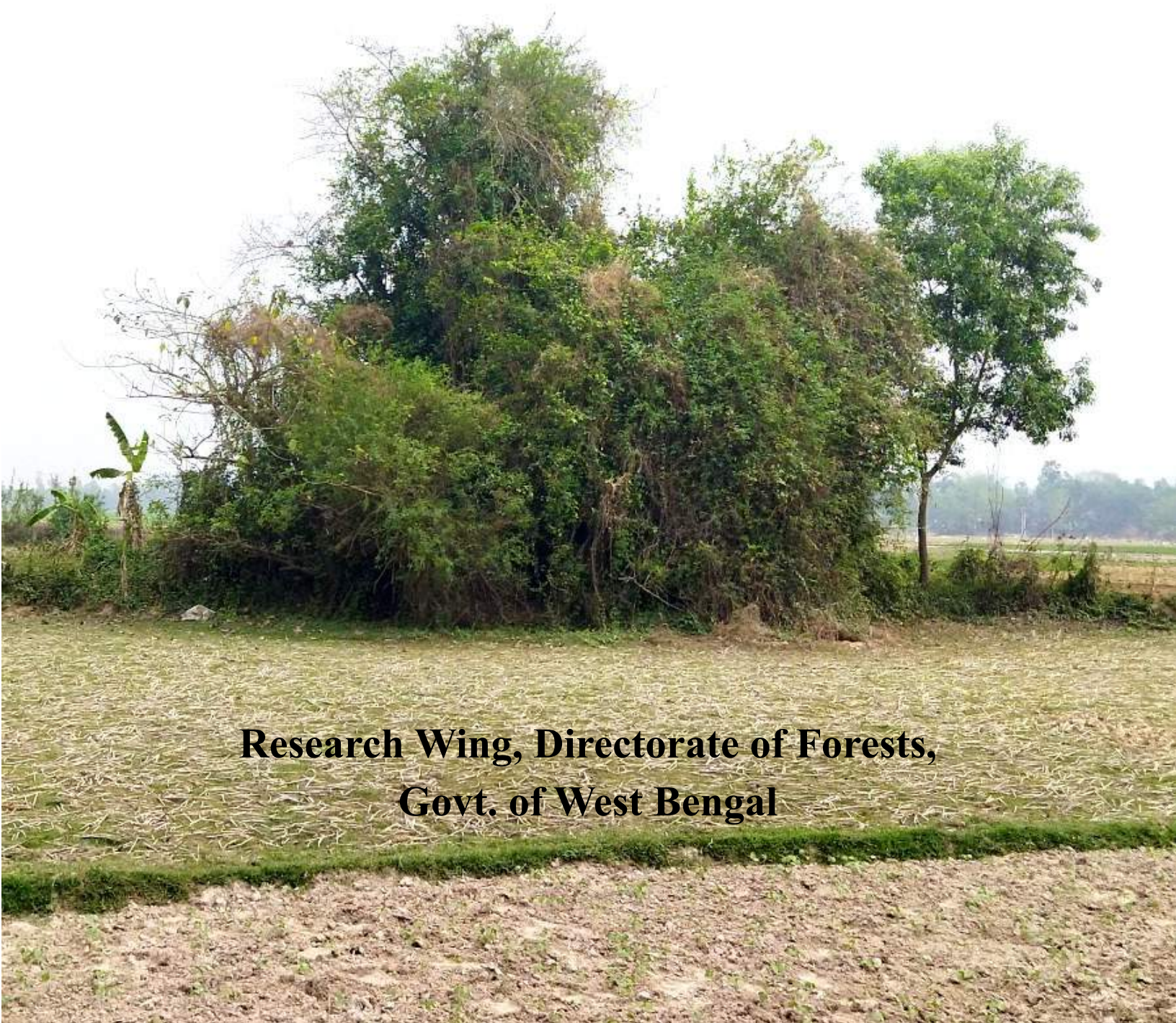




Survey and Identification of Sacred Groves in Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur Districts, West Bengal



**Research Wing, Directorate of Forests,
Govt. of West Bengal**

Final Report

**Survey and Identification of Sacred Groves in
Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar, Uttar Dinajpur
and Dakshin Dinajpur Districts, West Bengal**

Conducted by

**Silviculture North Division
Directorate of Forests
Government of West Bengal**

And

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প্রধান মুখ্য বনপাল,
গবেষণা, পরিদর্শন এবং উন্নয়ন
বন বিভাগ,
পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার

দূরত্ব : ০৩৩-২২২৫-০০৫৩, ২২৩৫-০০৪৩ (সরাসরি)

Foreword

Indigenous communities everywhere lived in harmony with the nature and conserved its valuable biodiversity since time immemorial.

A good example of such traditional practices is the conservation and protection of small forest patches by dedicating them to the local deities by these communities all over the world. Such forest patches are called “sacred groves” and provide the inextricable link between present society to the past in terms of biodiversity, culture, religious and ethnic heritage. Sacred groves, in addition, act as a nursery and storehouse of many of the local ayurvedic, tribal and folk medicines while others waiting to be given their right place and significance.

Sacred Groves once existed in most parts of India. Dietrich Brandis, the first Inspector General of Forests of India, records that sacred grove were “very numerous” and found “in nearly all provinces” (Brandis 1897: 12-13). It appears that the cumulative floral diversity of Sacred Groves in a given geographical unit at the district level closely resembles the total floral richness of that area.

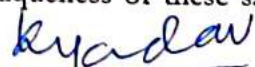
Despite the vast and varied flora in Northern West Bengal, information on the sacred groves is still limited.

The Research Wing, Directorate of Forests, Govt. of West Bengal has taken the initiative to document the sacred groves under the jurisdiction of Silviculture North Division Directorate of Forests Government of West Bengal, covering Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Cooch-Bihar, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur with the objective of documenting their biodiversity, potential animal habitats and related socio-cultural aspects. This was assigned to Nature Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS) who have conducted this survey.

The survey revealed a total of 54 sacred groves in five districts (Jalpaiguri - 8, Alipurduar - 8, Cooch-Bihar - 7, Uttar Dinajpur - 15, Dakshin Dinajpur - 16). Most of the sacred groves in Alipurduar district are located inside forest or forest fringe areas, whereas in rest four districts they are situated in non-forest areas especially amidst the agricultural fields or outside village residential zone.

Overall, 276 plant species under 91 families including 141 tree species, 38 climber species, 93 herb and shrub species and 4 epiphytic species were documented from the surveyed sacred groves. Plant species diversity was recorded maximum in Dakshin Dinajpur (145) followed by Uttar Dinajpur (134), Alipurduar (132), Cooch-Bihar (118) and Jalpaiguri (106). However, the maximum tree species diversity was seen in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar (73 each) followed by Cooch-Bihar (70), Dakshin Dinajpur (61) and Uttar Dinajpur (56).

This benchmark study would help the Forest Department, West Bengal to collaborate with the respective communities in preserving the biodiversity and uniqueness of these sacred groves.


(Vinod Kumar Yadav, IFS)

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Lastly, we express our sincere gratitude to all the resource persons and local people for providing valuable information and sharing their experience regarding the history, culture, taboos and rituals of the sacred groves.

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1. Introduction

Conservation practice of nature and natural components through inherent socio-cultural and religious means has its roots in ancient (pre-vedic period) societies. The classic example of this is reflected in the presence of sacred groves in different parts of the globe especially where aboriginal people dwell. Indigenous knowledge of local plants, animals, their habitat preferences, distribution, life histories and demographic features is socially transmitted from one individual to another within and across generations (Gadgil et al. 1993). This practice goes back to the pre-agricultural hunting-gathering stage of the human society (Gadgil & Vartak 1975). One of the valuable outcomes of such practices is the preservation of sacred groves prevalent in different geographical regions of the globe excepting the new world (Gadgil & Guha 1992). They also seem to be most numerous in Asia and Africa (Roy Burman 1996) and especially in India viz., Western Ghats, Central India and North-East India, particularly where the ethnic communities live. These are known by various names by the respective indigenous people and is passed down to generation after generation. Every sacred grove has its own legends, lore and myths with an identity of its own. Moreover, an inextricable link exists between the present society and the past in term of biodiversity, culture, religious and ethnic heritage in these groves which is ideal for biodiversity conservation (Khan et al. 2008). Besides, taboos regarding the local Deities in these groves keep them sacrosanct as they were imagined by these ancient societies to prevail in stones, trees, animals and woods. Animism therefore seemed to be an expression of the gratitude to and respect for nature for providing goods and services to human society (Dev 2007a) – a way to traditional conservation practice.

Sacred Groves and their importance in nature conservation has long been recognized (Kosambi, 1962; Gadgil and Vartak, 1976; Haridasan and Rao, 1985; Khan et al., 1997; Anthwal et al., 2006) and their biodiversity was a center of study since the last few decades (Basu, 2005; Kotwal and Banerjee, 2002; Kumar and Asija, 2005 and Swain et al., 2008). Besides the biologists, these sacred groves are also a subject of great interest to the sociologists, anthropologists and policy makers as they represent a variety of ecosystems, social and ethnic identities, management designs, legal tenures and cultural traditions (Ray et al. 2014).

The vegetational climax, as reflected in the sacred groves, supports the fact that the sacred groves are immuned to human interference (Gadgil and Vartak, 1976). These fragmented landscapes with their unique vegetational architecture provide diversified microhabitats for various life forms maintaining a veritable gene pool. They also maintain the meta-community dynamics with a wide array of ecological niches creating an abode to locally endangered and many threatened species. Besides sustaining the faunal diversity, sacred groves are a rich heritage of medicinal plant wealth - traditionally used in local health care system. The intangible benefits to the society are gained through the significant ecological services of sacred groves such as carbon sequestration, soil conservation, nutrient cycling, water conservation, pollination etc.

The composition of such a grove basically depends on the vegetation history; it may be multi-species, multi-tire primary forest or a cluster of ancient trees mingled with some generations. The composition of the vegetation, expressing the climatic climax of that region, corroborates

the supposition that sacred groves have been protected from human interference for a very long period (Gadgil & Vartak 1975). Thus, these segments of landscape contain vegetation and other forms of life and geographical features that are delimited and protected by human societies to keep them in a relatively undisturbed state. As a result, number of rare and endemic wild floral and faunal species find way and means to find and occupy their habitat in these sacred groves. Customary protection of the groves over centuries has resulted in conservation of a range of rare and endemic species constituting a classic example of traditional cultural institutions fostering biodiversity conservation (Verner 2005). In fact, sacred groves represent the ancient way of *in-situ* conservation of genetic diversity and play important role in conservation of biological diversity (Mgumia & Oba 2003).

In Indian context, most sacred groves act as refuge for several locally endangered species and is a haven for sustaining regional taxonomic diversity with a veritable gene pool inspite of the threats and challenges with increasing urbanization and habitat fragmentation. Such natural treasure houses in the form of miniature biosphere reserves locking the ancient secret of sorcery and magic (Swain et al. 2008) would obviously satisfy the scientific, cultural and aesthetic needs of humankind (Basu 2000).

In West Bengal, few studies that have been carried pout on sacred groves had emphasis on their socio-ecological and biodiversity conservation values. Malhotra et al. (2001) documented some sacred groves from the state. Spadoni and Deb 2005 and Deb (2007b) reported some sacred groves of Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling district. Sacred groves are found more frequently in the southwestern districts than northern districts (Deb and Malhotra 1997, 2001) and are conspicuously scarce in the non-forest districts lying alongside the river Ganges (Deb 2007b). The sacred groves of Western parts of the districts with biodiversity, socio-religious cultures and conservation practices are well documented by many workers – Purulia (Deb 2007a, Basu 2000 and 2005a), Bankura (Deb 2007a, Mitra et al. 2014, Mitra et al. 2017, Mitra et al. 2018, Basu 2005b), Birbhum (Deb 2007a, Manna et al. 2013, Manna et al. 2017), Jhargram (Kamilya & Paria, 1994). However, the sacred groves of North Bengal and its biodiversity are yet to be documented comprehensively.

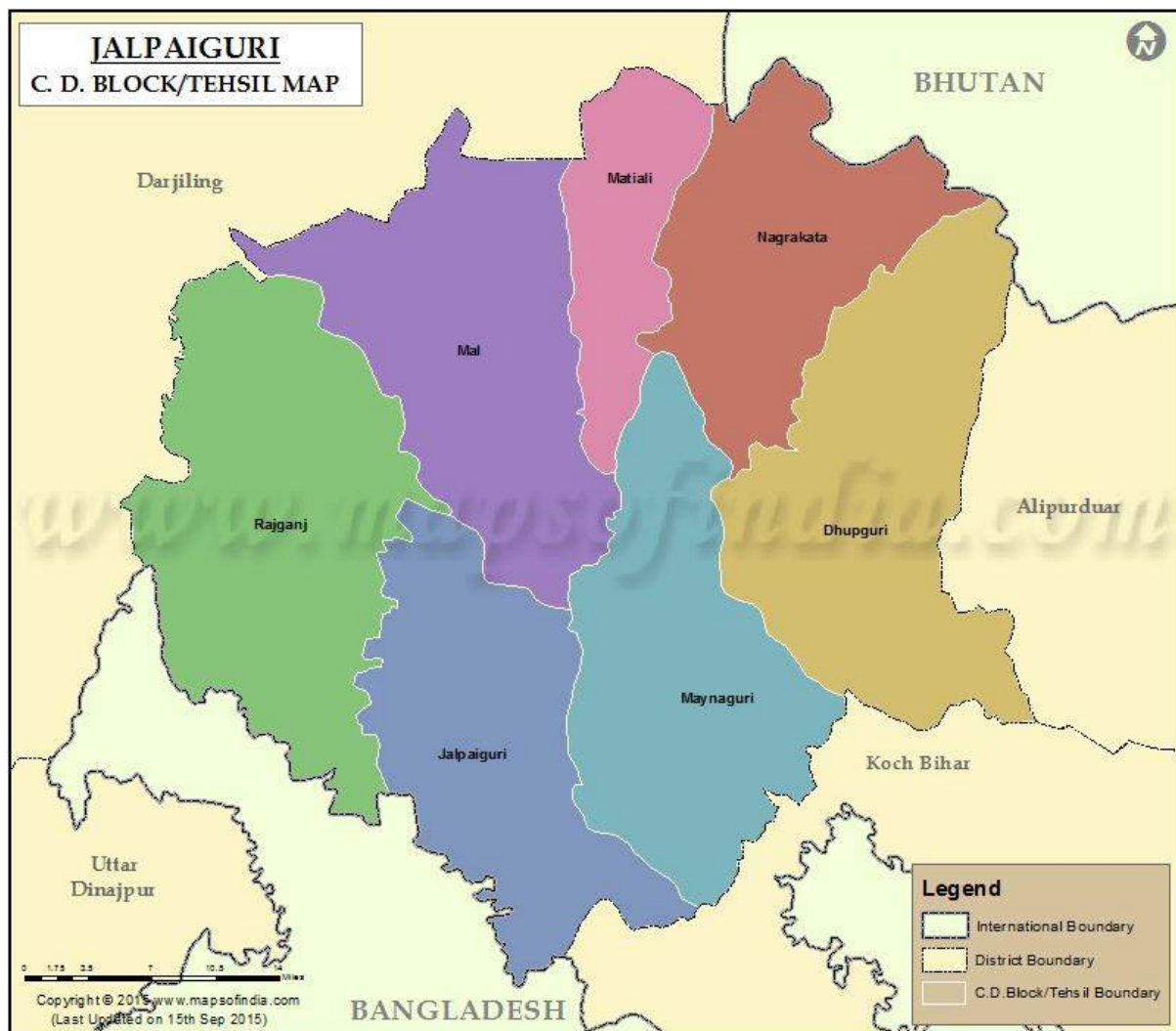
Many sacred groves are facing serious threats and being eroded day by day through exponential expansion of human habitation particularly the spread of cultivable lands (Anthwal et al. 2006). Considering the importance of sacred groves, International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) treats them under Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) (Oliedo et al. 2005). As per provision of the Section 37(1) of Biological Diversity Act, 2002 of India, state government may notify the areas of biodiversity importance as Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS) and in such cases many of the sacred groves qualified for declaring them as BHS for legal protection.

In a rapidly changing global scenario, maintenance of green cover is the most challenging issue to any state administration. The research, Monitoring and Development Wing, Directorate of Forests, Govt. of West Bengal has undertaken taken the initiative to document the sacred groves under the jurisdiction of Silviculture North Division covering Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Cooch-Behar, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur with the objectives to document biodiversity, potential animal habitat and related socio-cultural aspects.

Study Area

Jalpaiguri District

Geographic location and boundary: It is believed that the district of Jalpaiguri has derived its name from the 'Jalpai' trees (olive trees) which grow abundantly in the forests covering the northern hilly terrain which were even visible in the 1900. The district is located 26°16' and 27°0' North latitude and 88°4' and 89°53' East longitude. With 6,22,700 ha. total area, the district is situated in the northern part of the state of West Bengal and shares its international borders with Bhutan and Bangladesh in the northeast and south respectively. The remaining borders are shared with the district of Darjeeling in the west and northwest, Kalimpong district in the north, Coochbehar district in the Southeast and Alipurduar district in the west.



Administrative setup: The district is constituted by seven administrative blocks viz. Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri Sadar, Mal, Matiali, Maynaguri, Nagrakata and Rajganj.

Climate: Jalpaiguri is a part of the monsoon zone of South eastern Asia. May is the hottest month of this region with average maximum temperature of about 32° C. January is coolest

with 11°C. The average annual humidity of the district is of 82 % and the rainfall is 3160 mm. December is the driest month with average rainfall of 0.2mm and July is the wettest with 809.3 mm.

Soil and topography: The soil in this region ranges from alluvial to sandy and clayey soil. The soil can be broadly classified under two heads – a) the terai soils covering almost the entire district and b) the brown forest soil covering the northern foot hills of the district. However, the soil is predominantly sandy and hence porous with low water holding capacity. The district topography wears a mixed look – consisting both of hilly areas and undulating plains coupled with vast flat plains. Three district physiographic units can be identified in the district (a) the northern hilly terrain which is a part of the sub-Himalayan Ranges, (b) the submontane central tract, locally called Bhabar and (c) the gently sloping alluvial plain in the south locally called Terai.

Rivers and drainage system: There are a large number of rivers and rivulets originating or passing through the district of Jalpaiguri. This district is drained by major rivers like Teesta, Torsa, Jaldhaka along with various small rivers namely Fuleswari, Panga, Jarada, Karala, Dharala, Sutunga etc. Frequent flash floods occur in different parts of the district mainly due to high intensity rainstorms within the watersheds of major river systems apart from rainfall within the district itself.

Forests: The forests, covering 179000 hectares of land, constitute 27.8% of the total geographical area of the district and are home to a fascinating variety of flora and fauna. Places in the forest areas like Murti, Chapramari and Gorumara are one of the most important forests reserves in the country.

Flora: The vegetation is mostly deciduous semievergreen with *sal* as the dominant species. Though *Sal* is gregarious but it is found in a mixture of a varying proportion of the following species like *Terminalia spp.*, *Chkraisia tabularis*, *Lagerstroemia parviflora*, *Amoora rohiruka*, *Careya arborea* etc. In the riverine forest areas *Acacia catechu* and *Dalbergia sissoo* are predominant. In the relatively low lying and damper areas *Machillus spp.*, *Listsea spp.*, *Syzygium spp.* etc. constituted the Wet mixed forest.

Fauna: The fauna of this region consists of wildlife like the Indian one horned rhinoceros, hispid hare, pygmy hog, elephants, gaur, leopard, sambar, cheetal, barking deer, badger, rhesus, sloth bear, otter, king cobra, hornbill, lesser adjutant stork etc.

Demography: The district harbors a total population of 2381596 with a large rural population (1628791) and with a high number of SCs/STs present (Census 2011). A sizeable population also resides in the tea gardens which are spread all over the district.

Alipurduar District

Geographic location and boundary: Alipurduar is the newly created District of West Bengal with a total area of 2566.85 Sq.m. It became 20th district of West Bengal on 25th June, 2014. The Late Colonel Hedayet Ali Khan was the first Assistant Commissioner of Alipurduar and it was named after him. Geographically the district lies in between 26.4°N to 26.83°N and 89°E

to 89.9°E. It is bounded by Jalpaiguri District in the West, Coochbehar District in the South, Assam state in the East, in the north the district shares an international border line with Bhutan.

Administrative setup: This district consists of six blocks namely 1) Kumargram, 2) Kalchini, 3) Alipurduar-I, 4) Alipurduar-II, 5) Falakata, 6) Madarihat-Birpara and one Municipality i.e., Alipurduar Municipality.

Climate: Alipurduar district experiences subtropical climate, which is characterized by hot summer from March to May and well distributed rain fall during southwest monsoon from June to October. Winter season in the area is marked by dry and cold weather during the month of November to February. Normal average rain-fall of this area is 1500 - 1800 mm. Number of rain-fall days is about 72 (February to October). Maximum temperature ranges between 31° C - 35° C with minimum temperature between 6.8-9.5° C. In general, climate of this station is hot and humid.



Soil and topography: The soil in this region varies from alluvial to sandy and hard black clayey. The upper region in the north of Dooars, the soil is mainly black and clayey. This soil is suitable for growing tea, which is a major cash crop of this district. In the lower plain, the

soil consists of a mixture of both clay and sand. The alluvial soil is fertile enough for crops like paddy, wheat, jute, potato, pulses, oilseeds, sugarcane etc. to be grown. Topography of the district wears a mixed look consisting both of hilly areas and undulating vast plain. The western part is slightly undulating and covered by paddy fields and bushy jungles, while the eastern part of the district presents a flat strip of land. The whole region is full of tea gardens and scatter forests. The entire topography is crisscrossed with streams, rivers and hills.

Rivers and drainage system: Number of rivers and rivulets originate from the hilly areas of adjacent Bhutan and there is a network of rivers cross-crossing the entire region. The major rivers are Torsa, Kaljani, Raydak, Jayanti and Sankosh. The rivers often overflow their banks depositing layers of fertile soil on the banks on either side.

Forests: The district Alipurduar is blessed with rich reserves of forest resources. The presence of vast hilly tracts covered with dense forests with sparkling streams flowing through them has attracted the attention of all over the world. The forests of Alipurduar district cover 106715 hectares of land, which is 38.3% of the total geographical areas of the district. It, is the home of a fascinating variety of flora and fauna. The forested hilly ranges have given birth to two major Wild Life Reserves viz. Jaldapara Wild Life sanctuary and Buxa Tiger Reserve.

Flora: There are 352 species of trees, 108 species of climbers, 6 species of canes, 133 species of shrubs, 144 species of bamboos and 25 varieties of rare plants. The vegetation is mostly deciduous semievergreen and dominated by Sal trees along with Teak. Other commonly seen tree species are Khair, Madar, Nim, Pakur, Palas, Pipal (Long Pepper), Panisaj, Simul, Siris, Sissu etc.

Fauna: The forests of this district is the abode of a spectacular range of faunal variety with mammal 69 species, reptiles 41 species, birds 249 species, amphibians 45 species, fishes 33 species and entomic fauna 353 species. The Jaldapara Wild Life Sanctuary is the oldest sanctuary which is a part of the Buxa Forest Division and famous for conservation of Indian one-horned Rhinoceros. The sanctuary is also the home of elephant, tiger, leopard, sambar, hog deer, barking deer, spotted deer, swamp deer, pig, sloth bear etc.

Demography: The district has a population of 1426018 (persons) including 732395 males and 693623 females. Sex ratio of Alipurduar District is about 948/1000. Population density of the district is about 539/sq.km. The major religions in the district are Hindu and Buddhist of the total population (Census 2011).

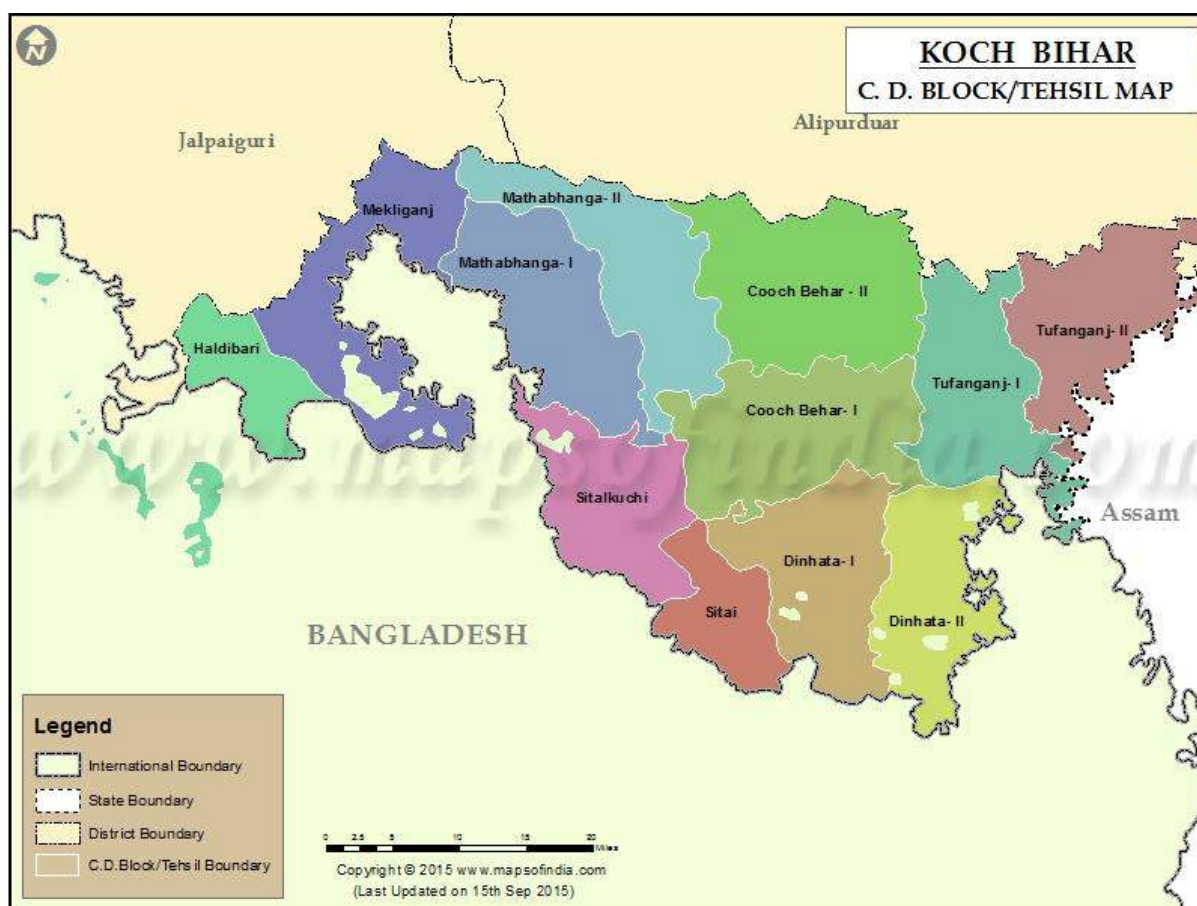
Coochbehar District

Geographic location and boundary: Even after independence, before 28th August 1949, Coochbehar was a Princely State ruled by the king of Cooch dynasty. By an agreement dated 28th August, 1949 the king of Coochbehar ceded full and extensive authority, jurisdiction and power of the state to the Dominion Government of India. The Coochbehar District lies in the North Eastern part of the State of West Bengal. Geographically, Coochbehar district is surrounded by district Jalpaiguri to the North and West, State of Assam to the East and International Boundary with Bangladesh towards South, South-East and South-West. With 3387 sq. km. total geographic area, the district is spread over from 26°32'20" N to 25°57'40" N

and 89°54'35" E to 88°47' 40" E. Also, there are some natural borders created by rivers Jaldhaka and Kaljani to the North, Gadadhar and Sankosh to the East and Dharla to the South.

Administrative setup: The Coochbehar district comprises 12 (twelve) C.D. Blocks viz. Cooch Behar-I, Cooch Behar-II, Dinhata-I, Dinhata-II, Haldibari, Mathabhanga-I, Mathabhanga-II, Mekliganj, Sitai, Sitalkuchi, Tufanganj-I and Tufanganj-II. There are 6 (six) Municipalities in the district namely Haldibari, Mekliganj, Mathabhanga, Coochbehar, Tufanganj and Dinhata.

Climate: A highly humid atmosphere and abundant rains characterize the sub-tropical climate of this district. The temperature in the Coochbehar district varies from 8° C in January to 37° C in August. During the summer, the maximum temperature usually touches 36° C to 37° C but the month of occurrence varies from March to August. The lowest temperature is generally reached in January or February touching 5° C to 7° C. The South-West monsoon causes heavy to very heavy rainfall in the district which often crosses the mark of 2500 mm per annum. The highest rainfall usually occurs in the months of June to August, ranging from around 600 mm to more than 800 mm in a single month. The atmosphere in Coochbehar district is highly humid throughout the year except February to May when relative humidity is as less as 50 to 70%. But in July, the relative humidity of the district reaches almost the saturation point (96%).



Soil and topography: Geographically this district lies in the foothills of the Himalayas and mainly constituted of plain land with marshy riverine areas known as 'Terai' and 'Dooars'. The entire district forms a part of the great alluvial plain of the Ganges-Brahmaputra system. The

topography in the district gradually slopes southwards. The northern part of district, which in general has a higher elevation, forms the transitional zone between the northern terai zone of the Himalayas and the southern alluvial soil.

Rivers and drainage system: District Coochbehar has a large network of rivers and rivulets running from North-West to South and South-East direction, depending upon the general slope of the land. All the rivers have emerged in Himalayas and after crossing the district, enter the State of Assam or neighboring country Bangladesh. During monsoons, the velocity of the river streams almost gets doubled and Teesta, Jaldhaka (Mansai), Torsa, Kaljani, Raidak and Gadadhar/ Sankosh and their tributaries overflow - causing flood and destruction of lives and creatures and hindering agricultural produce.

Forests: The existence of forest is very limited in district Coochbehar and except the areas near Rasikbil and Patlakhawa. The district has only about 7330 ha of forests, which covers only 1.28 percent of the geographical area of the district. Most of these forests are concentrated in the northern half of the district.

Flora: Fertile alluvial soil, vicinity to the Himalayan Mountains and ample rainfall has nurtured a huge variety of foliage in the district. Bamboo bushes are very common to the district, clubbed with variety of Palms-Coconut, Khejur (Date-Palms), Supuri (Betel-nut Palms) etc., Plantains and different variety of Banana; Timber-trees (Sal (Shorea Robusa)), Shishu (Indian Rosewood), Sagun (Teak wood), Babla, Khayer, Mahogany etc., Rain Tree (Krishna Chura, Radha Chura etc.).

Fauna: In the restricted areas of forests, multiple wild species can be found which includes Cheetal, Barking Deer, Sambhar, Hog Deer, Indian Bison (Gaur), Civet Cat, Jungle Cat, Leopard Cat, Jackal, Mongoose, Wild Pig, Hog Badger, Fox, Wild Dog, Pangolin, Hispid Hare, Porcupines etc. Turtles and small Tortoises are found in the riverine areas and water bodies.

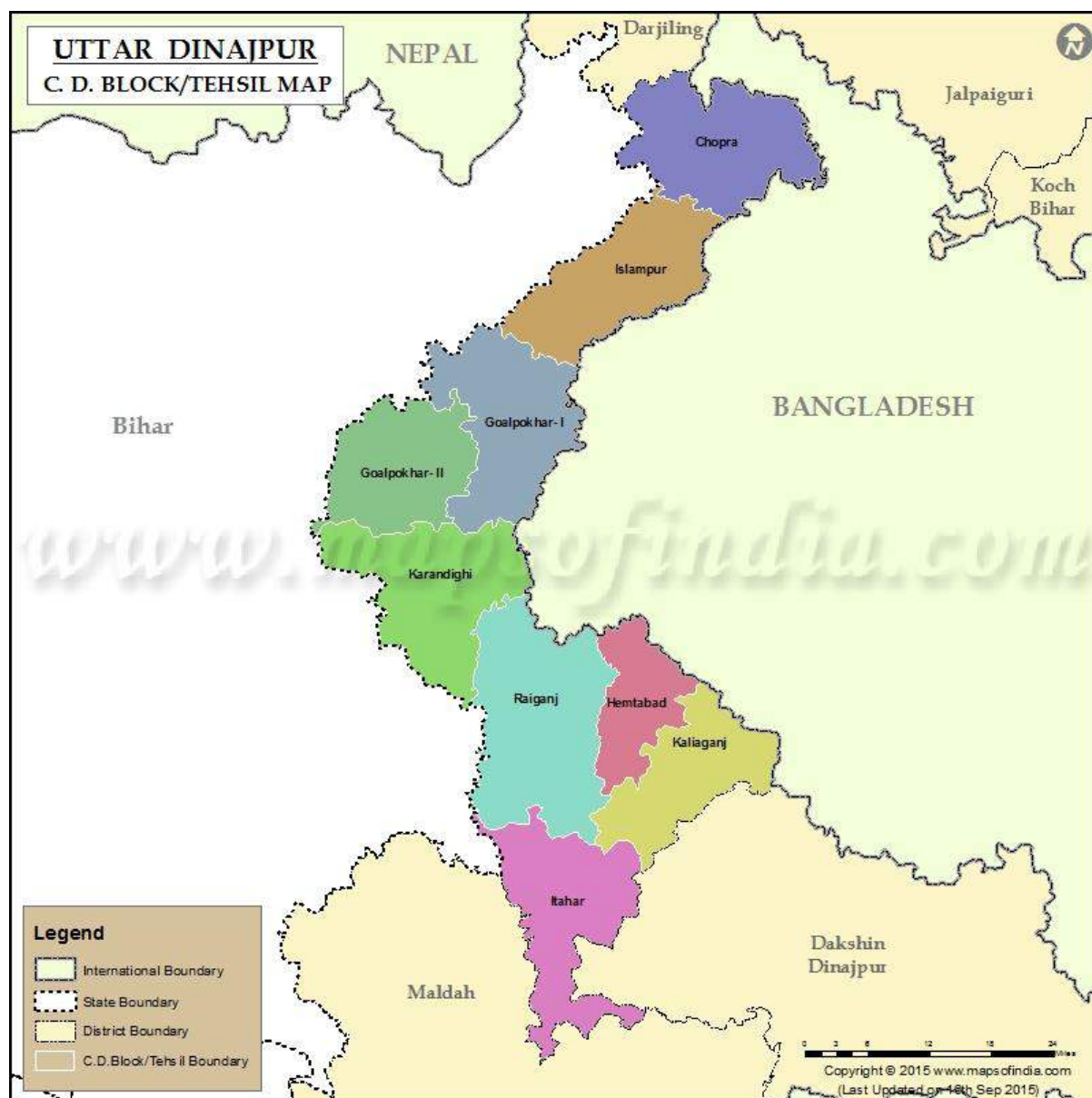
Demography: According to the 2011 census, Coochbehar district has a population of 28,19,086 (persons) including 14,51,542 males and 13,67,544. The majority of the population belongs to Hindu Community with a population share of 74.1 per cent followed by Muslims (25.5 per cent).

Uttar Dinajpur District

Geographic location and boundary: Uttar Dinajpur district was formed on 1st April, 1992 by bifurcation of the erstwhile West Dinajpur district. The district with a geographical area of 3140 sq. km. is bounded by Darjeeling district in the North, Purnea district of Bihar State in the West, Malda and Dakshin Dinajpur district in the South and Bangladesh in the east. Geographically the district located between 26°35'15" N and 25°10'25" N latitude and 89°0'30" E and 87°48'37" longitude.

Administrative setup: The district has 2 Sub Divisions, 9 blocks, 9 police stations, 9 panchayat samities, 99 gram panchayats, 1422 inhabited villages, 1504 mouzas and 4 municipalities.

Climate: The district experiences maximum temperature of 35° C in summer and minimum temperature of 7° C in winter. Rainfall patterns vary quite widely within Uttar Dinajpur, with sharp divergence in annual precipitation between the five southern blocks of Karandighi, Raiganj, Hemtabad, Kaliaganj and Itahar, and the four terai blocks of Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar-1 and Goalpokhar-2. Thus, while the southernmost Itahar receives around 1400-1500mm of rain annually, northeastern Chopra receives much higher precipitation ranging between 2400-2700 mm p.a.



Soil and topography: The soil of the district may be classified as old alluvium, alluvium and new alluvium. The texture of old alluvium varies from stiff clay to clay loam. The soil is deep and in reaction neutral to slightly acidic. The district is flat in general with a very gentle slope from North to South.

Rivers and drainage system: Mahananda, Kulik, Tangan, Nagar and Sui are the main rivers.

Forests: Its total forest area occupies 580.54 ha. Only 0.18% of the total geographical area of the district covers. The forest type is mainly Northern tropical Moist Mixed Deciduous Forests. The distribution of forests is very erratic and mostly spread in small pockets. Raiganj Bird Sanctuary with an area of 35 acre is situated along the National Highway and by the side of the Kulik river.

Flora: In the forests Sal, Segun, Hijal, Sishu and Palash trees are available. The common trees found in the region are the Mango, Jackfruit, Jam, Guava, Banana, Simul and Palash along with wild ones like Banyan, Peepal, Neem, Krishnachuda and Babla trees.

Fauna: The forest, water bodies and the river attract the migratory birds like Open Bill Stork, Night heron, cormorant, little cormorant & Egrets from South Asian countries and coastal regions. These migratory birds arrive from end of May to 1st week of July and depart from mid-December to end of January. Local birds like dove, Bulbul, sparrow, king fisher, woodpeckers, owl, duck & cuckoo, can also be seen in large numbers.

Demography: According to the 2011 census, the district has a population of 29,65,495 (persons) with a sex ratio of 939/1000 (female/male). The district also has large rural population of 26,44,906 with 26.9% SC and 5% ST community.

Dakshin Dinajpur District

Geographic location and boundary: Dakshin Dinajpur is the District in North Bengal in the Indian State of West Bengal, India. It was created on 1 April 1992 by the division of the erstwhile West Dinajpur District. Geographically this district lies between latitudes 24°20'N and 25°35'N and longitudes 88°20'E and 89°30'E. With 2219.78 Sq. Km total geographic area, it is bounded by the river Karatoya (international border with Bangladesh) to the east, the Mahanda to the west, and the northern bank of the river Ganges to the South. **Administrative setup:** The district comprises two subdivisions: Balurghat and Gangarampur at Buniadpur. Balurghat subdivision consists of Balurghat municipality and four community development blocks: Hili, Balurghat, Kumarganj and Tapan. Gangarampur subdivision consists of Gangarampur, Buniadpur municipalities and four community development blocks: Gangarampur, Bansihari, Harirampur and Kushmandi.

Climate: The climate is generally cool and comfortable through the major part of the year. The minimum temperature of the district lies within the range of 11° and 22° Celsius in the month of January and August respectively and maximum temperature lies within 25° and 38° in the month of December and May respectively. Normally pre-monsoon shower starts from late April, continues up to May, and places the district with congenial conditions for sowing of Jute and Aus paddy. Monsoon generally sets in late May and continues up to October. Usually, monsoon withdraws by 10th October with an average annual rainfall is 1022.24 mm. Generally, the humidity ranging from 85 - 99% during the monsoons and 45% - 60% during months of March and April.

Soil and topography: The district is generally flat, slightly sloping southwards. The region appears to be a continuation of 'Barind' tract – a geographical formation of old alluvium. The

surface ground is undulating though there is no existence of hill. The elevation of the district from mean sea level is 15 meters.



Rivers and drainage system: The main three river of the district are Atrayee, Punarbhaba and Tangon. Along these three main rivers; another important river, Ichamoti is also flowing in this district. There is another small river named Jamuna in the Hilli block. Flood in rainy season is a common phenomenon with in this district due to over flowing of water.

Forests: A total area of 1463.79 ha. comes under the forest jurisdiction. The Concentration of forests in the district of Dakshin Dinajpur is mostly along the eastern and southern borders which the district shares with Bangladesh. The nearest wildlife sanctuary is Raiganj Wildlife sanctuary and the distance from this district is 17.07 km.

Flora: Mango, jackfruits, custard apple, Khejur, Tal, peach and coconut are available in numbers. The presence of jungle trees like Babool, wild palm, Pepul, Banyan, Neem, tamarisk, Sishu, bamboo, Simul are noteworthy. Many species of grasses and reeds such as Nagarmutha, Nal, Khaskhas and sola are also found. Plantation of trees like Teak, Sal, Eucalyptus, Sishu, Garam, Arjun etc. are very common along the roads, railway lines, rivers, and canal banks in the district.

Fauna: A huge amount of common wild lives like moles, squirrels, fox, jackals, tortoise, wild cat, and so many other mammals are found in the forest. This area is rich in a variety of birds including owls, ducks, cranes, cuckoos, bulbuls, mynas, pigeons, parakeets, doves, owls, and others. Recently, some species of migratory birds have been seen near the low-land or areas marshy areas during the winter season. There are also found different types of snakes in the jungle.

Demography: According to the 2011 population, it is the third least populated District of West Bengal. The district has a population of 16,76, 276 (persons) including 8,57,199 males and 8,19,077 females. The district has a sex ratio of 92 females for every 100 males. The major religions in the district are Hindu (74.01%) and Muslim (24.02%) of the total population respectively.

2. Methodology

Information related to sacred groves, in India and West Bengal as well, were collected through published literatures in reputed journals, websites, reports etc. which generated a preliminary database about the locations and vegetational composition of those sacred groves. Factors like strong belief system among aboriginal people, forest type, annual rainfall, different soil types, topography etc. made the districts very interesting regarding the distribution of sacred groves, vegetation pattern and different types of management practices. On the basis of this preliminary data possible locations of sacred groves in each of the five districts (Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur) were identified.

Each of the five districts were surveyed vigorously during February to March of 2022. Initially, map(s) of the study area(s) were collected and accordingly each of the administrative blocks of Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur Districts were visited for the study. During the field trip eight community development blocks of Jalpaiguri District, six community development blocks of Alipurduar District, twelve community development blocks of Coochbehar District, nine community development blocks of Uttar Dinajpur District and nine community development blocks of Dakshin Dinajpur District were traversed along with local resource persons (either from forest department or local knowledgeable person) to locate the sacred groves of the concerned districts. Sacred groves were also identified based on the information available from local people especially vaidyas, prirs, hakims, community elders and sometimes randomly on the way through different areas of the districts.

The geographical location (Longitude, Latitude and Altitude) of each sacred grove were demarcated using GPS. Vegetational composition of each sacred groves were studied thoroughly and biodiversity components especially plant components were documented with photographs. As there are restrictions for plant material collection from most of the sacred groves, only good quality photographs were taken for identification of plant components. Plants were identified following standard literature (Hooker 1872-1897, Prain 1903 etc.). Nearby villages were visited and information regarding ecological history and existing management practices prevailing on the grove were collected from the villagers by participatory observation and group meetings. Information on major animals along with their habitats were identified and documented from recall data collected from interaction with local people. Factors causing threats to the existence of sacred groves were also identified during the field survey.



3. Results

3.1. List of sacred groves identified during the study.

Sl. No.	Sacred grove	Sl. No.	Sacred grove
Jalpaiguri District			
1	Gram Thakur Maharaja Than	5	Mahakal Dham, Boro Dighit
2	Kodur Mela Than	6	Sansari Gajadambha
3	Devi Chowdhururani Temple Grove	7	Mahakal Dham, Sologeria
4	Ma Bon Durga/Thanthania Durga	8	Mahakal Dham, Uttar Kalamati
Alipurduar District			
1	Pokhri Pahar Sacred Grove	5	Baba Mahakal Dham, Dakshin Mahakalguri
2	Shivalaya/Bholebaba Than	6	Budhhist Lama Sacred Grove
3	Choto Mahakal Dham	7	Mahakal Dham, Chilapata Forest
4	Mahakal Dham/Shiva Dham, Daragaon	8	Ma Kali Than
Coochbehar District			
1	Masan Baba Than, Sonari	5	Gram Thakur Than, Nakkati
2	Baneswar Shiv Dham	6	Hukuduar Mangalchandi Than
3	Shiv Dham, Coochbehar Municipality	7	Garhkata Mashan Baba Than
4	Mashan Baba Than, Chhat Guriahati		
Uttar Dinajpur District			
1	Rana Kali Than	9	Pir Babar Majar, Bhelagachi
2	Kali Mata Than	10	Gram Thakur Than, Atghara
3	Kali Than	11	Baroari Kali Than
4	Gram Thakur Than, Chatiyani	12	Karaichandi Than
5	Shiv Bari	13	Pir Babar Majar, Kashiya
6	Durga Than	14	Sanyasi Thakur Than
7	Gram Thakur and Pirtala	15	Sasan Kali Than
8	Hat Kali Than		
Dakshin Dinajpur District			
1	Lakshmi Than, Mahishbathan	9	Bura Pir Tala
2	Surkali Than, Ramkrishnapur	10	Mashna Kali Mata Than
3	Eidgah	11	Sur Kali Than, Taksail
4	Pirer Than, Godul	12	Mashna Kali Than, Sewai
5	Sanyasi Thakur Than	13	Akhra Kali Than
6	Bura Mashna Kali Than	14	Pir Darga
7	Lakshmi Than (Bamboo grove)	15	Buri Kali Than
8	Jora Bridge Pir Babar Majar	16	Gram Thakur Than, Maniko

3.2. Detailed account on sacred groves of Jalpaiguri District

A. Gram Thakur Maharaja Than

Administrative location:

Village – Sarkar Para

G.P. – Majhiali

Block – Rajganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°32.204'

Longitude – E 088°29.647 '

Altitude – 297 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Govt. vest land.

History: More than 200–300 years. The area was previously covered with dense forest vegetation, but now most of the vegetation has been destroyed by means of natural calamity especially storm.

The Deity: Maharaj.

Taboo (s): It is a belief that anyone who use the timber for making furniture especially beds for domestic purpose will face disastrous consequences. So, tree felling is prohibited except for ritual purposes. Entering the temple premise with bare foot is an inherent culture. It is also believed that the sacred water of the pond cure complicated diseases. Use of pond water in plantation or other agriculture field (except the grove) is prohibited on the basis of the taboo that it will result in the death of the plants.

Customs: Annual worshipping ritual is organized in the Bengali month of Ashar (June-July). The Deity is being worshipped on a daily basis by the villagers. At the village fair a massive gathering is observed during the time of Saraswati Puja every year.

Management: The local committee manage the grove under the guidance of Gram Pradhan – Haresh Pal (Head of the village). Plantation of *Eucalyptus sp.* has been carried out by the Block Development Office. To keep the sacredness of the pond, use of chemical detergent or soap while bathing or washing of cloths is restricted with utmost care keeping the water clean enough for human consumption.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	Natural
2	Khayer	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	
3	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	
4	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
5	Subabul/potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
6	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbek</i>	
7	Chatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
8	Moyna Kanta	<i>Randia longispina</i>	
9	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
10	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
11	Gokul	<i>Ailanthus integrifolia</i>	
12	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	
13	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandia</i>	
14	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
15	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	
16	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	
Climbers			
18	Alkusi	<i>Mukuna pruriens</i>	Natural
19	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
20	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	Natural
21	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
22	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
23	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
24	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
25	Kanta Begun	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	
26	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	
27	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): In the southern boundary there is encroachment of land by local tea garden. It is very noteworthy that more than 80-100 individuals of old Khayer tree (*Acacia catechu*) are still there, reflecting the age of the grove.

B. Kodur Mela Than

Administrative location:

Village – Fakir Para

G.P. – Kukurjan

Block – Rajganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°30.384'

Longitude – E 088°33.896'

Altitude – 288 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.8 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Private land owned by Rajeswar Roy.

History: More than 100 years. Previously there were arboreal trees which has been destroyed for building of temple.

The Deity: Lakshmi and Radha-Krishna.

Taboo (s): Absence of any taboo or historical incidents.

Customs: Annual worshipping ritual is being organized on the day of Kojagori Lakshmi puja. A local village fair is also being organized on the day after. In winter season every year Osto-prohor Harinam Sankirtan (play of Lord Krishna) is performed. The deity Kali is being worshipped in Diwali.

Management: Local managing committee look after the grove under the guidance of Gram Pradhan (Head of the village).

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	Natural
2	Chatim	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
3	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
4	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	

5	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	
6	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
7	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
8	Pati lebu	<i>Citrus limetta</i>	Planted
9	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
10	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
11	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
12	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
13	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
Climbers			
14	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
15	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	Natural
16	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
17	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
20	Pindi	<i>Rungia pectinata</i>	
21	Dheki Sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The river Chauli flows along the North-Western boundary of the grove.

C. Devi Chowdhururani Temple Grove

Administrative location:

Village – Hatkhola

G.P. – Belakoba

Block – Rajganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°37.319'

Longitude – E 088°35.050'

Altitude – 325 ft.



Land schedule: Area – 2.27 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Private land owned by the temple committee.

History: More than 150 years. It is in local story that famous Devi Chowdhurani established the place and started the worshipping of Devi Kali.

The Deity: Devi Kali.

Taboo (s): Absence of any taboo.



Customs: The deity Kali is being worshipped daily and annual Kali puja is being organized in the Diwali. Devi Durga is also worshipped in the grove premise in the month of October with gathering of local villagers in village fair.

Management: Dedicated managing committee look after the temple grove under the guidance of Gram Pradhan (Head of the village). The grove floor is regularly cleaned. Plantation of fruit plants and garden plants was observed there along with barbed fencing with perforations.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Natural
2	Arjun	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	
3	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	

4	Subabul	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	Planted
5	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
6	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	
7	Debdaru	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	
8	Narkel	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	
9	Kath Chanpa	<i>Plumeria alba</i>	
10	Batabi lebu	<i>Citrus maxima</i>	
11	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
12	Supari	<i>Areca catechu</i>	
13	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
14	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
15	Peara	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	
16	Amloki	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	
17	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	
18	Lichu	<i>Litchi chinensis</i>	
19	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	
20	Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	
21	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
22	Nona ata	<i>Annona reticulata</i>	
Struggler			
23	Kagoj ful	<i>Bougainvillea spectabilis</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
24	Kanta Begun	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	Natural
25	Sheyal kanta	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	
26	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
27	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
28	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
29	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is under high level of templization and construction. The ground vegetation cannot be developed due to regular cleaning of grove floor. There is a large open ground inside the grove premise where village fair is organized. There are tea gardens around the grove.

D. Ma Bon Durga/Thanthania Durga

Administrative location:

Village – Farabari

G.P. – Binaguri

Block – Rajganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°42.672'

Longitude – E 088°30.827'

Altitude – 415 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – 3-4 bigha approximate.

Status – Amidst forest.

Forest jurisdiction:

Beat – Farabari

Range – Debgram

Division – Baikunthapur



History: Approximately 150 years. It is in local story that famous Devi Chowdhurani started worshipping of Devi Durga.

The Deity: Devi Durga.

Taboo (s): Drinking alcohol inside the grove premise, felling of trees and poaching of animals is strictly prohibited. There is a ritual of set free a pair of pigeon or male goat rather than sacrificing their life for worshipping.



Customs: In the month of January the annual worshipping of the deity Durga is organized along with large gathering of local people in a local fair. Personal worshipping by devotee family often seen for the quest of blessings of the Devi Durga.

Management: Dedicated managing committee look after the grove under the guidance of forest department as this place falls under the jurisdiction and protection of the same.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Natural
2	Bahera	<i>Treminalia bellirica</i>	
3	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
4	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
5	Kumbhi	<i>Careya arborea</i>	
6	Lali	<i>Amoora wallichii</i>	
7	Tatari	<i>Dillenia pentagyna</i>	
8	Bandor Khaja	<i>Casearia glomerata</i>	
9	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
Epiphyte			
10		<i>Bulbophyllum sp.</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
11	Dhki sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	Natural
12	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
13	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Often elephants use this grove premise as their resting place.

E. Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Boro Dighit

G.P. – Batabari II

Block – Metili

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°46.159'

Longitude – E 088°47.606'

Altitude – 387 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – 5 bigha approximate.

Status – Amidst forest.

Forest jurisdiction:

Beat – Boro Dighit

Range – Lataguri

Division – Jalpaiguri



History: Approximately 150-200 years old. The grove premise is demarcated by a narrow water channel all around.

The Deity: Mahakal (Lord Shiva).

Taboo (s): Entering the grove with footwear is a taboo. Cleaning of grove floor done only withing a small place where the deity resides, rest part of the grove floor left as it is. Tree felling is strictly prohibited, but sometimes naturally fallen trees are taken by the villagers for domestic use. Passing by people do not cross the place without offering their gratitude towards the deity. It is also the customary ritual to pray and worship the deity after buying new vehicle for safety and prosperity. Marriage ceremonies of tribal people is done here, new couples must visit the place and worship the deity for healthy marriage life.



Customs: Daily worshipping done by locals of nearby village Boro Dighit. As there are no dedicated priest, local elderly persons perform the worshipping rituals. Annual worshipping is celebrated on Dol Yatra and Shiv Ratri (March). This is a customary ritual to offer food and fruits in banana leaf plates at a particular place beside the narrow water channel. The food and fruits are regularly been consumed by elephants, bisons and dears.

Management: There is no dedicated managing committee to look after the grove. The grove is managed by the locals under the observation of forest department.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Natural
2	Toon	<i>Toona ciliate</i>	
3	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
4	Rudraksha	<i>Elaeocarpus angustifolius</i>	
5	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
6	Pakasaj	<i>Terminalia elliptica</i>	
7	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
8	Kumbhi	<i>Careya arborea</i>	
9	Kawla	<i>Machilus gamblei</i>	
10	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	
11	Kurchi/Khirra	<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>	
12	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
13	Kattus	<i>Castanopsis hystrix</i>	
14	Lotka	<i>Baccaurea ramiflora</i>	
15	Gante/Chalmugra	<i>Gynocardia odorata</i>	
16	Jhakri kath	<i>Lasiococca symphyllifolia</i>	
17	Jongli Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum bijolighata</i>	
18	Gobdo	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>	
19	Bhale Kawla	<i>Machilus glaucescens</i>	
20	Jam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	
21	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
22	Komla Lebu	<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	
Epiphyte			
23	Orchid	<i>Bulbophyllum sp.</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
24	Dhki sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	Natural
25	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
26	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
27	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Planted
28	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-chinensis</i>	
29	Jongli Anaras	<i>Ananas comosus</i>	Natural
30	Bon Til		
31		<i>Selaginella sp.</i>	
32	Purundi	<i>Alpinia nigra</i>	
33	Bon Kontokarika	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	
Climber			
34	Atang lota	<i>Combretum decandrum</i>	Natural
35	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
36	Paan	<i>Piper betel</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Often elephants use this grove premise as their resting place.

F. Sansari Gajadambha

Administrative location:

Village – Panijhora

G.P. – Nagrakata

Block – Nagrakata

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°52.596'

Longitude – E 088°50.351'

Altitude – 630 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – Cannot be demarcated.

Status – Amidst forest.

Forest jurisdiction:

Beat – Panijhora

Range – Chalsa

Division – Jalpaiguri



History: More than 200 years. Nepali community worship there.

The Deity: Sansari Gajadambha (Lord Shiva in Nepali community).

Taboo (s): Absent.

Customs: Local people gathered at this grove once in a year in the Month of April (Chaitra in Bengali calendar) for worshipping to obtain the blessing of the deity for good yield of crops, peace and prosperity.



Management: A dedicated managing committee is absent. Local people of Panijhora village look after the grove under the guidance of community elders.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Natural
2	Bahera	<i>Treminalia bellirica</i>	
3	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	

4	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
5	Kumbhi	<i>Careya arborea</i>	
6	Pakasaj	<i>Terminalia elliptica</i>	
7	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
8	Chhatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
9	Dudhia	<i>Wrightia tomentosa</i>	
10	Ambake	<i>Syzygium formosum</i>	
Climber			
11	Dantun	<i>Combretum decandrum</i>	Natural
12	Dudhilata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
13	Putki/Kaliangri	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	Natural
14	Dhki sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
15	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
16	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
17	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	

G. Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Sologheria

G.P. – Rajadanga

Block – Kranti

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°47.064'

Longitude – E 088°37.970'

Altitude – 449 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – Cannot be demarcated, approximately 1 bigha.

Status – Amidst forest.

Forest jurisdiction:

Beat – Targhera

Range – Targhera

Division – Baikunthapur



History: More than 100 years.

The Deity: Mahakal (Lord Shiva).

Taboo (s): Absent.

Customs: Local people of forest fringe villages worship the Lord Shiva at the grove under the guidance of community elders.

Management: A dedicated managing committee is absent. It is already under protection of forest department.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Natural
2	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
3	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
4	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
5	Kumbhi	<i>Careya arborea</i>	

6	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	
7	Champa	<i>Michelia champaca</i>	
8	Kosoi	<i>Bridelia retusa</i>	
9	Sidha	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	
10	Bandor Khaja	<i>Casearia glomerata</i>	
11	Parari	<i>Stereospermum tetragonum</i>	
12	Kali Kath	<i>Cephalanthus tetraandra</i>	
13	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
14	Kori Ful	<i>Morinda angustifolia</i>	
15	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
16	Chinimichri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	Natural
17	Dhki sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Ram Basak	<i>Phlogacanthus thyrsoformis</i>	
20	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
21	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
22	Kontokarika	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	
23	Pindi	<i>Rungia pectinata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): It is believed that a boat made of gold was buried once at this grove by Devi Chowdhurani.

H. Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Uttar Kalamati

G.P. – Ramsai

Block – Moinaguri

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°41.707'

Longitude – E 088°47.865'

Altitude – 316 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – Cannot be demarcated, approximately 1 bigha.

Status – Amidst forest.

Forest jurisdiction:

Beat – Kalamati

Range – Ramsai

Division – Jalpaiguri

History: Approximately 150 years. The grove is relocated from its ancient location 20-25 years ago.

The Deity: Mahakal (Lord Shiva).

Taboo (s): Absent.

Customs: Local people of forest fringe villages worship the Lord Shiva at the grove under the guidance of community elders.

Management: A dedicated managing committee is absent. It is already under protection of forest department.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Lasune Lali	<i>Amoora rohituka</i>	Natural

2	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
3	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
4	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
5	Kumbhi	<i>Careya arborea</i>	
6	Bel	<i>Aegle Marmelos</i>	
7	Jam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	
8	Pakasaj	<i>Terminalia elliptica</i>	
9	Sidha	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	
10	Parari	<i>Stereospermum tetragonum</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
11	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
12	Dhki sak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
13	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
14	Antamul	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	
15	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
16	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is shifted from its original place. Ground vegetation is less due to grazing.

3.3. Detailed account on sacred groves of Alipurduar District

A. Pokhri Pahar Sacred Grove

Administrative location:

Village – Jayanti

G.P. – Rajabhatkhawa

Block – Kalchini

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°43.324’

Longitude – E 089°35.981’

Altitude – 1117 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.7 Ha.

Status – Forest land.

History: More than 1000 years.

The Deity: Devi Kalratri (Magur Fish & Tortoise in the pond as well as painted idol) and Lord Shiva.

Taboo (s): Killing of sacred cat fishes is strictly prohibited. There is a local story that some local people killed and ate “Catfish & Tortoise” 10 years back and next day they started vomiting blood and ultimately died. Some tourists killed one Catfish 2 years back and that night they were senseless and ultimately died of heart-attack.

Customs: Occasionally worshipped by the Buddhist from nearby Bhutan and also local tribal and non-tribal Hindu and Nepalese communities of Kalchini area.

Management: Local tribal and non-tribal Hindu people--both Nepalese & non-Nepalese people of Kalchini & Jayanti area, Rajbanshi people of Koch Bihar and Buddhist people from Bhutan are actively associated with management of the Grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1		<i>Albizia procera</i>	Natural
2	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	

3	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>		
4	Palash	<i>Butea monosperma</i>		
5	Gobdo	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>		
6	Kattus	<i>Castanopsis hystrix</i>		
7	Bahubara	<i>Cordia myxa</i>		
8	Barun	<i>Crateva religiosa</i>		
9	Tatari	<i>Dillenia pentagyna</i>		
10		<i>Duabanga grandiflora</i>		
11		<i>Dysoxylum binectariferum</i>		
12	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>		
13	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>		
14	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>		
15		<i>Magnolia champaca</i>		
16	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>		
17	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>		
18		<i>Pandanus furcatus</i>		
19	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>		
20	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>		
21	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>		
22	Toon	<i>Toona ciliata</i>		
Climbers				
23		<i>Aristolochia indica</i>		Natural
24		<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i>		
25		<i>Derris scandens</i>		
26	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>		
27	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>		
28	Bon Morich/Pipul	<i>Piper longum</i>		
29	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>		
30	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>		
31		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>		
32	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>		
33		<i>Tragia involucrata</i>		
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)				
34		<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Natural	
35	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>		
36	Ganja	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>		
37	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>		
38	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>		
39	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>		
40	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>		
41	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>		
42	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>		
43	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>		
44	Fern	<i>Drymaria cordata</i>		
45	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>		
46	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>		
47	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>		

48	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
49	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
50	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
51		<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea</i>	
Epiphyte			
52	Orchid	<i>Bulbophyllum apodum</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): The vegetation of this grove is very well structured and protected from outside hindrance. It is a conservation site of cat fish and tortoise.

B. Shivalaya/Bholebaba Than

Administrative location:

Village – Godandabi

G.P. – Sattali

Block – Kalchini

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°41.941’

Longitude – E 089°24.139’

Altitude – 400 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.1 Ha approximately.

Status – Forest land.

History: Approximately than 80 years.

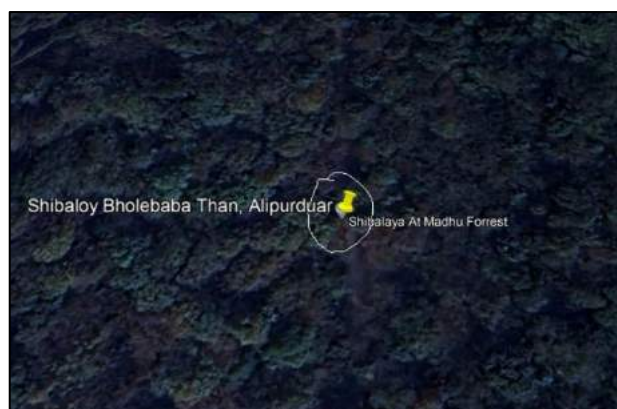
The Deity: Lord Shiva.

Taboo (s): There is no taboo maintained inside the grove.

Customs: Occasionally performed by the local priest as well as local tribal and non-tribal Hindu people of Godanbari area under Hamiltonganj, but a big puja is worshipped on “Shiva Ratri Night” every year.

Management: The Burman family of Hamiltonganj is managing the grove for quite a few years.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Chatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
3	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandra</i>	
4	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	
5	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
6	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
7	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
8	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	

9	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
10	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
11	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
12	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
13	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climbers			
14		<i>Derris scandens</i>	Natural
15	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
16	Bon Morich/Pipul	<i>Piper longum</i>	
17	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Natural
19	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
20	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
21	Fern	<i>Drymaria cordata</i>	
22	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
23	Basak	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	
24	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
25	Fern	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	
26	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
27	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
28	Fern	<i>Pteris biaurita</i>	
29	Swet Berala	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Templization in recent time taken place.

C. Choto Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Jayanti

G.P. – Rajabhatkhawa

Block – Kalchini

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°44.081’

Longitude – E 089°37.280’

Altitude – 1017 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 1 Acre approximately.

Status – Forest land.

History: More than 500 years.

The Deity: Lord Shiva

Taboo (s): Entering the grove cave with bare foot and without taking bath is a taboo. Felling of trees and poaching of animals are strictly prohibited.

Customs: Daily performed by the Hindu Priest as well as by the tribal and non-tribal Hindu and Nepalese communities throughout Kalchini Block area, annual festival is organized on “Shiva ratri Night” every year followed by a big Mela (Fair) for next seven days.

Management: Local tribal and non-tribal Hindu people--both Nepalese & non-Nepalese people of Kalchini & Jayanti area and ‘Mahakal Seva Samity of Siliguri’ are actively associated with the Grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1		<i>Albizia procera</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
3		<i>Bischofia javanica</i>	
4	Gobdo	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>	
5	Fishtail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>	
6	Kattus	<i>Castanopsis hystrix</i>	

7	Tatari	<i>Dillenia pentagyna</i>	
8		<i>Dysoxylum binectariferum</i>	
9	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	
10	Lakhha pakur	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>	
11	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
12	Joggo dumur	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	
13	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
14	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
15	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
16	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
17		<i>Pandanus furcatus</i>	
18	Chilauney	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	
19		<i>Sterculia villosa</i>	
20	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
21	Toon/Ghora neem	<i>Toona ciliata</i>	
22	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
23	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climbers			
24		<i>Cayratia pedata</i>	Natural
25	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
26	Bon Morich/Pipul	<i>Piper longum</i>	
27	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
28		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
29	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
30		<i>Tragia involucrata</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
31		<i>Abroma augusta</i>	Natural
32	Fern	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	
33	Fern	<i>Angiopteris wallichiana</i>	
34	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	
35	Ganja	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	
36	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
37	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
38	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
39	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
40		<i>Combretum roxburghii</i>	
41	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
42		<i>Desmodium gyroides</i>	
43	Fern	<i>Drymaria cordata</i>	
44	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
45	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
46	Fern	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	
47	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
48	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
49	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
50	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	

51	Ram Basak/Tita-phul	<i>Phlogacanthus thyrsiformis</i>	
52	Fern	<i>Pteris biaurita</i>	
53		<i>Selaginella sp.</i>	
54		<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea</i>	
55		<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i>	
Epiphyte			
56	Orchid	<i>Vanda tessellata</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): A small stream or a narrow jhora flows down from a hillock seen, just behind the Mahakal Dham, also Jayanti River flows just down the grove.

D. Mahakal Dham/Shiva Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Daragaon

G.P. – Rajabhatkhawa

Block – Kalchini

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°45.344'

Longitude – E 089°34.708'

Altitude – 2008 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.1 Ha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land. Patta given to Nimdem Dupka.

History: More than 200 years.

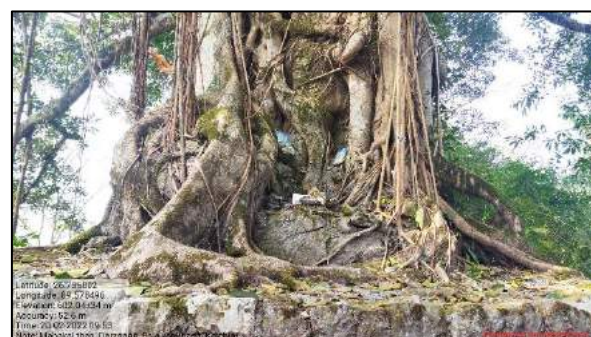
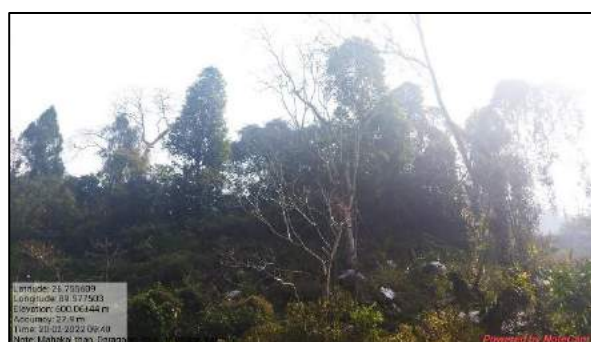
The Deity: Lord Shiva

Taboo (s): There is no taboo associated with the grove.

Customs: Performed every Monday by the local tribal Dukpa Buddhist and Nepalese People of Daragaon area. People gather at this grove for the annual worshipping ceremony on “Shiva Ratri Night” every year.

Management: Local tribal and non-tribal Hindu & Buddhist Dukpa people of Daragaon area are actively associated with the management of the Grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyen	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
3	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandia</i>	
4	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	
5	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
6	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
7	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
8	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	

9		<i>Pandanus furcatus</i>	
10	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
Climbers			
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
12	Ganja	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Natural
13		<i>Cestrum diurnum</i>	
14	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
15	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
16	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
17	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
18	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
19	Rangchita	<i>Euphorbia tithymaloides</i>	
20	Basak	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	
21	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Habitats of butterflies, rare birds including Indian Hornbills, Owls, Giant Squirrel, Indian Fox, Jungle cat and bats.

E. Baba Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Dakshin Mahakalguri

G.P. – Mahakalguri

Block – Alipurduar II

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°30.870′

Longitude – E 089°40.541′

Altitude – 168 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5 Ha.

Status – Under the ownership of temple committee.

History: More than 100 years. The Shiv ling (sacred stone) was established by Raja Nipendranarayan Roy of Coochbehar dynasty.

The Deity: Lord Shiva and Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Entering the temple premise with footwear is a taboo. Poaching of animals and felling of trees are prohibited.

Customs: Annual worshipping festival is organized on last Sunday of Bengali Bhadra mas (August-September). Otherwise, regular worshipping is also performed.

Management: There is a dedicated temple committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Khayer	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	Natural
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Planted
3	Nona ata	<i>Annona reticulata</i>	Natural
4	Supari	<i>Areca catechu</i>	Planted
5	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
6	Kamranga	<i>Averrhoa carambola</i>	
7	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Natural
8	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	

9	Palash	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	
10	Krishnachura	<i>Caesalpinia pulcherrima</i>	Planted
11	Bottle brush	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	
12	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	Natural
13	Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	Planted
14	Batabi Lebu	<i>Citrus maxima</i>	
15	Narkel	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	
16	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	Natural
17	Gulmohor	<i>Delonix regia</i>	
18	Rudraksh	<i>Elaeocarpus angustifolius</i>	
19	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
20	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	
21	Sidha	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	
22	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
23	Lichu	<i>Litchi chinensis</i>	Planted
24	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
25	Khirkul	<i>Manilkara hexandra</i>	Natural
26	Bokul	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	Planted
27	Sojne	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	
28	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	Natural
29	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Planted
30	Sheuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	Natural
31	Radhachura	<i>Peltophorum pterocarpum</i>	Planted
32	Debdaru	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	
33	Peara	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	
34	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	Natural
35	Panisaj	<i>Terminalia microcarpa</i>	
36	Toon/Ghora neem	<i>Toona ciliata</i>	
37	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
38	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	Planted
39	Jhau	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	
40	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Natural
Climbers			
41	Kagoj Ful	<i>Bougainvillea spectabilis</i>	Natural
42	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
43	Ganja	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Planted
44	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	Natural
45	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
46	Cycas	<i>Cycas revoluta</i>	Planted
47	Durba Ghas	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Natural
48	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
49	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
50	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Planted
51	Rangan	<i>Ixora coccinea</i>	
52	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	Natural
53	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	

54	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Planted
55	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	Natural
56	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Planted

Special notes (threats and other): There is a large water body in the grove premise. The grove is highly templized and grove floor is cleaned regularly. As a result, there are very less ground vegetation at the temple premise. In 2006, new temple, concrete made path was constructed.

F. Buddhist Lama Sacred Grove

Administrative location:

Village – Lothabari

G.P. – Hamiltanganj

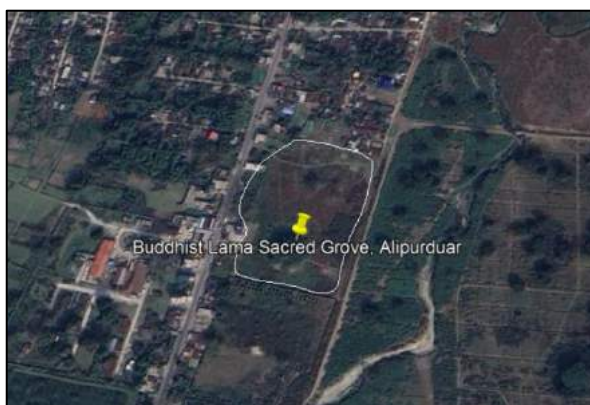
Block – Kalchini

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°41.154′

Longitude – E 089°26.323′

Altitude – 359 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – 0.5 Ha.

Status – Private land of Late Mr. Karma Namgyal Lama.

History: Before the establishment of Sacred tomb in 2008, Local Buddhist community worship ‘Bot Tree’ by wrapping sacred clothes around it and with Buddhist Flags since long back. It is believed that God Buddha often come to rest here at the bottom of this tree and Lama - Sri Karma Namgyal had seen him one night at the bottom of this tree and the very next day Mr. Karma was demised.



The Deity: “Sacred Tomb” of Sri Karma Namgyal Lama.

Taboo (s): No such taboos seemed to be followed.

Customs: The deity is occasionally worshipped by the local Buddhist Nepalese Lama community of Lathabari area. Annual worshipping ceremony is organized on the day of Sri Karma Namgyal Lama’s demise to rejuvenate Sacred Lama’s connection to Buddha (God). Otherwise, anybody may worship on any day if they wish.



Management: By Uttar Lathabari Buddhist Lama Community.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Palash	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	
3	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	

4	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
5	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
6	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
7	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	
8	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climbers			
9		<i>Cayratia pedata</i>	Natural
10	Krishnachura	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
11	Bottle brush	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
12	Chikrasi	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
13	Tejpata	<i>Tragia involucrata</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
14		<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Natural
15	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	
16	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
17	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
20	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
21	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
22	Basak	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	
23	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
24	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
25	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
26	Bon begun	<i>Solanum khasianum</i>	
Epiphyte			
27	Orchid	<i>Vanda roxburghii</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): The plant community of the grove is not well structured and has been altered time to time. As a result, many invasive plant species invaded the grove floor hindering the growth and germination of indigenous herbs and shrubs.

G. Mahakal Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Chilapata

G.P. – Mathura

Block – Alipurduar I

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°34.123′

Longitude – E 089°22.911′

Altitude – 223 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5-6 Kata.

Status – Forest land.

History: Approximately 300 years.

The Deity: Lord Shiva.

Taboo (s): No such taboos seemed to be followed.

Customs: The deity is worshipped occasionally by the local priest as well as local tribal and non-tribal Hindu people of Chilapata area. Annual worshipping festival is organized on “Shiva Ratri” every year.

Management: By Chilapata Forest Department as well as local Hindu people.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandra</i>	
3	Jongli Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum bijolighata</i>	
4	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
5	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
6	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
7		<i>Sterculia villosa</i>	
8	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	

9	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climbers			
10		<i>Cayratia pedata</i>	Natural
11		<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i>	
12	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
13	Bon Morich/Pipul	<i>Piper longum</i>	
14	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
15	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
16		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
17	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Natural
19	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
20	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
21	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
22	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
23	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
24	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
25	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
26	Basak	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	
27	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
28	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
29	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
30	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
31	Pankhusi	<i>Phyllanthus reticulatus</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Resting place for elephants. There is a narrow water stream flows beside the grove.

H. Ma Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Madarihat

G.P. – Madarihat

Block – Madarihat-Birpara

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°41.586′

Longitude – E 089°16.957′

Altitude – 322 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.5 Ha.

Status – Forest land.

History: More than 500 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali has been worshipped since long back in form of several ancient stones.

Taboo (s): Entering the forest only after worshipping the deity by local people is mandatory custom. It is believed that the Goddess Kali may save them whenever they encounter any threat from wild animals.

Customs: The deity is worshipped by the local tribal and non-tribal Hindu community of Madarihat. Annual festival of worshipping is organized on “Diwali” every year.

Management: No dedicated management committee or authority is there. local Hindu communities of Madarihat Town worship the deity. The grove is under protection of Jaldapara National Park.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Palash	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	
3	Gobdo	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>	
4	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandia</i>	
5	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	
6	Kurchi/Khirra	<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>	
7	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
8	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
9	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	

10	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
11	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
12	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climbers			
13		<i>Derris scandens</i>	Natural
14	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
15		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
16	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
17		<i>Tragia involucrata</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18		<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Natural
19	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
20	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
21	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
22	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
23	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
24	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
25	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
26	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The place is located inside the Jaldapara National Park and under the legal protection of West Bengal Forest Department. River Torsha flows just 150 m backyard of the grove. The grove provides habitats of butterflies, rare birds including Indian Hornbills, Rare Eagles and Owls, Gaur (Bison), wild Elephants, wild boar, Barking Deer, Leopard, Leopard cat, Indian Fox, Jungle cat and bats.

3.4. Detailed account on sacred groves of Coochbehar District

A. Masan Baba Than

Administrative location:

Village – Sonari

G.P. – Gopalpur

Block – Pundibari

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°33.042'

Longitude – E 089°28.515'

Altitude – 141 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.2 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Private land owned by Bachhu Sarkar.

History: Approximately 150–200 years. Previously the grove was at another place, since past 15 years it is relocated to present location.

The Deity: Mashan Baba and Jagadhatri.

Taboo (s): Absence of any taboo or historical incidents.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the Deity Jagadhatri has been organized at the month of November and Lord Shiva has been worshipped in the month of March during Shivratri.

Management: Any dedicated management structure like committee or trustee is absent. The Sarkar family of Sonari village organize the annual festival of worshipping the deities on afore said time. Rest of the year the grove is left alone without disturbing the grove vegetation. No management practice like clearing or sweeping grove floor or making any kind of fencing or concrete made structure were performed regularly except at the time of worshipping.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Paras Pipul	<i>Thespesia populnea</i>	Natural
2	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	



3	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>		
4	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>		
5	Chatiyar	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>		
6	Kurkur	<i>Leea indica</i>		
7	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>		
8	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>		
9	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>		
10	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>		
11	Borojam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>		Planted
12	Gurijam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>		
13	Kadam	<i>Neolamarkia cadamba</i>		
14	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>		
15	Fish Tail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>		
Climbers				
16	Atang lata	<i>Combretum decandrum</i>	Natural	
17	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>		
18	Jol Kalmi	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>		
19	Gulancha lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>		
20	Paan	<i>Piper betel</i>		
21	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>		
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)				
22	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	Natural	
23	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>		
24	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>		
25	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>		
26	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>		
27	Tita bagoon	<i>Solanum torvum</i>		
28	Bon okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>		
29	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>		
30	Shetberela	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>		
31	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>		
32	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>		

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is located just beside a busy road. So, the periphery of the grove is very much disturbed which results in establishment of some invasive plant species. On the rear side, there is a large shallow water body which is supportive to the grove vegetation. The grove is under pressure of being abolished due to private ownership.

B. Baneswar Shiv Dham

Administrative location:

Village – Baneswar

G.P. – Baneswar

Block – Cooch Behar II

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°23.919'

Longitude – E 089°29.866'

Altitude – 140 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 1.2 Ha

Status – Non forest, owned by the temple trustee board.

History: This place is of immense mythological importance. It is popularly believed that once lord Shiva agreed to come down to the earth on the basis of request by legendary Raja Banasura. On the way the Raja stopped at Baneswar which was a breach of agreement. Instantly lord Shiva disappeared. Raja Banasura established the Shiva Linga there on the bank of the Bangti River. According to some, the temple was built by Raja Jalpeswar, who built the Jalpesh temple. He is believed to have ruled in the second or third century.

The Deity: Shiva and ardhnanarishwar. Goddess Kali in another shed.

Taboo (s): Entering the temple without taking bath is a taboo. Smoking and drinking are prohibited inside the grove premise. Chewing betel leaves, tobacco, guthka and spitting inside the premise is strictly prohibited. There is particular dress code for men and women inside. Men can enter wearing t-shirt and trouser, dhoti or payjamas with upper cloths. For women, the dress code is saree, churidar, kurti-payjamas. Sacrificing hair of child after certain period of birth for healthy and prosperous life of the child is being practiced since ancient time.

Customs: A week-long fair is held during Shiva Chaturdashi.

Management: This sacred place is governed by Cooch Behar Debutter Sangstha. The temple premise is regularly cleaned. The sacred pond is kept protected from pollution by making barricade throughout its boundary which restrict people to bathe or for any other domestic use.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Planted
2	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
3	Debdaru	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	
4	Bokul	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	
5	Chatiyana	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
6	Chandra Prova	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	
7	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
8	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
9	Pepe	<i>Carica papaya</i>	
10	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
11	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
12	Lakhha pakur	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>	
13	Kadam	<i>Neolamarkia cadamba</i>	
14	Seuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	
15	Narikel	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	
16	Christmas tree	<i>Araucaria columnaris</i>	
17	Panthapadap	<i>Ravenala madagascariensis</i>	
18	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Natural
19	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Shrubs)			
20	Cycas	<i>Cycas revoluta</i>	Natural
21	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
22	Rangan	<i>Ixora coccinea</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a big pond in the premise 'Shiv pukur' which is a habitat of many Black softshell turtle, a critically endangered species of turtle. The turtles are locally known as 'Mohan' and are sacred. Maximum area of grove floor is devoid of any ground vegetation (herbs and shrubs) as the premise is regularly cleaned and swept.

C. Shiv Dham

Administrative location:

Ward No. – 20

Cooch Behar Municipality

Just behind Cooch Behar Rajbari.

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°19.661'

Longitude – E 089°26.218'

Altitude – 147 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – 0.13 Ha

Status – Non forest. Government vest land.

History: Contemporary of Cooch Behar Rajbari.

The Deity: Lord Shiva.

Taboo (s): No such taboos are there.



Customs: Daily worshipping of the deity has been performed by dedicated priest. Annual festival of worshipping occurs on Shivratri (March).

Management: The grove is well protected by concrete made boundary wall. The entrance is locked most of the time which restrict undesired/unauthorized entry. Grove floor is cleaned daily.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1		<i>Ficus virens</i>	Natural
2	Krishna bot	<i>Ficus krishnae</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
6	Kadam	<i>Neolamarkia cadamba</i>	

7	Narikel	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Planted
8	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
9	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
10	Supari	<i>Areca catechu</i>	
11	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
12	Swet Chandan	<i>Santalum album</i>	
13	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
14	Gandharaj	<i>Gardenia jasminoides</i>	
15	Fish Tail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>	
16	Lichu	<i>Litchi chinensis</i>	
17	Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	
18	Peara	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	
19	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus roja-chinensis</i>	
20	Kala	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
21	Batabi Lebu	<i>Citrus maxima</i>	
22	Debdaru	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	
Climbers			
23	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
24	Holud	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Natural
25	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
26	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
27	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
28	Pahari palang	<i>Rumex dentata</i>	
29	Snake plant	<i>Sansevieria Zeylanica</i>	
30	Pankushi	<i>Phyllanthus reticulatus</i>	
31	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
32	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
33	Dhutura	<i>Datura metel</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): A rare plant species *Ficus krishnae* is found inside the grove premise.

D. Mashan Baba Than

Administrative location:

Village – Chhat Guriahati

G.P. – Guriahati II

Block – Cooch Behar I

Located at Torsha River bank side.

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°17.970'

Longitude – E 089°27.188'

Altitude – 137 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2.1 Ha

Status – Non forest land on the bank of Torsha river. Government vest land under Irrigation department.

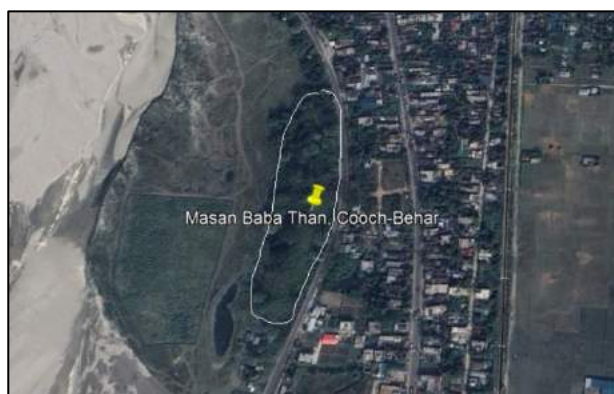
History: 50-60 years.

The Deity: Mashan Baba.

Taboo (s): No such taboos are there. But strong inherent belief system keeps the wilderness of the grove.

Customs: Daily worshipping of the deity done by villagers. Annual feast of worshipping occurs on Gajan (March-April).

Management: There is a dedicated managing committee to look after the Grove. No fencing was there to protect the grove from grazing.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	Natural
2	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	

6	Kadam	<i>Neolamarkia cadamba</i>	Planted
7	Amra	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	
8	Seuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	
9	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
10	Supari	<i>Areca catechu</i>	
11	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
12	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
13	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	
14	Khayer	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	
15	Fish Tail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>	
16	Bokul	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	
17	Chhatim	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
18	Peara	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	
19	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	
20	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	
Climbers			
21	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
22	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
23		<i>Tetrastigma sp.</i>	
Epiphyte			
24		<i>Vanda roxburghii</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs and shrubs)			
25	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Natural
26	Ghentu	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
27	Tita bagoon	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	
28	Pankushi	<i>Phyllanthus reticulatus</i>	
29	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
30	Dadmardan	<i>Senna alata</i>	
31	Maan Kochu	<i>Alocasia macrorrhizos</i>	
32	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	
33	Reri	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	
34	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
35	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus roja-chinensis</i>	
36	Ram Tulsi	<i>Ocimum gratissimum</i>	
37	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
38	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Large area of this grove is covered with compact ground vegetation keeping the grove in its wild condition.

E. Gram Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Nakkati

G.P. – Sitalkuchi

Block – Sitalkuchi

Infront of Sitalkuchi High School.

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°09.582'

Longitude – E 089°11.729'

Altitude – 154 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.3 Ha

Status – Non-forest.

History: Approximately 100 years. Sadhunath Adhikari donated this land to the grove.

The Deity: Kali, Shiv, Hanuman, Radha-Krishna, Bishohori.

Taboo (s): Absence of any taboo or historical incidents.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the Deities have been organized by the management committee at different times of the year. At the month of March worshipping of Lord Shiva is performed followed by the worshipping of the Goddess Basanti. After Shivratri worshipping of Devi Kali is organized.

Management: Nakkati Mashan Sangha (local Club) manage the grove and organizes all the worshipping festivals. Temples of respective deities are separately constructed at particular places of the grove.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Bahubara	<i>Cordia myxa</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	



5	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	Planted
6	Moyna Kanta	<i>Randia longispina</i>	
7	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
8	Lombu	<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	
9	Rudra Palash	<i>Spathodea campanulata</i>	
Climbers			
10	Bichtarak Guguli	<i>Argyreia speciosa</i>	Natural
11	Kari Lata	<i>Erycibe paniculata</i>	
12	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
13	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
14	Gulancho Lata	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	
Herbs & Shrubs			
15	Mankochu	<i>Alocasia macrorrhizos</i>	Natural
16	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
17	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
20	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
21	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
22	Putki	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	
23	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
24	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
25	Tita Begun	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	
26	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
Epiphyte			
27	Dhaira Ful	<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is located just in front of Sitalkuchi High School without any kind of fencing. So, the grove premise is very much intervened by the students and hawkers. As a result, maximum area of grove floor is devoid of any ground vegetation except at the periphery which is mostly covered by invasive species.

F. Hukuduar Mangalchandi Than

Administrative location:

Village – Boro Natabari

G.P. – Mallirhat

Block – Dinhata I

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26.181467°

Longitude – E 089.338324°

Altitude – 134 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 1.3 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Govt. vest land.

History: More than 300 years. Historically this place was the main gate of fort boundary of Kamteswar Raj Dynasty.

The Deity: Shiv and Mangalchandi.

Taboo (s): Felling of trees and poaching of animals is strictly prohibited. Any person passing by the grove must submit their respect to the grove Deities, or else the purpose of his/her journey cannot be fulfilled.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the Deities have been organized by the management committee at different times of the year. In the month of March worshipping of Lord Shiva is performed and at October duringt the time of Durga puja the worshipping of Mangalchandi is organized. The deities are worshipped at daily basis too.

Management: Hukuduar Mangalchandi Committee manage the grove and organizes all the worshipping festivals. Temples of respective deities are separately constructed at particular places of the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2	Kanthai	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
3	Fishtail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>	

4	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
5	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
6	Rudra Palash	<i>Spathodea campanulata</i>	
7	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
8	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	Natural
9	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
10	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
11	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
12	Kosoi	<i>Bridelia retusa</i>	
13	Shimul	<i>Ceiba pentrandia</i>	
14	Barun	<i>Crateva religiosa</i>	
15	Gulmohor	<i>Delonix regia</i>	
16	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
17	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	
18	Sidha	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	
19	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
20	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
21	Kurkur	<i>Leea indica</i>	
22	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
23	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
24	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	
25	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas	<i>Senna fistula</i>	
26	Amra	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	
27	Bara Jam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	
28	Arjun	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	
29	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
Climbers			
30		<i>Caesalpinia sp.</i>	Natural
31	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
32	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Herbs & Shrubs			
33	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Natural
34	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
35	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
36	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
37	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
38	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
39	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
40		<i>Selaginella sp.</i>	
41	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
42	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): As this place is a remnant of ancient structure most of the trees are age old reflecting the ancient vegetation of this area. It is actually a mound (small hillock) on which the small temples are placed. Around the temples a climax vegetation has developed over the course of time.

G. Garhkata Mashan Baba Than

Administrative location:

Village – Natabari

G.P. – Gisanimari I

Block – Dinhata I

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°08.338'

Longitude – E 089°23.015'

Altitude – 129 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 3.2 Ha

Status – Non-forest. Govt. vest land.

History: More than 300 years. This place was a part of fort of Kamteswar Raj Dynasty.

The Deity: Mashan Baba (Lord Shiva).

Taboo (s): Felling of trees and poaching of animals is strictly prohibited. Any person passing by the grove must submit their respect to the grove Deities, or else the purpose of his/her journey cannot be fulfilled. Entering the temple premise with bare foot is a must to do custom.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the deity Lord Shiva have been organized by the management committee in the month of March during Shivratri. Daily worship is also performed.

Management: A dedicated management committee of the grove organizes all the worshipping ceremonies. A large temple is erected along with concretized boundary wall and resting place for pilgrims keeping maximum area in wild condition.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2	Christmas Tree	<i>Araucaria columnaris</i>	
3	Fishtail Palm	<i>Caryota urens</i>	
4	Sheuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	

5	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	Natural	
6	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>		
7	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>		
8	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>		
9	Chikrasi	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>		
10	Gulmohor	<i>Delonix regia</i>		
11	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>		
12	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>		
13	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>		
14	Gamar	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>		
15	Sidha	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>		
16	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>		
17	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>		
18	Kurkur	<i>Leea indica</i>		
19	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>		
20	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>		
21		<i>Pavetta indica</i>		
22	Khirish	<i>Samanea saman</i>		
23	Choto Jam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>		
24	Toon/Ghora neem	<i>Toona ciliata</i>		
25	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>		
Climbers				
26	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>		Natural
27	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>		
Herbs & Shrubs				
28	Mankochu	<i>Alocasia macrorrhizos</i>	Natural	
29	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>		
30	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>		
31	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>		
32	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>		
33	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>		
34	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>		
35	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Planted	

Special notes (threats and other): As this place is a remnant of ancient structure most of the trees are age old reflecting the ancient vegetation of this area.

3.5. Detailed account on sacred groves of Uttar Dinajpur District

A. Rana Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Madhupur

G.P. – Jhitkia

Block – Raiganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°38.623′

Longitude – E 088°05.617′

Altitude – 109 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 3 katha

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: Approximately 400 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali

Taboo (s): Worshipping the deity is believed to bring peace and prosperity in village.

Customs: The deity Kali is being worshipped on a daily basis since generations. Annual festival of worshipping is organized during the month of October-November on the day of Diwali. No idol of the deity is there, people worship the tree and rocks as a belief that the deity reside on the rocks and trees.

Management: There is no dedicated management committee or trusty or any form of management structure. Local people of nearby villages only came to the sacred place only for worshipping. Otherwise, the grove is left at its wild condition most of the time.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Chatian	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
3	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
4	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	

5	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
6	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
7	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
8	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
9	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climbers			
10	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	Natural
11	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
12	Swarnalata	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	
13	Antamul	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	
14	Bon Morich/Pipul	<i>Piper longum</i>	
15		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
16	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
17	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Natural
19	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
20	Akanda	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	
21	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
22	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
23	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
24		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
25	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
26		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
27	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
28	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	
29	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
30	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
31	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
32		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
33	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
34	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Expansion of highway almost engulfed the grove. Need immediate protection which seems to be impossible as the expanding lane of the highway is already built up except the grove area only. The grove is on the verge of demolition.

B. Kali Mata Than

Administrative location:

Village – Cheradangi

G.P. – Bogram

Block – Raiganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°42.530′

Longitude – E 088°08.720′

Altitude – 117 ft.



Land schedule:

Area – 1 katha

Status – Private land.

History: Approximately 200 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali

Taboo (s): People seldom come to this place in the fear of supernatural phenomena. Once Abdul Rashid with his son tried to cut the branches of Seora Tree (*Streblus asper*) but failed and experienced a fearsome supernatural phenomenon that they both could not deal a single stroke of axe to the tree. They both fled from the place immediately. It was also a local story that once a son of the land owner who was residing at Delhi at that time, tried to sell the land. The very next day he got seriously ill with blood vomiting and admitted to hospital. As time passed by the situation got more serious and his health condition was rapidly deteriorating. His father somehow understood the reason and organized a worshipping ceremony at this grove to please the deity praying forgiveness for his son's sin. At last, his son recovered very slowly. After that the place is generally avoided by the trespassers and left in its wild condition.



Customs: Once, the deity Kali was worshipped on a daily basis since generations, but after change in land ownership cultural practices stopped. Very seldom some of the villagers come here to pray for peace, prosperity and to gain cure from serious illness.

Management: There is no dedicated management committee or trustee or any form of management structure. The grove is left at its wild condition most of the time.

Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	Natural
2	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
3	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
4	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climbers			
5		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
6	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
7		<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i>	
8	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
9	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
10		<i>Mallotus repandus</i>	
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
12		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
13	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground Vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
14		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
15	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	
16	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
17		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
20	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
21	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
22		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
23	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
24	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
25	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
26	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
27	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
28		<i>Physalis minima</i>	
29	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
30		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
31	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is situated amidst crop fields and is known for its wilderness.

C. Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Basian

G.P. – Basian

Block – Raiganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°43.806′

Longitude – E 088°09.013′

Altitude – 121 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 bigha

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: More than 250 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo(s): Worship is performed for maintaining peace in village and good agricultural yield.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the deity is organized during Diwali (November).

Management: The grove is managed by local people of Hindu community of Basiyan.



Flora:

Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	Natural
2	Hijol	<i>Barringtonia acutangula</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
5	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
6	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
7	Karanj	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	
8	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
9	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	

10	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climbers			
11	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
12	Swarnalata	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	
13	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
14	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
15	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
16	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
17	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Natural
18		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
19	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
20		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
21	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
22		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
23		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
24	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
25	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
26	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
27	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	
28	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
29	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
30		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a sacred pond in the grove premise. Well conserved in a limited area. Agricultural field extension disturbs the biodiversity of this sacred grove.

D. Gram Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Chatiyan

G.P. – Barua

Block – Raiganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°35.245′

Longitude – E 088°12.642′

Altitude – 104 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 katha

Status – The land is allocated to the name of God and donated by the villagers.

History: About 200 years.

The Deity: Haribasar, Kalimata, Shiva, Others.

Taboo (s): There is no such belief system related to the grove.

Customs: Annual worshipping ceremony organized in the month of October on ‘Nabami of Durga puja’. There is no custom of Daily or regular worshipping. Anyone can come to this grove any time to offer gratitude to the god.

Management: There is absence of any kind of management authority.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	Natural
2	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
5	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
6	Tentul	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	
7	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Planted
8	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Natural
Climbers			

9		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
10	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
12		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
13	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
14	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
15	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	Natural
16		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
17	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
20		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
21	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
22	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
23	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
24	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is well conserved. Arboreal age-old trees are still in good condition, along with many climber species create keystone habitat for many avian, reptile and insect species.

E. Shiv Bari

Administrative location:

Village – Hatmoni

G.P. – Bahin

Block – Raiganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°37.556′

Longitude – E 088°04.241′

Altitude – 105 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 10-12 Bigha.

Status – The land is registered under the name of temple management committee.

History: More than 150 years. The Temples were established in 1383 Bengali year.

The Deity: Lord Shiva, Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): There is no such taboo system is associated with this grove.

Customs: Daily worshipping of Lord Shiva and Goddess Kali is performed by priest.

Management: There is a dedicated temple management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
3	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
4	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
5	Tejpata	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	Planted
6	Gulmohor	<i>Delonix regia</i>	
7	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Natural
8	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
9	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
10	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	Planted

11	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Natural
12	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	
13	Bara Jam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	
14	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
15	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
Climbers			
16	Madhabilata	<i>Combretum indicum</i>	Natural
17	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
18	Jol Kalmi	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>	
19	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
20		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
21	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	Natural
22	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
23		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
24	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
25	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
26	Tulo	<i>Gossypium herbaceum</i>	
27	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
28	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
29	Bon Tamak	<i>Nicotiana plumbaginifolia</i>	
30		<i>Nymphoides indica</i>	
31	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
32	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
33	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
34	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a large (10 bigha or more) pond inside the premise. A Hindu crematorium is also there. On the West side of the grove dumping of construction materials by the PWD Roads hinders the natural regeneration and growth of vegetation.

F. Durga Than

Administrative location:

Village – Vendabari

G.P. – Duegapur

Block – Itahar

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°31.226′

Longitude – E 088°10.087′

Altitude – 95 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 Bigha.

Status – The land is registered under the name of temple management committee.

History: More than 150 years. The Temples were established 15 years ago.

The Deity: Goddess Durga.

Taboo (s): The sacred pond never dried up even in mid-summer though the ground water level in this area is very low. It is believed that if any one cut the ‘*Pakur*’ tree (*Ficus rumphii*) even a small branch, it will bring devastating consequences to his/her family.

Customs: Annual worshipping ceremony is organized during Durga puja (October).

Management: There is a dedicated temple management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
5	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
6	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Planted
7	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Natural

8	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
9	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
10	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
11	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Planted
12	Sheuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	
13	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	Natural
14	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
15	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	Planted
Climbers			
16	Kuch	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Natural
17		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	
18	Aparajita	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	
19	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
20	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
21	Jhumkolata	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	
22	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
23		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
24	Gulanha Lata	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	
25	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
26	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Natural
27	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
28		<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	
29	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
30		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
31	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
32	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
33	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
34		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
35	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
36		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
37	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
38	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
39	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Planted
40	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	Natural
41	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
42	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	
43	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	Planted
44	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a large pond inside the grove area.

G. Gram Thakur and Pirtala

Administrative location:

Village – Sahavita

G.P. – Patirajpur 5

Block – Itahar

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°26.629′

Longitude – E 088°12.640′

Altitude – 98 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 7 Bigha.

Status – The land is registered under the name of temple management committee.

History: Almost 4000 years.

The Deity: Chandi Mata, Shiva along with 14 different Hindu Deities and Pirbaba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animals are strictly prohibited.

Customs: Daily worshipping of the deities is performed for bringing peace and prosperity in village.

Management: There is a dedicated temple management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
3	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
4	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
5	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
6	Tal	<i>Borassus flabellifer</i>	Planted
7	Gobdo	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>	Natural
8	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
9	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
10	Potas	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Planted

11	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Natural
12	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
13	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
14	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
15	Noni	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Natural
16	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
17	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Planted
18		<i>Pavetta indica</i>	Natural
19	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
20	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
21	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climbers			
22		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
23	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
24	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
25	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
26	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
27	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
28	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Natural
29	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
30	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
31	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
32	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
33		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
34	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
35	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
36	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
37	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
Epiphyte			
38	Dhaira Ful	<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): The grove acquires large area having wild vegetation which make the grove ideal habitat for many wildlife. There is a dense bamboo bush inside the premise.

H. Hat Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Narihat

G.P. – Patirajpur 5

Block – Itahar

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°27.119′

Longitude – E 088°15.226′

Altitude – 93 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2.5-3 Bigha.

Status – It is under the occupancy of Gramsabha.

History: More than 2000 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Collection of dried leaves and dead wood for domestic use is prohibited.

Customs: Daily worshipping of the deity is not performed. Annual worshipping festival is organized during ‘Diwali’ (November).

Management: Local tribal and Hindu community are closely associated with the management of the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4		<i>Ehretia amoena</i>	
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
6	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
7	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
8	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
9	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural

10	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
12	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
13	Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
14		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
15	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
16	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
17	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
18	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
19	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
20		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
21	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
22	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
23	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	
24	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Planted
25	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	Natural

Special notes (threats and other): Generally, the grove remained undisturbed throughout the year. There is a large waterbody at the back side of the grove.

I. Pir Babar Majar

Administrative location:

Village – Bhelagachi

G.P. – Patirajpur 5

Block – Itahar

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°27.987′

Longitude – E 088°15.403′

Altitude – 99 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 6 katha.

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: More than 200 years.

The Deity: Bir Baba.

Taboo (s): Worshipping is performed for peace in village.

Customs: Regular or annual worshipping is absent. Villagers come to this place for the quest of blessing of Pir Baba.

Management: People from both Hindu and Ishlamic community are closely associated in the management of the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akar	<i>Alangium salviifolium</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
3	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
4	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
5	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
6	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Planted
7		<i>Putranjiva roxburghii</i>	Natural
8	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas	<i>Senna fistula</i>	
9	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
10	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	

Climbers			
11	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
12	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
13	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
14	Jhumkolata	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	
15		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
16	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	Natural
17		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
20	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
21		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
22	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
23	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
24	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
25		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Generally, the grove remains undisturbed throughout the year. There is a possible threat from introduction of alien invasive plant species which can rapidly alter the indigenous vegetation especially herbs and shrubs.

J. Gram Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Atghara

G.P. – Haldibari

Block – Kaliaganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°36.532′

Longitude – E 088°20.976′

Altitude – 112 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5 Bigha.

Status – The land belongs to the temple committee.

History: 300 years approximately.

The Deity: Lord Shiva and Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling is strictly prohibited. Once a local timber merchant tried to cut all the trees from this grove, as a result he suffered with an incurable disease lifelong.

Customs: Daily worshipping is performed.

Management: Local tribal and Hindu community are closely associated with the management of the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
5	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
6	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
7	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
8	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	Natural
9	Sal	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	
10	Mehagani	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	Planted

11	Segun	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	
12	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Natural
Climbers			
13		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
14	Swarnalata	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	
15	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
16		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
17	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Natural
18		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
19	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
20	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
21		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
22	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
23	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
24	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
25	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
26	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	
27	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
28	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
29	Swet Berala	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	
30	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
31	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a large pond in the grove. In recent time a portion of the grove is transformed into concrete made temple.

K. Baroari Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Bishnupur

G.P. – Bishnupur

Block – Hemtabad

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°45.377′

Longitude – E 088°15.853′

Altitude – 128 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 3 Bigha.

Status – The land belongs to the Gramsabha.

History: 300 years or more.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Regular worshipping of the deity is absent. Annual festival is organized during ‘Diwali’ (November).

Management: Local tribal and Hindu community are closely associated with the management of the grove. There is no dedicated management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
3	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
4	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
5	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
6	Sheuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	Natural
7	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
8	Kuchila	<i>Strychnos nux-vomica</i>	
Climbers			
9		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural

10	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
11	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
12	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
13		<i>Monstera adansonii</i>	
14	Alkusi	<i>Mukuna pruriens</i>	
15	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
16		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
17		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
18	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
19	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
20	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
21	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
22	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
23		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
24	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
25	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
26	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
27	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
28	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
29		<i>Physalis minima</i>	
30	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
31	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
32	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	
33	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is undisturbed and is at its original Wild structure. No initiative of templization is taken yet. People seldom visit this place in fear from supernatural activities.

L. Karaichandi Than

Administrative location:

Village – Darimanpur

G.P. – Naoda

Block – Hemtabad

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°43.498′

Longitude – E 088°19.396′

Altitude – 146 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5-6 Bigha.

Status – The land belongs to the Gramsabha.

History: Approximately 300 years.

The Deity: Goddess Chandi Mata (a form of Devi Durga).

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Only one worshipping ceremony is organized during Durga Puja (October).

Management: Local tribal and Hindu community are closely associated with the management of the grove. There is no dedicated management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
3	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
4	Joggo dumur	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	
5	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
6	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
7	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
8	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	

9	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas	<i>Senna fistula</i>	
10	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
11	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
Climber			
12	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
13	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
14	Jol Kalmi	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>	
15	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
16	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
17	Jhumkolata	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	
18	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
19		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
20		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
21	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	
22	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
23		<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	
24	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
25		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
26	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
27	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
28	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
29		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
30	Durba Ghas	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	
31	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
32		<i>Justicia gendarussa</i>	
33	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
34	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
35		<i>Physalis minima</i>	
36	Pindi	<i>Rungia pectinata</i>	
37	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
38	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
39		<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove is undisturbed and is at its original Wild structure. No initiative of templization is taken yet. People seldom visit this place in fear from supernatural activities. There is a very large waterbody just adjacent to the grove.

M. Pir Babar Majar

Administrative location:

Village – Kashiya

G.P. – Hemtabad

Block – Hemtabad

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°40.742′

Longitude – E 088°15.310′

Altitude – 122 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 katha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: 250 years or more.

The Deity: Pir Baba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Regular or annual worshipping is absent. Villagers come to this place for the quest of blessing of Pir Baba.

Management: Local inhabitants of both Hindu and Islamic community are closely associated with the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Natural
2	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
5	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
6	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
7	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
8	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
9	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
10	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
11	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	

Climber			
12	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
13	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
14	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
15		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
16	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
17	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Natural
18		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
19	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
20	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
21		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
22	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
23	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
24	Durba Ghas	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	
25		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
26	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
27	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
28	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
29	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
30	Fern	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	
31	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
32	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
33	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
34	Jol morich	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	
35		<i>Physalis minima</i>	
36	Fern	<i>Pteris biaurita</i>	
37	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
38	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
39	Tita Begun	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Despite of having smaller area the grove is well structured and protected by a brick made fencing wall to prevent grazing.

N. Sanyasi Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Kamargach

G.P. – Kamargach

Block – Chopra

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°22.516'

Longitude – E 088°17.357'

Altitude – 237 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 6 katha approximately.

Status – The area is under the occupancy of Gramsabha.

History: Approximately 150 years.

The Deity: Sanyasi Thakur.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Daily worshipping is performed by local priest. Local people traditionally offer fruits to the deity.

Management: Local Hindu people look after the wellbeing of the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Natural
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
3	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
4	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
6	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
7	Noni	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	
8	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
9	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
10	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
11	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	

Climber			
12	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
13	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
14	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
15	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
16	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
17	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
18	Gulancho Lata	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
19		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
20		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
21	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
22	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
23	Beguni Hurhure	<i>Cleome rutidosperma</i>	
24	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
25	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
26	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
27	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
28	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
29	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
30	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
31	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
32	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
33		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
34	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
35	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
36		<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The grove still maintains its wilderness which is characterized by dense thorny bushes, lots of climbers and lianas in association with arboreal trees.

O. Sasan Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Sonakhari

G.P. – Bhagabati

Block – Chopra

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°22.516’

Longitude – E 088°17.357’

Altitude – 222 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 5-6 katha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: More than 250 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Annual worshipping ceremony is organized during ‘Diwali’ (November). Local people of tribal and Hindu community come to this place for the quest of blessing from the goddess to bring peace and prosperity to their families.

Management: Local people of tribal and Hindu community are associated to this grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
3	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
4	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
5	Sindure	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	
6	Noni	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	
7	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
8	Karanj	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	
9	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	

10	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
11	Choto Jam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	
12	Bara Jam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	
13	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
14	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
15	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
16		<i>Ampelocissus latifolia</i>	Natural
17	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
18	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
19	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
20	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
21	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
22		<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	Natural
23	Kanta Note	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	
24	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
25		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
26	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
27	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
28	Coffee	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	
29	Kansira	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	
30	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
31	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
32	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	
33	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
34	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
35	Fern	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	
36	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
37	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
38	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
39	Tridhara/Tag Ganda	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	
40	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	
41		<i>Vernonia cineria</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Encroachment of cultivable surrounding fields is major threat to the existence of the grove.

3.6. Detailed account on sacred groves of Dakshin Dinajpur District

A. Lakshmi Than

Administrative location:

Village – Mahishbathan

G.P. – Deulpur

Block – Mushmandi

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 26°31.444′

Longitude – E 088°18.628′

Altitude – 107 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 4 Bigha approximately.

Status – The land is registered under the grove management committee.

History: Approximately 300 years.

The Deity: Goddess Lakshmi, Lord Shiva and Gram Thakur. F

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited. Cutting of tree branches and bushes are permitted only at the time of annual festival for preparing sacred food. Cleaning of leaf litter or sweeping the grove floor is prohibited for rest of the year.

Customs: Every Thursday the deity is worshipped by local priest. Lord Shiva is worshipped annually during Bengali Chaitra mas (March-April), Ostoprohor Harinam Sankirtan is organized during Bengali Baishakh mas (April-May), annual worshipping ceremony of Gram Thakur is organized on Bengali Ashar mas (June-July) and annual festival of worshipping Goddess Lakshmi during Bengali Kartick mas (October-November).

Management: There is a dedicated management committee to look after the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	

3	Kanthal	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	
4	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
5	Lal Shimul	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	
6	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
7	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
8	Lombu	<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	Planted
9	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
10	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
11	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
12	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	Natural
13	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
14	Choto Jam	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	
Climber			
15		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
16	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
17	Gulanha Lata	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18	Seyal Kanta	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	Natural
19	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
20	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
21	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
22		<i>Justicia gendarussa</i>	
23	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
24	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
25		<i>Physalis minima</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Arboreal Shimul tree is ideal habitat for fruit bat. This place is declared as bat conservation site by the Kushmandi Community Development Block.

B. Surkali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Ramkrishnapur

G.P. – Ramkrishnapur

Block – Kumarganj

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°24.510′

Longitude – E 088°48.804′

Altitude – 94 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2-3 katha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land. Close proximity to the India-Bangladesh international border.

History: More than 200 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Annual festival is organized on 'Diwali' (November).

Management: There is no management authority in form of committee or trustee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Natural
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
3	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	
4	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
6	Jarul	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	
7	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
8	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	Planted
9	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
10	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	Natural
11	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
Climber			

12		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
13	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
14	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
15	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
16	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
17	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
18	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Natural
19		<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	
20	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
21		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
22	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
23	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
24	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
25	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
26	Tita Begun	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	
27	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): As the grove is situated close to the India-Bangladesh international border the grove already comes under protection of Border Security Force of India. Anyone to visit this place has to produce him/her authentic identity proof and other official document satisfying the purpose of the visit.

C. Eidgah

Administrative location:

Village – Dangapara

G.P. – Baghichapur

Block – Harirampur (Bansihari)

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°23.968′

Longitude – E 088°15.840′

Altitude – 95 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 1 katha approximately.

Status – The land belongs to the Gram Sabha.

History: 400 years approximately.

The Deity: There is no idolistic deity. Once this place was used for prayer (Namaz).

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: People gather at this place once in year at the time of holy Eid.

Management: Local Islamic community under the holy guidance of Moulana look after the place.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akar	<i>Alangium salviifolium</i>	Natural
2	Chatiyar	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
5	Muchkundo Chapa	<i>Pterospermum acerifolium</i>	
6	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas	<i>Senna fistula</i>	
7	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	

8	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
9	Kuch	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Natural
10	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
12	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
13		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	Natural
14	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
15		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
16		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
17	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
18	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
19	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
20	Swet Berala	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	
21		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
22		<i>Synedrella nodiflora</i>	
23	Tridhara/Tag Ganda	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is ancient Islamic tomb like structures which are now safe habitat for many animals like mongoose, rats, squirrels and snakes.

D. Pirer Than

Administrative location:

Village – Godul

G.P. – Baghichapur 6

Block – Harirampur (Bansihari)

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°24.105′

Longitude – E 088°15.347′

Altitude – 81 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 4 katha approximately.

Status – The land belongs to the Gram Sabha.

History: More than 300 years.

The Deity: There is no idolistic deity. This place is actually the burial ground of Holy Pir Baba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: No regular worshipping is organized. People come to this place to pray for peace and prosperity of their family.

Management: No such management authority is there. People seldom visit this place.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Bahubara	<i>Cordia myxa</i>	
5	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
6	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	
7	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
8	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
9	Joggo dumur	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	

10	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
11	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
12	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
13		<i>Putranjiva roxburghii</i>	
14	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
15	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
16	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
17		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
18	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
19	Bon Jui	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	
20		<i>Mallotus repandus</i>	
21	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
22	Jhumkolata	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	
23	Ram Dantan	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	
24	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
25	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
26		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	
27		<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	
28		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
29		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
30	Kesuth	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	
31	Kulekhara	<i>Hygrophila schulli</i>	
32	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
33	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
34	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): A nice and well-structured plant community has developed amidst vast agricultural field due to minimum anthropogenic disturbance. Golden jackal was observed during the field survey. Many birds, small mammals, reptiles, insects and many other animals find this place haven for their natural roosting and nesting.

E. Sanyasi Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Jogonali

G.P. – Baghichapur 6

Block – Harirampur (Bansihari)

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°24.539′

Longitude – E 088°14.957′

Altitude – 91 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 15 katha approximately.

Status – The land belongs to the Gram Sabha.

History: Approximately 250 years.

The Deity: Gram Thakur/Sanyasi Thakur.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited. Clearing the leaf litter from grove floor is prohibited.

Customs: Annual worshipping ceremony of Gram Thakur is organized on Bengali Ashar mas (June-July).

Management: There is no management authority in form of committee or trustee. Local people from Hindu and Tribal community together look after the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Natural
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
3	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	
4	Ampatari	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	
5	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
6	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
7	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	
8	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	

9	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
10	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
11	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
12	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
13	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
14	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
15	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
16	Totola	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	
17		<i>Putranjiva roxburghii</i>	
18	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas	<i>Senna fistula</i>	
19	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
20	Arjun	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	
21	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
Climber			
22		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
23	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
24	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
25		<i>Mallotus repandus</i>	
26	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
27	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
28		<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	
29	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
30	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Natural
31	Seyal Kanta	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	
32		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
33	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
34	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
35	Verenda	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>	
36	Dadmardan	<i>Senna alata</i>	
37	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	
38	Nisinda	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Dominance of arboreal climber species (Lianas) were observed occupying the top canopy of large trees which made a dense continuous canopy giving the grove a typical dome shaped structure.

F. Bura Mashna Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Uday

G.P. – Fulbari

Block – Gangarampur

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°24.383′

Longitude – E 088°37.955′

Altitude – 93 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 10 katha approximately.

Status – The land belongs to the grove committee under Gram Sabha.

History: 200 years or more.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is prohibited.

Customs: On Sankranti of Bengali Chaitra mas (March-April) the annual worshipping ceremony is organized. Daily worshipping absent.

Management: A management committee including the elderly people of Uday village look after the grove.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Khayer	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	Natural
2	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
3		<i>Bauhinia variegata</i>	
4	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
5	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
6	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
7	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
8	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
9	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	

10	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
11	Bokul	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	
12	Kola	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	
13	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
14	Sheuli	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	Natural
15	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
16	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
17	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
18	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
19	Aparajita	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	Natural
20	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
21	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
22	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
23	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
24	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
25	Gopali	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Natural
26		<i>Barleria prionitis</i>	
27		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
28	Akanda	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	
29	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
30	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
31	Jaba	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Planted
32	Verenda	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>	Natural
33		<i>Randia spinosa</i>	
34	Dadmardan	<i>Senna alata</i>	
35	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
36	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	
37	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	
38		<i>Turnera ulmifolia</i>	
39	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Indigenous original vegetation is destroyed during the course of time. Plantation of tree species and other flowering and fruiting plants was observed.

G. Lakshmi Than (Bamboo grove)

Administrative location:

Subhash Pally, Ward No. 6

Municipality – Gangarampur

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°24.409′

Longitude – E 088°31.790′

Altitude – 91 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 15-20 bigha approximately.

Status – The land is under gram sabha.

History: Almost 100 years.

The Deity: Goddess Lakshmi.

Taboo (s): No such taboos are followed now a days.

Customs: People gather at this place to worship the Goddess Lakshmi for prosperity and wealth only once in a year during Kojagari Lakshmi Puja during October.

Management: No dedicated management committee is reported from the local informants.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	Natural
2	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
Climber			
3	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
4	Antamul	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	
5	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
6	Alkusi	<i>Mukuna pruriens</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
7	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	Natural
8	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
9		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
10	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
11	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
12	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The total grove area includes a very large pond (Lakshmi Pukur) which is now used for commercial fishery. Dense bamboo bushes are there around the pond.

H. Jora Bridge Pir Babar Majar

Administrative location:

Village – Srirampur

G.P. – Pathar Ghata

Block – Harirampur (Bansihari)

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°21.270′

Longitude – E 088°20.946′

Altitude – 87 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 katha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: Approximately 150 years.

The Deity: There is no idolistic deity. This place is actually the burial ground of Holy Pir Baba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling is prohibited.

Customs: There is no practice of worshipping the Pir Baba. People of nearby villages and truck drivers offer clothing above the mud tomb (graveyard of Pir Baba) occasionally.

Management: There is no grove management committee or trustee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Natural
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
3	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
4	Tal	<i>Borassus flabellifer</i>	
5	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
6	Joggo dumur	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	
7	Lombu	<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	
8	Karanj	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	
9	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
10	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
11	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	

Climber			
12	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	Natural
13	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
14		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
15		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
16	Akanda	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	
17		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
18		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
19	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	
20		<i>Ziziphus rugosa</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): The area of the grove has been encroached by expanding road way.

I. Bura Pir Tala

Administrative location:

Village – Mechuapara

G.P. – Gopalpur

Block – Harirampur (Bansihari)

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°19.312′

Longitude – E 088°21.344′

Altitude – 91 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 1 Bigha approximately.

Status –

History: Approximately 500 years.

The Deity: There is no idolistic deity. This place is actually the burial ground of Holy Pir Baba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: People gather at this place once in year at the time of holy Eid.

Management: No dedicated management committee is there.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbeck</i>	Natural
2	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
3	Bans	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	
4	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
5	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
6	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
7	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
8	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	
9	Karanj	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	
10	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
11	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	

12	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
Climber			
13	Kuch	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Natural
14		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	
15	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
16		<i>Pergularia daemia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
17		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
18	Verenda	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>	
19	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
20	Foni Monsa	<i>Opuntia dillenii</i>	
21	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
22		<i>Ziziphus rugosa</i>	
Epiphyte			
23	Orchid	<i>Vanda roxburghii</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is ancient Islamic tomb like structures which are now safe habitat for many animals like mongoose, rats, squirrels and snakes. Rapid proliferation of rarely seen climber plant *Abrus precatorius* was observed indicating a healthy vegetation without any disturbance.

J. Mashna Kali Mata Than

Administrative location:

Village – Bodolpur

G.P. – Bolla

Block – Balurghat

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°18.671′

Longitude – E 088°42.420′

Altitude – 87 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 6 katha approximately.

Status – Land ownership is unknown. The grove is situated amidst vast crop field.

History: Almost 300 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Annual worshipping festival is organized during Diwali (November).

Management: No management committee or trustee was reported by the informants.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Natural
2	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
3	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
4	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
5	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
6	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
7	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
8	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
9	Kuch	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Natural
10		<i>Aristolochia indica</i>	
11		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	

12	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
13	Swarnalata	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	
14	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
15	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
16	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
17	Alkusi	<i>Mukuna pruriens</i>	
18	Jhumkolata	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	
19	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
20	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
21		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
22		<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	
23		<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	
24	Bon Note	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	
25		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
26		<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	
27	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
28		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
29	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
30	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
31	Holud	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	
32	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
33	Kesuth	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	
34	Hatisur	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	
35	Kulekhara	<i>Hygrophila schulli</i>	
36	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
37	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
38		<i>Physalis minima</i>	
39	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
40	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	
41	Swet Berala	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	
42		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
43	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Golden jackal was observed during the field survey. Many birds, small mammals, reptiles, insects and many other animals find this place haven for their natural roosting and nesting.

K. Sur Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Taksail

G.P. – Bolla

Block – Balurghat

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°18.915′

Longitude – E 088°42.222′

Altitude – 88 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 10 katha approximately.

Status – The land is privately owned by Mahendra Sarkar of Buddhipur village. The grove is situated amidst vast crop field.

History: Nearly 250 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): No such taboo was reported to be followed inside this grove.

Customs: Worshipping festivals are organized twice in a year during Bengali Ashar mas (June-July) and Boishakh mas (April-May).

Management: There is no management committee or trustee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2		<i>Antidesma ghaesembilla</i>	Natural
3	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
4	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
5	Pakur	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	
6	Koth Bel	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	
7	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	
8	Bara Jam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	Natural
9	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	

10	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
11		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
12	Aparajita	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	
13	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
14	Jol Kalmi	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>	
15	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
16	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
17	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
18	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
19		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
20		<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	
21		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
22	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
23	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
24	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
25	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
26		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
27	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
28		<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	
29	Dhekisak	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	
30	Kesuth	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	
31	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
32	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
33	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
34	Lajjabati	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	
35	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
36		<i>Nymphoides indica</i>	
37	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
38	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
39	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
40	Tridhara/Tar Ganda	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Few years back there was a very old large Pakur Tree (*Ficus rumphii*) which was destroyed by thunderstorm.

L. Mashna Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Sewai

G.P. – Gopalbati

Block – Balurghat

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°19.408′

Longitude – E 088°51.561′

Altitude – 81 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 2 katha approximately.

Status – Privately owned land.

History: Approximately 200 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): No such taboo is reported from this grove.

Customs: There is no fixed date of organizing the worshipping ceremony. People use to pray to the Goddess for peace and prosperity of their family.

Management: There is no management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Natural
3	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
4	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
5	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
6	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
7	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
8		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Natural
9	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	
10	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	

11	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
12		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	Natural
13	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
14	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
15		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
16	Dhutro	<i>Datura metel</i>	
17	Kesuth	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	
18	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
19	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
20	Fern	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	
21	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
22	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
23	Fern	<i>Pteris biaurita</i>	
24	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
25	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
26	Swet Berala	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	
27	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	
28	Tridhara/Tag Ganda	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	
29	Bon Okra	<i>Urena lobata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Small area with compact and dense vegetation made this grove haven for wildlife like smaller birds, snakes, skinks, butterflies etc.

M. Akhra Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Batkhorna

G.P. – Nazirpur

Block – Balurghat

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°19.543′

Longitude – E 088°47.973′

Altitude – 84 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 15 bigha approximately.

Status – This land is under the gram sabha.

History: Approximately 300 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited. The sacred pond never dries up. There is strict prohibition of entering the grove premise after eating animal meat. Entering with footware is also a taboo.

Customs: There is a ritual of offering milk to Cobra snake which resides at the large trunk of *Ficus benghalensis*. There is also custom of sacrificing goat to please the deity.

Management: Local people from Hindu and tribal community strictly follow the rules and regulations of the grove. No organized management structure like committee or trustee is there.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akashmoni	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Planted
2	Bel	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	
3	Chatiyani	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
4	Deo	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	
5	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
6	Bahubara	<i>Cordia myxa</i>	
7	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	

8	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Planted
9	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	Natural
10	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
11	Kurchi/Khirra	<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>	
12	Koth Bel	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	
13	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
14	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
15	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
16	Khejur	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	Natural
17	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
18	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
19	Toon/Ghora neem	<i>Toona ciliata</i>	
20	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
21	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
22	Kolke	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	
23	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
24	Kuch	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Natural
25		<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	
26	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
27	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	
28	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
29		<i>Vitis trifolia</i>	
30	Siakul	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
31	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
32	Atasi	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	
33	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
34	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophora</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): Age old trees with numerous climbers made this grove a unique habitat for wildlife.

N. Pir Darga

Administrative location:

Village – Jagadishbati

G.P. – Harsura

Block – Tapan

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°20.382′

Longitude – E 088°37.773′

Altitude – 97 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 3 katha approximately.

Status – Privately owned but true ownership is hard to find.

History: Almost 300 years.

The Deity: There is no idolistic deity. This place is actually the burial ground of Holy Pir Baba.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Long before people regularly visit this grove for worshipping, but now this grove is left abandoned. People merely visit the grove.

Management: No dedicated management committee is there.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Sirish	<i>Albizia lebbek</i>	Natural
2	Neem	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	
3	Tamal	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	
4	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	
5	Bot	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	
6	Joggo dumur	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	
7	Subabul/Potka	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	
8	Chimni	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	
9	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	

10	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
11	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
12	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
13	Bara Jam	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	
14	Tentul	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	
15	Kapashia	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	
16	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
17	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
18	Dudhi Lata	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	
19	Jol Kalmi	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>	
20	Dhudhul	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	
21	Akanadi	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	
22	Padma Gulancha Lata	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
23		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
24	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
25		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
26		<i>Pluchea indica</i>	
27		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	
28	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika	<i>Solanum sisymbirifolium</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is ancient Islamic tomb like structures which are now safe habitat for many animals like mongoose, rats, squirrels and snakes.

O. Buri Kali Than

Administrative location:

Village – Paschim Aptoir

G.P. – Hili I

Block – Hili

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°17.564′

Longitude – E 088°59.810′

Altitude – 89 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 4 katha approximately.

Status – Land ownership unknown.

History: Nearly 300 years.

The Deity: Goddess Kali.

Taboo (s): Tree felling and poaching of animal is strictly prohibited.

Customs: Annual worshipping of the deity is organized on the holy occasion (Amabasya) of Bengali Bhadra mas (September). There is a ritual of offering milk to the deity when the domesticated cow starts secreting milk.

Management: There is no dedicated management committee.

Flora:



Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Chatiyan	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Natural
2	Madar/Parijat	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	
3	Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Planted
4	Aswatha	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Natural
5	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
6	Kurchi/Khirra	<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>	
7	Jiol	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	
8	Aam	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Planted
9	Kadam	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	
10	Peara	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	

11	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	Natural
12	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
13	Pithali	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	
14	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
15	Bichati	<i>Tragia involucrata</i>	Natural
Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
16	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Natural
17		<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	
18	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
19		<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	
20	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
21	Danta Kalas	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	
22	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
23	Tulsi	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	
24	Amrul	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	
25	Kalkasunda	<i>Senna sophera</i>	
26	Tita Begun	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	
27	Tagar	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	

Special notes (threats and other): There is a pack of jackal residing at the dense bushes inside the grove.

P. Gram Thakur Than

Administrative location:

Village – Maniko

G.P. – Jamalpur 5

Block – Hili

Geographic location:

Latitude – N 25°13.980′

Longitude – E 088°55.615′

Altitude – 84 ft.

Land schedule:

Area – 0.5 katha approximately.

Status – Govt. vest land.

History: Approximately 100 years.

The Deity: Lord Shiva.

Taboo (s): No such taboos are followed inside this grove.

Customs: People gather at this grove in annual worshipping ceremony on “Shiva Ratri Night” every year.

Management: Maniko Adibasi Yuva Sangha club look after the grove.

Flora:



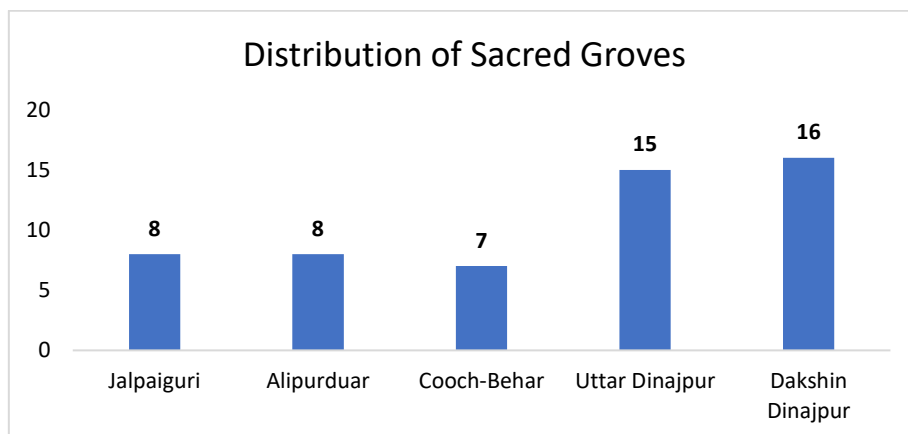
Sl. No.	Common name	Scientific name	Status
Trees			
1	Akar	<i>Alangium salviifolium</i>	Natural
2	Chatiyar	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	
3	Sisoo	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	
4	Dumur	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	
5	Noni	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	
6	Kamini	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	
7	Seora	<i>Streblus asper</i>	
8	Narenga	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	
9	Topa kul	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	
Climber			
10	Telakucha	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Natural
11	Ravanlata	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	

Ground vegetation (Herbs & Shrubs)			
12		<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Natural
13		<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	
14	Seyal Kanta	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	
15		<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	
16		<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	
17	Thankuni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	
18	Asamlata	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	
19	Holud Hurhure	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	
20	Ghentu/Bhant	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	
21	Kochu	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	
22	Keu	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	
23	Durba Ghas	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	
24	Kesuth	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	
25	Ans Seora	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	
26	Putus	<i>Lantana camara</i>	
27	Susni	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	
28	Kari Pata	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	
29	Bon Tamak	<i>Nicotiana plumbaginifolia</i>	
30	Chini Michri	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	
31	Dadmardan	<i>Senna alata</i>	
32		<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	

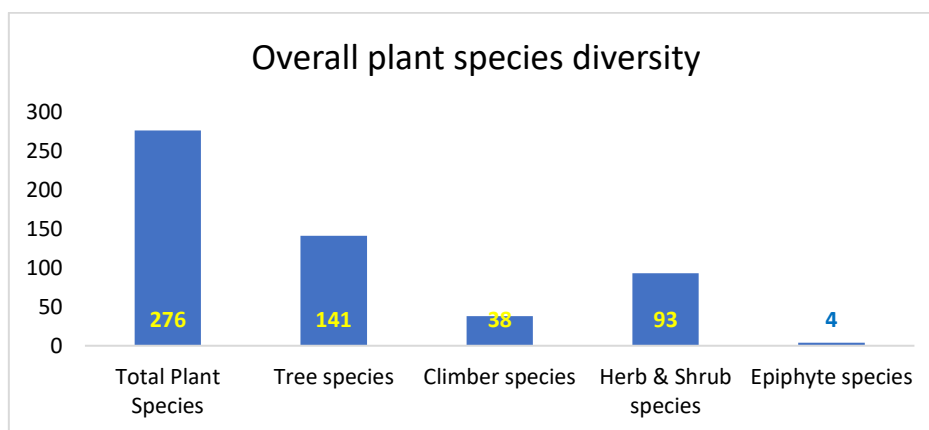
Special notes (threats and other): There are age old Seora tree (*Streblus asper*).

4. Discussion

As a whole 54 sacred groves were identified in five districts (Jalpaiguri - 8, Alipurduar - 8, Cooch-Behar – 7, Uttar Dinajpur – 15, Dakshin Dinajpur – 16). Most of the sacred groves in Alipurduar district are located inside forest or forest fringe areas, whereas in rest four districts they are situated in non-forest areas especially amidst the agricultural fields or outside village residential zone.



Overall, 276 plant species under 91 families including 141 tree species, 38 climber species, 93 herb and shrub species and 4 epiphytic species were documented from the identified sacred groves. Maximum plant species diversity was found in Dakshin Dinajpur district (145) followed by Uttar Dinajpur (134), Alipurduar (132), Cooch-Behar (118) and Jalpaiguri (106). Maximum tree species diversity was found in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar (73 each) followed by Cooch-Behar (70), Dakshin Dinajpur (61) and Uttar Dinajpur (56).



In Jalpaiguri district, 3 sacred groves are located in non-forest area while rest 5 located inside forest land. A total of 106 plant species were documented from these 8 sacred groves which is the lowest among all 5 studied districts. But these sacred groves harbour joint highest tree species diversity (73) along with Alipurduar district. Though the lowest diversity of climber, herbs-shrubs and epiphyte were recorded from these sacred groves which represented by 8, 24 and 1 species respectively.

Among 8 sacred groves in Alipurduar district 5 are located in forest area. The groves also exhibited joint highest tree species diversity (73) along with Jalpaiguri district. Maximum diversity of epiphytic plants (3) was recorded from these groves.

Sacred groves of Coochbehar district exhibited second lowest plant species diversity (116) having high tree species diversity (70). All the groves are located in non-forest area.

Maximum climber species were documented from Uttar Dinajpur (24) and Dakshin Dinajpur (23). Both Dakshin Dinajpur and Uttar Dinajpur districts also harbours maximum herb and shrub species (60 and 53 respectively). Despite of having maximum plant species diversity, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur districts exhibited comparatively less tree species diversity and high climber species diversity than Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch-Behar.

Table: Overall plant species diversity in sacred groves of five districts.

District	Total Plant Species	Tree species	Climber species	Herb & Shrub species	Epiphyte species
Jalpaiguri	106	73	8	24	1
Alipurduar	132	73	13	43	3
Cooch-Behar	118	70	10	36	2
Uttar Dinajpur	134	56	24	53	1
Dakshin Dinajpur	145	61	23	60	1

Maximum plant species diversity was recorded from Choto Mahakal Dham, Alipurduar (56), followed by Pokhri Pahar, Alipurduar (52) while minimum plant species diversity was documented from Lakshmi Than, Gangarampur, Dakshin Dinajpur (12) followed by Ma Bondurga Than, Jalpaiguri (13).

Overall, 76 plant species were found in single occurrence among the sacred groves. The species are *Abroma augusta*, *Adiantum capillus-veneris*, *Alpinia nigra*, *Ailanthus integrifolia*, *Amoora rohituka*, *Amoora wallichii*, *Ampelocissus latifolia*, *Ananas comosus*, *Angiopteris wallichiana*, *Antidesma ghaesembilla*, *Argyreia speciosa*, *Averrhoa carambola*, *Baccaurea ramiflora*, *Barleria prionitis*, *Barringtonia acutangula*, *Bauhinia variegata*, *Bischofia javanica*, *Caesalpinia sp.*, *Caesalpinia pulcherrima*, *Callistemon citrinus*, *Carica papaya*, *Cephalanthus tetrandra*, *Cestrum diurnum*, *Citrus sinensis*, *Cleome rutidosperma*, *Combretum indicum*, *Combretum roxburghii*, *Desmodium gyroides*, *Duabanga grandiflora*, *Ehretia amoena*, *Erycibe paniculate*, *Eucalyptus globulus*, *Euphorbia tithymaloides*, *Ficus krishnae*, *Ficus virens*, *Gardenia jasminoides*, *Gossypium herbaceum*, *Gynocardia odorata*, *Lasiococca symphyllifolia*, *Machilus gamblei*, *Machilus glaucescens*, *Manilkara hexandra*, *Monstera adansonii*, *Morinda angustifolia*, *Moringa oleifera*, *Ocimum gratissimum*, *Opuntia dillenii*, *Peltophorum pterocarpum*, *Pergularia daemia*, *Plumeria alba*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Pluchea indica*, *Pterospermum acerifolium*, *Randia spinosa*, *Ravenala madagascariensis*, *Ricinus communis*, *Rumex dentata*, *Samanea saman*, *Santalum album*, *Sansevieria zeylanica*, *Solanum khasianum*, *Strychnos nux-vomica*, *Synedrella nodiflora*, *Syzygium formosum*, *Tecoma stans*, *Terminalia macrocarpa*, *Tetrastigma sp.*, *Thespesia populnea*, *Thuja occidentalis*, *Turnera ulmifolia*, *Vanda tessellate*, *Vernonia cineria*, *Vitex negundo*, *Vitis trifolia*, *Woodfordia fruticosa* and *Wrightia tomentosa*. *Clerodendrum infortunatum* was documented from 47 groves and found to be most common among all the groves which was followed by *Mikania micrantha* and *Glycosmis pentaphylla* which were found in 42 and 31 sacred groves respectively.

In Jalpaiguri district, 71 plant species were recorded with single occurrence in the studied sacred groves. *Clerodendrum infortunatum* was most common plant and found in all the eight sacred groves whereas *Diplazium esculentum* was found in seven groves and *Lagerstroemia speciosa* was recorded from six of them.

In Alipurduar district, 69 plant species were recorded with single occurrence in the studied sacred groves. *Clerodendrum infortunatum* was most common plant and found in all the eight sacred groves whereas *Mikania micrantha* was found in seven groves and *Alstonia scholaris*, *Chromolaena odorata*, *Glycosmis pentaphylla*, *Lannea coromandelica*, *Leucus aspera*, *Mallotus philippensis*, *Tectona grandis* and *Trema orientalis* was recorded from six of them.

In Coochbehar district, 60 plant species were recorded with single occurrence in the studied sacred groves. *Diplazium esculentum*, *Mikania micrantha* and *Tabernaemontana divaricata* were most common plant and found in six sacred groves followed by *Caryota urens*, *Clerodendrum infortunatum*, *Ficus religiosa*, *Neolamarckia cadamba* and *Stephania hernandifolia* which were recorded from five sacred groves.

In Uttar Dinajpur district, 47 plant species were recorded with single occurrence in the studied sacred groves. *Clerodendrum infortunatum* was most common plant and found in fourteen sacred groves followed by *Glycosmis pentaphylla*, *Mikania micrantha* and *Streblus asper* which were documented from 13 sacred groves of the district. The woody climber *Ichnocarpus frutescens* was also found from 12 sacred groves.

In Dakshin Dinajpur district, 51 plant species were recorded with single occurrence in the studied sacred groves. *Mikania micrantha* and *Streblus asper* were most common among the sacred groves and found in fourteen of them. *Clerodendrum infortunatum* was also found very common in these groves and recorded from 12 of the groves.

Table: List of tree species documented during the study.

Sl. No.	Tree Species	Family	Local Name
1	<i>Acacia auriculiformis</i>	Fabaceae	Akashmoni
2	<i>Acacia catechu</i>	Fabaceae	Khayer
3	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Rutaceae	Bel
4	<i>Alangium salvifolium</i>	Alangiaceae	Akar
5	<i>Albizia lebeck</i>	Fabaceae	Sirish
6	<i>Albizia procera</i>	Fabaceae	
7	<i>Ailanthus integrifolia</i>	Simaroubaceae	Gokul
8	<i>Alstonia scholaris</i>	Apocynaceae	Chatiyan
9	<i>Amoora rohituka</i>	Meliaceae	Lasune Lali
10	<i>Amoora wallichii</i>	Meliaceae	Lali
11	<i>Annona reticulata</i>	Annonaceae	Nona ata
12	<i>Antidesma ghaesembilla</i>	Phyllanthaceae	
13	<i>Aphanamixis polystachya</i>	Meliaceae	Ampatari
14	<i>Areca catechu</i>	Arecaceae	Supari
15	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Moraceae	Kanthal
16	<i>Artocarpus lacucha</i>	Moraceae	Deo
17	<i>Araucaria columnaris</i>	Araucariaceae	Christmas Tree
18	<i>Averrhoa carambola</i>	Oxalidaceae	Kamranga

19	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Meliaceae	Neem
20	<i>Baccaurea ramiflora</i>	Phyllanthaceae	Lotka/Notka
21	<i>Bamboosa sp.</i>	Poaceae	Bans
22	<i>Barringtonia acutangula</i>	Lecythidaceae	Hijol
23	<i>Bauhinia variegata</i>	Fabaceae	
24	<i>Bischofia javanica</i>	Phyllanthaceae	
25	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>	Bombacaceae	Lal Shimul
26	<i>Borassus flabellifer</i>	Arecaceae	Tal
27	<i>Bridelia retusa</i>	Phyllanthaceae	Kosoi
28	<i>Butea monosperma</i>	Fabaceae	Palash
29	<i>Caesalpinia pulcherrima</i>	Fabaceae	Krishnachura
30	<i>Callicarpa arborea</i>	Lamiaceae	Gobdo
31	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	Myrtaceae	Bottle brush
32	<i>Careya arborea</i>	Lecythidaceae	Kumbhi
33	<i>Carica papaya</i>	Caricaceae	Pepe
34	<i>Caryota urens</i>	Arecaceae	Fishtail Palm
35	<i>Casearia glomerata</i>	Salicaceae	Bandor Khaja
36	<i>Castanopsis hystrix</i>	Fagaceae	Kattus
37	<i>Ceiba pentandra</i>	Malvaceae	Shimul
38	<i>Cephalanthus tetrandra</i>	Rubiaceae	Kali Kath
39	<i>Chukrasia tabularis</i>	Meliaceae	Chikrasi
40	<i>Cinnamomum bijolighata</i>	Lauraceae	Jongli Tejpata
41	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	Lauraceae	Tejpata
42	<i>Citrus limetta</i>	Rutaceae	Pati Lebu
43	<i>Citrus maxima</i>	Rutaceae	Batabi Lebu
44	<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Rutaceae	Komla Lebu
45	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Arecaceae	Narkel
46	<i>Cordia myxa</i>	Boraginaceae	Bahubara
47	<i>Crateva religiosa</i>	Capparaceae	Barun
48	<i>Dalbergia sissoo</i>	Fabaceae	Sisoo
49	<i>Delonix regia</i>	Fabaceae	Gulmohor
50	<i>Dillenia pentagyna</i>	Dilleniaceae	Tatari
51	<i>Diospyros montana</i>	Ebenaceae	Tamal
52	<i>Duabanga grandiflora</i>	Lythraceae	
53	<i>Dysoxylum binectariferum</i>	Meliaceae	
54	<i>Ehretia amoena</i>	Boraginaceae	
55	<i>Elaeocarpus angustifolius</i>	Elaeocarpaceae	Rudraksh
56	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>	Fabaceae	Madar/Parijat
57	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Myrtaceae	Eucalyptus
58	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	Myrtaceae	Potas
59	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>	Moraceae	Lakhha pakur
60	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Moraceae	Aswatha
61	<i>Ficus hispida</i>	Moraceae	Dumur
62	<i>Ficus rumphii</i>	Moraceae	Pakur
63	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Moraceae	Bot
64	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	Moraceae	Joggo dumur

65	<i>Ficus krishnae</i>	Moraceae	Krishna Bot
66	<i>Ficus virens</i>	Moraceae	
67	<i>Gardenia jasminoides</i>	Rubiaceae	Gandharaj
68	<i>Gmelia arborea</i>	Verbenaceae	Gamar
69	<i>Gynocardia odorata</i>	Achariaceae	Gante/Chalmugra
70	<i>Holarrhena pubescens</i>	Apocynaceae	Kurchi/Khirra
71	<i>Khaya anthotheca</i>	Meliaceae	Lombu
72	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>	Lythraceae	Sidha
73	<i>Lagerstroemia speciosa</i>	Lythraceae	Jarul
74	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>	Anacardiaceae	Jiol
75	<i>Lasiococca symphyllifolia</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Jhakri Kath
76	<i>Leea indica</i>	Vitaceae	Kurkur
77	<i>Leucaena leucocephala</i>	Fabaceae	Subabul/Potka
78	<i>Limonia acidissima</i>	Rutaceae	Koth Bel
79	<i>Litchi chinensis</i>	Sapindaceae	Lichu
80	<i>Litsea glutinosa</i>	Lauraceae	Chimni
81	<i>Machilus gamblei</i>	Lauraceae	Kawla
82	<i>Machilus glaucescens</i>	Lauraceae	Bhale Kawla
83	<i>Magnolia champaca</i>	Magnoliaceae	
84	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Sindure
85	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Anacardiaceae	Aam
86	<i>Manilkara hexandra</i>	Sapotaceae	Khirkul
87	<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	Sapotaceae	Bokul
88	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Noni
89	<i>Morinda angustifolia</i>	Rubiaceae	Kori Ful
90	<i>Moringa oleifera</i>	Moringaceae	Sojne
91	<i>Murraya paniculata</i>	Rutaceae	Kamini
92	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i>	Musaceae	Kola
93	<i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i>	Rubiaceae	Kadam
94	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tritis</i>	Oleaceae	Sheuli
95	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i>	Bignoniaceae	Totola
96	<i>Pavetta indica</i>	Rubiaceae	
97	<i>Pandanus furcatus</i>	Pandanaceae	
98	<i>Peltophorum pterocarpum</i>	Fabaceae	Radhachura
99	<i>Plumeria alba</i>	Apocynaceae	Kath Chanpa
100	<i>Polyalthia longifolia</i>	Annonaceae	Debdaru
101	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Fabaceae	Karanj
102	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	Arecaceae	Khejur
103	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Phyllanthaceae	Amloki
104	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Myrtaceae	Peara
105	<i>Pterospermum acerifolium</i>	Sterculiaceae	Muchkundo Chapa
106	<i>Putranjiva roxburghii</i>	Putranjivaceae	
107	<i>Randia longispina</i>	Rubiaceae	Moyna Kanta
108	<i>Ravenala madagascariensis</i>	Strelitziaceae	Panthapadop
109	<i>Samanea saman</i>	Fabaceae	Khirish
110	<i>Santalum album</i>	Santalaceae	Swet Chandan

111	<i>Schima wallichii</i>	Theaceae	Chilauney
112	<i>Senna fistula</i>	Fabaceae	Bandor Lathi/Amaltas
113	<i>Shorea robusta</i>	Dipterocarpaceae	Sal
114	<i>Spathodea campanulata</i>	Bignoniaceae	Rudra Palash
115	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>	Anacardiaceae	Amra
116	<i>Sterculia villosa</i>	Sterculiaceae	
117	<i>Streblus asper</i>	Moraceae	Seora
118	<i>Strychnos nux-vomica</i>	Loganiaceae	Kuchila
119	<i>Stereospermum tetragonum</i>	Bignoniaceae	Parari
120	<i>Suregada multiflora</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Narenga
121	<i>Swietenia macrophylla</i>	Meliaceae	Mehagani
122	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Myrtaceae	Choto Jam
123	<i>Syzygium formosum</i>	Myrtaceae	Ambake
124	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	Myrtaceae	Bara Jam
125	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	Fabaceae	Tentul
126	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Bignoniaceae	Chandra Prova
127	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	Verbenaceae	Segun
128	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Combretaceae	Arjun
129	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>	Combretaceae	Bohera
130	<i>Terminalia elliptica</i>	Combretaceae	Pakasaj
131	<i>Terminalia microcarpa</i>	Combretaceae	Panisaj
132	<i>Thespesia populnea</i>	Malvaceae	Paras Pipul
133	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	Apocynaceae	Kolke
134	<i>Toona ciliata</i>	Meliaceae	Toon/Ghora neem
135	<i>Trewia nudiflora</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Pithali
136	<i>Trema orientalis</i>	Cannabaceae	Kapashia
137	<i>Thevetia peruviana</i>	Apocynaceae	Kolke
138	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Cupressaceae	Jhau
139	<i>Vitex negundo</i>	Lamiaceae	Nisinda
140	<i>Wrightia tomentosa</i>	Apocynaceae	Dudhia
141	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i>	Rhamnaceae	Topa kul

Table: List of Climber species documented during the study.

Sl. No.	Climber Species	Family	Local Name
1	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Fabaceae	Kuch
2	<i>Ampelocissus latifolia</i>	Vitaceae	
3	<i>Argyreia speciosa</i>	Convolvulaceae	Bichtarak Guguli
4	<i>Aristolochia indica</i>	Aristolochiaceae	
5	<i>Bougainvillea spectabilis</i>	Nyctaginaceae	Kagoj Ful
6	<i>Caesalpinia sp.</i>	Fabaceae	
7	<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Capparaceae	
8	<i>Cayratia pedata</i>	Vitaceae	
9	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	Fabaceae	Aparajita
10	<i>Coccinia grandis</i>	Cucurbitaceae	Telakucha
11	<i>Cocculus hirsutus</i>	Menispermaceae	

12	<i>Combretum decandrum</i>	Combretaceae	Atang Lata
13	<i>Combretum indicum</i>	Combretaceae	Madhabilata
14	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i>	Convolvulaceae	Swarnalata
15	<i>Derris scandens</i>	Fabaceae	
16	<i>Erycibe paniculata</i>	Convolvulaceae	Kari Lata
17	<i>Hemidesmus indicus</i>	Apocynaceae	Antamul
18	<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i>	Apocynaceae	Dudhi Lata
19	<i>Ipomoea carnea</i>	Convolvulaceae	Jol Kalmi
20	<i>Jasminum multiflorum</i>	Oleaceae	Bon Jui
21	<i>Luffa cylindrica</i>	Cucurbitaceae	Dhudhul
22	<i>Mallotus repandus</i>	Euphorbiaceae	
23	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	Asteraceae	Ravanlata
24	<i>Monstera adansonii</i>	Araceae	
25	<i>Mukuna pruriens</i>	Fabaceae	Alkusi
26	<i>Passiflora foetida</i>	Passifloraceae	Jhumkolata
27	<i>Pergularia daemia</i>	Apocynaceae	
28	<i>Piper betel</i>	Piperaceae	Paan
29	<i>Piper longum</i>	Piperaceae	Bon Morich/Pipul
30	<i>Smilax zeylanica</i>	Smilacaceae	Ram Dantan
31	<i>Stephania hernandifolia</i>	Menispermaceae	Akanadi
32	<i>Tetrastigma sp.</i>	Vitaceae	
33	<i>Tiliacora racemosa</i>	Menispermaceae	
34	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Menispermaceae	Padma Gulancha Lata
35	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i>	Menispermaceae	Gulancha Lata
36	<i>Tragia involucrata</i>	Euphorbiaceae	
37	<i>Vitis trifolia</i>	Vitaceae	
38	<i>Ziziphus oenoplia</i>	Rhamnaceae	Siakul

Table: List of Herb and Shrub species documented during the study.

Sl. No.	Herb and Shrub Species	Family	Local Name
1	<i>Abroma augusta</i>	Sterculiaceae	
2	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Amaranthaceae	
3	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Pteridaceae	Fern
4	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Asteraceae	
5	<i>Alpinia nigra</i>	Zingiberaceae	Purundi
6	<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	Amaranthaceae	
7	<i>Alocasia macrorrhizos</i>	Araceae	Mankochu
8	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i>	Amaranthaceae	Kanta Note
9	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i>	Amaranthaceae	Bon Note
10	<i>Ananas comosus</i>	Bromeliaceae	Jongli Anaras
11	<i>Angiopteris wallichiana</i>	Marattiaceae	Fern
12	<i>Anisomeles indica</i>	Lamiaceae	Gopali
13	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i>	Papaveraceae	Seyal Kanta
14	<i>Barleria prionitis</i>	Acanthaceae	
15	<i>Breynia vitis-idaea</i>	Phyllanthaceae	

16	<i>Caesalpinia bonduc</i>	Fabaceae	
17	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Apocynaceae	Akanda
18	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Cannabaceae	Ganja
19	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Apiaceae	Thankuni
20	<i>Cestrum diurnum</i>	Solanaceae	
21	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	Asteraceae	Asamlata
22	<i>Chrozophora indica</i>	Euphorbiaceae	
23	<i>Cleome rutidosperma</i>	Cleomaceae	Beguni Hurhure
24	<i>Cleome viscosa</i>	Cleomaceae	Holud Hurhure
25	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i>	Verbenaceae	Ghentu/Bhant
26	<i>Coffea benghalensis</i>	Rubiaceae	Coffee
27	<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Araceae	Kochu
28	<i>Combretum roxburghii</i>	Combretaceae	
29	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i>	Commelinaceae	Kansira
30	<i>Costus speciosus</i>	Costaceae	Keu
31	<i>Crotalaria pallida</i>	Fabaceae	Atasi
32	<i>Croton bonplandianus</i>	Euphorbiaceae	
33	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Zingiberaceae	Holud
34	<i>Cycas revoluta</i>	Cycadaceae	Cycas
35	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Poaceae	Durba Ghas
36	<i>Datura metel</i>	Solanaceae	Dhuro
37	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	Fabaceae	
38	<i>Desmodium gyroides</i>	Fabaceae	
39	<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	Athyriaceae	Dhekisak
40	<i>Drymaria cordata</i>	Caryophyllaceae	Fern
41	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	Asteraceae	Kesuth
42	<i>Euphorbia tithymaloides</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Rangchita
43	<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i>	Rutaceae	Ans Seora
44	<i>Gossypium herbaceum</i>	Malvaceae	Tulo
45	<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>	Boraginaceae	Hatisur
46	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Malvaceae	Jaba
47	<i>Hygrophila schulli</i>	Acanthaceae	Kulekhara
48	<i>Ixora coccinea</i>	Rubiaceae	Tangan
49	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i>	Acanthaceae	Basak
50	<i>Justicia gendarussa</i>	Acanthaceae	
51	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Verenda
52	<i>Lantana camara</i>	Verbenaceae	Putus
53	<i>Leucus aspera</i>	Lamiaceae	Danta Kalas
54	<i>Lygodium flexuosum</i>	Lygodiaceae	Fern
55	<i>Marsilea quadrifolia</i>	Marsileaceae	Susni
56	<i>Melastoma malabathricum</i>	Melastomataceae	Putki
57	<i>Mimosa pudica</i>	Fabaceae	Lajjabati
58	<i>Murraya koenigii</i>	Rutaceae	Kari Pata
59	<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Solanaceae	Bon Tamak
60	<i>Nymphoides indica</i>	Menyanthaceae	

61	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Lamiaceae	Tulsi
62	<i>Ocimum gratissimum</i>	Lamiaceae	Ram Tulsi
63	<i>Opuntia dillenii</i>	Cactaceae	Foni Monsa
64	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	Oxalidaceae	Amrul
65	<i>Polygonum hydropiper</i>	Polygonaceae	Jol morich
66	<i>Phlogacanthus thyrsoformis</i>	Acanthaceae	Ram Basak/Tita-phul
67	<i>Phyllanthus reticulatus</i>	Phyllanthaceae	Pankhusi
68	<i>Physalis minima</i>	Solanaceae	
69	<i>Pluchea indica</i>	Asteraceae	
70	<i>Pteris biaurita</i>	Pteridaceae	Fern
71	<i>Randia spinosa</i>	Rubiaceae	
72	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Reri
73	<i>Rumex dentata</i>	Polygonaceae	Pahari Palang
74	<i>Rungia pectinata</i>	Acanthaceae	Pindi
75	<i>Scoparia dulcis</i>	Plantaginaceae	Chini Michri
76	<i>Selaginella sp.</i>	Selaginellaceae	
77	<i>Senna alata</i>	Fabaceae	Dadmardan
78	<i>Senna sophora</i>	Fabaceae	Kalkasunda
79	<i>Sansevieria Zeylanica</i>	Asparagaceae	Snake Plant
80	<i>Sida rhombifolia</i>	Malvaceae	Swet Berala
81	<i>Solanum khasianum</i>	Solanaceae	Bon begun
82	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Solanaceae	
83	<i>Solanum sisymbriifolium</i>	Solanaceae	Kanta Begun/Bon Kontokorika
84	<i>Solanum torvum</i>	Solanaceae	Tita Begun
85	<i>Synedrella nodiflora</i>	Asteraceae	
86	<i>Tabernaemontana divaricata</i>	Apocynaceae	Tagar
87	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	Asteraceae	Tridhara/Tag Ganda
88	<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea</i>	Malvaceae	
89	<i>Turnera ulmifolia</i>	Passifloraceae	
90	<i>Urena lobata</i>	Malvaceae	Bon Okra
91	<i>Vernonia cineria</i>	Asteraceae	
92	<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i>	Lythraceae	
93	<i>Ziziphus rugosa</i>	Rhamnaceae	

Table: List of Epiphytic species documented during the study.

Sl. No.	Herb and Shrub Species	Family	Local Name
1	<i>Bulbophyllum apodum</i>	Orchidaceae	Orchid
2	<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i>	Loranthaceae	Dhaira Ful
3	<i>Vanda roxburghii</i>	Orchidaceae	Orchid
4	<i>Vanda tessellata</i>	Orchidaceae	Orchid

5. Conclusion

Fifty-four sacred groves were identified in five districts. Most of the sacred groves in Alipurduar district are located in forest or forest fringe areas, whereas in rest four districts they are situated in non-forest areas especially amidst the agricultural fields or outside village residential zone. The study revealed that sacred groves of these five districts has been conserving diversified plant components especially the indigenous ones. Maximum plant species diversity was found in Dakshin Dinajpur district (145) followed by Uttar Dinajpur (134), Alipurduar (132), Cooch-Bihar (118) and Jalpaiguri (106). Maximum tree species diversity was found in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar (73 each) followed by Cooch-Bihar (70), Dakshin Dinajpur (61) and Uttar Dinajpur (56). Maximum climber species were documented from Uttar Dinajpur (24) and Dakshin Dinajpur (23). Both Dakshin Dinajpur and Uttar Dinajpur districts also harbours maximum herb and shrub species (60 and 53 respectively). Despite of having maximum plant species diversity, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur districts exhibited comparatively less tree species diversity and high climber species diversity than Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Cooch-Bihar. Most of the sacred groves amidst forest areas are less susceptible to anthropogenic threats like over exploitation or habitat alteration. But many of the sacred groves are socially protected through socio-cultural practices and religious belief system (taboos) and still in good shape exhibiting climax community and providing habitats for numerous wildlife. It is the need of the hour that the sacred grove “Ranakali Than” at Raiganj Block of Uttar Dinajpur district must be taken under immediate consideration for conservation measure as it is on the verge of extinction and facing the challenge of sustaining its own entity. Aggressive encroachment through developmental project of expanding highway for bypassing the Raiganj town is all set to engulf this ancient biodiversity heritage.

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8.1. Important Tree Species of Sacred Groves



Acacia catechu



Acacia auriculiformis



Alstonia scholaris



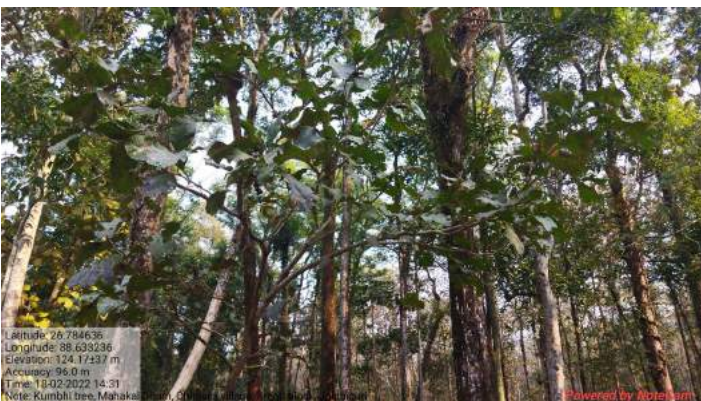
Aegle marmelos



Artocarpus lacucha



Aphanamixis polystachya



Careya arborea



Bombax ceiba

8.1. Important Tree Species of Sacred Groves



Gmelia arborea



Ficus religiosa



Casearia glomerata



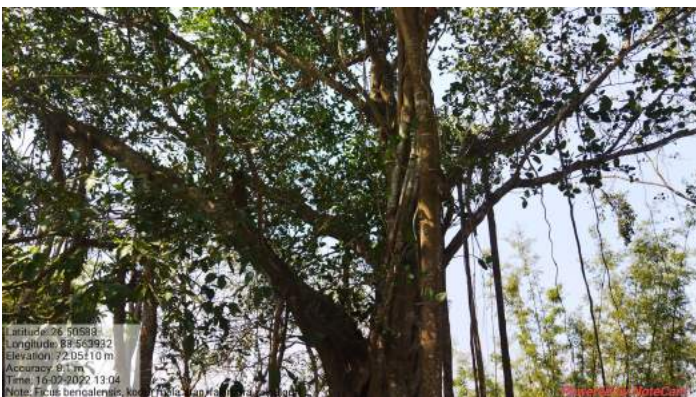
Cordia myxa



Dalbargia sissoo



Diospyros montana



Ficus benghalensis



Ficus hispida

8.1. Important Tree Species of Sacred Groves



Holarrhena pubescens



Lagerstroemia speciosa



Limonia acidissima



Litsea glutinosa



Mallotus philippensis



Morinda citrifolia



Nyctanthes arbor-tritis



Oroxylum indicum

8.1. Important Tree Species of Sacred Groves



Ehretia amoena



Erythrina variegata



Streblus asper



Strychnos –nux-vomica



Suregada multiflora



Swietenia macrophylla



Tectona grandis



Thevetia peruviana

8.2. Important Climber Species of Sacred Groves



Abrus precatorius



Bougainvillea spectabilis



Capparis spinosa



Coccinia grandis



Ichnocarpus frutescens



Mikania Micrantha



Mukuna pruriens



Pergularia daemia

8.2. Important Climber Species of Sacred Groves



Clitoria ternatea



Combretum indicum



Cuscuta reflexa



Piper betel



Smilax zeylanica



Stephania hernandifolia



Tiliacora racemosa



Luffa cylindrica

8.3. Important Herb and Shrub Species of Sacred Groves



Ananas comosus



Calotropis procera



Cassia sophora



Clerodendrum infortunatum



Chromolaena odorata



Cleome rutidosperma



Coffea benghalensis

8.3. Important Herb and Shrub Species of Sacred Groves



Diplazium aesculantum



Glycosmis pentaphylla



Heliotropium indicum



Jatropha gossypifolia



Lantana camara



Leucos aspera



Melastoma malabaricum

8.3. Important Herb and Shrub Species of Sacred Groves



Ocimum sanctum



Phlogacanthus thyrsoformis



Scoparia dulcis



Selaginella sp.



Solanum sisymbirifolium



Tabernaemontana divaricata



Urena lobata



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