

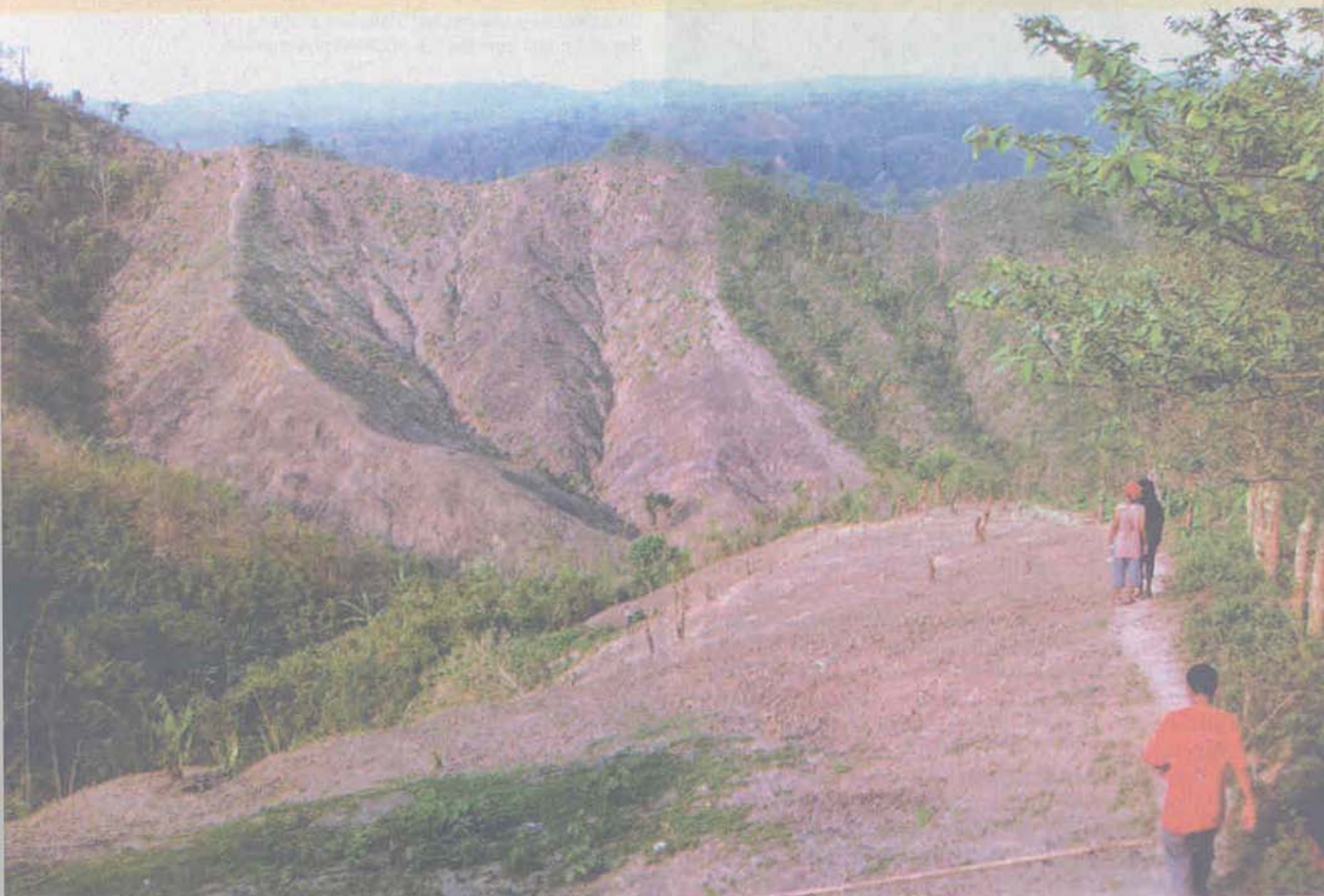
people are the romantic ones. They come to the resort and stay here, be it sunny or rain. They take a cup of coffee and watch the scenes unfold each morning. They are just here for a change of surroundings," says Diyan. The magnificence of Bandarban will surely allure one to extend his or her stay. I can vouch for a third kind of people, those that try to evade the mosquitoes. Though the situation is not so bad right now, a powerful mosquito repellent called Odomos quickly befriends anyone and everyone in Bandarban. The time of sunrise and sunset is the most dangerous period to get bitten by mosquitoes as it is feeding time. One must remember that this is a malaria prone area so precautions must be taken.

My friends and I went up an interesting looking flight of stairs (it was made out of mud with bamboo edges to give grip), and found ourselves at the entrance of the restaurant 'Restora Riggre Khyang'. This hosts a variety of local and foreign cuisine and its balcony has the best view of the river Sangu gently flowing below. We would be on the riverbank in the evening.

After a quick shower and breakfast, we set forth to visit some indigenous villages. Our guide for the trip was Khawl Khup Bawm, who has been working at Milonchhori for about two years. He comes to work from Farook Para close to Shailaprobat. There are more than a hundred families residing where he comes from and most of them work in fruit gardens, growing pineapples, papayas, bananas and mangoes and selling them to local markets.

After 20 minutes of driving, we came upon Changgye Para, where two tribal villages were located. As we went down the mountain through the lush green hills, accessible only through unpaved roads, the settlements soon came into view. Some of my friends made walking sticks out from bamboos lying about and we were quite energetic as we made our way down the hill. I wish we had conserved some of the energy for the later climb back, uphill.

The ancestors of these indigenous people basically came from Myanmar. Chiefly Buddhist by religion, these



The walk to Sangu River involves trekking through a range of mountains, fruit gardens as well as paddy fields.