Chapter- 3: Status of Tourist Places in Bankura District
3.1: Introduction
Bankura district has huge tourism potential having many types of destinations—both natural and man made. But the performance of the district is very poor in attracting tourists. Recently, the extremist activities going on in the district led by Maoists have rendered the tourism sector in a tough situation. During last four-five years the district has suffered from this bad fame in almost all tourist places of the district. Tourism resource means the type of attractions, accommodation facilities, recreational facilities in the varieties of destinations, souvenir products, transport facilities and certain others. The tourism resources actually include the four ‘a’s—‘attractions’ (destinations—natural or man made), ‘access’ (transport and communication facilities), ‘accommodation’ (hotel, holiday homes and other places of stay) and the ‘ancillary industries’ (souvenir products being sold in the places of tourist attractions). In this chapter, status of tourist destinations has been presented while other ‘a’s are analyzed in the successive chapters.

3.2: Destinations on the Basis of Location
These are the places where main recreational activities are performed by visiting tourists who stay temporarily in various types of accommodation facilities. Thus entire tourist industry is located in these places. Tourists here utilize all the tourism resources. They look for various attractions and recreational facilities, stay in decent accommodation looking for better service, use local transportation facilities and spend some money in purchasing local handicraft items as memento. Thus destination provides all these items to the tourists in a single location. The more the attractions and facilities are the more tourists will travel that destination.

Bankura district has a wide variety of tourist places ranging from magnificent physical landscape of Susunia and Biharinath, deep enchanting forest of Jhillimulli to
culturally and historically enriched terracotta works at Bishnupur. These all factors collectively built tourist image of the district. The International Travel Research Institute (ITRI) revealed some image building factors like scenic attractions, good facilities for visitors, warm and friendly people, good food, good shopping etc. (Mill and Morrison, 1985) A destination may not have all these factors simultaneously and hence a proper system of classification of tourist places is needed. On the basis of the variety of the tourist generating factors, as well as the level of tourism development and popularity, the tourist places of the district are classified broadly as natural and cultural or popular and potential respectively (Figure 3.1).

3.2.1: Hilly Northern Bankura

The north-western part of the district is merely an extension of Chhotanagpur plateau which is characteristic of hilly mountainous terrain. This part of the district has long been regarded as the most beautiful and picturesque. Most of the tourist places of north and north-western Bankura are natural sites and purely the gift of nature though human interventions are now taking place in some cases. These natural sites are classified into two subgroups—hill based and water based. Three important hills—Biharinath Hill, Susuna Hill and Koro Pahai fall in this category are located on the right side of River Damodar in a line parallel to the river. The water based spot is Gangdoa Dam. The most attractive hill of this region is Susuna Hill.

3.2.1.1: Biharinath Hill

This is the highest peak of the district, located in the north-western corner of the district in Saltora block, rising abruptly from the surrounding undulating terrain to a height of 442 metres (1449 feet). The hill is about 3.2 kilometres away from the right bank of Damodar river (Banerjee, 1968). There is a metalled road from Tiluri village to reach the northern foot of the hill and one from Saltora to its southern foot. The
stone image of 'Paresnath' on the wall of the old temple bears the testimony of its long history and proves that once it was a Jain Centre. Later, the Hindu devotees used this temple as a place for Vishnu worship. Now beside the old temple, a new 'Shiva' temple has been erected and an annual fair is organized on the eve of 'Sivaratri' during the month of February. The major attractions are (Figure 3.3)

Figure 3.1: Typology of Destinations in Bankura District

(i) Trekking through forest clad hill
(ii) Rock Climbing
(iii) Bird Watching
(iv) Shiva Temple and its Sprawling Campus
(v) Sunset on the Hill
There is only one hotel ‘Biharinath Atithi Niwas’ with about 60 beds.

3.2.1.2: Susunia Hill

This is the second highest hill of the district located in Chhatna block, rising abruptly from the surrounding plains to a height of about 440 metres (1442 feet). The hill runs in an east west alignment for about 3.2 kilometres (Banerjee, 1968), like an elephant lying on the ground with its trumpet. The head of this lying elephant is its first peak while the back of the elephant is the second peak of the hill. Etymologically, ‘Susunia’ has been derived from the Pali root ‘Sunsumar’ and Sanskrit ‘Susumar’ meaning ‘elephant’ (Karmakar, 2006).
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Apart from its natural beauty, Susumia hill is an important archaeological and historical site. In 1966, Directorate of Archaeology discovered many Palaeolithic remains in and around Susumia Hill dating back to about 40,000 years. Thus, it can be said that this hill was inhabited by Pleistocene hominids (Banerjee, 1968). In modern history, it was a seat of Kushan dynasty. The capital of this dynasty was in 'Puskarna' or present 'Pokhonna', during 5th century A.D., a large village beside the River Damodar. One of the important rulers of this dynasty was Maharaj 'Chandrabarma' who lived in Susumia for a number of years during his reign. The rock inscription on Susumia hill bears the testimony of that. After that it was a part of Malla Kingdom and then up to 16th century A.D., it was a part of 'Samantabhum' whose capital was nearby Chhatna. The major attractions are

(i) **Trekking**- Two trekking routes are present, the usual on the southern slope and the adventures route on the northern slope.

(ii) **Rock Climbing** on Manik Rock

(iii) **Rock Inscription** In 5th century A.D., Maharaj Chandrabarma erected this inscription as a proof of his kingdom on the northern slope of the hill at about 350 metres. On the top of the inscription, a sheet of fourteen spokes is inscribed. The writings are

"Chakra Swamin Dasagrenati Shristo

Puskaranadhipate Maharaj Sri Simha Barman

Putrasya Maharaj Sri Chandrabarma Kriti."

(iv) **Susumia Spring** At the base of the hill, a perennial spring is present where an annual fair is being held during July-August.
(v) **Tribal Fair of Siulibona:** Every year on 1\textsuperscript{st} January, a tribal fair is arranged where different types of folk dance and folk music are demonstrated by local folk artists.

![Susunia Hill Tourist Map](image)

**Figure 3.4: Tourist Map of Susunia Hill**

(vi) **Kamarshal:** This place was used by Maharaj Chandrabarma as an industry for making arms and ammunitions. The karmakars (blacksmith) of Susunia are believed to be the settled since then in this village.

(vii) **Hatibathan:** At the southern slope of the hill the elephants and horses took rest after a long journey during war. This place still renowned as ‘hatibathan’ among the local villagers.
Deer Park  Previously it was named as Harinbathan but now at the southern slope forest department has kept a number of deers for tourists’ interest.

Jamdhara  On the northern foot of the hill a small perennial rivulet flowing west to east in circuitous path.

Garh Pukur  During the age of Kushans it was the place of Royal House. Some imprints of old brick made walls bear the testimony of the fact. Now this Garh (fort) has turned into a large depression and thus locally it is known as ‘Garh Pukur’.

There are a number of hotels, youth hostel, guest houses at Susumia, though very insufficient in quantity as well as quality during peak months.

3.2.1.3: Koro Pahar

The small hillock in the north of Bankura town stands as a local pilgrim centre. It is about 122 metres high and about 244 metres long. There is a temple of Savitri Devi at the top of the hill. The hill and its surroundings is a local picnic spot. Visitors occasionally gather in a huge number. No accommodation facility has yet been developed.

3.2.1.4: Gangdoa Dam

This is another important water based tourist place of the district. It is located in Gangajalghati block and about 20 km north of Bankura town. It also offers boating facility and a fair is organized here during the last week of December to attract more tourists to this place. This picnic spot of the district only collects tax for picnicking in an organized manner. Gangdoa dam along with Amarkanan Ashram and Koro Pahar is a compact outing especially for people of Bankura town.
3.2.1.5: Amarkanan

Once the centre of freedom struggle, Amarkanan is located in Gangajalghati block, about 20 km north of Bankura town. The area now is occupied by Amarkanan Ashram (previously covered by a forest known as ‘Machrangar Jungle’ or the Jungle of Kingfishers’) set up for rural reconstruction and emancipation from foreign rule (Bhattacharya, 1982). The Ramkrishna temple of the Ashram was inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi. The roaming through the Ashram premises may remind its holy and noble activities in the past.

3.2.2: Forested Southern Bankura

The southern part of the district is composed of deep forest with undulating terrain. This creates magnificent scenario for the attraction of tourists. The tourist places of this region are mainly water based and forest based. The most important attractions are Mukutmonipur, Jhullimilli, Chhendapathar, Sutan, Talberia Dam, Bordi Pahar and others. Among them, Mukutmonipur is the principal attraction of this region.

3.2.2.1: Mukutmonipur Dam

A huge reservoir (81 km²) and the second longest earthen dam (10.08 kilometres) in the country along two rivers Kangsabati and its tributary Kumari was constructed in 1962 in erstwhile known Mukutmonipur of Khatra block. The reservoir formed by the dam is in reality the mingling of two adjacent lakes with each other (Banerjee, 1968). The project is aimed to serve the dual purpose of irrigation and flood control in downstream areas with soil conservation in upstream areas. But now along with these objectives, reservoir also plays an important role and contributes more to the economy of the district, being established as prominent tourist spot of regional importance. Mukutmonipur provides the following tourism and recreational facilities (Figure 3.4).
(i) **Boating Facility:** The huge water body offers magnificent scenarios soothing experience when boating through its numerous long creeks.

(ii) **Bonpukuria Deer Park:** It is a beautiful forest clad peninsula on the north-western side of the lake.

(iii) **Figure 3.5: Tourist Map of Mukutmonipur Dam**

(iv) **Paresnath:** It is about 5 km south-western of Mukutmonipur a centre of pre-historic antiquity. This religious centre of both Jains and Hindus. A large stone figure of Parswanatha, the last of the 24 tirthankaras has been found in the village apart from two brick built temples believed to be made of 12th or 13th century.

(v) **Ambikanagar:** It is about 2 km from the dam site is also about place of great archaeological interest, as it yielded several artifacts of Palaeolithic and Neolithic age (Banerjee, 1968). The archaeological remains of Ambika temple and Rajbari may be worth seeing place for the tourists.
(vi) *Trekking* through nearby forest clad Masak Pahar.

This is the most important scenic tourist place of the district and its scenic beauty attracts many tourists and picnickers every year and it is truly described as the ‘Crown of Bankura’.

The dam started attracting tourists formally after the establishment of Youth Hostel in 1982 with about 41 beds. It gradually gained importance and within ten years the total number of beds available for tourists crossed 120. Presently, there are 8 hotels having 99 rooms (A.C.- 34 & Non-A.C.- 65) with about 260 beds (A.C.- 74 & Non-A.C.- 185). These hotels of Mukutmonipur create direct employment for about 65 persons (Local-54 and Outsider- 11). Only two hotels have not in house restaurant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>No. of Hotels</th>
<th>No. of Beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upto1985</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-1990</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1995</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-2000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2005</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>259</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey, 2009*

The average occupancy of the hotels of Mukutmonipur is 62 percent in 2009. The evolution of tourism at Mukutmonipur has been represented in the figure 3.6 and table 3.1:

*Figure 3.6: Evolution of Tourism in Mukutmonipur*

### 3.2.2.2: Sutan Eco-Park

Sutan Eco-Park was established in January, 1999 and remained an excellent example of people’s participation in rural development till November, 2004. Since then it was acted as a police camp in compliance with the growing extremist movement in that part of the district till February, 2010. In March, 2010, the camp was totally destroyed.
by the extremists. Since 2004, then it is abandoned and not a single tourist turns up in
Sutan. Sutan Eco-Park was famous for its magnificent and picturesque scenario, tranquil forest, composed mainly of sal and small beautiful lake. A drive through the forest in this area is really adventurous, educational and soothing for the mind. An almost semi-dry jhora (rivulet) namely Sutan had been plucked in 1986 by constructing an earthen dam storing about 30 feet deep water has added beauty to this forest. Keeping in view the beauty and potential of this area, government of West Bengal through its forest department (DFO-South, Bankura) had developed the following facilities to promote ecotourism and nature study camp in Sutan (Figure 3.7)

(i) *Trekkers' Hut* with a double bed room and a 12 bed dormitory

(ii) *Tent Pad* for at least 8 persons at a time

(iii) *Boating Facility* through circuitous path of Sutan Jhora and Sutan dam

(iv) *Watch Tower* to view the surrounding forest

(v) *Deer Park* just alongside the hut of at least 60 deers

Being established in January, 1999, Sutan has become an appealing destination for nature lovers within a very short span of time. In the year of its opening about 864 tourists visited Sutan which had been doubled in the next year and it entered into the development phase. But since then the number of tourists decreased gradually to as low as 250 in the year, 2004. The occupancy rate in table 3.2 shows that the room occupancy as well as bed occupancy were the highest in the year 2000. After this year it has steadily decreased. This diminishing trend of tourists in this hilly forested tract of West Bengal in spite of its magnificent scenery and warm welcome by tribal residents can be analyzed in the light of present political status of the region. Sutan
Eco Park has lost its popularity rapidly and within five years of its inception, it no longer attracts tourists.

The bad tourist image of the area from the standpoint of safety and security gradually restricted the movement of tourists. And since September, 2004 the tourist hut was being handed over to West Bengal Police for a temporary camp in view of the rising extremist activities in the area. The death certificate of Sutan was thus issued. The case of Sutan is a real world demonstration of the life cycle model of tourist places, proposed by R.W. Butler in 1980 lending the idea from famous geomorphological concept of youth, maturity and old age, put forwarded by W.M. Davis. Sutan is found disabled to run its normal life cycle due to its death before maturity (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.7: Tourist Map of Sutan Eco-Park

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Tourism has killed tourism in Sutan. In spite of its positive contribution to local economy, it was not possible for the Department of Forest to run ecotourism resort at Sutan because of the problem of safety and security situation area. The prime cause of insecurity among the tourists is growing extremist activities in and around the area. Sutan falls within the “Red Corridor”. About 90 per cent of the surveyed tourists in the district reported that the present level of insecurity in the area is the only cause of not visiting Sutan Eco-Park. Though not a single tourist is being targeted by them, the sense of fear among the tourists is only the cause of exclusion of Sutan from their
The situation is improving quite well since 2010 in this area. Viewing this improved situation, the authority shifted the security camp elsewhere in the first week of March, 2010. After the shifting of the camp, it was completely destroyed by the extremists except the establishments made for tourists. Thus, rigorous planning is needed to rejuvenate the park so that it again contributes to the local village economy as it did earlier.

3.2.2.3: Jhillimilli

This is a model village in the extreme south-western corner of the district at the tri-junction of Bankura, Purulia, and West Medinipur districts. The name itself describes its picturesque and natural scenery around its forest-clad hills. Jhillimilli is about 24 km from Rambandh and about 87 km from Bankura town. The major attractions are (figure 3.9):

(i) **Kalyan Niketan** Basically a rural development organization spread over 85 acres of land housing two schools, 'Vigyan Mandir' hostels, library etc. It aimed to revitalize rural life of the surrounding villages. The lush green campus of Kalyan Niketan provides great pleasure to the visitors.

(ii) **Kalyan Sayar** A huge tank beside Kalyan Niketan is used for pisciculture and a major source of water for the villagers. This also can be used for tourist purpose.

(iii) **Rambandh Forest** Walking through the dense wood is also a source of great mental satisfaction for the tourists.

(iv) **Bird Sanctuary** in the north of Kalyan Niketan.

In Jhillimilli, there is only one hotel has so far been established with 16 beds.
3.2.2.4: Talberia Dam

Another water based tourist place has recently developed at Talberia, about 6 km north-east of Jhillimilli (figure 3.9). An unmetalled road is going to Talberia dam from Jhillimilli- Chhendapathar road. This is a very famous picnic spot for people of Ranibandh and Khatra blocks. A small reservoir surrounded by fairly dense forest provides tourists solitude and pleasure of varying degrees. In winter birds of various species are migrated to this small lake and forest which presents attractive environment to the visitors.
3.2.2.5: Bordi Pahar

This is located in Sarenga block, about 20 km from Raipur and 60 km from Bankura town along the river Kangshabati. This is a very beautiful and scenic spot of local importance with high tourism potential. The circuitous path of river Kangshabati through the steep cliff of Bordi Pahar creates a good touristic image. Proper planning and management may convert this spot into a developed destination of the district.

3.2.2.6: Chhendapathar

It is remote village in the extreme south of forest clad Ramibandh block. It is about 13 km from Jhillimili on the Jhillimili-Phulkusma road. Literally, Chhendapathar means in local dialect, a stone with a hollow in it (Banerjee, 1968). During the freedom struggle, Chhendapathar remains to be a shooting and target practice camp of the well-known Bengali Revolutionary Kshudiram Basu. An elongated depression with forest on three sides bears the imprint of this camp. Legend says beside the camp, there was a large well where they hide the explosives, arms and ammunitions. There is a huge lake nearby and a park with the statue of Kshudiram Basu recently established in the memory of this great freedom fighter.

3.2.3: Historical East Bankura

Bankura district has a rich historical background starting from the reign of Malla Kingdom to the British rule. The people of the district were actively engaged in independence struggle. Thus many places have been emerged as historically important. The capital of Mallabhum kingdom, Bishnupur and the birth place of Maa Sarada, Jairambati are located in this region. Apart from these two other forest based tourist places are located here.
3.2.3.1: Bishnupur

Once the capital of Mallabhum, Bishnupur now is considered as the ‘Temple Town’ and still retains the flavour of an old Bengali urban complex. Now this is the headquarter of Bishnupur subdivision and is situated at 23°05′ N latitude and 87°20′ E longitude covering almost 21 sq km. It is about 200 km west of Kolkata via Kharagpur and about 35 km from Bankura town. Bishnupur has been the capital of Malla Kingdom since 997 A.D. and this capital has been built by Malla king Jagat Malla (994-1007 A.D.). He first established Mrinmoyee Devi Temple in 997 A.D. and then within a few years he gradually shifted the capital from Pradyumnyapur (near Joypur, 15 km east of Bishnupur) to Bishnupur. Since then Bishnupur evolved as an important business centre as well as a centre of excellence in art and music. Many temples and monuments established in the town by various Malla Kings. Besides, many lakes have been established for irrigation purpose. The major attractions are (Figure 3.10)

(i) **Temples:** There are about 16 large temples in Bishnupur dating back from 1622 A.D. to 1758 A.D. Each and every temple reveals great splendour and magnificence in the days of its power and glory. The temples are classified into various categories like deul or sikhara type, chala type and ratna type depending upon their architectural style and formation (Biswas, 1992)

(a) **Deul or Sikhara Type** - Malleswar (1622 A.D. by Bir Singh-I), Krishna Balaram, Kesara-Ray and Nikunjabharti temples

(b) **Chala Type** - Jor Bangla (1643 A.D. by Raghunath Singh-I), Radha-Vinod and Radha-Raman temples
(c) Ratna Type

- **Ek Ratna Type**- Kalachand (1656 A.D. by Raghunath Singh-I), Muralin Mohan, Madan Mohan (1694 by Durjan Singh), Jor Mandir (1726 by Gopal Singh), Radha Govinda (1729 by Krishna Singh), Radha Madhav (1737 by Churamoni Deve, queen of Krishna Singh) Nandalal and Radha-Shyam (1758 A.D. by Chaitanya Singh) temples

- **Pancha Ratna Type**- Shyam Ray (1643 A.D. by Raghunath Singh- I) and Madan Gopal (1665 A.D. by Siromoni Devi, queen of Bir Singh-II) temples.
• *Nava Ratna Type*- Sridhara Temple in the end of the eighteenth century

Another important temple which is a must seeing for tourists is Chhinnamasta Temple in the south western corner of Bishnupur tourist lodge

(i) **Monuments:** In Bishnupur town, the Malla kings also established a large number of monuments and other establishments for security reasons from time to time. Among these important monuments are

(a) *Rash Mancha*- This is an architectural marvel, built by Bir Hambir in the end of sixteenth century. It stands on laterite plinth and the sanctum is enclosed by three successive squared galleries, having ten, eight and five arched openings on each side (Banerjee, 1968)

(b) *Gumghar*- A four solid wall structures with no side entrance apart from top is still found on the southern part of the fort. It is believed to be use as punishment cabin for the criminals where they died of starvation.

(c) *Bara and Chhota Pathar Darwajas*- These are the two gates of the fort made of laterites, the small gate is in outside while the larger gate is inside the circular canal of the citadel.

(d) *Dalmadal Canon*- This wrought iron made huge (3.8m long) canon shows the power and glory of Malla Kingdom. Until few years back, it was fired on the second day of Durga Puja (Astami) to commence the offerings to Maa Durga.

(ii) **Lakes:** Malla Kings also gave importance in storing water and hence built many embankments on natural hollows. In this way, seven huge tanks in and around Bishnupur town formed. These are- Krishnabandh,
Shyambandh, Lalbandh in the east, Yamunabandh, Kalindibandh and Gantatbandh to the west and Pokabandh in the centre of the city

(iv) Lalgarh Eco Park: In the south eastern corner of Lalbandh, recently an eco-park has established in the midst of tranquil lake on the west and serene forest on the east and south. It also preserves outlet of a tunnel believed to be built by Bir Hambir, running from ‘Rajbari’ (Royal House) to outside the city through underneath the Lalbandh. Legend says the Malla Kings used this as an escape route from the citadel in case of emergency. A watch tower is also being built in the park to see the forest and the migratory birds on the tranquil water of Lalbandh. Apart from these two landmarks the park is beautifully dressed by flower garden specially with various types of roses. The eco-park is fully managed by Marar Gram Panchayat.

(v) Bishnupur Museum: Another worth visiting place of Bishnupur is ‘Acharya Jogeschandra Archaeological Museum’ which houses the relics of Malla Kingdom, prehistoric stone artifacts found in various excavations around the district, books manuscripts, sculptures, folk arts etc.

Apart from these, two fairs are organize in Bishnupur town- ‘Bishnupur Tourism Fair’ (23rd -27th December) and ‘Bishnupur Utsav’ (1st - 3rd January) to attract more tourists to this temple town. It has a large number of hotels and lodges to cater to the varied needs.
type of tourists. Bishnupur has well developed accommodation facilities. Till 2009, it has 27 hotels with 309 rooms (A.C.-45 and Non-A.C.-264), containing 802 beds (A.C.-94 and Non-A.C.-708). Tourism in Bishnupur dates back to 1970 when Bishnupur Tourist Lodge near Chhinnamasta Temple and Lali Hotel near Pokabandh established. The evolution of tourism has passed through a number of peaks and lows. During the later half of the 90s it has seen a high growth in tourism sector with about 155 hotel beds being established during 1986-90. The next ten years have witnessed slower growth of tourism and during the last five years of the last millennium only 74 beds have added. But by the start of this millennium, it has seen a rapid progress in this sector. Between 2001 and 2005, about 217 new beds have added.

![Evolution of Tourism](image)

**Figure 3.11: Evolution of Tourism in Bishnupur**

This progress may be due to the shifting of tourist flow from western and southern Bankura towards east because of the problem of safety and security cropped up by increased extremist movements in these areas. After 2005, the entire district suffered from net loss in this sector. But Bishnupur witnessed a slow progress- about 145 new beds have been established during this phase (figure 3.9). Recently, the Government of West Bengal opened a Tourist Reception Centre to cater to the needs of
innumerable number of day visitors. About 160 direct employment has been created by these hotels. In Bishnupur, there are about 12 restaurants and 6 conference halls. The average occupancy of these hotels is 60 percent per year. With all these attractions and facilities, Bishnupur has emerged as a model tourist place of the district.

3.2.3.2: Jairambati

Jairambati, the gateway of Bankura district from Kolkata located in the 22°56' N latitude and 87°36'45" E longitude in the south eastern corner of the district. It is about 100 km west of Kolkata and has long been known as the birth place of Maa Sarada, wife of Sri Sri Ramkrishna Paramhansa Deva, the renowned Bengali Savant of the nineteenth century. Tourists from almost all states of India and from many foreign countries regularly visit the place to see the lady of remarkable personality and the ideals of Ramkrishna Mission. The places of tourists’ interest at Jairambati are (Figure 3.12)

(i) **Matrimandira (Mother’s Temple)** A modern temple has been built in 1923 on exactly the spot where Maa Sarada took birth along with a big prayer hall. The white marble statue of Holy Mother was installed in the temple in 1954. The sacred relics of Holy Mother are preserved in the Sanctum (Garbha Mantra) and are daily worshipped with appropriate rites and offerings (Tejasananda, 1995).

(ii) **Puratan Bari (Old House)** This is the house of brother Prasanna Mukhopadhyaya which he got during division of the family where Holy Mother lived a long fifty two years (1863-1915). From this house, many persons received ‘Brahmacharya’ and ‘Sannyasa’ from her and thus it became blessed. The authorities of Belur Math purchased this house from
the son of Prasanna Mukhopadhyaya and preserved its original shape and size.

(iii) Nutan Bari (New House): With the increase in the number of devotees, it was hard to accommodate all of them in the small old house. Thus Swami Saradananda purchased a plot of land on the western bank of ‘Punya Pukur’ and erected a thatched house in 1915-16. Many devotees also took ‘Brahmacharya’ and ‘Sannyasa’ from this house. Holy Mother also lived in this house since 1916.

(iv) Punya Pukur (Holy Tank): In the eastern part of Matrimandira and Nutan Bari, this big tank is located. It was constantly used by Holy Mother for
many purposes, and hence it is now called holy tank. Devotees take bath in this tank to seek blessings of the Holy Mother.

(v) Dharma Thakur’s Temple  Dharma Thakur, the principal deity of the village has been enshrined in a small mud-walled thatched house (Tejasananda, 1995) located on the north western corner of the holy tank. In one of the rooms of this temple, there is the tortoise shaped Dharma Thakur named Sundarnarayana who is still worshipped by Mukherjee family in terms.

(vi) Bhanu Pishi’s House  Though paternal aunt in relationship with the Holy Mother, Bhanu Pishi happened to be the true friend of the Holy Mother in her younger days whose house is very near to old house. Holy Mother frequently visited this house for mental peace and solace. Bhanu Pishi regarded Holy Mother as the real Goddess. Recently, the site of Bhanu Pishi has been taken over by Sri Sri Matrimandira and renovated the house in its original form.

(vii) Bathing Ghat of Amodar  The rivulet Amodar in the north eastern part of Matrimandira flowing from north west to south east in a circuitous journey was regarded by the Holy Mother. River Ganga of Jairambati Holy Mother during her childhood regularly took bath in this river. On the opposite side of the ‘ghat’ a scrubland grew up along the meander core of the river. This was the place of meditation of many devotees including Swami Saradananda.

(viii) Simhavahini Temple  This temple is located to the south of Matrimandira, beside taxi stand is also a worth visiting place for the tourists from far and near. Holy Mother used to visit this temple seeking blessings for various
ailments. Legend says, when the Holy Mother suffered of an acute disease, the simhavahini (the Goddess Jagaddhatri) cured her completely. In this way, this temple got local as well as regional importance.

(ix) **Mayer Dighi (Mother’s Tank)** In the west of Matrimandira, on Jairambati-Kotulpur road, a huge tank with a concrete bathing ghat is found. This was occasionally used by the Holy Mother. This is a very scenic place as well as the tank is surrounded by thick scrub on its three sides.

(x) **Nara Narayan Temple** In the southern flank of Jairambati, Vivekananda Temple in 1985 along with a huge prayer hall, an orphanage as well as a guest house. This is also a place of meditation and it offers great satisfaction to the visitors.

(xi) **Barujjey Pukur** This tank is also called ‘Tal Pukur’ owned by Hriday Narayan Banerjee located in the south eastern part of Matrimandira. The Holy Mother used to take her bath frequently in this deep tank and also used its water for drinking and cooking.

(xii) **Sadananda Ashram** It is located in south western corner of the village on Jairambati-Masinapur/Jibta road. The peace you get by roaming through the Ashram premises is really satisfying. This Ashram was established by Swami Sadananda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.4: Evolution of Tourism in Jairambati</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upto 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2009

Jairambati, with all its attractions, houses almost eight hotels and guest houses of the Mission can cater to at least 500 tourists in a day during peak period. Apart from round the year visit of tourists, about 3000 tourists visit in a single day on some special occasions like Birth day of the Holy Mother and Sri Sri Ramkrishna.
Paramhansa Deva. The figure 3.13 shows that formal tourism in Jairambati started in year 1975 with the establishment of Matrimandira Guest House with about 200 beds. With increasing number of visitors first private hotel in the name of Maa Sarada Lodge was established in the year 1992. After then a number of private hotels came up to cater to the increasing demand of tourists. From the figure it can be stated that only small hotels are and these small hotels are mostly owned by the local people. Thus tourism income from hotel business is directly pumped in the local economy minimizing the leakage of income from the local market.

3.2.3.3: Samudrabandh

This is another water based tourist place of the district locally known as 'Dhalsamudra'. It is located in the Jaipur block just 1 km south of Jaipur village. The principal attractions are (Figure 3.14):

(i)  Boating on the lake water
(ii) Walking or Cycling on the deep forest
(iii) Angling on the lake water
(iv) Watch Tower on the deep forest to watch the magnificent view of lake water and migratory birds
(v) Banalata Restaurant on the roadside
A forest rest house (Banabitan) is the only accommodation in Samudrabandh. Tourists may also ply from nearby Bishnupur for day visit. The deep forest and tranquil lake water gives great satisfaction to the visitors.

Figure 3.14: Tourist Map of Samudrabandh

3.2.3.4: Chenchuria Eco-Park

This park was established in 1999 along in Taldangra block for the fulfillment of some objectives- participatory rural development. For this purpose, government of West Bengal through its forest department (DFO-South, Bankura) established the following tourist infrastructure (Figure 3.15):

(i) Rest house with 3 rooms
(ii) Dormitory with 12 beds
(iii) Zoological Garden
(iv) Deer Park
(v) Children’s Play Area
(vi) Big Lake with a central island
(vii) Picnic Tents

**Figure 3.15: Tourist Map of Chenchuria Eco-Park**

For the proper maintenance of the park, Sutan model is followed and this park is now functioning on full swing. This park is about 3 km from Taldangra and about 22 km
from Bankura town. Every year, a huge gathering occurs during the last week of December.

### 3.3: Fairs and Festivals

Bengali proverb “Baro Mase Tero Parbon” (Thirteen festivals in twelve months) is truly represented in Bankura district. In almost all blocks of the district, there is a fair or festival in every month. About 465 annual fairs and festivals are held in the district as a whole. Largest number of fairs is organized in Onda block. Almost all the fairs and festivals are primarily religious, Bishnupur Tourism Fair, Bishnupur Utsav, Tribal Fair of Siulibona, Tourism Fair of Mukutmonipur.

#### Table 3.5: Major Fairs and Festivals of Bankura District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No</th>
<th>Blocks</th>
<th>Gajan (APR-MAY)</th>
<th>Makar Sankranti (JAN)</th>
<th>Dolejatra (MÄR)</th>
<th>Ratha Yatra (JUN-JUL)</th>
<th>Manasa Puja (AUG)</th>
<th>Rash Yatra (OCT-NOV)</th>
<th>24 Prahar (MAY-JUN)</th>
<th>Tourism Fair</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Raipur &amp; Sarenga</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>352</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bankura District Gazetteer, 1968 and Field Survey
3.4: Souvenir Points

These are the places where important art and crafts of the district are produced. Due to economic reasons, these production centres of various handicraft goods are projected as tourist places. In these places, tourists and artisans are in direct contact and in the absence of any middleman, both of them are benefited. Table 4.2 presents a picture of such souvenir points around the district.

3.5: Folk Tourism

Folk tourism is growing very rapidly by attracting more and more tourists with its unique charm of folk custom culture (Lijuan, 2006). Now, this type of tourism is getting importance for two reasons. First, it pays more attention to the local issues, it is the way to conserve the dying folk culture. Second, the tourists enjoy the experience of relaxation and they regard it as very exciting. It can meet the needs of various people to mentally relax themselves and the exciting and relaxing atmosphere created by large crowds is favourable for tourists to pour out their emotions. The folk tourism thus based on local folk cultural elements. These cultural elements are developed and popular among the people, reflecting their lifestyle and practice of production and livelihood. These are totally based on the life of their own. Thus it belongs to popular culture, created as a result of collective wisdom by common people (Lijuan, 2006). It is popular in all walks of life and as a form of relaxing activities such as singing, dancing, painting and sculpting. In Bankura district, such folk tourism elements are many. Among these, some of the folk tourism elements are:

3.5.1: Jhapan

Jhapan is an important folk cultural activity being celebrated in the last day of Bengali month- Shravana (the mid-August) every year. This cultural activity is mainly pursued in the western part of the district. But the main centre of this activity is
Bishnupur It is the occasion that makes the people to worship snakes According to Hindu mythology, daughter of Lord Shiva is goddess Manasa who is also known as the goddess of snakes People worship this goddess so that the fertility of the land is maintained that results in good harvest Jhapan is celebrated with snake shows and snake fights in different parts of the district But the most spectacular is the one held at Bishnupur in mid-August with its shows of live snakes on open platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Souvenir Points</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Products/Attractions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Panchmura</td>
<td>In Taldangra block about 35 km from Bankura town</td>
<td>Famous terracotta works Touristic items like Bankura Horse, Manasa Jhar and many others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Kenjakura</td>
<td>In Bankura-I block, about 14 km from Bankura town</td>
<td>Cane and bamboo products, Wooden crafts, Bell metal and Bel Mala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Bikna</td>
<td>In Bankura-II block, 3 km from Bankura town on Bankura-Raniganj road</td>
<td>Dokra Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Chhandar</td>
<td>In Sonamukhi block, 25 km from Bankura town</td>
<td>Abhivyakti established in 1978 with a view to revitalize the rich cultural heritage of the district It is a training centre of art and craft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Prepared by the Scholar

3.5.2: Rabankata Dance

Rabankata is a Bengali word, meaning cutting Raban's head – the demon king from the great Indian epic 'The Ramayana' This is mask dance like 'Chhau Dance' of Purulia originated in the Malla Kingdom some four hundred years ago Since then it is still celebrated in the last day of the famous Bengali 'Durga Puja' – the 'Dashami' or 'Dussera' The players, wearing masks on their head dance on the rhythm of folk music among the huge crowd in Bishnupur town All total six colourful masked players play this dance The most important masks are two – the evil characters- Ravana and the Kumbhakarna Other four masks are the representatives of
Ramchandra- Hanuman, Sugrib, Jambuban and Bibhishan (Ghosh, 2007) The masks that are worn by the dancers are actually the custodians of these masks and the right to possess the masks is handed from generation to generation, positively within the bloodline. The dance started in the evening of Dashami and continued till midnight with the symbolic killing of Ravana. The masks they wear are used since its inception around four hundred years back are painted every year to give a new look. Such mask dance is definitely mystic and provides excitement and refreshment to the tourists.

3.5.3: Tusu Parab

It is the main attraction of Makar Sankranti festival of the district. Tusu Parab is a very seasonal dance and is performed only in the month of Pausa-the December-January. Every evening, young women gather and dance to songs which are called Tusu songs. This is a way of recreation of young ladies in the evening. On the day of Makar Sankranti, people gather around a pond or nearby river before sunrise in the early morning and float the saucer shaped earthen pot, encircled by earthen lamp and decorate with flowers. After offering their prayers to Goddess Tusu, people sing and dance on the banks of the river or pond. The dance consists of simple group movements accompanied by Tusu songs. There are no instruments used for the songs.

3.6: Destinations on the Basis of Popularity

On the basis of level of development of tourism related activities, tourist places of the district can broadly classified in two groups—established and prospective or potential. To classify destinations on this basis, number of tourists visiting from outside the district, number of hotels, restaurants, access to the destinations, attractions as well as safety and security of the tourists are considered.
3.6.1: Popular Destinations

Considering all the indicators of development of tourist places three destinations are declared as established – Bishnupur, Jairambati and Mukutmonipur. Table 3.3 presents a list of amenities in these established destinations of the district. A composite score has been prepared on the basis of seven indicators (Table 3.3). The result shows that the score is positive only in cases of these three tourist places. Six other destinations included in the study show negative scores. Among the positive scores, Bishnupur has the highest value (8.23) followed by Jairambati (6.17) and Mukutmonipur (4.49). Thus it can be concluded that Bishnupur is the main attraction of the district (Table 3.7).

3.6.2: Prospective/ Potential Destinations

Centres not having proper access, accommodation facility (except rest house or inspection bungalow), private investment is scanty are considered as prospective or potential destinations. About six such destinations are identified around the district with high potential. All these destinations showed negative score in the study. Among these, the least score is of Susuma Hill (-2.30). The proper planning and management of existing tourism resources at Susuma may lead to the inclusion of Susuma Hill in the list of established destinations. Other prospective destinations are Biharnath Hill (-2.81), Chenchura Eco-Park (-2.95), Sutan Eco-Park (-3.58), Samudrabandh (-3.92) and Jhillimilli (-6.09). Some of these have shown remarkable progress in a very short span of time. The proper planning and provision of many amenities by government departments or private operators along with the safety and security of the tourists may convert these potential tourist places in truly developed destinations (Table 3.7).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Tourist Places</th>
<th>Hotel Beds</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>No. of Restaurants</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>Avg. Length of Stay</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>No of Fairs &amp; Festivals</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>Tourist Function Index</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>Hotel Occupancy Rate (%)</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>Tourist Density</th>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>COMPOSITE SCORE</th>
<th>STATUS OF DESTINATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bishnupur</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>1.29</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.5851</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2.109</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>Popular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jairambati</td>
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<td>61.38</td>
<td>1.7602</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>0.859</td>
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<td>1.483</td>
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<td>59</td>
<td>1.662</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>-0.618</td>
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Source. Calculated by the Scholar
Footnote:

1. **Tourist Function Index:** This measure of intensity of tourism has been proposed by Baretje and Defert in 1972. The tourist function of an area is based on the juxtaposition of two populations—visitors and residents. Mathematically, it is derived from the following formula (Pearce, 1982)

\[ Tf = \frac{N_{beds}}{T_p} \times 100 \]

Where \( N_{beds} \) = Number of hotel beds in an area in a base year
\( T_p \) = Resident population in the same year

2. **Occupancy Rate:** The occupancy rate of hotels is also a better method of measuring the intensity of tourism in an area. This can be calculated from the ratio between the number of occupied beds with the total beds of the hotel. In this case, monthly occupancy data is available and thus at first, monthly occupancy is calculated and then all these 12-month data are averaged to get the annual average occupancy rate.

\[ OR(m) = \frac{Bo}{N} \times 100 \]

Where \( OR(m) \) = Monthly Occupancy, \( Bo \) = Beds

\[ OR(y) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{BO}{N} \times 100}{12} \]

\( OR(y) \) = Annual Occupancy, \( N \) = Total number of beds

3. **Tourist Density:** This is another good measure of the population pressure on the tourist areas. It also reveals the importance of the tourist place. It can be mathematically calculated as under:

\[ Td = \frac{P + Pt}{A} \]

Where \( P \) = Resident Population of the area, \( Pt \) = Incoming Tourists

As tourist inflow data is unavailable in any government bulletin or report for the respective tourist places, the total bed nights are considered to get a glimpse of the visiting tourists in the area. Thus in the above equation, \( Pt \) is being replaced by \( Bn \) (Number of Bednights). To calculate \( Bn \), the following formula is used.

\[ Bn = \frac{Hb \times 365}{OR(y)} \]

\( Hb \) = Number of Hotel Beds, \( OR(y) \) = Average Annual Occupancy Rate