

# DISTRICT DIGITAL CULTURAL REPOSITORY

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Directorate of Culture, Department of  
Information and Cultural Affairs,  
Government of West Bengal

JHARGRAM

# Table of Contents

People and Eminent Personalities	2
Events and Festivals	3
Cultural Traditions and Art Forms	4
Historical, Anthropological and Heritage Sites	8

# Jhargram

## Forests, Folk Art and Tribes

### **A) PEOPLE AND EMINENT PERSONALITIES:**

**Sadhu Ramchand Murmu (1897-1954):** He was a noted Poet, Playwright and Essayist. He is remembered for his great contribution in enriching Santhali Literature. His noted works include books like Sari Dhorom Sereng Puthi (Part - I & II), Lita Goddet (Traditional Narration) and Ol Daha Anrhe (Poem).

**Saridharam Hansda:** He is one of the renowned authors of Santhali Popular Literature. He was awarded by Mamata Bannerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal for his literary contribution. He was also awarded Sahitya Academy Award in 2013 for his works on literature.

**Jogendra Narayan Sahosh Roy:** The erstwhile king of Lalgarh Royal Family has been remembered for his many social welfare works as well as philanthropic activities for the area,

**Raja Jagadish Chandra Dhabaldeo:** He was a Graduate in Astrology. He has done many philanthropic works. He was the pioneer in bringing western pattern of education in Chilki Garh. Under his tutelage higher secondary school, free health centers and many more educational Institutions were opened.

**Kalipada Soren:** He is a noted author and dramatist of Santhali Literature. He has great contribution in Santhali Literature and has been awarded multiple times for his work, including Padma Shri and Sahitya Academy award. Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Bandyopadhyay has also awarded him.

**Raja Raghunath Malla Deb:** The 14th Raja of Mall Deb Dynasty of Jhargram Raja Raghunath Malla Deb was a benevolent and progressive king and always for the welfare of his subjects. He welcomed industrialisation as such encouraged Indian and British businessmen to set up industries in his kingdom.

Jhargram Railway station was built by him which connected Jhargram with Calcutta and Bombay.

**Suparna Singh:** She is a renowned Archer. She was the member of the Bronze winner Asia Cup Archery Team in 2018. She had been The National Champion in 2016.

## **B) Events & Festivals**

**Makar Parab (Tusu Parab)** This festival primarily symbolizes the worship of agriculture and harvesting. It is held during the winter season (January). The villagers pray for prosperity to the god.

**Saharul;** Sahrul is celebrated in the spring season. It is a festival of worshipping nature. Through this festival, the nature is greeted.

**Karam Parab:** The festival is celebrated in “Sukla Ekadashi” of the Bengali month of “Bhadra”. This festival is about prosperity in agriculture. “JawaGeet” or “Karam Geet” is the principal part of this festival.

**Indra Puja:** This festival symbolizes worship of Lord Indra with an expectation for good rainfall resulting in prosperous crops. This is primarily a festival patronised by the Royal families of Jhargram. Parva Dance is one of the most attractive parts of this festival.

**Bandna (Saharai):** Bandna is a festival to express gratitude to the animals used in the agricultural activities. Not only animals, the agricultural devices also get worshipped. “Ahira Geet” is an integral part of this festival. This festival is celebrated on “Kartika Amawasya” of the bengali calendar.

**Baha Banga:** Baha is one of the important festivals of the Santhal community. It starts on the day after “Dol Purima”. The worship takes place at the “Jaher Than”. The dance associated with this festival is called “Baha Dance”.

**Mah Mare:** This festival starts in Bengali month “Baisakh” (April) and continues upto seventh day of “Asharh” (June). The worship takes place in “Jaher Than”. The dance forms associated with it is “Parab Dance”



Mah Mare:

### **C) Cultural Tradition & Art Forms** **Music/Dance - Genres prevalent in the district**

**Parva:** The word Parva signifies Prava or brilliance. It is a folk drama performed in Bengali language. Performers use various types of mask to denote the characters they are playing like Goddess Durga, Goddess Kali, bhaluk (bear) kak (crow), jamdali, buro and buri (old man and woman). Around 20 performers are required to enact this art – including 10 dancers, two singers and the rest playing musical instruments. The theme of the drama centres around mythical and social oriented issues. This form of dance is a type of Chhau but very unique to Jhargarm known as 'Chilkgarh Chhau-Parva'. This form is mainly encouraged and patronized by the Kings of Lalgarh and specially Raja Man Govinda Dhabal Deb of Jhargramroyal family. He had taken tremendous initiative to keep this dying art form alive.

**Mundari:** Mundari is a ritualistic dance form of the Munda tribes. They pray to their partron deity Karam Thakur for good harvest through this dance

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movements. There are three types of Mundari dances, they are to please Karam Thakur, Jadur Naach and Dong. Madal, Dhamsa, Karki Jhumka are the musical instruments accompanying the dance.

**Adibasi Sarpa Nritya:** AdibasiSarpa dance is mainly performed by group of women varying from 15 to 20 in numbers. They use a wooden folk percussion instrument known as Sarpa and a small bowl made of brass known as Ginhe. They produce sound with these two instruments and dance on its rhythm. This dance is held between the period of Durga Puja and Kali Puja.



Sarpa Dance

**Tusu and Kirtan:** Tusu and Kirtan are the folk songs with religious intonations. Generally young girls from Kurmi tribes sing Tusu songs to worship goddess Tusu, usually without any musical instruments.

Kirtan is basically love ballad of Lord Krishna and is sung using musical instruments like khol, kartal, harmonium, ghungur.

**Bhuang and Kendri:** Bhuang (a percussion instrument made of gourd) and Kendri (a string instrument) are the two types of musical instruments which are played in this type of dance thus the name of the dance is referred as Bhuang and Kendri. The team of dancers sings song and dance together.

### **Pata Naach**

Patanaach, Bhuang & Kendri are the folk dances of Kurmis, Santhals. In Pata Naach male folks play instruments and sing songs and females dance on that rhythm. The dance has two forms -- Barabargaan and Bandana.

**Chhau:** It is a dance drama mainly based on mythological plot, but nowadays some societal issues are gaining popularity as plot of the dance drama. It is a masked dance in which dancers wear elaborate head gear along with mask and gorgeous silken attire studded with sequins and beads. The musical instruments used are nagra, dhamsa, tikar, harmonium, ramjhal.

**Dong & Dangery:** This dance is mainly performed by the Munda tribe during all their special festivals and occasions. The dancers move to the beats of musical instruments like flutes, pipes, drums and cymbals wearing colourful traditional dresses.

Dangery is the hunting dance of the Lodhas. It is performed in group consisting of 15 to 20 men or more than that. This dance is performed before going out for hunting. The high energetic dance movement symbolizes the valour, courage of the men folk of the community.



Chhau Dance Troupe

**Baha:** Baha is a tribal dance. Baha is performed during different tribal occasions. It is practiced from the Bengali month of Falgun and continues till Boishakh. Both male and female performers wear traditional dresses. Women wear Panchi Sarees and men wear Panchi Dhosis and fasten gamcha around their head as head gear.

**Karam:** Karam dance is performed during the autumnal festival of Karam Puja during the Bengali month of Bhadro. The tribal group presents this dance as a part of worshipping Karam Devta, 'God of Fate' so that He shower his blessings on them. The tribe believe that Karam Devta brings prosperity in their lives so they try to propitiate Karam Devta with Karma dance.

**Jhumur:** Jhumur is a kind of folk song. Generally practiced by the Kurmali community. Nowadays young tribal men and women are coming forward with modernized Jhumur song in which apart from traditional themes related to nature and environment they are infusing socially relevant themes too. Educated youngsters from Kurmali community are coming forward and researching to develop this art form to enhance its accessibility throughout the world.

**Handicrafts :** From upper part of date leaves, from kash grass, babui grass small artefacts are made like fruit basket, tiffin box, pen stand, suitcase. Not only hand



crafted items such as wall hanging, magazine boxes are made but also furniture like table, chair, bed etc are made out of bamboo.

On the other hand bust of human faces, different types of small insects and animals are carved out from raw bamboo plant. Black stone carving can be seen as another major handicraft practice. Artisans produce plates, bowls, idols, etc from carving out Laterite stones mainly found in Belpahari region.

**Handloom:** Traditional Sarees and traditional Dhotis known as "Panchi Saree" and "Panchi Dhoti" are commonly woven material here in Jhargram. Apart from this the weavers also weave "Gamchas". All these sarees, dhotis and gamchas are embellished with floral designs and patterns woven in bright colours.

**Stone Craft:** In two villages of Belpahari bordering Jharkhand for generations artisans have been making stone crafts (Plate, bowl, idol, different utensils). Laterite stones available around this area are carved into plates, house hold items and decorative products by the artisans.

**Bamboo Basket:** Basket making with the help of bamboo is a main source of livelihood for those poor artisans.

**Pottery:** Pottery items is made by forming a clay body into objects of a required shape and heating them to high temperatures in a kiln which removes all the water from the clay, which induces reactions that lead to permanent changes including increasing their strength and hardening and setting their shape. A clay body can be decorated before or after firing.

## **D) Historical, Anthropological & Heritage sites**

### **Museum, Forts, Palaces**

#### **Museum :**

#### **Tribal Interpretation Center**

Tribal Interpretation Center is situated in a picturesque atmosphere at Bandorbhula area, only 4K.M away from Jhargram town. It shares the same complex of The "Jhargram Prakriti Parjatan Kendra" and tourist

lodge run by West Bengal Forest Development Corporation Ltd. The museum exhibits the tribal musical instruments, armory, agricultural devices and other matters related to daily life of Tribal communities.

### **Palaces :**

#### **Jhargram Rajbari**

The dynasty was founded around 1592 C.E. by Sarveshwar Singh who belonged to the Chauhan clan of Rajputs from Fatehpur Sikri. He along with his elder brother were Generals under Man Singh of Amer and came to conquer Bengal when Emperor Akbar granted Subehdari of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa to Raja Man Singh. He defeated the local tribal kings who were ruling the region known as Junglekhand. Even today to commemorate this victory every year an idol of tribal king is made and symbolically slain on the day of Vijayadashami. The Kings had matrimonial alliance relation with 8 (eight) Mahal kings. This custom was rearranged by Raja Narasingha Malla Deb when he married the princess from Mayurbhanj Royal Family of Orissa in early 20th century. Raja Shivendra Bijoy Malla Deb, is the 18th Raja Saheb of Jhargram since 22nd February 2000.

The palace is a structure combining the Italian and Islamic architecture models. About 10 rooms on the ground floor have been converted into a Heritage Hotel run by the family. The Palace is an opulent Italianate structure, set in carefully laid lawns and gardens which was built in 1922 CE, during the reign of Raja Narasingha Malla Dev Bahadur

#### **Lalgarh Rajbari**

Lalgarh was founded by the younger brother Udaychandra of the brother duo Gunachandra & Udaychandra. The royal family is known as 'Sahosh Roy' of Lalgarh. They belong from Brahmhatt clan of Itwa, Uttar Pradesh.



Jhargram Rajbari

### **Chilkiagarh Rajbari**

It is assumed that King Jagatdeo of Suryavansh Dynasty declared himself as king Dhawaldev after defeating Dhalraj, king of Chilkiagarh. Later Royal family of Chilkiagarh came to be called as Dhawaldevs.



Chilkgarh Palace

### **Ramgarh Rajbari**

Gunachandra 'Singho Sahos Roy' established the Ramgarh Royal family. Impressed by his courage and bravery of killing a tiger, Nawab of Bengal, Ali Bardi Khan, honoured him with the title 'SinghoSahos Roy'. The temple is dedicated to Lord Bishnu.

### **Temple, Mosques & other religious places of historical importance**

#### **Rameshwar Temple**

The principal deity of the temple is Lord Shiva. Thousands of pilgrims gather here during the month of Shravan to worship the lord. The temple is believed to have been built around 16th century C.E. by King Chandraketu of Nayagram. The temple is built in traditional Odiya style of architecture. Every year during Ganga Baruni, a grand fair is organised adjacent ground to the temple.

#### **Sabitri Temple**

The Temple of Goddess Sabitri is the Sanctum of the deity of the Malladev Dynasty of Jhargram. The temple is 350 years old. Sabitri is another name for Goddess Durga.



### **Kanak Durga**

King Gopinath has built the temple which is estimated to be more than 500 years old. King Gopinath dreamt the idol of Goddess Kanak Durga, and he built the temple of the devi. As the name suggests Kanak, the idol, is completely made of Gold and is 2 (two) feet in height.



Kanakdurga Temple

### **Sri Radha Govinda Mandir**

Sri Radha Govinda Mandir was built in 1400 C.E. To the Vaishnavas, the temple is known as 'Gupta Brindavan'. The temple houses the idols of Sri Radha Govind Ji and Smt Radha Rani Ji along with the idols of Lord Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra.

### **Orgonda Bhairabasthan**

Bhairab (Lord Shiva) is the deity here. Local believe the temple was made within a night by the grace of omnipotent Lord Bhairab. Patabinda Parab is the major festival held every year during the time of Durga Puja. Huge crowd of pilgrims gather here during this time of the year. Pahan - the priest family has been serving Lord Bhairab for generations.

Compiled by: Santu Biswas, DICO, Jhargram