

HERITAGE

Muktijuddho Museum in the City

MUKTIJUDDHO Smriti Trust in a press briefing declared their intention to open a Muktijuddho Museum in the heart of Dhaka city. In their first ever press conference on June 19, the Trust met the press at 5 Segun Bagicha, the premises where the museum will be located, and announced that documents, papers, photographs, information, personal belongings of freedom fighters and other martyrs and all kinds of memorabilia from the great liberation war will be kept in the museum for people to see.

The Muktijuddho Smriti Trust was conceived by a group of members sharing similar thought, respect and pride for the War of Liberation of Bangladesh. It is their common sentiments for the martyrs of the war and their felt need to honour the great sacrifices for the struggle for freedom, that had led to the formation of this trust.

The Trust feels, it is unfortunate that even after 24 years of independence no concerted effort has been made by successive governments to preserve its spirit. Rather, history has been repeatedly distorted to meet the political interests of vested quarters. It is unfortunate that the new generation has very little opportunity to learn about the tragedies, sacrifices and glories of the Liberation War.

spots where important battles were fought, and to establish a memorial museum.

In the absence of any sincere effort by the government, the Trust feels involvement of people committed to the spirit of liberation is essential for preservation of such memories, and

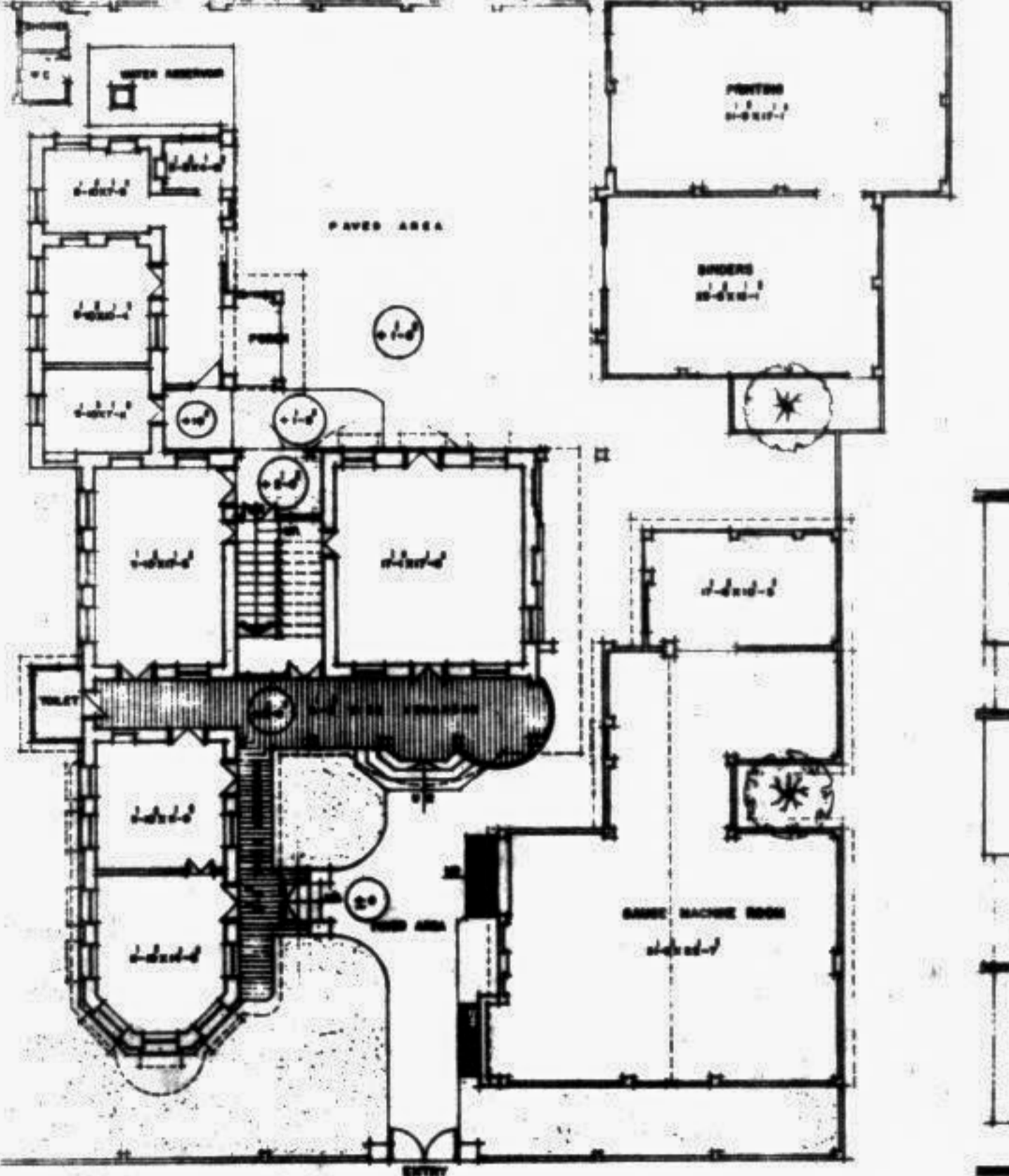
that a "private initiative" must be taken at the earliest, initially to "identify these historic sites and subsequently to work towards their preservation" for new generation and for posterity to be aware of their history and heritage.

—Akku Chowdhury

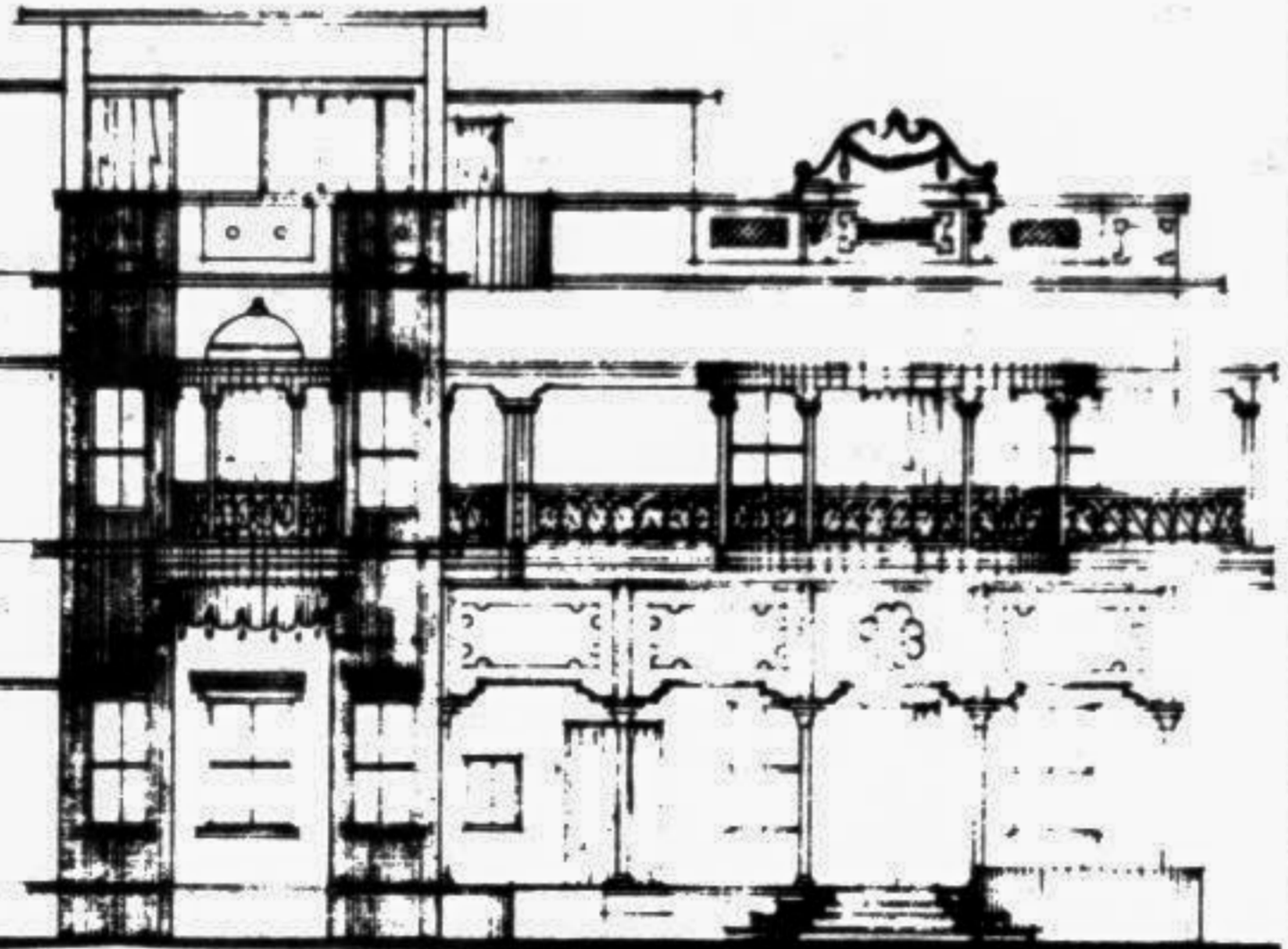


Muktijuddho Smriti Trust: Aims and Objectives

The Trust shall identify and preserve sites that had been significant in the liberation war. These may be important battle sites, killing fields and graves of freedom fighters or other victims of mass killing by the Pakistan Army and their henchmen Al-Badr, Al-Shams and Razakars.



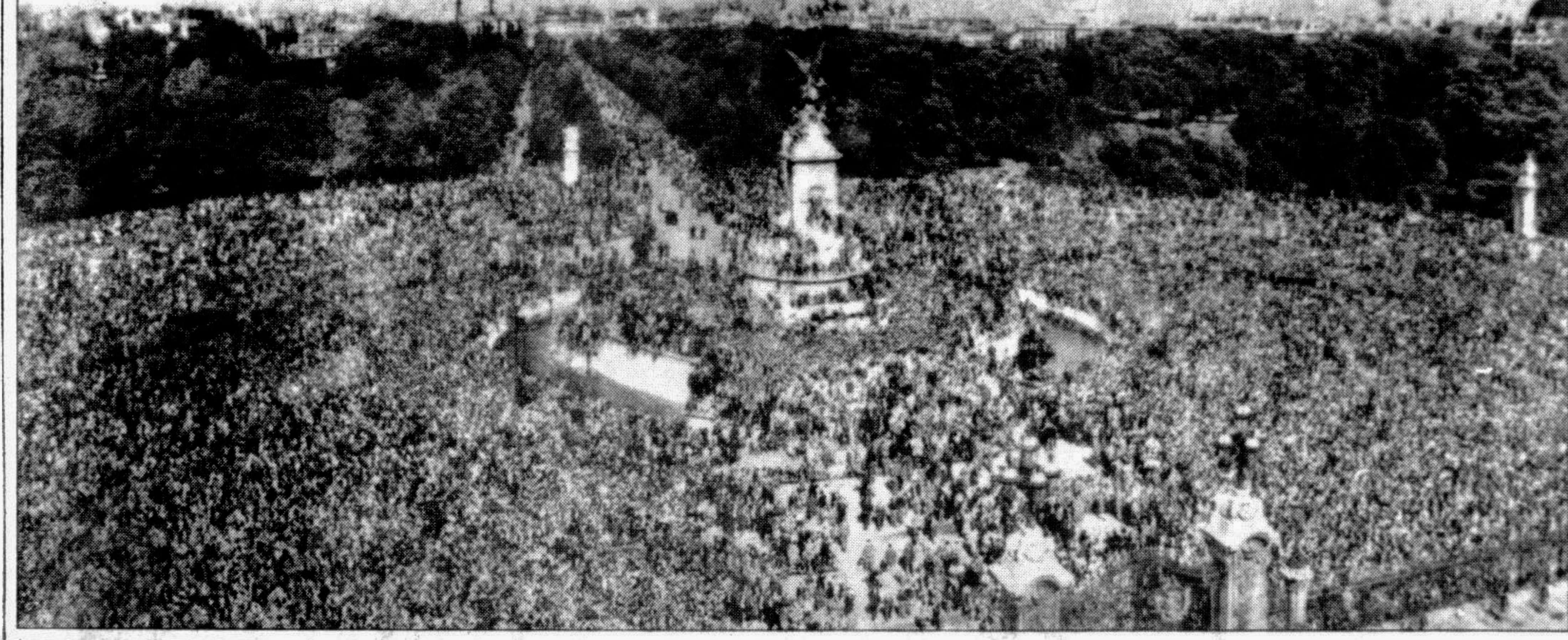
Ground floor plan



South elevation

HISTORY

VE DAY COMMEMORATION: From 1939 to 1945, the people of Britain were a united nation intent on bringing an end to World War II. On May 8 1945, with their task finally completed, those same people took to the streets of London to celebrate VE Day when war in Europe was declared over. This archive picture shows a view of the crowds in the Mall. The picture was taken from the roof of Buckingham Palace. — LPS



ETHICS

POLICE officers in Britain are among the last in the world to remain unarmed in the course of their routine duties. Except for the regulation baton and pair of handcuffs carried by the "Bobby" on the beat, no British police officer — man or woman — carries a revolver or any other lethal weapons. But over the past few years, an increasing number of officers have been coming under fire while patrolling the streets or carrying out other acts of law-enforcement. In a number of cases the officers involved have been seriously wounded, even killed. Thus there has been mounting concern that the police are simply not well enough equipped to deal effectively with today's criminal class.

Changing Values: The British Scene

by Sagar Chaudhury

last April 28-year old police constable Philip Walters was gunned down in East London. In the West Yorkshire region in Northern England, there were nearly eight hundred assaults on the police in last year alone and now each officer is issued with bullet-protective vest. Four times a day its fire-arms officers undergo intensive weapons and tactics training. But although the threat from gun-toting criminals has increased, most police officers still feel strongly that the police should not be routinely armed.

In the recent survey — the biggest ever ballot held by the Police Federation — all 126,000 officers were asked their opinion on whether they should be routinely allowed to carry arms in the line of duty. Of these, 74,000 replied. Out of these again, 79% rejected routine arming, but 83% said "Yes" to an increase in the number of officers who has access to arms. One officer, who has been in the police-force for the last eight

teen years, said: "I would resign if was required to carry a gun.... I am not prepared to have the responsibility (of carrying a fire-arm)....." This officer is not alone in expressing such sentiments. All police-forces in the country currently have armed-response units that are available twenty-four hours a day and there are other officers who believe that these specially equipped units are the best way of tackling armed criminals. Besides, there have been a few cases recently where the police have been criticised for over-reacting, even where highly trained officers have been involved. So many police personnel do not think that the force can cope with situations where every officer carries a gun — that is to say, the option between life and death — in his hand.

Called Kola Pani or Black Waters, two islands in a far-flung part of the Indian subcontinent could be the answer to Westerners' quest for a new unspoiled heaven on earth.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands are a tourist delight, so far untouched by invading armies of Japanese and American visitors in search of new destinations unknown to Europeans and other tourists.

Actually closer to Indonesia than to Indian ports, the Andamans have remained an exotic, back-of-beyond destination even for local tourists.

Access is a problem for would-be visitors because the islands — particularly Nicobar — are verboten to all foreigners and even to Indians. Nicobar is a Tribal Protected Area and a special permit is needed to go there.

Indian authorities, have adopted a cautious approach, discouraging visitors from coming face-to-face with even not-so-hostile tribes of the islands. The official policy is to leave the tribes alone.

Ironically, a perennial attraction of the Andaman and Nicobar islands is the very same protected tribal group. The islands' inhabitants are believed to be among the world's most primitive tribes. Six aboriginal tribes inhabit this group of islands with the Sentinelese, found in the

Heaven is Out of Bounds

North Sentinel Island, being the most hostile. The Jarawa, which is of Negrito stock, is the most feared tribe. But even as myths and legends about the Jarawas abound, local environmentalists believe they only attack when provoked. Among the things Jarawas consider as grave provocation is the hunting of wild boar in their island. They seek out hunters for days, if need be, to kill them.

damaged in any way. A major concern is the emergence of pollution and environmental degradation problems once tourists flock to the islands. It may be more difficult to maintain ecological balance in the islands especially with the basic problem of lack of water supply. One of the hotels in Port Blair has, in fact, begun using sea water for flushing its toilets while visitors to the Cinque island are advised to



The Andamans' obvious appeal has India's Department of Tourism fighting determinedly to develop the islands as tourist destinations. But the Department of Environment and "Green" brigades are equally determined to block their plans. They fear greed for dollars will destroy some of the most unspoiled parts of the country.

Senior officials say: "We want to promote the emerald isles (Andaman and Nicobar) as a major tourist destination, but without damaging its quiet retreats. In other words, the ecosystems will not be

carry their own drinking water. Tourism planners in the Andamans face other peculiar challenges including the lack of reliable communication, inter-island transportation and adequate accommodation. Additional flights and ferry services from the mainland are also needed to bring in more and more tourists.

Despite the heavy demand, there is only an alternate-day Indian Airlines flight from Calcutta and Madras to Port Blair, with no more than 100 passengers. Two private airlines have already shown in-

terest in operating flights to Port Blair. Although the Department of Civil Aviation has cleared a project to extend the runway to accommodate bigger aircraft like the Airbus and full-load 737s, experts point out that this will take a couple of years. An alternative is to develop a high-class low-volume tourism as in the case of the neighbouring Buddhist kingdom of Bhutan.

Officials say there are plans to develop beach resorts in more picturesque and sparsely inhabited islands. Then there are cruises along mangrove-lined lagoons and tropical rain forests and magical miles of colourful coral reefs.

However, there are no ferry services. Boat charter to visit the most picturesque island of Cinque costs a steep 850 rupees (US\$7) per head. The island has acres of coral reefs with rare fishes of all colours.

The lack of inter-island communications has halted a move by the Department of Tourism to float global tenders so beaches can be leased to Indian and foreign companies for development as resorts. One beach at Havlock has already been booked by a non-resident Indian industrialist with a foreign partner. — Depthnews Asia

Good News in the Budget Season

POWER CELLS: Like electricity, the power cells in the power generation public sector have positive and negative polarities (plus and minus). The government is firm on neutralizing the vested groups of the negative activists within these organisations, resisting the privatisation or infusion of private investment in tieups in keeping with the modern open market trend. Timed with the announcement of the creation of new Power (Transfer) Cells by the government, the vested coterie inside have started public agitation by rousing the labour unions to resist the move and agitate for a "powerful" merger of PDB, DESA and REB. The union leaders are not telling the workers one single important point: from where the private sector will get the thousands of trained personnel to run

The Passing Show

by Alif Zabr

the privatised business, except through the transfer or reemployment of the existing hands? It takes years to train a person and many more years for him to gain experience. Skilled personnel cannot be plucked from the trees. The activities of the notorious vested groups inside (they are a minority) should be crushed mercilessly by the peoples' government.

TELECOM: The same type of gang is operating in the public telecom sector making telephones in Bangladesh the most expensive in the world, and service also may be the worst in the world (the solution may be all-out fixed

wireless/cellular system now fast coming into vogue, where the total global investment is shooting into tens of billions of dollars, according to reports in the trade journals). The private sector alone can never meet the ever-increasing demand for new telephones in the country in the next ten or fifteen years. Here also the technical personnel from the public sector will have to man the services, and train up the new entry staff. The Bangladesh T&T Board Amendment Bill has just been introduced in the Parliament during the budget session. This is a move in the right direction. There are many types of hostage-takers in the country, including some powerful sharks in the public sector. It is the duty of the government to break these powerful cartels who are acting against the public interest.

NGO DIVERSIFICATION: Good news that the Islamic Bank is going to participate in the NGO activities in the rural sector. This will provide a balancing effect in the NGO sourcing, in view of some kind of negative image of some of the NGO work, especially by the foreign NGOs, drawing questionable reactions from the public at large.

While the government is rightly concentrating on the development activities in the rural areas, in view of the open market economy, our small businessmen in the urban area have to be trained by the NGOs in the science and art of marketing. The rural groups have to be taught quality control, storage, marketing and distribution techniques (eggs, poultry, cheese, milk, potatoes, fruits and vegetable products). The rural cooperatives, with amateurish background in management, have to be imparted professional training in these lines. The local and foreign NGOs are a suitable mechanism to impart the knowledge and field experience. An integrated master plan is necessary for guideline, the technical manuals may be prepared separately in phases.

NEW CURRICULA FOR SCHOOLS: The announcement of the preparation of new curricula for the SSC and HSC is most welcome. It is time our education system is made up-to-date and more practical. So long the objective on the part of the student was simply to pass the examination. The university syllabi have also been recast for international recognition. The loopholes in the vocational and technical training, adult education, and non-formal education are also being looked into. These measures will bring in some fresh air in the stale academic environment. Let us not talk about campus violence!

other cases, sadly, they have moved completely away and severed all links with the buildings and lands which have perhaps been in their family for generations. Britain's Aristocracy has been under this pressure for about a hundred years. Their decline began in the 1880s when the price of land began to fall. Since then, a combination of mismanagement, death duties or inheritance tax and low incomes from farming has forced increasing numbers of the landed gentry out of their ancestral homes. In the last twenty years alone, more than five hundred country estates have been sold by the Aristocracy. Their homes may ultimately be turned into hotels or conference centres or simply fall into disrepair, which would indeed be a great pity.

and the fortunes of the 500 wealthiest people have fallen by an average of £ 20 million per head. But although the Aristocracy have been the hardest-hit group so far, there are still one hundred and one of them on the Rich List, including the monarch of the realm.

The London newspaper The Sunday Times brings out every year a line-up of the wealthiest people in Britain. Facetiously called "The Rich List", the recently published line-up for 1995 claims that over the last twelve months the combined total wealth of the five hundred richest people in the country has fallen by nearly ten thousand million pounds, which proves that if money is hard to make, it is just as hard to keep. At the top of the Sunday Times Rich List for two years in succession have been the Rausing brothers, who left their own country Sweden to come Britain and made a fortune — over 5000 million pounds — from a new design for plastic milk containers. But at the end of last year their business interests were found to have lost more than an estimated 1000 million pounds and their company is still staggering from the impact of the loss. The general depression which has been afflicting Britain's economy for the past five years or so, characterised by falling share prices and a dormant property market, has adversely affected the wealthy

For years Queen Elizabeth II had been topping the list but new and stricter rules on defining personal wealth have relegated the Queen to the seventeenth position, below such commoners as the financier James Goldsmith and the head of the Virgin Empire, Richard Brason. However, much of this decline in the Queen's fortunes is due to the decision not to include her art collection in the assessment of her wealth. This collection contains, among others, 20,000 Old Master drawings and paintings and has been valued at up to £ 10 billion.

There have been, of course, some rises as well as declines over the past twelve months. For example, the Bamford family who make construction equipment, and the newspaper published Viscount Rothermere have climbed up the ladder. There is also Robert Earl who has teamed up with Hollywood stars Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone to develop the Planet Hollywood restaurants, one of which is located at the West End in London. He is only 143rd on the list, but he is well on his way to becoming the world's first billionaire restaurateur. Leading figures from the world of music and entertainment also feature near the top of the list. Ex-Beatle Paul McCartney is at the 20th position, followed closely by Andrew Lloyd Webber, the producer of such blockbuster musicals as "Cats" and "Evita" which have been seen around the world to full houses. Ageing rockers Elton John, Phill Collins and Mick Jagger are further down the list but not too far behind.