

Reclaiming the land

In the end, victory tasted sweeter than anything else the world had to offer. The trauma of the preceding nine months, the sacrifices of three million souls, the rape of two hundred thousand women and the pillaging of villages and towns finally culminated in that ancient historical truth --- the triumph of those who had suffered. On December 16, 1971, the people of Bangladesh came home, in that deeply philosophical sense of the meaning. With the surrender of the Pakistan occupation forces on a declining winter afternoon, it was a new nation, armed with the indomitable will that comes of a convergence of poetry and politics, of a spirit that does not flinch from waging war in the cause of righteousness, that took its place in the global scheme of things.

Today, as dawn breaks through the mist across the huts in our hamlets, as it gleams in our rivers, we observe that remembered moment of victory. We celebrate; and yet in a larger sense we commemorate the supreme sacrifices of all those millions who perished in order for all of us to live in the dignity that comes of being free. Heads bowed in reverence, hearts deep in prayer, we recall the national leadership that showed us the path out of the dark woods and we salute the brave sons and daughters of the soil who marched to the fields of war determined to wrest the land and its heritage from dark elements come from the hills.

Today we sing the old songs of the heart, of the triumph of morality over evil.

-Editor



Victory Monument near Bangabazar in the city.