

Star Holiday

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 6, 2008

PACKAGE TOURS



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BANGLADESH



The Hilly Bangladesh

THREE consecutive holidays were ahead from February 21 to 23. I sat over a map and chalked out a plan to take a detour of the hill districts. I phoned Shaer to arrange a vehicle. Shaer requested few friends and Monzoor responded quickly.



On February 21 morning Monzoor and his wife Jesmine picked me up from Kakali, Banani area. We picked up Shaer, Mimi, Meesham and Shaeri. At Zatrabari, we met a huge traffic jam. All holidaymakers were rushing out of the capital. We halted in

front of the Nurjahan Restaurant at Comilla to take breakfast of paratha and beef bhuna.

The weather was pleasant. We took a left turn at Baroihut and right turn at Karerhut. Once we entered the hilly area our companions were thrilled. The driver was new in this terrain, which worried me a little. Soon the driver got acclimatized.

We reached Ramgarh at around 1300 hours. We visited the BDR (Bangladesh Rifles) founding site, had a cozy rest and a cup of tea at Ramgarh BDR rest house and then proceeded towards Khagrachhari. We reached Mohalchhari before sunset for the night halt.

We woke early morning to the chirpings of birds. We headed for Ghagra, my old place of posting. I became nostalgic when I crossed Kutukchhari, Bogachhari and Manikchhari. We crossed through RMMK (Rangamati-Manikchari-Mohalchhari-Khagrachhari) Road and the famous massive hill range



Kalapahar We reached Ghagra at about 1000 hours. We had our tea and proceeded for Kaptai through Ghaghra-Baraichari route.

I was too happy to see lofty Pine trees I had planted 20 years back on both side of the ascending road to the Officers' Mess of Ghaghra Army Camp. We left Ghaghra at about 1100 hours and reached Kaptai Dam about 1200 hours. Oh! Another beautiful site by the lakeside.

By the river Karnaphuly we observed how picnickers were enjoying! We refueled our microbus at Lichubagan and headed for Bandarban. We

had a pleasant journey through the Lichubagan-Bandarban road though it was quite zigzagged. We reached Bandarban before sunset and proceeded towards Chimbuk. A new rest house is ready to be inaugurated at Chimbuk. It was another rare experience to drive through the hilly road at night. We reached Bolipara BDR HQ and refreshed ourselves. After dinner, we went for a stroll and found that people here are using solar energy to light up their homes very comfortably. Next morning we visited a village of indigenous people.

We set out for return

journey on February 23 morning and took a right turn just after 22 kilometers and found the famous Nilgiri. It was a beautiful place to stay overnight. On the way to Bandarban we halted at Sailopropat and Jesmine and Mimi got busy shopping shawls and bed sheets. We left Bandarban before lunch for Dhaka.

It was a wonderful adventurous journey indeed. We covered a total 874km.

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Photo: SHEIKH SHAER HASSAN

