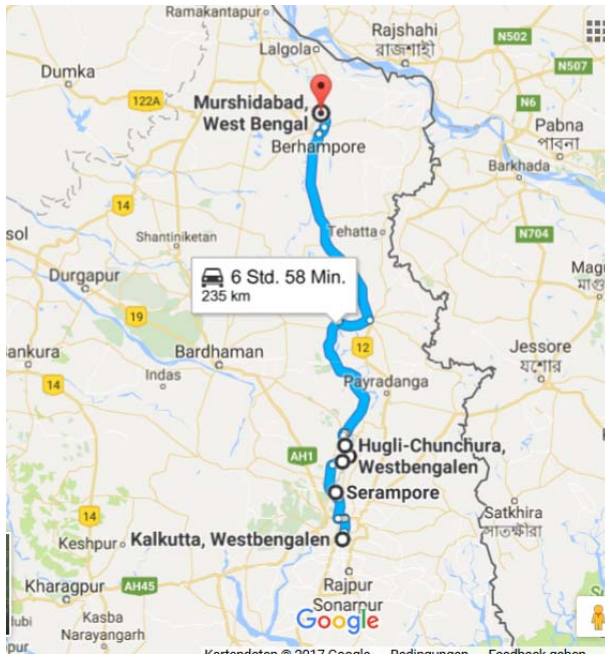


Europe along the Hooghly



Serampore (Danish), Chandannagar (French), Chinsurah (Dutch) and Bandel (Portuguese)

Almost a century after Vasco da Gama landed on the West Coast of India (1498), the Europeans started making inroads in Bengal. Using Hooghly (also known as Ganga or Ganges) as the main source of navigation, they started making inroads in Bengal.

Europe along the Hooghly River
(Serampore, Chandannagar, Chinsurah and
Bandel)



Serampore



Chandannagar



Chinsurah



Bandel

Soon, European settlement started growing along the Hooghly River in the present day Hooghly District. Long before the British made Calcutta their stronghold, the Portuguese had settled in Bandel. They were closely followed by the Dutch in Chinsurah, Danish in Serampore and the French in Chandannagar.

Bandel: Portuguese Stronghold



Bandel Church “Our Lady of the Happy Voyage,” Bandel, Hooghly, West Bengal

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to settle in Bengal and also have the distinction of building the first Christian Church in Bengal.

The Church of Our Lady of the Happy Voyage was initially constructed in 1599 and demolished by the Mughals in 1632 and was

rebuilt the same year.

Sadly, the Church has been reconstructed several times and today represents a modern structure.

It is popularly known as the Bandel Church. The word Bandel means ‘mast’ in Portuguese.

The Bandel Church compound houses a mast, which was gifted by a Portuguese ship captain, after his ship was damaged in a storm in Hooghly.

Apart from the mast and church, nothing much remains of Portuguese history in Bandel. For More information read [Bandel, Church and Imambara](#)

Chinsurah: Its all Dutch



Dutch Cemetery, Chinsurah (Chuchura)

In 1825, the British exchanged the island of Sumatra, in Indonesia, for Chinsurah, with the Dutch. Thus ended the Dutch rule in Chinsurah or Chuchura.

The Dutch fort of Gustava has long been demolished by the British and nothing much remains of the Dutch legacy in Chinsurah.

The Dutch Church was demolished in 1980s, but the Dutch Cemetery still stands and is a reminder of the golden days of the Dutch.

The cemetery contains a assortment of graves scattered under the shade of ancient trees. The oldest dates back to 1743 while the newest one is on 1840. For more information read [Chinsurah \(Chuchura\), Remains of a Dutch Legacy](#).

Chandannagar: A slice of France



Durgacharan Rakshit Ghat, Chandannagar Strand

Unlike Bandel, Chinsurah and Serampore, Chandannagar still boasts a lot of French heritage. Chandannagar was a French colony till 1950 and French is still taught as a third language in many of Chandannagar's schools.

The Chandannagar Strand is considered as the most beautiful stretch of the Hooghly and still

houses a few French mansions.

Just off The Strand, is the Sacred Heart Church, one of the prime attractions of Chandannagar. The church interior has beautiful stained glasses.

The Durgacharan Rakshit Ghat on the Strand is a interesting mix of Indo – French architecture. Also on the Strand is the Duplex's Museum, housing a French Museum. For more information read [Chandannagar, a slice of France](#).

Serampore: Danish Delight



Baptist Mission Cemetery, Serampore

Serampore remained under the Danish rule till 1845, after which the Danish Governor decided to sell it to the British East India Company.

Built in 1818, the Serampore College, with its grand facade, reminds one of the glorious days of Danish Serampore.

Danish missionary Carey, along with Ward and Marshman, started the Serampore Mission Press and published the first Bengali translation of the Bible. They also started the Friends of India newspaper.

Serampore also houses two Cemeteries dating back to the Danish days. The Baptist Mission Cemetery in Serampore contains the family graves of Carey, Ward and Marshman, while the Danish Cemetery houses several other Danish graves.

Serampore ([Bengali](#): শ্রীরামপুর) (also called Serampur, Srirampur, Srirampore, Shreerampur, Shreerampore, Shrirampur, Shrirampore, Srerampore) is a famous and historical city in the [Indian state](#) of [West Bengal](#). It is the headquarter of the [Srirampore subdivision](#). It is a part of the area covered by [Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority](#).^[2] It is a pre-colonial town (city) on the west bank of the [Hooghly River](#). It was part of [Danish India](#) under the name Frederiknagore from 1755 to 1845.

Etymology

It is probable that the name 'Srirampur' originated either from 'Sripur', 'Sri Ram' or both, or it could originate from 'Seetarampore' as there was a very famous 'Ram-Seeta' temple.

Serampore City was grown up joining by Mahesh, Ballavpur, Akna, Sripur, Gopinathpur, Manoharpur, Chatra, Rajyadharapur, Naoga, Sheoraphuli, Shimla - sataghara villages. Here some aristocratic localities came up, namely Goswamipara, Lahiripara, Mukherjeepara, Bhattacharyapara, Chakravartipara, Beniapara etc., whose inhabitants were Brahmins of different groups and sects.

History

The city is several centuries old and has witnessed both the growth and decline of the [feudal system](#), the coming of the [Danes](#) and their settlement and then a cultural renaissance (known as the [Bengal Renaissance](#)) initiated by the [British](#) following the construction of the east Indian railway, along with subsequent industrial development.

There were three main phases in the process of urbanisation of Serampore:

1. The Pre-urbanisation phase (the period before 1755);
2. The Urbanisation phase (from 1755 to 1854); and
3. The Industrialisation phase (1854 to 1947).

Before the [Mughal era](#), the region between the [Saraswati](#) and [Hooghly](#) rivers was a thriving local community.

After this there arose the need for local artisans along with "service class" people who came from the neighbouring villages and settled on granted land. In this way, colonies such as Patuapara, Kumarpara, Dhulipara, Goalpara, Dutta Bagan, Khash Bagan were formed. This along with the fact that Sheoraphuli was a distribution point for local marketable goods produced in different parts of Hughli, induced many families - the Barujibis, Duttas, Deys, Das etc. - to come to settle here before 1755. The cultivating classes settled in such places as Sadgoppara, Mannapara, Lankabaganpara. The Jele-Kaibarta and 'Sani' Muchi, were already in the locality from the beginning, and had their own areas. The local [Sunni](#) Muslims, descendants of [Mughal](#) soldiers, traders and artisans, lived in Mullickpara, Mussalman Para and here a mosque still bears witness to their existence.

During the [Mughal](#) period, Akna (today's Akra Bati Lane) and Mahesh were heavily populated. The hot humid climate of the area suited the textile industry and the local land was well known for its [cotton](#) and [silk](#) weaving. The Hindu weavers used to manufacture fine cotton pieces, while the Muslim weavers monopolised silk manufacture. In the fertile land, [paddy](#), [jute](#) and [betel-leaf](#) were grown in abundance. The Kaibarta used the marshy land for fishing.

In pre-urbanisation age, communication was mainly by way of the river. Besides this, there was the 'Badshahi Sadak' or the grand trunk road. Before [Danes](#) arrived in this region, the Sheoraphuli Hat was the main internal trade centre and had close commercial links with Barisal, Khulna, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Rajshahi and other districts of East Bengal (now Bangladesh).

Between the 14th and 18th centuries, many foreign merchants, such as the [French](#), [Portuguese](#) and [Dutch](#) - established their trading outposts, or "Kuthis", here and were involved in trade and commerce.

During the Muslim period, the villagers on the bank of the [Hooghly](#) and [Saraswati](#) were included in the zamindaries of Sheoraphuli; these feudal lords not only collected rent but also dispensed justice.

Danish rule

The [urbanization](#) phase began with the acquisition of land in the area by the [Danes](#) in the early 18th century, as part of the [Danish colonial empire](#). In 1755, the [Danish East India Company](#) sent a representative from its Tranquebar office to the [Nawab of Bengal](#). Their intention was to secure a parwana (district jurisdiction) allowing them the right to do business in Bengal. They obtained the parwana by paying fifty thousand [rupees](#) in cash to Nawab [Alivardi Khan](#), along with many gifts, acquiring three *bighas* of land at Sripur on the riverfront and then another fifty-seven bighas at Akna for the building of a new factory and port, which the Danes governed from [Tranquebar](#). Subsequently, the Danes acquired the Serampore, Akna and Pearapur *mahals* by paying an annual rent of 1601 rupees to the [zamindar](#) (tax farmer) of [Sheoraphuli](#) in North Serampore. By 1770 the Danish merchants were beginning to make significant progress in trade and commerce in the area. Danish prosperity was assisted by the able administrative performance of Colonel Ole Bie, who was appointed the first Crown regent of Serampore in 1776.

The Danes also established a [bazaar](#) (the present Tin Bazaar) and allowed private [godowns](#), or warehouses to be maintained. Gradually, the town developed and became elegant and prosperous, and merchants of both foreign and indigenous origin began to arrive and live there.

Initially the Danes were dependent on their factors for obtaining commodities (primarily [silk](#) and [cotton](#) fabrics), but they later got involved in collection of merchandise directly from the producers, and offered incentives to the artisans in the form of earnest money for making high quality products. They also created a class of trading middlemen, such as agents, [banias](#), *muttsuddis*, and [stevedores](#).



Administrative building of [Government College of Engineering & Textile Technology, Serampore](#)

Sobharan Basak and Anandaram Dhoba, the two local textile businessmen, were appointed as the first '[factors](#)' for the Danes. Nandalal Chakravarty was their first agent, and subsequently he was promoted to "Dewan". Patita Paban Roy, who came from Katulpur in [Bankura](#), and Saphali Ram Dey were appointed agents for the supplying of [saltpetre](#). Brothers Raghuram

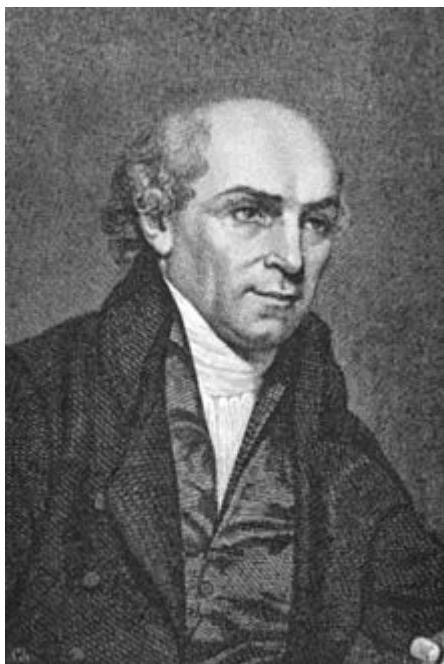
Goswami and Raghavram Goswami came to Serampore from their home village of Patuli, to seek their fortune. Raghuram secured a job at the [commissariat](#) of the Danish Governor, while Raghavram became the official moneylender to the factory. Between them, they amassed a huge fortune acquired vast lands and founded an [aristocratic](#) colony on the western side of Serampore with their family. Their descendants still live in Serampore today.

As a sop to the weavers of Akna and Mohanpur villages, the Danes gave advances for both cotton and fine silk products. The merchants also established their own factory to produce fine cloths. They collected 'Hammer' and 'Luckline' ropes for ships, various other kinds of ropes and agricultural produce. They inspired the cultivators of Pearapur to cultivate indigo in addition to paddy rice. Mr. Princep was their indigo agent.

Another notable source of their income was the Hoondi business. Colonel Ole Bie was also interested in making Serampore a charming, elegant, attractive tourist resort. It became a well-protected town and the maintenance of law and order was well developed. To facilitate municipal administrative and judicial work, a new Court House was built and a metalled road was laid on the river bank and magnificent palatial buildings were erected.

The local civil administration, however was carried out by a prototype of a municipality known as the 'Village Committee', with Ole Bie as its Governor. The balmy days of Danish overseas trade largely coincided with the service of Ole Bie as Head of the factory, serving from 1776 to 1805, with only a few interruptions.

Marshman and Carey



[William Carey \(missionary\)](#) of [Serampore Mission Press](#) & he established [Serampore College](#) in 1818. with [Joshua Marshman](#), [Hannah Marshman](#), [William Carey](#), and [Willam Ward](#)

The beginning of the 19th century can be considered the most significant period in the history of Serampore, with the arrival of four English missionaries - [Joshua Marshman](#), [Hannah Marshman](#), [William Carey](#), and [Willam Ward](#) - who between them were the architects of the Serampore renaissance. Although they came chiefly for the purpose of preaching Christianity, they dedicated themselves to the service of ailing and distressed people in and around the town, spreading education, social reforms and social reconstruction.

They established more than a hundred 'monitorial' schools in the region. [Hannah Marshman](#) established the first Girls' School at Serampore, which received much public approval. Carey made an outstanding contribution by founding the [Serampore Mission Press](#) in 1800 where the wooden Bengali types made by [Panchanan Karmakar](#) were installed.

Perhaps the crowning work of Carey and his two associates was the establishment of the [Serampore College](#) in 1818 which acts both as a university through the [Senate of Serampore College \(University\)](#) and as an individual college. The founders had to spend their last

farthing on the construction of its magnificent buildings. It was also the first college in [Asia](#) to award a degree.

Carey became famous as the father of Bengali prose. The Mission Press published three books - the Bengali translation of the [Bible](#), [Hitopadesh](#) and Kathopakhathan. [Munshi Ramram Basu](#), the pundit appointed by Carey, brought out [Pratapaditya](#) Charit and the Bengali versions of the [Ramayana](#) and the [Mahabharata](#). The first issue of the second Bengali daily, [Samachar Darpan](#) came out in 1818 under the editorship of Carey.

At the same time, the [Serampore Mission Press](#) brought out the English daily, *A Friend of India* (precursor to [The Statesman](#)). Another outstanding contribution of the missionaries was the installation of India's first paper mill, at Battala, set up by [John Clark Marshman](#) (the son of Joshua and Hannah Marshman) which was powered by a steam engine.

Between 1801 and 1832 the Serampore Mission Press printed 212,000 copies of books in 40 different languages. In this cultural development, the local inhabitants had only a passive role. Only a few among the affluent, comprising absentee landlords and businessmen, seized the opportunity for higher education by sending their children to the academic institutions of the missionaries. On the other hand, people belonging to the lower economic stratum sent their children to the monitorial schools, which provided a basic education. In the process, there emerged a class of local gentry, who had a favourable attitude towards the missionaries.

British rule



The century old Durga Puja of Ukil Bari, Chatra

Serampore was turned into a sub-division in the District of Hooghly in 1845. Serampore Municipality was set up separately in 1865. Serampore and its adjoining areas were famous for learning. The Sanskrit Schools popularly known as 'Tole' were engaged in the teaching of Sanskrit and published journals like 'Gyanarunodaya' (1852), 'Satya Pradip', 'The Evangelist' (1843), 'Arunodaya' (1856), 'Sarbartha-Sangraha' (1873), 'Aakhbare Serampore' (1826), 'Bibidha Barta Prakasika' (1875), 'Prakiti Ranjan' (1878) and 'Benga-Bandhu' (1882). Literature was always shining in Serampore. Rev. [Lal Behari Dey](#), M. Tansdend, Narayan Chattaraj Gunanidhi, Kalidas Maitra, John Robinson and others were very active in their literary activities. It is said that Raja [Ram Mohan Roy](#), the first modern man in India was born at Chatra in Serampore at his maternal-uncle's house though the issue is still controversial. [Dinabandhu Mitra](#), the great author, was posted as postmaster (Head Post Office), Serampore. Bibhutibhusan Mukhopadhyay, the famous litterateur, spent his childhood days at Chatra in Serampore. Poets like Amiya Chakraborty, Haraprasad Mitra were also born there.

On 11 October, 1845, it was sold to Britain, which integrated it into [British India](#) and officially restored the Bengali name. After taking possession of the town, the British began to look after its civic amenities and the earlier 'Village Committee' was transformed into the Serampore Municipality in 1865. [Rishra](#) and [Konnagar](#) were also included in it. [Raja Ram Mohan Roy](#) was born in Serampore (Deshguru Bhattacharia Bari at Chatra, North Serampore) [এটি ছিল তাঁর মামার বাড়ি](#) At that time, the affluent high caste section of the Serampore population displayed no sign of modernisation, nor did they subscribe to an urban ethos. The Indian economy during the period was passing through a severe recession. There was continuous

migration of rural people to the urban centres. Landless labourers from [Uttar Pradesh](#), [Andhra Pradesh](#), [Bihar](#) and [Orissa](#) came to Serampore in search of employment. When the second Jute Mill was opened in 1866 in Serampore (the first one was set up at Rishra in 1855) the town began to grow as an industrial town. Along with the Jute mills, many other subsidiary factories came up in the erstwhile rural areas within or on the fringes of the town.

Thus, with the capital investment of the British the commercial town of Serampore was transformed into an industrial one. The deciding force behind the process was the laying of the railway line from Howrah to Burdwan in 1854. It ushered in a great change in the social composition of the town. Between 1866 and 1915, six more jute mills were established at Rishra, Serampore and Chandannagar. The local landlords, thikadars and mill-owners made arrangements for the habitation of the labour force around the factories. Thus at Mahesh, Akna, and Tarapukur mouzas adjacent to the Ganges, workers' colonies like [Odiabasti](#), Gayaparabasti, [Chhapra](#) basti and [Telengipara](#) basti were established. Because of the arrival of these [migrant workers](#), the population in Serampore increased from 24,440 to 44,451 between 1872 and 1901. The habitations of labourers were unhygienic, overcrowded [slums](#). There was no provision for even the bare minimum of civic amenities in their dwellings.

In 1914, an arrangement was made to supply filtered potable water from the Municipality. The Town Hall was established in memory of Kishori Lal Goswami in 1927. At the initiative of the Government, the weaving school was founded during the thirties, and later on it was raised to the status of a Textile College. The municipality began to provide electricity in 1938. After fifty years of British possession, Serampore was swept by the waves of [a Bengali cultural and nationalist movement](#). The spirit of nationalism influenced many youths from [middle-class](#) families. It resulted in the decline of [foreign investment](#) in industries. But there was an increase in indigenous investment. The Bangalakhmi Cotton Mill was founded out of the [swadeshi](#) spirit. From the beginning of the 20th century, many primary schools and educational institutions were set up in Serampore. The descendants of some of the older aristocratic families donated their residential buildings for benevolent purposes.

Post 1947

'm Bazaar' (Bazaar Kolkata Shopping Mall), K.M Sha Street, [Serampore Town Station Bazaar](#)

Since 1947, Serampore has become a satellite of [Kolkata](#) (formerly Calcutta) and as such its process of urbanisation and change is as yet still incomplete. Now Serampore is one of the most developed (city) towns in the main line region of Howrah.

Demographics

According to an India [census](#), Serampore had a population of 181,842 in 2011. Males constituted 51.55% of the population and females 48.45%. It had an average literacy rate of 89.99%, higher than the national average of 74.04%: male literacy was 92.75%, and female literacy 87.05%; 7% of the population was under 6 years of age.^[3]

The following Municipalities and Census Towns in Hooghly district were part of Kolkata Urban Agglomeration in 2011 census: [Bansberia](#) (M), [Hugli-Chinsurah](#) (M), Bara Khejuria ([Out Growth](#)), [Shankhanagar](#) (CT), [Amodghata](#) (CT), [Chak Bansberia](#) (CT), [Naldanga](#) (CT), [Kodalia](#) (CT), [Kulihanda](#) (CT), [Simla](#) (CT), [Dharmapur](#) (CT), [Bhadreswar](#) (M), [Chamdpdani](#) (M), [Chandannagar](#) (M Corp.), [Baidyabati](#) (M), Serampore (M), [Rishra](#) (M), [Rishra](#) (CT),

[Bamunari](#) (CT), [Dakshin Rajyadharpur](#) (CT), [Nabagram Colony](#) (CT), [Konnagar](#) (M), [Uttarpara Kotrung](#) (M), [Raghunathpur \(PS-Dankuni\)](#) (CT), [Kanaipur](#) (CT) and [Keota](#) (CT).^[4]

Rail

[Serampore Town railway station](#) and [Sheoraphuli railway station](#) two Railway stations in Serampore. 15 August 1854, India was the first rail traffic from Howrah to Hooghly. And that was the first stop on the first train station in the Bally and then the second halt in Serampore. Serampore town and Sheoraphuli station is a very important unit. [Howrah–Bardhaman main line](#) railway. Many important Local, Passenger, Express train stop here.

[Serampore Town railway station](#): Daily Train UP- 136 and Down- 135 [Sheoraphuli railway station](#): Daily Train UP- 140 and Down- 139

Water



Dey Ghat, Battala

Serampore City connect to [Barrackpore](#) City and Titagarh by Ferry service on Ganges/[Hooghly River](#). There are five Ferry service in the City (6 AM-10 PM):

- Serampore Mahesh Ghat - [Titagarh](#)
- Serampore Ballavpur Ghat - [Titagarh](#)
- Serampore Juggal Auddy Ghat - [Barrackpore](#)
- Serampore Chatra Ghat - [Barrackpore](#)
- Serampore [Sheoraphuli](#) Ghat - [Barrackpore](#)

Air

Kolkata Airport is 34 km from Serampore

Hindu architecture



Radha-Ballav Temple, Ballavpur

Satimata Mandir, at B. P. Dey Street, [Serampore Town railway station Bazaar](#)

Various Hindu temples can be found in the Serampore area, such as:

- The temple of Radhaballabh at Ballavpur (18th century)
- The temple of Lord Jagannath at Mahesh (1396 A.D.)
- The Rath Yatra of Mahesh
- The Ram-Sita temple, Sripur
- [Gauranga](#) at Chatra (16th century)
- Hari Sabha at Battala (Near Battala Crossing & Battala Police Station)
- Sashan Kali Mandir at Ballavpur

- Henry Martin's [Pagoda](#), Ballavpur
- Sitalatala Mandir [Chatra Sitalatala]
- Nistarini Kali Bari, [Sheoraphuli](#) Ghat

The [Jagannath](#) temple of Mahesh is dated to 1755. When Bengal came under the command of [Sri Chaitanya](#)'s [Vaisnavism](#) in the 15th century, these places became pre-eminent as a Hindu pilgrim centre.

Raja Manohar Roy Zaminder of [Sheoraphuli](#) (North Serampore) built the temple of Ram-Sita in Sripur in 1753, and his son Ram Chandra Roy then later dedicated the villages of Sripur, [Gopinathpur](#) and [Manoharpur](#) as devottara land in the service of the deity. Subsequently, the temple was taken care of by Raja Nirmal Chandra Ghosh and the '[Seoraphuli Raj Debuttar Estate, Serampore](#)'.

Some pics:



Chandannagar,

formerly spelled as **Chandernagore** ([Bengali](#): চন্দননগর *Chôndônnôgôr*, [French](#): *Chandernagor*), is a Corporation city and [former French colony](#) located about 35 kilometers (22 mi) north of [Kolkata](#), in [West Bengal](#), [India](#). It is headquarter of a subdivision of same name in [Hooghly District](#). It is one of the 7 [municipal corporations](#) in West Bengal. It is a part of the area covered by [Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority](#). Located on the [Hooghly River](#), the city has been able to maintain a unique identity different from all other cities and abide by her own characteristics. The total area is 19 square kilometers (7.3 sq mi), and had a population of 166,867 at the 2011 Census. Chandannagar is connected to Kolkata by railway, roadways and Hooghly river and it takes about an hour to reach there by car.

Origin of name of Chandannagar

The name Chandannagar is possibly derived from the shape of the bank of the river Ganges which is bent like a half moon (in Bengali, *Chand* means moon and *Nagar* implies city). Some local people say that once, the place was the major hub of the trade of [Sandal](#) (Bengali-*chandan*). In some old documents the spelling of Chandannagar was Chandernagore which probably came from Chandra Nagar. To mention, *Chandra* is the Bengali of Moon. One more reason behind the name is, in Chandernagore there is a temple of Goddess 'Chandi'. So it might come from there. But earlier people knew the place by the name *Farasdangaor* "Francedonmgi" as it was a French colony (Bengali: *Farasi* means French, *danga* means land).

History



The capture of the position of Chandernagore in 1757 by the *Royal Navy*.

Chandannagar was established as a [French](#) colony in 1673, when the French obtained permission from Ibrahim Khan, the [Nawab of Bengal](#), to establish a [trading post](#) on the right bank of the Hughli River.

Bengal was then a province of the [Mughal Empire](#). It became a permanent French settlement in 1688, and in 1730 [Joseph François Dupleix](#) was appointed governor of the city, during whose administration more than two thousand brick houses were erected in the town and a considerable maritime trade was carried on. For a time, Chandannagar was the main center for European commerce in Bengal.



Chandannagar waterfront c. 1850

In 1756 war broke out between France and Great Britain, and Colonel [Robert Clive](#) of the [British East India Company](#) and [Admiral Charles Watson](#) of the British Navy bombarded and [captured](#) [Chandannagar](#) on 23 March 1757. The town's

fortifications and many houses were demolished thereafter, and Chandannagar's importance as a commercial center was eclipsed by that of [Calcutta](#) situated down river. Chandernagore was restored to the French in 1763, but retaken by the British in 1794 in the [Napoleonic Wars](#). The city was returned to France in 1816, along with a 3 sq mi (7.8 km²) enclave of surrounding territory. It was governed as part of [French India](#) until 1950, under the political control of the governor-general in [Pondicherry](#). By 1900 the town's former commercial importance was gone, and it was little more than a quiet suburb of Calcutta, with a population of 25,000 (1901). But it was noted for its clean wide thoroughfares, with many elegant residences along the riverbank.

Like the other three French occupied colonies of India, Chandernagore was under Pondicherry. There was only one Governor for the entire French India. He lived in the principal city of Pondicherry, from time to time he would visit the colonies. There was one Administrator under the Governor in each colony. Though there were courts and magistrates here, a separate judge used to come from Pondicherry for session trials. There was a High court in Pondicherry for filing an appeal. The Collectories, the Education Department, the Housing Department etc. were all under the said department of Pondicherry. One Inspector from France used to come here every year for inspecting all the affairs. The French Consul who lived in Calcutta had no connection with the administration of Chandernagore.

Formerly the government kept a troop of sepoys to help maintenance of peace in the town. It is known that Chandernagore had two divisions of infantry during 1743-45. Under the terms of the treaty it had no alternative but to keep not more than 15 soldiers.

The laws of this place were not separate, laws were the same in regard to all the colonies and they were drawn up by the Minister of the Interior of France. In the councils of Depute and Senateur of France there was one representative elected by the citizens and representatives of French India in each.

Though no Indian ever got a place in the Councils of Depute and Senateur, the citizens of Chandernagore had the right to be elected to those seats.

A Municipality was created here on 1 August 1880. Charles Dumaine became the first Mayor.

There was a post called 'Notaire' like the Registrar of British India. All the deeds as for testament, sale and purchase, debts and dues were registered by him.

The judicial system even passed a few death sentences here. An instrument called 'guillotine' was used to carry out capital punishment. The guillotine instrument was used here for the last time on 22 July 1895. Two persons of this place named Sk. Abdul Panjari and Hiru Bagdi were sentenced to death for the first time on 26 January 1883.

Battle of Chandannagore

Merger with India

India became independent from Britain in 1947. In June 1948 the French Government held a plebiscite which found that 97% of Chandannagar's residents wished to become part of India. In May 1950, the French allowed the Indian government to assume *de*

facto control over Chandannagar, officially ceding the city to India on 2 February 1951. *De jure* transfer took place on 9 June 1952.

On 2 October 1954 Chandannagar was integrated into the state of [West Bengal](#).^[1]

Places of tourist interest

The Chandan Nagar strand.



French Cemetery.



Sacred



Heart church.

Inscription on Chandannagar Gate



Nandadulal Jiu mandir.



The French Governor's palace presently housing the Chandannagar Museum

Chandannagore Strand

The tree-shaded promenade along the river is about 1 km (0.62 mi) in length and 7 meters (23 ft) in width, and there are many buildings of historical importance along the way. It is a popular spot for local people and tourists alike, who love to stroll along enjoying the breeze and watching the small boats sail by. Along the Strand one can find the [Vivekananda](#) Mandir (a [meditation](#) centre protruding into the river Ganges).

Chandannagore Museum and Institute (*Institut de Chandernagor*)

One of the oldest museums of the region. It boasts a collection of French antiques (such as [cannons](#) used in [Anglo-French](#) war, wooden furniture of the 18th century, etc.) which are difficult to find anywhere else in the world. The institute still teaches [French](#) through regular classes. Jogendra Nath Sen, resident of Chandannagar who died in France fighting in the World War I. His personal items were sent to his brother in India who later donated them to the Institut de Chandernagore in Chandannagar.^[2]

The Sacred Heart Church of Chandannagar (*l'Eglise du Sacré Cœur*)

The church is situated near the Strand. It was designed by French Architect Jacques Duchatz. The church was inaugurated by [Paul Goethals](#) 27 Jan. 1884.^[3] The 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* is also an attractive tourist spot.

French Cemetery

The French Cemetery contains 150 tombs and is located on the Grand Trunk Road opposite Lal Dighi (a large lake). Amongst the remarkable people buried there, one can find the tomb of Duplessis, the founding father of French Chandannagar and also the one of pioneering meteorologist [Henry "Storm" Piddington](#), who is mentioned in [Amitav Ghosh](#)'s novel [The Hungry Tide](#).^[4]



The Patal Bari or the underground house

Chandanagar Gate

Constructed in 1937, to mark the Fall of Bastille, the gate has the French Revolution slogan "Liberté, égalité, fraternité (Liberty, equality and fraternity)"

etched on it.^[5]

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 Ganges. 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. The house was owned by the zemindars of nearby Bansberia.

Nandadulal Temple

[Nandadulal Temple](#) built in 1740 by [Indranarayan Roychoudhury](#) presents an excellent example of ancient Indian sculptures. There are many fascinating temples devoted to [Kali](#), [Shiva](#) and other deities which show marks of brilliant craftsmanship and artistic taste.

Nritya Gopal Smriti Mandir

Built by Sri Harihar Sett, and donated to the people of Chandannagore. This building still serves as a theatre hall and a library. It was first of its kind in the entire locality. It has one of the largest collections of books in French, English and Bengali in the district.

Bishalakshmi temple

The temple is situated near Brahmin para, Boubazar in the western part of railway station. The history of this ancient temple is not known properly. The deity is worshiped regularly by the local people.

Chandernagore Heritage Museum

Archival materials on the history of Chandernagor and relics of Rabindranath Tagore are available at the Chandernagore Heritage Museum which is located in the vicinity of the Barabazar Auto Stop. (Please note that access to the archive is limited only to research scholars).

Radhanath Sikdar Himalayan Museum

The Radhanath Sikdar Himalayan Museum at Ananda Cottage, Bagbazar, sports a fine display of mountaineering equipment and the history associated with such artefacts.

History

The ancient history of Jagadhatri Puja in Chandannagar is unknown even today. It is wrongly believed that [Indranarayan Chowdhury](#) introduced the Jagadhatri Puja in Chandannagar in manners similar to [Raja Krishnachandra](#) of [Krishnanagore](#). The time of beginning of Jagadhatri Puja in Krishnanagore was 1762. Indranarayan Choudhury died in 1756. So Indranarayan Choudhury by no means introduced the Jagadhatri puja in Chandannagar. The beginning of Jagadhatri puja in Chandannagar probably dates back earlier than 1750. Indranarayan Choudhury performed the Jagadhatri puja at his own house in Chandannagar, at the time Krishnachandra used to come to borrow money from Indranarayan Choudhury. The father of Krishnachandra had started the puja of Jagadhatri at Krishna Nagar due to missing out once on the puja of Durga by being

locked up in British prison.^[6] Once Krishnachandra's ship could not reach Krishna Nagar in time for Jagadhatri puja due to weak winds. So he performed on day of nabami the puja at the Ghat of Nichupoty. Seeing in this the wish of the Goddess to be established as a puja in Chandannagar too, he left funds for its yearly worship on a permanent basis. In 1780 *Bengal Gazette* of James August Hickey was the first newspaper of this country. The newspaper was silent about the Jagaddhatri Puja. But the 'Friends of India' published a report on the community Jagaddhatri Puja in 1820. The date of the community Jagaddhatri Puja in Chandernagore was 1790. In those days Robert Clive called Loxmigonj of Chandernagore the 'Granary of Bengal'. The Jagaddhatri Puja at Chaulpotty (Rice Market) in Loxmigonj is probably the historic example of the ancient community Jagaddhatri Puja. The Jagaddhatri Puja of Chandernagore bridges the past and the present.

Jagaddhatri_Puja_Baghbazar_Area_Chandannagar

One of the main attractions of the Jagaddhatri idol of Chandernagore is the ornamental decoration of the goddess with sola and the beautiful canvas of mats with paintings at the back of the image. Also the procession is second longest in the world after Rio de Janeiro's.^[7]

The lightgates of Chandan nagar in West Bengal, India. Chandan nagar is famous for its light gates that are used during Durga Pooja and Jagadhatri Pooja.

Geography



A view of the River Hooghly from the Strand Road

Chandannagar is located at [22.87°N 88.38°E](#). It has an average elevation of 10 metres (33 ft).

Chandannagar consisted of mainly three parts Khalisani (west), Gondalpara (south) and Boro Kishanganj (north). There are about 30 localities (para) and more than 100 sub-localities. Of them some are Gondalpara, Nutan Telighat, Barasat, Tematha, Hatkhola, Daibokpara, Padripara, Lalbagan, Barabazar, Bagbazar, Fatokgora, Khalisani, Nabagram, Palpara, Urdibazar, Luxmigonj, Panchanantala, Taldanga, Haridradanga etc.

The G.T. Road runs through the middle of the city. The Delhi road runs marking the western limit of the city. **Bajra**, **Bandhagram** etc. are some of the village like areas near the borders of the city.

The city is bordered by Chinsurah in the north, Bhadreswar in the south, the Hooghly river in the east and Dhaniakhali in the west

Demographics

As per [2011 Census of India](#) Chandannagar had a total population of 166,867 of which 84,009 (50%) were males and 82,858 (50%) were females. Population below 6 years was 11,826. The total number of literates in Chandannagar was 139,005 (89.65% of the population over 6 years).^[11]