

# Hotel group to run Danish tavern



The Denmark Tavern, an 18th century inn for sailors in Serampore, after restoration



## ANASUYA BASU

*Mr Parr, who formerly kept the London Tavern, has taken the new upper-roomed house near the flag-staff in Serampore, directly facing the Barrackpore Cantonments and fitted up the same in an elegant and convenient manner; both as a Hotel and Tavern.*

**Calcutta:** Three centuries since the advertisement came out in the *Calcutta Gazette*, The Denmark Tavern — fitted out identically — starts afresh. Only Mr Parr has been replaced by The Park, Calcutta.

The hospitality chain owned by the Apeejay Surrendra Group has entered into an agreement with the state government to “manage the property of The Denmark Tavern”, which has been recently renovated

and refurbished as a cafe with six rooms for lodging. “We will manage the property on behalf of the state government,” an official of The Park said.

The tavern had been in a shambles with gnarled tree roots entwined around most of the structure, the wooden louvres broken and discoloured and the inside staircase in ruins. It was just another derelict structure in Serampore, which once went by the name of Fredricknagore and used to be a Danish colony till 1845, till a group of restorers, historians and experts from Denmark set sight on it.

The two-storeyed structure by the Hooghly was identified as Denmark Hotel and Tavern, where the Danes had kept their flagstaff and cannons. It took around two years to restore the tavern to its former

glory as part of Serampore Initiative, a restoration programme for several Danish heritage structures led by the National Museum of Denmark and funded by Realdania, a private trust in Denmark, in collaboration with state heritage commission, and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (Intach).

The tavern was restored at a cost of Rs 5 crore, the expenses borne by Realdania and the Bengal tourism department and inaugurated on March 1.

The cafe, with its double storeyed atrium, resembles Indian Coffee House in Calcutta. On the first floor are six plush rooms to be let out to boarders.

Guests can now enjoy a quiet break on the bank of Hooghly and enjoy the sights and sounds of old-world Serampore.