

Potentiality of Tourism in Chandannagar, Hooghly, West Bengal - A French Colonial Town

Ayan Kumar Maity¹, Chandralekha Bandyopadhyay²

¹Head Master, Narua Sikshanikatan, Chandannagar, Hooghly, West Bengal, India

²Department of Geography, The University of Burdwan, Burdwan, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

Tourism potential refers to capacity of tourism of a particular region with reference to local resources. It is one of the important remarkable economic social phenomena of Chandannagar town. Tourism is the major consumer preferences are the tourist of this town. The major focus of this paper understanding the capacity of tourism of this town with reference to cultural heritage, sustainable uses of resources and govt. initiatives with ecological footprint.

KEYWORDS: Hotspot, Eco tourism, Potentiality, Architecture, Illumination, Accessibility

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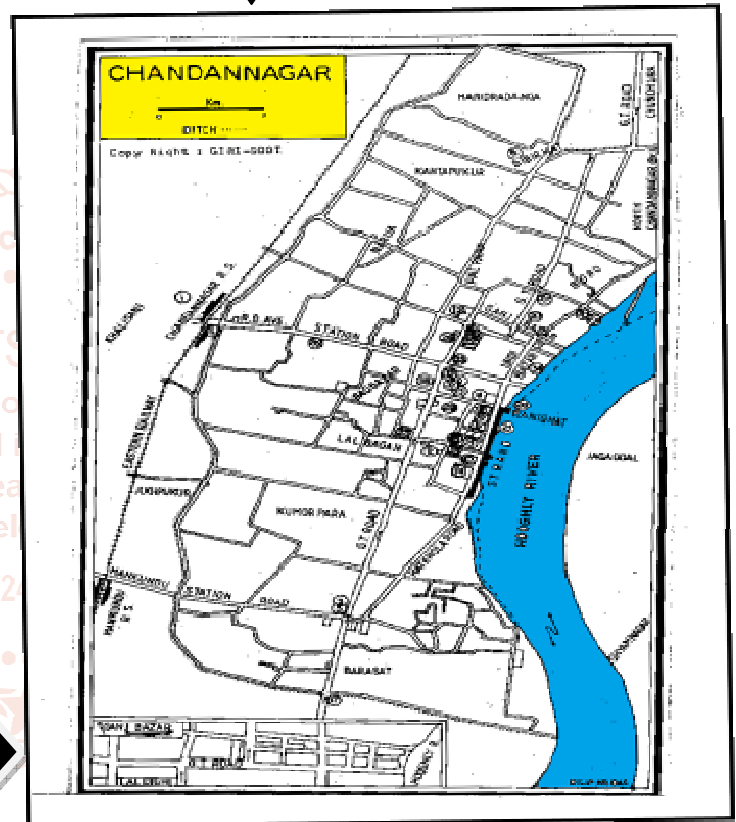
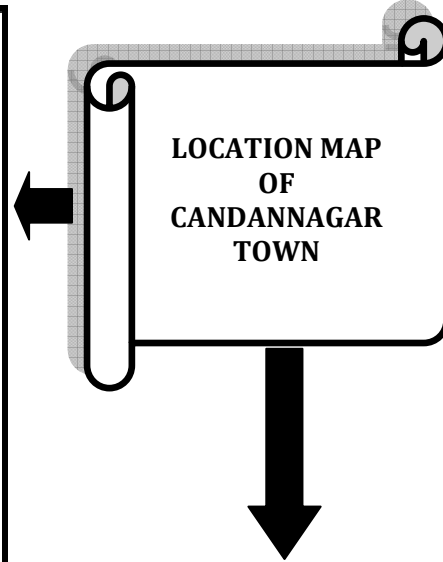


1. INTRODUCTION

Chandannagar was first under the rule of Nabab, then the region shifted to the French. With the arrival of the British Chandannagar changed many times between French and British until finally it merged with the state of W.B. at the time of Independence. French Government helps to Chandannagar as a tourism hub. Tourism development looks to develop Chandannagar as weekend hotspot. Jagadhatri carnival in Chandannagar is identification for development of tourism. It is a French courtesy that gives Chandannagar a unique age. With a French area but Bengali soul Chandannagar is a popular destination tourist within the state.

2. GEOGRAPHY

Chandannagar is a city in the Hooghly district in the Indian state of W.B. It is the head quarter of the Chandannagar sub division and is covered by Kolkata Metropolitan development Authority. It is located on the western bank of Hooghly River. It was a former French colony. Indo French architecture is seen in the colonial Bungalow. It is located in 22.87°N latitude and 88.38°E longitudes. It is well connected to the Kolkata by the Railway, NH-2 and River Hooghly.



3. DEMOGRAPHY

The Chandannagar Municipal Corporation has population of 166,867 of which 84,009 are males while 82,858 are females. Population of Children with age of 0-6 is 11826 which are 7.09 % of total population of Chandannagar (M Corp). In Chandannagar Municipal Corporation, Female Sex Ratio is of 986 against state average of 950. Moreover Child Sex Ratio in Chandannagar is around 955 compared to West Bengal state average of 956. Literacy rate of Chandannagar city is 89.66 % higher than state average of 76.26 %. In Chandannagar, Male literacy is around 92.38 % while female literacy rate is 86.90 %.



Source: Chandernagore mon amour: The Citadel of the moon edited by Antara Mukherjee

3.1. Chandannagar Religion Data 2011

Town	Population	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Buddhist	Jain	Others
Chandannagar	166867	92.64	6.82	0.37	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02

3.2. Timeline of Events in Chandannagar city

Dates	Events
1673	The French first came to Chandernagore, precisely to Bengal. Duplessis secured 20Arpents (a French unit of area approximately equal to 6.84 hectares) of land at Borokishnapur at a cost of Rs. 401/- only.
1688	The French company came here for the second time. It was in this year that 942 hectares of land were purchased for Rs. 40,000/- from the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb who gave permission to the French to build an office.
1693	The Mughal Emperor granted free trading rights in the parts of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The French East India company legally got the ownership title of Chandernagore.
1701	Monsieur Deslands left, handing over charges to Pierre Dulivier. It was this time Chandernagore came under the jurisdiction of Pondicherry.
1731	Joshep Francois Dupleix was appointed as the Governor.
1741	Dupleix was transferred to Pondicherry as Governor and Duval de Leyrit was appointed in his place.
1757	The English and the French were involved in the battle of Plessey and the English occupied Chandernagore.
1763	Under the terms of the Paris Treaty (was signed on 10 February 1763 by the kingdoms of Britain, France and Spain, with Portugal in agreement, after Britain's victory over France and Spain during the seven years war) Chandernagore was again returned to the French.
1778	A battle started between England and France on March 18. When this news reached Calcutta on July 6 the British again occupied Chandernagore.
1783	Chandernagore came under the occupation of the French, and its accordance with the terms of the Versailles Treaty a fort was dug out.
1789	Colonel De Montingy was appointed as the Governor of Chandernagore.
1793	A person named Fumerson was appointed as the Governor of Chandernagore.

Source: Chandernagore mon amour: The Citadel of the moon edited by Antara Mukherjee

1802	Followed by the provisions of the Amiens Treaty (signed in March 27, 1802) and the agreement signed at Britain, France, Spain and the Batavian Republic through which peace was achieved in Europe for 14 months, France and Britain were again engaged in a battle and Chandernagore again was occupied by the English.
1814	According to the First census, 41,377 people were registered.
1862	The name 'Brevel Elementary' in the French section of Ecole St. Marie was enlisted.
1873	Chandernagore library was founded under the auspices of Jadunath plait, Harimohan Sen and others in response to a proposal developed by Triguna Plait.
1882	The first Bengali weekly Newspaper Prajabandhu edited by Tincorinath Bandyopadhyay was published.
1910	Under the auspices of Charuchandra Roy, Srish Chandra Ghosh and others a festival and a exhibition was arranged in connection with the celebration of the goodness of learning at the den-house in Bagbazar of Mr. Nakurchandra Kar, It was named Saraswata Utsav.
1916	Gondolpara Anath Bhandar was established by Pearymohan Bandyopadhyay, Upendranath Mondal.
1927	Matribhumi was published as a new venture, commercial college was founded.
1929	Gondolpara was raided by the British Police and a person named Makhhanlal Ghoshal was shot dead.
1947	Chandernagore Administrative council was formed on November 27, C.F. Baron, the Governor of French India declared Chandernagore as a Ville Libre or free city.
1949	On June 19 a referendum was established to ascertain the desires of the people Chandernagore regarding their consent to stay within the French union. After election it was decided that Chandernagore was in favor of joining the Indian Union.
1951	A Treaty was signed between India and France recognized the De Jure Transfer of Chandernagore to the Govt. of India on February 2.
1954	Chandernagore was formally merged with West Bengal on October 2. The administration change was handed over to Nirmal Kanti Roychowdhuri, District of Hooghly, Serving at the West Bengal Government.

Source: Chandernagore mon amour: The Citadel of the moon edited by Antara Mukherjee

4. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In some old documents the spelling of Chandannagar was Chandernagore which probably came from Chandra Nagar. To mention, Chandra is Bengali of Moon. One more reason behind the name is in Chandernagore there is a temple of Goddess 'Chandi'. So it may have come from there. Chandannagar came into being during colonial times, proved conclusively by the fact that no mention of the town is found in medieval Bengali texts like Chandimangal and Manasamangal. Historians are of the opinion that the French created the town by amalgamating various smaller localities in the area. The three notable villages to be incorporated were Gondolpara to the South, Boro in the North and Khalisani to the West. The name "Chandernagore" can be first found in the letter dated 1696, intended for the officials of French East India Company, despatched by Andre Boureau Deslandes and Palle, French officials posted in Chandernagore.

5. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of these papers are as follows:

- Identify the tourist place of Chandannagar city.
- To find out the major resources for potentiality of tourisms of the city in near future.
- To find out the problems and prospects of tourisms of chandannagar city.
- Planning or policy for the new lesson for upliftment of chandannagar city as an attractive tourist area.

6. HYPOTHESIS

All hypothesis of this paper are based on “NULL” hypothesis. So therefore investigation, data collection as well as field study helps to significance of the hypothesis.

7. METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data are collected from the field area as well as different offices of Chandannagar Municipal corporation. GPS, Cartographic techniques, Statistical method are used for complete the paper.

8. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Wrapped in the interiors of West Bengal, in the Hooghly District, is the small yet significant town of Chandannagar. This small town which could have been in place of present day Kolkata. There is various places located in chandannagar these shows in the **Chandannagar Tourist Guide Map** –



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Tourist guide map

➤ **Nandadulal Temple**

Nandadulal Temple, built in 1740 by Indranarayan Roychoudhury. It is temple of Goddest Radha Krishnan.



➤ **Chandannagar Strand**



Chandannagar Strand is a beautiful tourist spot along the banks of the river Hooghly. It is a superbly decorated pavement studded with lights surrounded by lushly green trees. It is about 1 km in length and 7 meters in width, and many buildings of historical importance surround the spot. It is very popular visiting spot of the local people and the tourists would love to stroll along enjoying the mild breeze and watching the small boats sail by. Along the



strand are present Vivekananda Mandir (a meditation centre) and a protruding structure into the river Ganga. This is supposed to be the best decorated bank of the river along its entire length of 2500 km.

➤ **Chandannagar Sub - Divisional Hospital**

The Jesuits built a hospital and orphanage in Chadernagore in 1753. An unknown fever spread like an epidemic in 1832. The doctors became very worried. Later, French medical practitioner, Dr. Margain established 'Hospital Margain' in 1871. Now it is Sub-Divisional hospital run by the West Bengal Government. Previously, venom used to come from Vietnam for treatment of snake-bites. It is said that the property originally belonged to Rani Rashmoni of Janbazar. Renovation has begun on this part, a new building has been built and a subsidized medicine shop has started operation for the benefit of the needy and poor.



➤ **Saint Joseph's Covent**

St Joseph's Covent is an all-girls school in Chandannagar, established in 1861 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in the Arch-Diocese of Calcutta. It is affiliated to the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education and Indian School Certificate examinations.

➤ **Liberty Gate**

As we enter the town from the south, we pass the Liberty gate that was constructed in 1937 to commemorate the fall of Bastille. The gate bears the name Chandernagor; the slogan of the French Revolution, "Liberte, egalite, fraternite". It is said that one such gate existed on the northern entry to the town as well.



➤ **Chandannagar Museum and Institute**

One of the oldest and finest museums of the entire region. It boasts a beautiful collection of French antiques (like cannons used in Anglo-French war, wooden furniture of 18th century, etc.) which are difficult to find anywhere else in the world. The institute still teaches French through regular classes.



➤ **Chandannagar Government College**

Chandannagar Government College is a government college in Chandannagar, West Bengal, India. It is one of the oldest colleges in Hooghly district. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate courses in arts, commerce, and sciences. It is affiliated to University of Burdwan. It is a most famous place in Chandannagar.



➤ **Nritya Gopal Smriti Mandir**

Built by Sri Harihar Seth, and donated to the people of Chandannagar. This building still serves as a theatre hall and a library. It was first of its kind in the entire locality.



➤ **The Sacred Heart Church**

The Sacred Heart Church of Chandannagar. The beautiful church stands for over two centuries to mark the beauty of the architecture during the French period - a good place to visit for the historians and tourists alike. The remains of the Church of St. Louis are also an attractive tourist spot.



➤ **The Underground House (Patal-Bari)**

The building is another beautiful example of the advancement in the knowledge of architecture and the aesthetic sense of the people of those earlier days. Its lowest floor is submerged in the River Ganga. The Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore frequently visited the place and appreciated a lot about the building. He felt that the place influenced him to a large extent and broadened his intellectual capabilities. He mentioned Patal-bari in many of his famous novels. The famous social reformer Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar also stayed in the building.



➤ **French Cemetery**

GT Road, opposite Lal Dighi. The French Cemetery contains 150 tombs and is located on the Grand Trunk Road opposite Lal Dighi (a large lake).



➤ **Jagatdhatri Puja**

Chandannagor is famous for its Jagatdhatri Puja. It takes place just one month after the Durga Puja, usually in the month of November. The pandals, street lightings, idols - everything will make you spellbound. Millions of people from different parts of the country come here during that period. If you are crowd averse, then it's better for you to avoid Chandannagor during that time. Though, the atmosphere then is electrifying, and the whole city buzzes with exuberance. The immersion of idols gets marked with illuminated processions.



**JAGATDHATRI
PUJA
2019**

Some illuminations



Chandannagar is famous for its sweets. Surya kumar Modak, a famous confectioner, apparently invented a new sweet named Jolbhora Sandesh once upon a time. Nowadays, his grandsons operate more than one sweet shop in the city. Don't forget to have a taste of jolbhora. Apart from this, the other sweets and desserts are also very tasty and delicious. Names of few famous sweet shops are listed below:



- **Baba Panchanan Mishtanna Bhandar** (Panchanantala, Chandannagar) - Famous for its mouth watering lyangcha
- **Harigopal Nandi and Sons** (Baghbazar, Chandannagar) - Famous for golapi pyanra, diabetic sandesh etc.
- **Mrityunjay Sweets** (Sridurga Chhobighar More, Chandannagar) - Famous for Lord Chomchom, Pantua, and Mishti Doi.
- **Sumis Enterprise** (Boro Champatala, Chandannagar) - An array of ambrosia: Canned Packed Traditional Bengali Sweets: Specially Canned Packed Rosogolla and Gulab Jamun.
- Surya Kumar Modak & Grandsons, Saibal Kumar Modak (Barasat, Chandannagar) - For Jolbhora and other sweets

Apart from these, few very good restaurants are also available, where you get a wide range of food from Chinese to Indian. Few of them are:

- **Abhinandan** (Iaxmigunj Bazar, Chandannagar) - Decent food.
- **Restaurant Sundari** (Mahuar More, Chandannagar) - One of the oldest restaurants. Though food is not so good.
- **Royal Biryani** (Baghbazar, Chandannagar) - Serves good biryani, though the standard is deteriorating.
- **Satyam Garden Restaurant** - Set amidst a small garden, and a huge historical building called Nrityagopal smriti Mandir.
- **Shalimar Restaurant & Bar** (Burrabazar, Chandannagar) - The architecture is from the colonial period. The food tastes good as well.

There is a scarcity of good hotels in Chandannagar. One has to book well in advance if you plan to visit the city. Few options which are available are:

- **Rabindra Bhavan Guest House**

Operated by Chandannagar Municipal Corporation. Located just opposite the strand, it's a beautiful place to stay.



- **KMDA Park Rest House**

Set amidst the beautiful garden in the amusement park called Wonderland, (Operated by KMDA).

- **Ritzy Manor**

This is also located in the strand. It's owned by a private house.

- **Rash Behari Guest House**

Bagbazar Shiv Mandir, Station Road (From Station: Bagbazar More. From GT Road to Bagbazar-Station Road/Ferry Ghat to Bagbazar crossing).

8.1. Accessibility and connectivity

There is no airport in Chandannagar. The nearest one is in Kolkata which is located at a distance of around 52 km. The airport is easily accessible and from there, you can hire a taxi to reach the city. There are regular state transport buses and taxis plying between Chandannagar and nearby cities. Alternatively, the city is accessible via trains also.

Chandannagar does not have its own airport. The nearest airport to the city is the airport in Kolkata. It is located at a distance of around 52 km. The airport is well built and connected to prominent cities of India. Regular flights from different cities make it quite accessible. From the airport, you can easily hire a taxi to reach Chandannagar in one and half hours.

There is a good network of roads which connects Chandannagar to many nearby cities like Kolkata. There are regular buses run by state government and private buses are also available. Travelling by road is a good option but avoid this mode of transport if you are visiting during monsoons as heavy rainfall can be risky.

The city has its own railway station. It is located within the city at a distance of just 1 Km. though it is a small station, but it is well connected to Howrah railway station. Also, trains from different states halt here. Thus, Chandannagar is easily accessible by train also. Outside the station, you will find a plethora of taxis to take you to your hotel.

8.2. Local transport in Chandannagar

The most widely available options in the city are auto rickshaws and cycle rickshaws. Another benefit of the small town is that there isn't too much traffic, so getting around pretty much anywhere is not a big hassle. A lot of times you can just walk. But if you strictly prefer a proper car then cabs are rare but not difficult to find. They are easy to find in and around the station area.



Chandannagar is very close to most other onetime non-british colonies. Chinsurah, once held by Dutch (Dutch Cemetery, Bengal) is just 5 km away from Chandannagar. Former Portuguese settlement Bandel, and Danish settlement Serampore are also nearby. One can visit Hangseswari Temple in Bansberia, Tarakeswar, Furfura Sharif in Jangipara, Belur Math also from Chandannagar.



9. PLANNING FOR TOURISM IN CHANDANNAGAR NEAR FUTURE PLAN

- Here some houses are used as home stay or paying guest for the facilities of various guest as well as Foreigners and also for the students for staying there mainly at the time of Jagadhatri Puja. It is a new dimension of tourism planning at Chandannagar town.



- A big guest house has been building at the KMDA Park in Chandannagar. Another proposed area for guest house will be at or near the Patal Bari.



- A donation of rupees four lakh has been received from the state Government for the development of Chandannagar college area, roads and procession purposes. Except that an additional amount of rupees two lakh has been utilized for the arrangement of the foreigners as their fooding and lodging. Some donatations are also accepted from French Government for upliftment of tourism planning.



- Particular in this time a ship appears here from Kolkata with the Foreigners. Those Foreigners at first landed in the Kolkata airport then they reached in a hotel. After staying the hotel at night, next day in the morning they starts journey from Kolkata to Chandannagar Jetty. Then they stay here for four days. After four days they leave the place for Mayapur and Murshidabad. After two days they again back to Kolkata. For this peaceful arrangement an amount of rupees 20,000/-per person have been utilized by them.



- Some businessmen earned some money just as the time of Jagadhatri Puja by giving their flat as rent and also their land for stall and other purposes.
- Jolbhara a delicious sweet is the famous food for Chnadannagar. A plan has been making for exporting this type of sweets to other states of our country and also international countries.



- At present a big plan has been preparing for making a floating market in Chandannagar at Laldhigi.



- There are so many plans has been arranging for the purpose of Christmas day in chandannagar and Paribesh Mela, Book Fair during this period. These are the special attraction during winter vacation near the local people and surroundings.



Chandannagar church



10. POTENTIAL ZONE OF CHANDANNAGAR:

- **Detour index**

We can see the potential zone (accessibility and connectivity) with the help of detour index. Here in the area of Chandannagar the potentiality (accessibility and connectivity) had been showing on the basis of Detour index. In this area accessibility has been increasing day by day in the side of Strand road mainly eastern part of the locality and it has been decreasing in the town

of Chandannagar mainly western part of the Ganga River. Here we have calculated a detour index [Formula = (Actual Distance/Straight line distance)*100] and create a particular Detour Index Map. The map is as follows:



Credit Indrajit Mondal

11. PROBLEMS

- Administrative problems due to improper utilization of land.
- Accessibility and network development not up to the mark.
- Problem related to the good accommodation as well as Star Like Hotel.
- Improper utilization of French Donation.
- Not properly focus of Tourism of town through Mass Media or other means of communication.
- Improper urban planning.
- Recreation facilities are not reaching the standard of development tourism.
- Nearest to Kolkata is another disadvantage due to much more facilities in Metropolitan town.

12. LIMITATION

Due to lack of secondary data based on tourism of chandannagar information are mainly collected from primary data. So, therefore there is much more scope on primary level survey in detail near future considering long time span and in depth primary survey.

13. CONCLUSION

The major conclusion from the study is based on priority of tourism in chandannagar town with the assistance of French Government with West Bengal government jointly and focused with local French architecture, Heritage concept, Historical temple, Eminent persons of the city. Objectives of this paper are fulfilled in this respect we can draw a major conclusion regarding chandannagar town or city as a tourism profile within national level as well as international scale.

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