrating the love of Lord Krishna with Radha)

**Bhadra (August-September)**

4  ‘Kalai-Daman Utsava’ (remembering Sri Krishna as warrior against evil force)

**Ashinn (September-October)**

12  ‘Tal-Nabami Utsava’ (local folk festival)

**Kartic (October- November)**

12  ‘Annakut-Mahotsava’ (special offerings to deity)

**Aghrayan (November-December)**

12  ‘Raas-Yatra festival’ (festival of love)

**Poush (December-January)**

9  ‘Kattayani-Brata Utsava’ (a festival for unmarried women folk)

*Source: Field Survey, 2013*

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**‘Dando-Mahotsava’:**

Gopiballavpur is the destination of religious tourists during Dol (in the month of March), Dando-Mahotsav (in May) and Rasa (November). All three are Vaishnavite festivals but *Dando-Mahotsav* is very special because Gopiballavpur is the only place where such festival is performed. On the 11th day of this twelve day festival, the death anniversary of Prabhu Shyamananda is celebrated. *Kirtan*, a peculiar type of religious song, is the main attraction as illustrated in the programme schedule of this festival: (Table: 3.7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I, II, III, IV &amp; V</td>
<td><em>Lila Kirtan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td><em>Goudiya Vedanta charcha &amp; Lila Kirtan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td><em>Lila Kirtan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td><em>Chiradodhi Mahotsava</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td><em>Lila Kirtan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td><em>Snan Yatra</em> festival of Lord Jagannath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI (Sri Sri Shyamananda Probhu death anniversary)</td>
<td><em>Astraprahar Lila Kirtan</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII</td>
<td><em>Purna &amp; Kak Mohotsava</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Sri Sri Radhagobinda Jeeu Mandir committee, Gopiballavpur*
The arrival of pilgrims reaches its climax on the 10th day to observe the rituals associated with the *Snan-Yatra* festival of Lord Jagannath. It is an attracting event where a procession leads the God to the nearby river Subarnarekha along with a light and sound programme at night. All the devotees and pilgrims take part in the procession with a joy and engaged in dancing and chanting with *Naam-Sankirtana* across the road. It is the rare privilege to observe such occasion from folk tourism perspectives. The rally reaches to the river Subarnarekha River on the full Moon night. If anyone observes the rally from a boat in the Subarnarekha River on such a moonlit night, it will be a memorable experience for the whole of life.

The participants of the rally take bath in Subarnarekha to fulfil their bathing rituals. The unique *puja* rituals named ‘Subarnarekha Nadi Puja’, has added another attraction in *Snan-Yatra* (bathing) festival and at the end of worship (*puja*), water from Subarnarekha is brought in a pitcher to the temple for performing the bathing ritual of Lord Jagannatha. It is believed that gets the opportunity to attend during the bathing rituals of Lord Jagannatha, may fulfil their wishes and desires in their lives by the blessings of God.

3.4.3.3.) **Hatibari:**

Hatibari is located 38 km away from Jhargram, on the bank of river Subarnarekha. This area covered with dense forest having different types of trees viz. Sal, Teak, Mahua, Piyasal Cashew etc. The outstanding scenic sylvan beauty is the major attraction of Hatibari. Besides that, river Subarnarekha gives an added attraction to Hatibari.

3.4.3.4.) **Jhilli:**

Jhilli Pakhiralaya, a bird sanctuary, is situated just 3 km away from Hatibari. It is a potential eco-tourism destination of Paschim Medinipur. Jhilli Pakhiralaya with its adjoining beautiful lake offers outstanding scenic beauty. Different kinds of migratory birds are seen here.
Boating facilities are already available in the lake. A cottage type accommodation facility is provided to the nature lover bird watchers.

3.4.3.5. **Rameshwar Temple:**

Rameshwar temple is an architectural marvel and a peculiar South Indian category of temple famous as ‘Hindu Shiva Mandir’. Rameshwar temple is situated 22 km away from Gopiballavpur on the bank of river Subarnarekha. It is an ancient Shiva temple with a unique and peculiar demonstration of ‘Dadoslinga’ (twelve sacred lingas adjoining together) form which is the main attraction of the temple. According to the mythology, to fulfill Sita’s desire, Sri Ram established the temple with the help of Lord Vishwakarma. Several pillars are found in the temple complex. A holy pond is situated just beside the temple. The surrounding natural beauty of jungle areas and the adjoining river side beauty of Subarnarekha give an additional attraction to this sacred place. Mahashivaratri in February and Charak in April every year are the major festivals celebrated here.

3.4.3.6. **Tapoban:**

Tapoban, a natural religious tourist destination, situated at Beribar village under Nayagram Police Station of Paschim Medinipur. In Sanskrit Tapoban comes from the two part word “Tapasya” meaning specifically austerity and more generally spiritual practice and “Vana” meaning forest. According to Hindu tradition, forests are considered as three types- Tapovan, Mahavan and Sreevan. Tapoban in Paschim Medinipur bears a glory of mythological background. According to it, once there was an *ashram* of *Rishi* Balmiki. Sita stayed here for a long time after completing her “Banavasa” (confinement in the forest). Laba and Kush, her
twin baby took birth in the ashram. Tapoban is thus a sacred and mythologically important place. Situated in the dense forest just 5 km distance from Rameshwar temple, an age old ashram with ‘Yoghya Sthal’ is attracting the visitors. A footprint is also preserved here which, according to the local people, is Devi Sita’s foot prints. The idol of Devi Sita, Laba and Kush are worshipped here. ‘Makar Sankranti’ and ‘Ostham Prahara’ in the Bengali month Pousha and Baisakha (January and April respectively), are the major festive days at Tapoban. The surrounding natural dense forest with its thrilling suspensive atmosphere makes this area adventurous and also enhances the significance as a tourist destination.

3.4.3.7.) Chilkigarh:

Chilkigarh, 12 km away from Jhargram, is situated on the bank of Dulung River. Once, this place was ruled by Jamboni rulers. Now Chilkigarh is famous for its palace and fort. The palace with its large campus and temple is very attractive.

Before independence, Chilkigarh was famous as a renowned Chhau hub. Chilkigarh Chhau was very much famous because special kind of masks of different idols had been used for performing Chhau dance. It was flourished by the encouragement and nourishment of Chilkigarh royal family. The art become extinct with the fall of the dynasty of the royal family.
Another major attraction of Chilkigarh is Kanak Durga temple. The temple is situated on the bank of Dulung River. It is a temple of Guardian deity Kanak-Durga (as a form of Devi Durga). The surrounding area of the temple is covered with dense forest. The trusted Kanak-Durga temple, the adventurous sylvan beauty of dense forest and the nearby river Dulung are the major attractions. Durga Puja is the annual festive occasion at Kanak-Durga temple.

3.4.3.8.) Belpahari:

Belpahari is a natural as well as ethno-tourists destination. It is the gateway of Ghagra water fall, Gurrasini, Kankrajohr, the hills of Kanaisor, the spring at Ketki, the Laljal and Tarafeni-all are potential ecotourism sites. Physiographically, the western upland starts from here. An event of cock fighting held at Belpahari during Poush-Sankranti is a discernible experience. An archaeological finding from Belpahari establishes the fact that the place was habitat of ancient tribal population of Bengal.

3.4.3.9.) Ghagra Water Fall:

It is a nature based tourist destination. The rippling water of the Tarafeni River and the rock structure at Ghagra are the major attractions.

3.4.3.10.) Tarafeni:

About 53 km distance from Jhargram, the Tarafeni barrage has been constructed over Tarafeni River with a big reservoir. The natural and scenic beauty of the place is its attraction. Different migratory birds are seen here which its seasonal attraction is also.

3.4.3.11.) Kankrajohr:

Kankrajohr is very beautiful place and a nature based tourist destination. It is fully surrounded by dense forest of Sal,
Pial, Kendu, Simul, Bohera and Haritaki. At the top of the hill there was a forest guest house which was demolished by the Maoist. As the area overcomes the problem of such extremist activities today, the scope of adventurous jungle safari, the speechless natural and sylvan beauty may be considered as the major attractions of Kankrajohr.

3.4.3.12.) The Laljal Hill:

The Laljal hill has a great natural beauty. To climb up at the top of the hill by trekking is a discernible life time experience. A view from the top of the hill is very much magnificent and scenic. An age old temple, namely Basanti Mandir is found on this hill. Laljal is a nature tourism paradise of Paschim Medinipur.

3.4.3.13.) The Hills of Kanaisor:

The hills of Kanaisor are situated at about 14 km distance from Belpahari and the place has been inhabited by tribal population. In every autumn season, a five days’ religious festival is held there. The magnificent view of Kanaisor hills is its attraction. Lots of migratory birds are seen here during May and June and provide the scope of bird watching.

3.4.3.14.) Ketki Jharna:

About approx 15 km away from Belpahari on Chevara hill Ketki Jharna is located. The magnificent view of this spring attracts visitors.

3.4.3.15.) Gurrasini:

Gurrasini is very much famous for the *ashram* named Satananda *ashram*. At the top of the hill, there is also a temple of Lord Shiva. River Tarafeni flows through the bottom of it. It is a quiet place providing shelter to saints. The noted *ashram* and the natural beauty of the place give it the status of a natural as well as religious based tourist destination.

A scheme of classification of already mentioned tourist places is given in table no. 3.8 located in the district of Paschim Medinipur.
Table no.- 3.8: Classification of Tourist Destinations of Paschim Medinipur

Source: Literature and Field Survey
3.5. Major fairs and festivals of Purba and Paschim Medinipur:

The undivided Midnapore district (both Purba and Paschim Medinipur) is a home of diverse religion, community and culture. Therefore, an immense number of fairs, festivals and socio-cultural events are held at both the districts throughout the year. The major fairs and festivals having a great importance in tourism point of view observed throughout the year in the entire district are listed below:

**Table: 3.9: Major fairs and festivals of Purba and Paschim Medinipur**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Fairs and Festivals</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garhbeta</td>
<td>Durgapuja</td>
<td>Ashin Mas (September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raskundu</td>
<td>Ganjan Utsav</td>
<td>Chaitra Sankranti (April)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamulk</td>
<td>Baruni Mela</td>
<td>Poush Sankranti (January)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhargram Sub-division</td>
<td>Jaoa Utsav</td>
<td>Bhadra Mas (August)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhargram Sub-division</td>
<td>Bhadu</td>
<td>Bhadra Mas (September)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pataspur (Gonara)</td>
<td>Manasha Puja</td>
<td>Srabon Sankranti (August)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhargram Sub-division</td>
<td>Badhna</td>
<td>Kartik mas (October)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhargram Sub-division</td>
<td>Tusu</td>
<td>Poush Sankranti (January)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhargram</td>
<td>Jhargram Utsav</td>
<td>25th January to seven days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jhareswar</td>
<td>Ganjan utsav</td>
<td>Chaitra Sankranti (April)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moyna</td>
<td>Rasmela</td>
<td>Kartik Purnima (October)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahishadal</td>
<td>Rathjatra</td>
<td>Ashar Mas (June)</td>
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<td>Naya</td>
<td>Pat Mela</td>
<td>November</td>
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<td>Tamluk</td>
<td>Bargabhima Puja Mela</td>
<td>Poush Sankranti (January)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dantang</td>
<td>Sarasanka Dighi</td>
<td>Poush Sankranti (January)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kharagpur</td>
<td>Dashera</td>
<td>Bijaya Dashmi (October)</td>
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<td>Bagri Krishnagar</td>
<td>Dol Utsav</td>
<td>Falguni Purnima (February)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ghatal</td>
<td>Bishalaksh Devi mela</td>
<td>Poush Sankranti (January)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medinipur College Ground</td>
<td>State handicraft Expo</td>
<td>December last week to January first week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digha</td>
<td>Beach Festival</td>
<td>Every February month of a year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gopiballavpur</td>
<td>Dando mahotsav</td>
<td>Jaistha Mas (May)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panskura</td>
<td>Raghunath Jiu Puja</td>
<td>Ashin Mas (September)</td>
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*Source: Field Survey*
3.6.) **Folk arts and handicrafts of the study area:**

Folk art is an indivisible part of folk culture and the study about folk culture in India starts since 19th century. Folk art has been defined in different ways. The art form that is created by the spontaneity of a rural artist in the simplest possible way with the help of natural colours and ingredients may be termed as folk art (Chakrabarti, 2008). A diverse sphere of folk arts and handicrafts are found in the entire Midnapore district (both Purba and Paschim). The folk arts and handicrafts are the important tourism resource bases as a form of souvenir products that also helps to improve the economic strength of the local people, particularly those who are engaged in such work. It also helps in the cultural regeneration of folk-cultural groups concerned. The important folk arts and handicrafts as found in the study area are as follows:

- Pat art (Scroll Painting)
- Items made of bamboo
- Items made of cane
- Stone items
- Gold and Silver ornaments
- Ornament work
- Clay model and statues
- Cotton industry
- Kantha-stitch
- Rope making
- Iron tools
- Mat industry
- Dokra art
- Lac art
- Bone craft
- Jhinuk craft
- Items made of Kasa-Petal (Brass and Bell metal)
- Wood craft
- Sea shell craft

3.6.1.) **Pat Art:**

The word ‘Pat’ is derived from the word ‘Patta’ means cloth and the word ‘Chitra’ means painting. The artists are popularly known as ‘Patuas’ or ‘Chitrakars’. The
artists generally use ‘Chitrakar’ as their surname. Traditionally they are painters. The eco-friendly natural substances like leaves, fruits, flowers, plants, trees and other sources to make different colours are used for their painting. The scroll paintings made by them is so unique in nature as every ‘Pat’ bears a theme of story or issue. The illustration procedure of the ‘Pats’ by singing is their traditional folk culture which is the prior folk tourism resource.

3.6.2.) Mat Making:

Sabang is located at the South-Eastern part of the district Paschim Medinipur. The pure and fine mats are produced at Sabang by using ‘Madhur-Kathi’ which is the basic raw-material of mat industry. The fine, soft and glossy mat and the product diversity are the factor for developing mat industry and also make the product world class. Three types of mats are made in here: ekrokha mat, dorokha mat and masland mat. The art and craft of the villagers and the procedure of making of soft and fine mat from ‘Madhur-Kathi’ are the basic attraction as such a tourist destination.

3.6.3.) Bone Craft:

Several artifacts like kids’ toys, different statues, house decorating materials, different items for ladies and gents are made from bones. Now bone craft is an important handicraft of both Purba and Paschim Medinipur. The local people of the villages of Baishnavchak, Kalagachia, Durbachati, Raychak under the Kolaghat block in Purba Medinipur and Daspur-II block in Paschim Medinipur are engaged in making bone crafts.

3.6.4.) Jhinuk Craft:

It is basically found at Ramnagar I and II block of Purba Medinipur district. The interesting artifacts are the statues of God and Goddesses, variety products for ladies and different figures of elephant, peacock etc.

3.6.5.) Items made of Kasa-Petal:

Several kitchen utensils and idol of Gods and Goddesses like the idol of Sri Krishna, Maa Lakshmi is made from Kasa and Petal. The handicraft centres are found at Ghatal and Chandrakona blocks in Paschim Medinipur and in the village of Mahishadal, Chandanpur, Vidhyadharpur, Mukundupur at Purba Medinipur district.
3.6.6.) **Items made of Bamboo:**

Several utility goods like Winnowing tray (Kula), Strainer, Basket, Wicker Basket, Fish catching cages and Tally are made from bamboo sticks. This art culture has been found in almost everywhere in the study area.

3.6.7.) **Cane Art:**

Cane is a fine and flexible forest based items. Many types of sophisticated products (tray, basket, flower bowl etc.) and cane furnitures include (tool, table, chair, tea table etc.) are made by using cane. The cane products of this area are very much famous in spite of non availability of cane in the districts. It is brought from North Bengal.

3.6.8.) **Items made of Wood:**

Wood has been used for interior decorative items, making different models, mobile-stand, pen-stand, flower-bowl, photo-frame, wall-show-piece, statues of different Gods and Goddess etc. It is a popular craft found mostly in Midnapore city and Daspur-I block in Paschim Medinipur and in Tamluk block of Purba Medinipur district.

3.6.9.) **Stone Work:**

It is another attracting craft of Paschim Medinipur district. The stone work is found in the region like Binpur, Belpahari, Silda, Jamboni. Idols and statues of different kind made from stones are very much attractive. Without these, plates, bowls, drinking glasses, candles and candle stands are made from soft stones.

3.6.10.) **Ornament Work:**

Ornament work is also mentionable as a handicraft. In case of imitation ornament, it is localized at Daspur-I block in Paschim Medinipur. In case of Gold and Silver jewellery, it is found especially in Contai, Ramnagar and Dantan area.

3.6.11.) **Clay models and statues:**

It is found mostly everywhere in the districts (both Purba and Paschim). Different models and statues of elephant, horse etc. and the idols of God and Goddess are made from clay.
Photo 3.50: Handicrafts of the study area
3.6.12.) Kantha-Stitch:

Kantha-Stitch is another unique handicraft of Paschim Medinipur district. The beautiful and designed Kantha is made by using used clothes and saris.

3.6.13.) Dokra Art:

Dokra art is found in the villages of Guiadaha and Ramnagar which are situated near Chandrakona road. These villages are famous for a unique type of dokra art applying ‘lost wax’ method.

Apart from these, the other folk arts and handicrafts are found in both Purba and Paschim Medinipur including jute crafts, sea shell crafts, dry flowers work, jori work, iron craft, rope craft, lac art, etc. which have potentials to be established themselves as souvenirs with the growth of tourism industry in the region.

3.7.) Folk Songs and Dances of the study area:

In Paschim Medinipur, basically Jhargram Sub-Division is considered as a land of aboriginal tribes’ viz. the Santal, Mundas, Bhumij, Lodhas, Sabars etc. Their social and cultural performances, religious rites and rituals, life-style systems are the basic of folk-cultural tourism resources. Their performances as in the form of songs and dances give more attention to a culture loving tourist. Jhargram is considered as a paradise of folk culture based tourism resources. According to Mundari language, it is said that “SENGE SUSUN KAJI GE DURAN” – it means dance is the stepping and songs are the words of the tribes (Maity, 2005). Folk songs and dances are the folk tourism elements of the study area. Some of these are:

3.7.1.) Tusu:

Tusu festival is largely found in eight blocks in Jhargram subdivision which are Jhargram, Gopiballavpur I & II, Jamboni, Sankrail, Nayagram and Binpur I & II and mainly celebrated by...
the Kurmi, Bhumij and Bagal communities. Tusu may be called the most popular festival celebrated in Poush Sankranti or Makar Sankranti. Tusu means the reaping of the sown and as agriculture based festival it is slightly related with fertility cult. The major attraction of Tusu parab is the song of Tusu which have been composed and sung by them along with dance performance without any instrument. In every year new songs are composed for worship.

3.7.2.) **Bhadu:**

Bhadu is another festival celebrated here like Tusu. It is also a harvesting festival. This festival celebrated in Bhadra (a Bengali month) and is largely found in Jhargram sub-division. As like Tusu the folk festival Bhadu is celebrated by singing a song called Bhadu song which is totally composed by them. This is also a popular festival which attracts visitors.

3.7.3.) **Jhumur:**

Jhumur is a unique song of life. Jhumur song is a combination of emotion and sex passion along with hopes, frustrations, sorrows, dreams and melancholy. Jhumur songs are performed in the tribal festivals like Karam, Baha etc. In general Jhumur songs have been classified into five types. These are:

- Bhaduria Jhumur
- Darshayla Jhumur
- Darbari Jhumur
- Daharshayla Jhumur
- Pala Jhumur of Kahini Jhumur

Bauls of Bengal largely express themselves through Jumur. With Jhumur, Chhau dance is performed.

3.7.4.) **Chhau Dance:**

Chhau is characterized as a masked dance which is very much popular in the states of Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal. Based on its places of origin and development Chhau dance has been classified into four subgenres or gharana viz. Seraikella Chhau, Mayurbhanj Chhau, Puruliya Chhau and Chilkigarh Chhau. Everyone has its distinctive character of its own. At present Puruliya Chhau has received international
recognition whereas Chilkigarh Chhau in Jhargram sub-division is declared as extinct. The traditional Chhau dance was belonging to Chilkigarh royal family but in later periods, with the fall of the dynasty, the traditional dance has been decayed. Chilkigarh Chhau was once very famous and unique for its special kind performance by using the special kind of masks of different idols. Development of tourism may be a way to revive such traditional performing art.

3.7.5.) **Chang Dance:**

Chang is a dance of hunting tribe Lodha and Sabars. It is celebrated during worship, marriage and festival occasions. It is an encircling form of dancing held at evening to mid-night. A daffli like musical instrument is being used for dancing. The uniqueness and peculiarity of its style is very much attractive.

3.7.6.) **Panta-Dance:**

It is also a unique type of dancing. ‘Panta’ means group. A group dance of Bhumij community in Paschim Medinipur is called as ‘Panta-dance’. It is celebrated in the occasion of crop cutting and planting.

3.7.7.) **Ranpa-Dance:**

This is a unique and rare dance form. The artist perform Ranpa dance by using ladder made of bamboo. Madal and Dhamsas are used as a musical instrument during dance.

3.7.8.) **Puppet-Dance:**

It is very much interesting and beautiful dance. Puppets are used for this type of dancing performance. Three types of puppets are used viz.-

- String Puppet
- Rod Puppet
- Gloves Puppet

The puppet-dance is found at Ramgarh village in Goaltore P.S., Amratara village in Keshiary P.S. and Dhangori village in Sankrail P.S. Development and diffusion is not seen in case of puppet–dance. The extraordinary performing art by using puppet has a great value as a folk cultural tourism resource.
In spite of that Bhuang-Dance, Dangrey-Dance and Saharul-Dance are ethno tourism resources of Paschim Medinipur.

3.8.) Communities in the study area as ethno tourism resources:

The different tribal communities are found in both Purba and Paschim Medinipur district. The different socio-economic-cultural activity of different tribal communities made the districts as a potential ethno-tourism ground. The communities are- Santal, Munda, Bhumij, Mahali, Koda, Lodha, Kheria, Hoa and also Mech, Rava, Lepcha, Bhutia, Garo, Orao, Mog are present in there.

3.8.1.) Santal:

The Santal tribe is the third largest tribal community in India and the largest group among the tribal communities in the study area. Etymologically, the word ‘Santal’ came from ‘Saont’ or ‘Samanta’. Santals are mostly concentrated in Jhargram sub-division and the inhabitants of northern and western hilly area of Paschim Medinipur district. Cleansing of forest, agriculture and digging works are the basic occupational practices of Santal community. ‘Sohoray’ and ‘Karam’ are the major festivals of Santal community. Santali songs, rhymes, language, their livelihood pattern, socio-cultural activities, festivals and also their ethnic characteristics are the important folk-cultural tourism resources.

3.8.2.) Munda:

Etymologically, Munda means head, the headman of a village or habitation. Mundas are largely concentrated in Jhargram sub-division as in the place like Chandri and Maniputi of Jhargram P.S., Jeltai in Sankrail P.S., in Chunapara, Narayangarh, Belda, Keshiary, Gopiballavpur I & II and Belpahari block. Agrarian society prevails in munda community. Shifting cultivation was the basic occupation once practiced by Munda community. They are believed in Hinduism. Inter-marriage with other tribal community is barring. Singbonga is the supreme God. Every Munda Village has a ‘Gotiora’ a cultural training centre for young Munda and ‘Akhra’ the entertaining hub. It should be mentioned that ‘Pata-Nach’ is very popular in Munda society.
3.8.3.) **Bhumij:**

Bhumij is the offshoot of Munda community. Bhumij are largely found in Gopiballavpur I & II and Binpur-II block of Paschim Medinipur district and is the second predominant tribe of the district. Bhumij society is patriarchal in nature. Cleansing of forest, agriculture and digging work are the basic occupation of the community. They acculturated in Hindu customs. ‘Ming-Bonga’ is the supreme god. They also worship ‘Gonmadhanam’, ‘Jahirburu’ and ‘Dhukundra’ as a deity. Their major festivals are ‘Bandhna’, ‘Saharul’ and ‘Karam Parab’. Their customs, livelihood pattern, rituals are the important tourism resources.

3.8.4.) **Mahali:**

Mahali community is a separate offshoot of Santal community. They are mostly concentrated in Jhargram sub-division of Paschim Medinipur district. They are skilled in making bamboo made items like Basket, Tray, and Bowl etc. Hembram, Murmu, Hansda, Kisku, Besra, Tudu, Mandi, Baskey, Soren, Chanre, Shyama, Gundti, Dungi etc. are the different lineages of Mahali community. ‘Sing-Bonga’ is the supreme god of the community. Women of the community are engaged to produce handicrafts whereas male member are engaged in field. Their major festivals are Baha, Saharay, Karam, Dhansai, Maghnim etc.

3.8.5.) **Lodha:**

Lodhas are primarily a hunting gathering community largely concentrated in Jungle areas of Jhargram sub-division in Paschim Medinipur district. Lodhas are inhabited in almost 469 villages in Paschim Medinipur. They collect wild roots, tubers and edible leaves from jungle and also hunt wild animals, birds and reptiles as for their food. But now with the advancement of civilization, they also become familiar with the modern technique of agriculture and also practiced it. Kotal, Mallik, Nayek, Digar, Bhukta, Paramanik, Dandapat, Ahari and Bhunia are the different lineages of the community. ‘Baram’ is the chief god of the community. Tusu and Bandhna are celebrated by the women member of the community while ‘Changa-Dance’, ‘Jhumur’ and ‘Panta-Nach’ are performed by the male members of the community.
3.8.6.) **Kheria:**

Kheria is also a hunting gathering tribal community concentrated in Paschim Medinipur district. They collect fruits, roots and leaves, honey, logs for their food. They have some groups like Pahari-Kheria, Duddh-Kheria and Dhelki-Kheria. According to them, they are the descendants of primitive Kol group. Their language is now in endangered status. They have some peculiar socio-cultural practices. ‘Gurung’ or Sun is the chief God of the community.

Besides that, there are other communities found in the entire study area. Their concentrations are not found in a particular pocket. Such of the communities are Koda, Hoa, Mech, Rava, Lepcha, Bhutia, Garo, Orao, Mog, Kol and Shabor.

3.9.) **Conclusion:**

It may be concluded that the entire study area (both Purba and Paschim) has a variety of diversified tourism products but comparing with Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur is very much rich in diversified tourism resources.