

The Statesman
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Notebook

CULTURAL TOURISM

Ancient temples, gushing waterfalls, golden beaches and snowy mountain peaks have been the traditional tourist attractions. But the unexplored cultural heritage of the state and beyond is being sought to be brought to the tourism circuit by banglanatak.com. For the past 14 years, it is seeking to synergise economic development by supporting age old cultural pursuits. Be it *chou* dance or making *patas*, it has been trying to strengthen micro economy by turning craft-villages into tourism destinations. Now it offers tourists a package to visit Bamnia, Chelyama, Charida, Gorbhanga, Kushmandi, Madhubani, Natungram, Nimdih, Panchmura, Pingla and Tepantar to name a few. Supported by UNESCO and state department of micro, small and medium enterprises and

textiles, these centres of tourist attractions are not only craft hubs but also offer opportunity of trekking up a hill, watching a *chou* dance festival and going for a picnic at Kushmandi at a site named Shami Brikshya where the saying goes the Pandavas hid their arms.

