



The Barataraf family residence; and (below) terracotta carving of Vishnu anantashayan in a temple belonging to the Mejotaraf descendants

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## Hadal-Narayanpur

**14** Located on the banks of the Bodai river, the twin villages of Hadal-Narayanpur are a one-and-a-half-hour drive from Bankura town in West Bengal. The villages are noted for the Mandal family terracotta temples—Barataraf, Mejotaraf and Chhototaraf. The Mandals were early settlers in the area, who rose to prominence after gaining favour from the Malla Rajah Gopal Singh. The residence of the Barataraf—the main or senior descendants of the Mandal zamindar family—is no less than a palace. Near the entrance there is a huge *Rasmancha*. In an enclosure inside the residence compound there is a bell metal *ratha* (chariot). Meanwhile, Mejotaraf and Chhototaraf are richly studded with unique terracotta panels, including a noteworthy representation of Vishnu in the *anantashayan* posture. *Base yourself in Bankura; your best option is Hotel Saptarshi (from Rs 550; 03242-253272).*