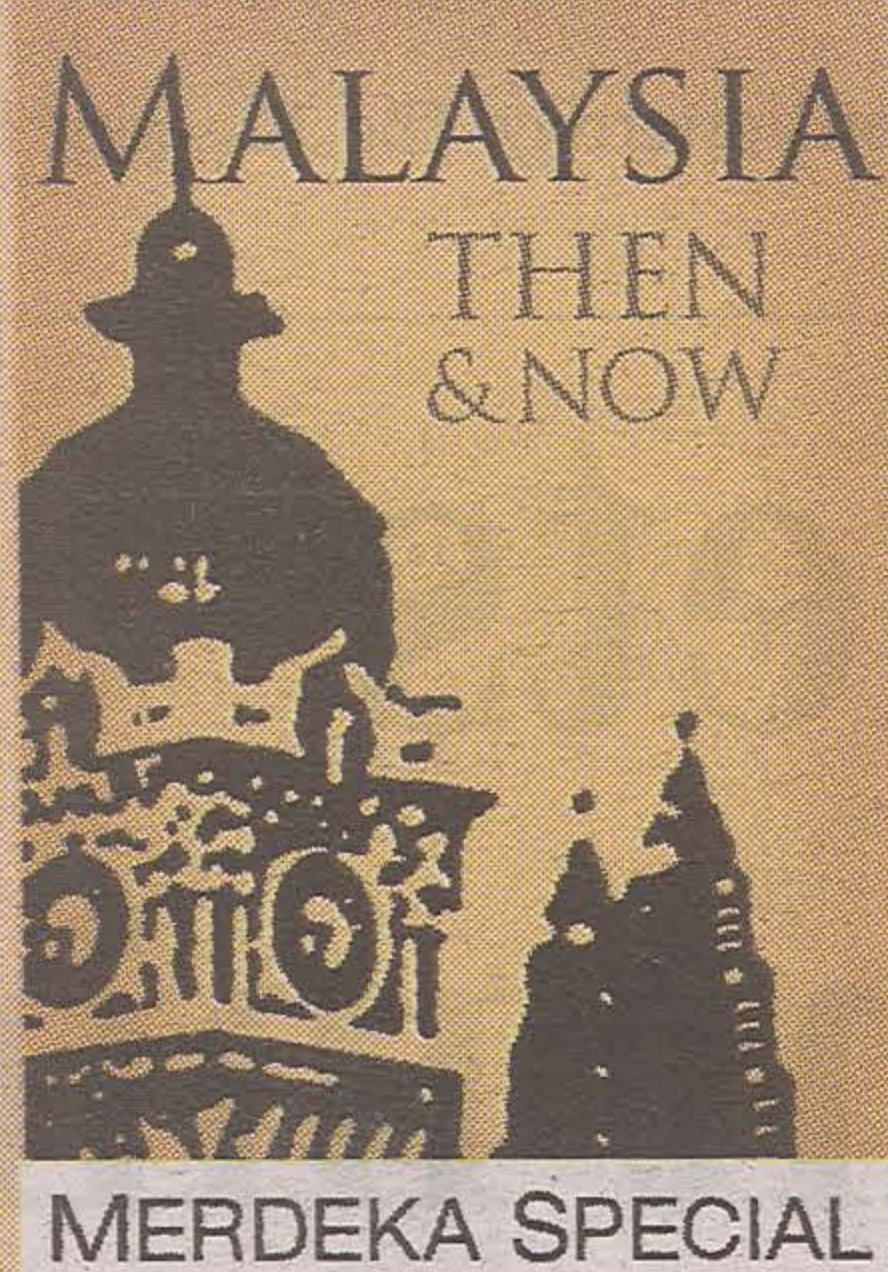


Bishop Street busy as ever



Money still flows through here

NST- 23/5/2007



BISHOP Street in Penang has an interesting history. In the early days, when Penang was a trading post, the island attracted settlers from Europe, India, China, the Malay Archipelago, Thailand and Burma.

Apparently, the Europeans settled in Light Street, while the Eurasians from Kedah and Phuket stayed in Bishop Street and Church Street. And the names? They were named after the Right Reverend Thomas Middleton, the Anglican bishop of Calcutta who consecrated the neighbouring church of St George in 1819.

In the above picture (taken around 1911), you can see business house White-

away, Laidlaw & Co which had branches in India, the Straits Settlement (thus, its presence in Penang) and Shanghai. Even then, the street had a financial gravitas about it.

Today, Bishop Street remains one of the financial arteries of Penang. Here, you will find banks, insurance companies and the offices of accountants.

Although the buildings on the left may have lost their beautiful facades (the pre-war colonial-style architecture now all covered with signboards and air-conditioning units) and instead of a row of trishaws, we now have cars, the street has not changed much in its purpose.

