

# NETRAKONA

## a gateway to nature

Netrakona, located in northern Bangladesh, is a hidden gem renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty and vibrant cultural heritage. Famous for its waterfalls, kaolin (China clay) hills, serene rivers, tranquil canals, and vast haors, the district is a perfect vacation destination.

JAYADUL ISLAM

During the cooler months, Netrakona attracts tourists eager to explore its landscapes and immerse themselves in its rich cultural diversity. If you plan to visit before the temperatures rise, here's a guide to some of the top attractions in Netrakona that you won't want to miss. From picturesque hills to historical landmarks, the district offers an unforgettable experience for nature lovers and cultural enthusiasts.

**BIRISHIRI CULTURAL ACADEMY, DURGAPUR**  
Birishiri Cultural Academy, officially known as the Ethnic Cultural Academy, is an autonomous institution in Birishiri, Durgapur. Established to preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of various small ethnic communities in the Greater Mymensingh region, the academy focuses on groups such as the Hajong, Koch, Dalu, Mandai, and Banai.

The academy serves as a vital centre for cultural and educational activities, showcasing traditional arts, crafts, music, and dance. It plays a crucial role in preserving languages, social customs, clothing, food habits, rituals, and other traditions integral to these communities' identities.

**SOMESHWARI RIVER, DURGAPUR**  
Originating from the Garo Hills in Meghalaya, India, the Someshwari flows into Durgapur upazila in Netrakona. Renowned for its crystal-clear waters and lush green surroundings, the river offers breathtaking landscapes



Ganeshwari river in Kalmakanda.

PHOTO: JAYADUL ISLAM

vigorous flow that appeals to adventure enthusiasts.

**RANIKHONG MISSION, DURGAPUR**  
Located near the Someshwari, Ranikhong Mission is a significant Christian missionary site known for its historical and cultural heritage. Situated near the Bangladesh-India border, it offers scenic views of the Indian hills. The mission's colonial-style architecture provides a glimpse into the past.

**CHINA MATIR PAHAR, DURGAPUR**  
China Matir Pahar (Kaolin Hills) in Bijoypur, Durgapur, is a unique geological formation. Famous for its distinctive

formed in the former mining pits enhance Bijoypur's scenic beauty.

**KOMOLA RANI DIGHI, DURGAPUR**  
Komola Rani Dighi, also known as Sagar Dighi, is a historic pond near the Birishiri Union Parishad, about three kilometres from Durgapur Sadar.

According to legend, in the late 15th century, King Janki Nath of Susong Durgapur married Komola Devi, and they had a son, Raghunath. To address water scarcity, the king dug a pond, but it remained dry. One night, he dreamed that if Queen Kamala Devi worshipped in the pond's centre, it would fill with water. When she performed the ritual, the water suddenly rose and drowned her.

Grieving, the king later dreamed that if he left infant Raghunath by the pond, Kamala Devi would return to breastfeed him—on the condition that he never touched her. Each night, she fed the child before vanishing. One night, the king tried to touch her, and she disappeared forever.

During Raghunath's reign, Susong Durgapur became a powerful pargana. He conquered Jangalbari Fort and defeated zamindars Chand Roy and Kedar Roy, earning the title of Maharaja from the Mughals. Today, the Someshwari flows through Komola Rani Dighi, with its southern and western banks standing as silent witnesses to history.

**CHANDRADINGA WATERFALL, KALMAKANDA**  
Located in Panchgaon village, Kalmakanda upazila, Chandradinga Waterfall is a serene destination near the Bangladesh-India border. The soothing sound of cascading water and the lush green surroundings make it a perfect retreat for nature lovers.

**GANESHWARI RIVER, KALMAKANDA**  
Flowing along the Garo Hills, the Ganeshwari river offers mesmerising views. To the northeast lies the India-Bangladesh border, lined with high, forested hills. The picturesque landscape is home to small ethnic communities.

**DINGAPOTA HAOR, MOHANGANJ**  
Dingapota Haor in Mohanganj Upazila is one of Bangladesh's largest wetlands. Its beauty transforms with the seasons, offering distinct experiences year-round. During the monsoon, the haor resembles a vast sea, with submerged hijal trees enhancing its charm. In the dry season, lush green fields and golden paddy crops replace the water, creating a stunning contrast.

**UCHITPUR HAOR, MADAN**  
Located in Madan upazila, Uchitpur Haor is a wetland known for its natural beauty. During the monsoon, it is often called the "Mini Cox's Bazar" due to its vast sandy stretches, creating a beach-like ambience that captivates visitors.



PHOTO: JAYADUL ISLAM

Ranikhong mission in Durgapur

### HOW TO GO THERE

#### BY BUS

BRTC and other private bus companies operate regular services from Mohakhali Bus Terminal to Netrakona. The journey is budget-friendly, with tickets costing around Tk 450.

#### BY TRAIN

For a more comfortable ride, take the Mohanganj Express or Haor Express from Kamalapur Railway Station or Airport Station.

#### WHERE TO STAY

Although Netrakona lacks luxury hotels, it offers several decent accommodations that are clean, affordable, and well-located. Netrakona Circuit House, Kachari Dak Bungalow, LGED Rest House, YMCA rest house in Durgapur are a few of them. Room rates range from Tk 1,000 to Tk 2,500 per night, ensuring a comfortable stay for tourists exploring Netrakona's serene beauty and rich cultural heritage.



PHOTO: JAYADUL ISLAM

Birishiri Cultural Academy in Durgapur



PHOTO: JAYADUL ISLAM

Chandradinga waterfall in Kalmakanda.



PHOTO: MD MAMUNUR RASHID

year-round. The Someshwari's beauty changes with the seasons. In winter, the receding water reveals sandy banks ideal for leisurely walks, while during the monsoon, the river swells, displaying a

white clay hills, the area is rich in minerals and has become a popular tourist destination.

The striking contrast between the white clay hills and the surrounding landscape makes this site a fascinating attraction. Additionally, the turquoise lakes



Someshwari river in Durgapur

PHOTO: MORSHED NEEL