



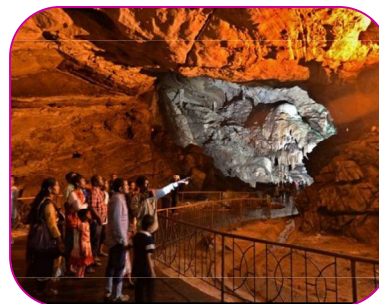
## TOURISM POTENTIALITY IN A PLATEAU REGION: A CASE STUDY ON PURULIA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL

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### ABSTRACT

*In present day tourism is one of the major sources of income. The study tries to identify the tourist places of Purulia district and analyse the types, importance and also try to find out the scope of income generation from this industry. To fulfil the objectives of this article, the primary and secondary both data have been used. The secondary data have been collected from different journals and books. Primary data have been collected by field survey. For doing this empirical observation and discussion methods have been applied. The study area is enriched with archaeological places and it also enriched with different landforms, pleasant environment and with cottage industry. Tourism industry has the potentiality to eradicate poverty.*

**KEYWORDS:** Landform, geomorphosite, potentiality, Archeology.

### INTRODUCTION:

The term 'tour' came from old English word 'tourians' and the word 'tourist' was used for first time in the year 1772. After 38 years of its introduction the word tourism came into existence in 1811(*etymonline.com*). In 1936 League of Nations put forward a definition of tourist which is "When someone travelling outside from his/her permanent residence for more than 24 hours". According to Hanzikarand Kraft, tourism is the combination of some phenomena related to stay and travelling and when people are not engaged with earning activity. In Manila declaration on world tourism in 1980, the importance of tourism is describe as an essential activity of a nation because it has direct impact on the social, cultural, education and economic sector. It is also important in international relation. It has a significant role in local economy. It brings large amount of income by providing goods and services. It also creates employment opportunity in service sector by doing tourism allied activity.

The term tourism is getting more attention in present time. Tourism means the activity of travelling from permanent



**Plate No 1: Deolghata / Boram**

residence to a certain destination for a few days. The purpose of tourism varies upon man to man. Some people go for travelling to get relaxation from daily life. Some people travel to new place to explore their

knowledge and some people go for adventure. In this context present study aims to highlight the potential tourist spots of Purulia district and categories them.

The landscape of Purulia is a part of Chhotanagpur plateau; it is ancient in geological time scale. This landscape has contained a large number of geomorphic landforms which can say about the ancient geological history of this place. A special landform, watershed has been transformed into dissected upland. In regards of archaeological evidences of West Bengal archeologist 'Haraprasad Sastri' says, 'so many ancient idols could be found from different forests, old villages and from old cities of west Bengal'. These idols may help us to construct the past history of Bengal. According to Subhas Roy, to establish the statement of Haraprasad Sastri we have no need to go anywhere of west Bengal, if we travel through remote villages of Purulia, ample evidences of past architect could be found. In Purulia 62 numbers of archaeological sites has been found (Roy, 2010). In present study the authors highlight some important archaeological sites as tourist spot. Archeological tourism is a form of cultural tourism. The main aim of this cultural tourism is to promote the public interest in archeology. It also helps to preserve the historical evidence. Archeologists say this kind of tourism encourages knowing the past history in a different way. If the archeological sites come under tourist board, ticket fees or directly under government revenue, it will get much priority (Smith, 2003).

Eco-tourism is a form of tourism which is non-residential, primitive and it is undisturbed natural area and it is not a standard commercial mass tourism. Simply it is defined as a natural area where travellers travel with conserving the natural scenario and improving the quality of life of local people (www.ecotourism.org). Its objectives are to educate the tourist and to invest fund for conserving the environment for sustainability. The primary attraction of eco-tourism is flora, fauna and cultural heritage. Since, 1980 environmentalist give special emphasis to ecotourism so that our future generation may experience relatively untouched natural landscape.

Cottage tourism is a kind of new tourism (Hampton, 2005). Mowforth and Munt, (2003) argued that new tourism tends to be small scale tourism and the difference between new tourism and conventional tourism is in the area of accommodation, catering and transportation.

**Location of the study area:** Purulia district is the eastern part of Chhotanagpur plateau and south-western district of west Bengal. The landscape of the district is undulating. The pleasant environment and the beautiful nature of this district is the gift of nature. The geographical extension of this district is  $22^{\circ}30'$  north to  $24^{\circ}$  north latitude and from  $85^{\circ}30'E$  to  $87^{\circ}$  E longitude.

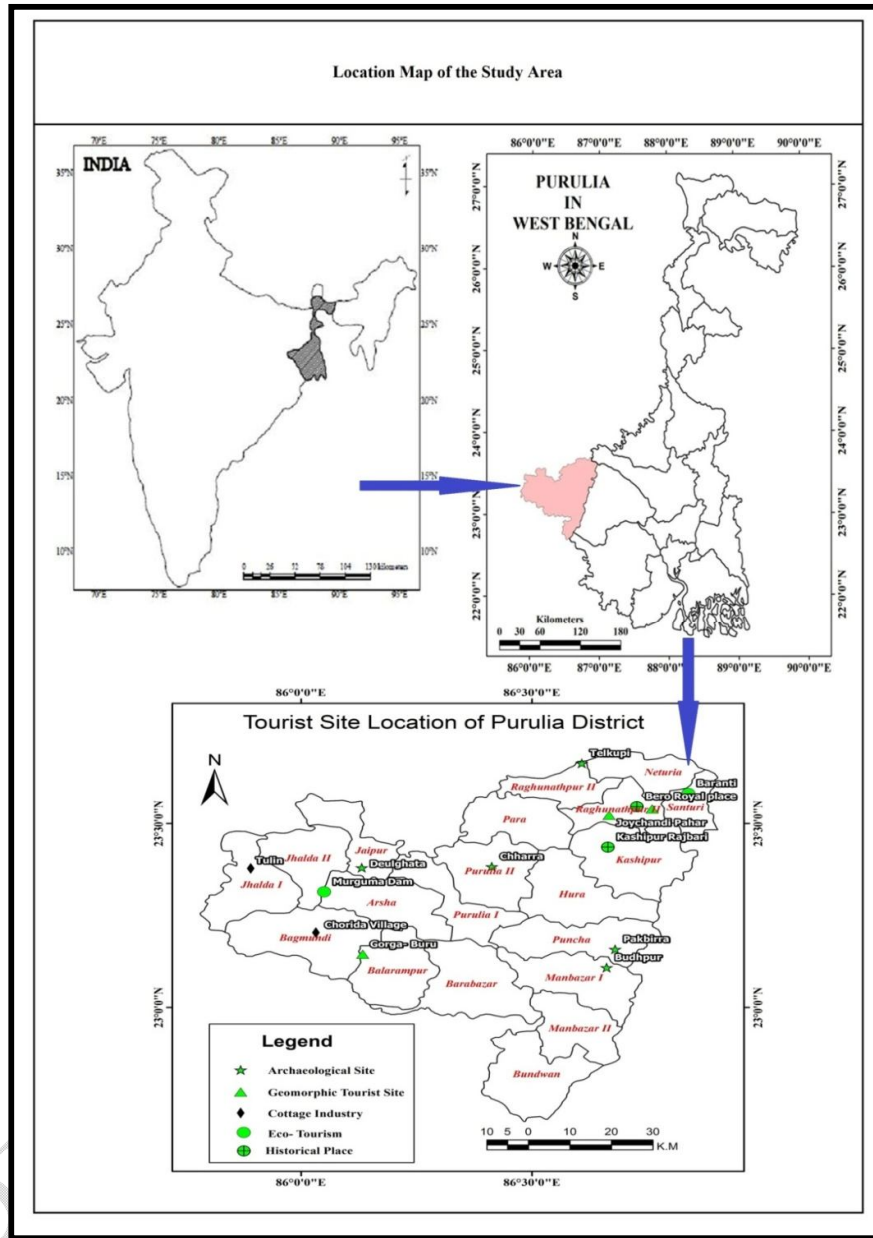


Figure 1: Location map of the study area

**OBJECTIVES**

The present study has been taken to fulfill the following objectives

1. To identify the tourist places of Purulia district.
2. Classify the tourist places, analyze its importance.
3. To find out the scope for income generation.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study has been done in scientific way. It has been completed through a systematic methodology. The methodological section of this study has been divided into three different parts which are given below:

**Pre field:** This is the initial stage of this study. In this stage a large number of literatures have been reviewed in details. Secondary data have been collected from official website of Purulia district. And finally all conceptual aspects have been made clear before doing the field study.

**Field:** This stage is very important for the study. The field survey has been done in grass root level to fulfil the present objectives of this study. The authors observed most of the tourist spots and discussed with local people.

**Post field:** It is the last stage of this study. The data, which have been collected through primary and secondary sources, are compiled together. The tourist spots have been classified according to their different characteristics.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL TOURIST SPOT

**Ajkoda:** This place is situated under Raghunathpur II blocks near Damodar River. It is an important archaeological tourist spot in Purulia.

**Arsha:** This archaeological spot is situated under Arsha block. It is 55 km away from Purulia town. It is also one of the important archaeological tourist spots in Purulia. One 'Lokeshwar' temple and a 'Bishnu' temple have been seen here.

**Banda:** This 'Deuli' is situated under Raghunath I Block. It is 1 km away from Cheliyama. It is one of the important 'Deuli' in Purulia which is protected by government. A caretaker has also been appointed by government. The upper portion of this deuli has been reconstructed by government. But the beauty of sculpture has been loosed due to reconstruction of this Deuli. This Deuli has been made during tenth to eleventh centuries (Roy, 2010). The present height of this Deuli is 70 foot and the height of the entering door is 6 foot.

**Belkuri:** Belkuri temple is 10 km away from Purulia town towards west via Purulia Ranchi road. It is situated under Purulia II block. The main attraction of this spot is that the temple is totally made by stone. It has similarity with Lagda and karcha 'Deuli'.

**Bhabanipur:** Bhabanipur is situated under Purulia II block. It is 10 km distance from Purulia town. The Bhabanipur village is surrounded by beautiful nature. In this village one 'Birstambha' idol has been implanted on the wall of Siva temple which is situated under an old banyan tree. The height of this statue is three foot. There is an old epigraphic in left side of 'Birstambha', which is unable to read till now. There have another beautiful Idol of 'Rishavnath under big tree'. There have an epigraphic under the 'Rishavnath' Idol which is also unable to read till now. It is assumed that the Idol has been made during nine or ten centuries (Subhas Roy, 2010).

**Bhangra:** This 'Deuli' is situated under Purulia police station area. The distance of Bhangra from Purulia is near about 8 km. an old Jain temple have been seen in Bhangra village and in the outside wall of the temple a Jain Tirthankar's idol is also there. An ancient destroyed heap has been seen at Misrapara of Bhangra village, from here one Tirthankar idol has been shifted to nearby Durga temple.

**Birinchinath:** This archaeological tourist site is situated under Neturia block near Damodar River which is 65 km away from Purulia town. This is one of the important archaeological sites in Purulia.

**Budhpur:** Budhpur is situated under Manbazar block near Kansai River. It is 55 km away from Purulia. According to J.D. Beglar there were five destroyed Deulis which were made during twelve hundred or thirteen hundred A.D (Roy, 2010). In present time a large size of fragmented rock hill has been seen. It is assumed that once upon a time there were seven 'Deilis' existed. In 1333 A.D the famous temple of Lord Budheswar Siva has been made by using fragmented stone of Deuli (Roy, 2010). Inside the temple there are different types of small Idol like Idol of Ganesha, Bishnu, and Sibling etc.

**Charrara:** It is six km away from Purulia town on Purulia Asansol road. This is situated under Purulia II block near chharra railway station. In chharra village seven Jain 'Deuli' were there in past time but at present there is only a single 'Deuli' remain left. The height of this 'Deuli' is 25 foot. The ancient 'Deuli' is perhaps made during eleven or twelve centuries A.D (Roy, 2010).

**Cheliyama:** The Cheliyama archaeological spot is under Raghunathpur I Block. It is near on the right bank of Damodar River. It is one of the important archaeological tourist spots in Purulia. There is an ancient archaeological temple which is made during 1619 B.C (Roy, 2010).

**Chhoto Balarampur:** The Chhoto Balarampur is situated near Kangsabati River under Purulia II block. It is 5.6 km from Purulia town and its direction is in south east side from town. This Jain temple is 2000 years old but the statue have been stolen from temple (Roy, 2010). The surrounding area is beautifully decorated by many trees and flowers.

**Deauli:** Deuli is situated under Baghmundi Block. It is 72 km away from Purulia town near Suisa rail Station. It is also a one of the archaeological tourist spots in Purulia District. It is a destroyed temple. There is an 'Erunath' Idol which is the Sculpture of Jain Tirthankar. The height of this Jain Tirthankar is 3 ft.

**Deolghata/ Boram:** The Deolghata Jain temple is 7 km away from Garh Jaipur rail station which situated near Kangsabati River in Arsha block. The surrounding environment is so pleasant. In past time, how many 'Deulis' were there, it is unknown to us. But in present time two Deulis are standing on left bank of Kangsabati River and these Deulis are made by bricks. These Deulis are facing towards east. There is no Idol inside the Deulis. The height of the Deuli is 60 foot.

**Deolvira:** The Deolvira archaeological tourist site is situated under Para block. It is a destroyed place which is 5 km away from para police station. Many Idols have been gotten from this destroyed Deuli; such as the Idol of Saraswati and a four hand Idol. There is one Ganesh and one Kartic Idol. There also an idol of Jain Tirthankar. This is perhaps the statue of 'Risavnath'. The architecture of this area is similarly with other architecture in Purulia.

**Dhadanga:** Dhadanga archaeological tourist spot is situated under Barabazar block. This archaeological tourist spot is also a destroyed temple. There have a destroyed Epigraphic.

**Dhadkitar:** Dhadkitar is situated under Hura block. It is 35 km distance from Purulia town. Dhadkitar is one of the archaeological tourist spot in Purulia.

**Gurudi:** Gurudi archaeological tourist spot is under Raghunathpur II block. It is 1.5 km away from Cheliyama and 56 km from Purulia town. It is near Damodar river bank. It is also an important archaeological tourist site in Purulia.

**Jaida:** Jaida is situated under Arsha block which is 55 km away from Purulia town. It is famous for archaeological tourist spot.

**Kodomjora:** The village is situated under Barabazar block. There is a temple of Lord Siva which is the Sculpture of Hindu God.

**Kroshjuri:** The Kroshjuri archaeological tourist site is situated under Kashipur block. It is an important archaeological spot in Purulia district.

**Lokra:** Lokra temple is situated in Hura block, 45 to 46 km distance from Purulia town. It is 5 km away from Pakberra Jain temple. The ancient Jain Deuli has been seen under a chalta tree at the end portion of this village. Here three stone 'Deulis' was existed (Roy, 2010) but in present all are destroyed. Here have a Mahabir Idol and one Idol of Risavnath which are respectively 3 foot and 2.5 foot in height.

**Nangti or Nonginthan:** Nangtir than is situated near Jitujuri village, at northern side of kangsabati river. This archeologically tourist spot is under Purulia II police station. The local name of this archeologically spot is 'Berar Gaira'. Here three idols are found in a temple which is made recently. The brief details of these three idols are given below. First idol: This is a fragmented idol, only lower portion of this idol is remaining. Second idol: It also a fragmented and 5.5 foot in height and width is 2.5 foot. Another twenty three idols are there in two side of this sculpture. Third Idol: This idol is 4.5 foot in height and 2 foot in width. Twenty four sculptures of Tirthankar are incised in four rows with both side of the idol.

**Pakbirra:** Pakbirra is situated under Pancha block in Purulia District. The distance from Purulia town to Pakbirra is 45 km. This is a great archaeological site in Purulia. A large number of stone sculptures are found in this area. This kind of archaeological site is peculiar one not only in Purulia but also in West Bengal. In earlier time archaeologist J.D. Beglar had seen 21 'Deulis', Out of them 19 'Deulis' were made by stone and two were made by brick. But in present all 'Deulis' have been destroyed except three. Here the most attractive Jain Sculpture is made from a large single black stone. The height of this Idol is 7.5 foot.

**Polma:** This is situated under Pancha block. It is 40 km away from Purulia town. This place is famous archaeological tourist spot.

**Ralibera:** Ralibera archaeological tourist spot is situated under Purulia II block near Mahadebbeara Village. This place is 9 km away from Purulia town on Purulia Kakora Road. The Kangsabati River has divided two villages, Mahadebbera and Ralibera which are respectively dominated by Jain religious people and Hindu religious. In Purulia, the Hindu and Jain Sculpture have been situated as Juxtaposition which proper example is this place. It is a Jain temple. Here have a sculpture Lord Shiva, 3 foot height Lord Ganesh and also god of Jagadhatri Mata idol. The temple architecture is established a lot ancient history during the Jain region. Here the Hindu religious idols denoted that after the Jain religious community, this area has been dominated by Hindus and when this area was dominated, this temple also nominated and spread their regions and culture.

**Sonadaha:** Sonadaha is an archaeological spot; this village is situated under Barabazar Block. The place is 43.7 km. away from Purulia town. An ancient sculpture of Rishovnath is seen in an open place of the village along with two 'chaito' idols. The height of the Rishovnath sculpture is 4 foot and the height of 'Chaito' idols are 1.5 foot.

**Suisa:** Suisa archaeological tourist spot is situated near Deuli tourist spot in Baghmundi Block. This archaeological tourist spot has a Jain temple. But there is a Sculpture of Lord Siva. There also have two Idols of 'Bishnu' and 'Durga'.

**Telkupi:** The famous archaeological site Telkupi is situated under Raghunathpur II block. It is 8 km distance from Cheliyama near Damodar River. Telkupi was a great port of Bengal during Jain. The Term Telkupi' comes from Sanskrit word 'Taila' means one kind of tax and 'Kampa' means Pargana. So Telkupi was once under the reign of Feudal king. This region was mainly engaged with copper business and it flourish from Damodar to Kangsabati river. According to archaeologist J.D. Beglar, there was 22 Deulis during 1878 A.D but all Deulis have been submerged due to construction of Damodar barrage (Roy, 2010).

**Tushama:** This is situated under Pancha Block. This is 56.5 K.M away from Purulia town and 1.5 km from Budhpur. This Deuli is standing on the bank of Kangsabati River. This Jain 'Deuli' is made by stone. The height of this 'Deuli' is 25 foot which is standing towards Kangsabati River. This 'Deuli' is probably during tenth to eleventh A.D without any doubt (Roy, 2010). There have seventy to eighty 'Siva ling' and a three foot rock Sculpture. These Idols are establishing that this area was under Jain religious.

### GEOMORPHOSITE TOURIST SPOTS

**Bero Hill:** The Bero hill is situated under Raghunathpur I Block. It is near Berorail station. It is an important geomorphic tourist site in Purulia district. It is a dome shape granite hill. The geology of this hill is so ancient that it may create a new history of this landscape. It has great significance to a geomorphologist. This feature like as Monadnock structure.

**Gorga- Buru pick:** Gorga-Buru pick is situated under Balarampur block. It is the highest pick of Ajodha hill which is 678 metres in height (Wikipedia). It is important for a Geomorphologist because of its geomorphic feature as monadnock and it also valuable in geology.

**Joychandi Pahar:** This Paharis situated under Raghunath I block near Joychandi railway station. It is 2 km from Raghunathpur town and 6 km from Adrajunction. First of all it is a geomorphic feature; it is called as Monadnock. It has a special importance for a Geomorphologist. It has a geological significance. This hill has Dome shaped structure. It is a granite rock bolder and this kind of shape has been formed by the weathering.

Here 6 hills have been found and all are dome shapes which are steep slope. The view of JoychandiPaharis amazing from Purulia Adra railway.

**KanhaPahar:** This Paharis located under Balarampur block near Balarampur station. It is one of the unknown important geomorphic sites. This feature is standing as a watershed. The important of this landform is that it has a unique geology and unique biological characteristics.

### HISTORICAL TOURIST SPOT

**Baghmundi Royal Place:** This historical place is situated under Baghmundi block. It is 45 km away from Purulia town. It is one of the important historical places in Purulia district. Here is a temple of lord Krishna which is made during 1733 B.C. and one temple of Lord Siva also there.

**Chakoltor:** The Chakoltor is situated under Purulia II block. It is 11 km distance from Purulia town. This place is famous for 'Chhata festival' which is celebrated in Bengali month of 'Bhadra' for 7 days. There is an old temple of Shayamchand which is known as 'Jora Bangla' Temple and one Radha Krishna temple has been built during 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Jhalda:** Jhalda Municipality is situated in western part of Purulia. A royal palace has been found under this area. This historical place may play an important role in tourism as a historical place.

**Kashipur Rajbari (Royal Palace):** 'Kashipur Rajbari' is situated under Kashipur block near Adra Junction. The distance of this place is 25 km from Purulia town and 6 km from Adra Junction. This historical place is not only famous in Purulia but also in West Bengal. The palace was dwelling place of Panchokot Royal family. There are five small houses. This royal palace is 1800 year old (Roy, 2010).

**Manbazar Royal Palace:** This historical place is situated under Manbazar block. It is 45 km from Purulia town, which is south west direction from Purulia town. This Royal palace is also a dwelling place of Panchokot King. This place is famous for Durga temple within the Royal Palace. It is also important for archaeological tourist spot. Here there is an idol of Jain Tirthankar's idol which is the sculpture of Jain Religion.

### COTTAGE INDUSTRY

**Balarampur:** The Balarampur is a small city of Balarampur block. The distance from the district head quarter to the city is 32 km. The city is famous for Lac Industry. The finished product of lac has been exported throughout different parts of our country. The raw material of lac industry comes from local trees like as Kul, Palas, and Kusum etc. It has a significant role in economy of Purulia District.

**Baragram Village:** This village is situated under Hura block on Purulia-Hura-Bankura road. It is near the source of Silabati River. This village is famous for Handloom Industry.

**Chorida Village:** Chorida village is situated under Baghmundi block near the foothill of Ajodha hill. It is 60 km away from Purulia town. Chorida village is known as 'Chhou mask' making village. Here, the mask for 'chhou' dance has been made up. It's a peculiar type of cottage industry not only in Purulia district but also in West Bengal.

**Jhalda:** Jhalda is a municipality of Purulia district. Jhalda municipality is situated in the western portion of Purulia. Jhalda Municipality is famous for Lac industry. The local climate, trees and cheap labour made favourable condition for Lac Industry. Here 'Biri industry' is also playing an important role for sustaining common people's livelihood. Another important cottage industry of this municipality is 'Agar industry'.

### ECO-TOURISM

**Baranti:** Baranti Eco-tourist spot is situated under Santuri block near Murad railway station. It is 62 km away from Purulia town. 'Baranti' is naturally a beautiful place. Here two hills 'Barti' and 'Muraddi' are joined with a cemented barrier which holds a large amount of water mass. The whole view of this place has been seen from 'Baranti' hill. Here the view of sun set is really amazing, which is the main attraction for a tourist. The winter season is the best for this place.

**Khairabera:** The Khairabera is situated under Baghmundi block near Baghmundi Bus stop, which is 54 km away from Purulia town via Jhalda road. Khairabera is one of the attractive tourist spot in Purulia. This tourist

spot offer an ample opportunity for enjoyment. The view of Ajodha hill from Khairabera is mind-blowing. The environment of this place is favorable for tracking and Mountain Bi-cycling. The reservoir is suitable for swimming and kayaking.

**Murguma Dam:** The Murguma Dam is situated on foothills of Ajodhahill under Jhalda II block. It is 50 km from Purulia town and 5 km away from Jhalda town. It is a water reservoir. It is surrounded with hills and forest which increased its beauties. This natural scenario of 'Murguma dam' is act as a pull factor for a tourist.

**Pakhi pahar:** It is situated under Baghmundi block. The distance from Purulia to 'Pakhipahar' is 47 km on the road of Balartampur –Baghmundi. PakhiPahar was previously known as 'MurraBuru' hill. But after the panting of birds on the stone of hill, it is known as pakhi pahar. The etching of birds on stone is the main attraction for a tourist. From the top of the hill, one can get a spectacular panoramic view of the entire landscape.

**Panchet Dam:** This dam is situated near Asansol railway station. The distance is 70km away from Purulia town. This reservoir holds of a large water mass on the Barakar River. Panchet Dam is one of the importance eco tourist sites in Purulia district. It is situated near GarhPanchakot hill. The view of Garh parchakot hill is beautiful from Panchet Dam. This reservoir is also an attracting place for kayaking.

**Tulin:** The Tulin is situated under Jhalda block near the left bank of Subarnarekha River. This is 50 km from Purulia town. This is famous for pleasant environment. Here 'PoushParvan' festival has been celebrated with Flamboyancy. There has a beautiful park named as 'Topoban'.

#### CONCLUSION:

The geology of Purulia district is ancient in geological time scale that means Purulia has a great geological significance. Landform is the inseparable part of geology. Landform helps us to know the evolution of landscape of a particular place. The geomorphic landforms of this area like 'Monadnock' and 'Tor' have the potentiality to develop as a Geomorphosite tourist spot, which may attract huge number of tourist. The study area is very much enriched with archaeological evidences. Basically, the eminent Jain Dules which have been made during 10 A.D. to 12 A.D. These Dules are enriched with architecture but in present time the architecture is decaying day by day due to lack of awareness and conservation. Here, cottage industry may play an important role in tourism sector. Mainly, Chhou mask making in Chorida village have potentiality to develop as tourist spot and beside this Lac industry in Balarampur and Jhalda block. Jhalda block also have potentiality to develop as tourist spot. So, government should take necessary step for development of tourism industry in this area. It has the potentiality to overcome the hackneyed economy of this district.

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