Rhino Heritage Museum

Nearly two decades after he was killed in Kargil leading his Kashmiri troops into battle, the bust of Capt Keishing Clifford Nongrum, MVC, at the Rhino Heritage Museum, surveys the Rilbong crossroads in the town where he grew up. The bust of Maj David Manlun, KC, who was educated in Shillong and killed in combat last year in Nagaland, was recently unveiled, and the two join the statue of Field Marshal SHFJ Manekshaw, who spearheaded India's victory in the Indo-Pak War of 1971. The squat building with a vaulted dome was constructed in 1928 and used as an arms store. In 1944, it housed Japanese prisoners of war and came to be known as Dungeon Lines. For a brief while after the Second World War ended, Gurkha troops used it as an ammunition store. After Independence, it fell into disuse till it was resurrected at the turn of the century. The pink building with the formidable sculpture of a rhino has photographs and war memorabilia that celebrates the history of the Indian Army’s 101 Area, the first of its formations to reach Dhaka during the 1971 war. It also has a room chock-a-block with information on the heritage, courage and compassion of the Assam Rifles, India’s oldest paramilitary force, headquartered in Shillong. Outside the museum is a Vijayanta tank standing at the crossroads.