ILLIONS of movie addicts across South Asia A are rejoicing as foreign

satellite television networks

begin beaming free late-night

adult films and popular

Hollywood movies into the

ger to cash in on one of the

India's conservative censorship norms, with media magnate

Rupert Murdoch's popular

Hong Kong-based STAR TV

crashing the loudest in recent

India's first encrypted televi-

sion channel in October, has

been hauled to court by cable

operators for not giving them a

year's list of films, cleared by

Indian censors, to be screened

on the pay movie channel.

Operators say they have paid

A pre-legislative govern-

ment order in late September

makes it mandatory for all

movies shown on encrypted

channels to conform to Indian

censor norms. Operators must

keep a year's list of such

movies to be shown on a pay

low our laws. The police will

put me behind bars if a sub-

scriber complains," says Roop

Sharma, head of the Cable

Operators Federation of India

(COFI) which represents 42

The cable television ordi-

nance makes operators liable

for pay channel programmes.

The ordinance will be replaced

by a law, and was issued by the

Information and Broadcasting

(I and B) Ministry a few days

before STAR launched its

obtained censor elearance for

75 movies. It needs to get an-

other 225 cleared to keep its

channel running for a year.

Newspaper reports quote un-

named STAR TV officials as

saying that it will take at least

that we are committed to

working with all authorities to

ensure that we comply with

local laws. We have told all ca-

ble operators that we will do

our best to obtain all clear-

ances from authorities," said

Brian Delaporte, senior STAR

TV manager and the network's

Sunset Rule

Continued from page 12

purpose. Cates they insist

should be open till the time

representative in India:

"Our long-stated position is

a year to get this done.

STAR is reported to have

operator associations,

movie channel.

"We are asking them to fol-

the US\$1.290 annual sub-

scription for the films.

channel.

STAR TV, which launched

world's largest television markets have run into trouble with

But foreign broadcasters ea-

teeming subcontinent.

Fons Tuinstra writes from Beijing

History is often written to fit prevailing perceptions rather than past facts, and thus tends to fuel current prejudices. That, says the author of a controversial book released in Beijing, is exactly what happened with the apparently definitive account of the life of China's last empress. Gemini News Service reports on an attempt to re-write history.

ISTORY is about to be re written in China: a book challenging the accepted view of the last empress — used by Westerners to justify anti Chinese stereotypes and by the communists to justify their vilification of the old feudal order released by the state-owned publishing house in Beijing.

A Chinese translation of Dragon Lady, the international best seller by Sterling Seagrave, is published early this year, confronting Chinese readers with a new account of the life of Cixi. "the last empress of China," who died in

The book attacks the work of three generations of sinologists and claims to expose a major historical fraud.

In the current view, the empress dowager Cixi (pronounced: Smie) is seen as an murderous nymphomaniac who killed anybody in her way.

Western powers used her evil reputation as an excuse to invade China in 1900, occupying parts of the country and finally destroying the imperial dynasty

Seagrave claims the whole picture is based on forged documents and false informa-

Seagrave paints Cixi as kind, indecisive and often misguided, a powerless puppet in the power struggle between factions of princes and warlords in the Forbidden City. Isolated from the outside world. Cixi never developed an independent view about developments in her country.

The common recollection of Cixi's role in Chinese history, says Seagrave, is mainly based on the account of the British journalist Sir Edmund Backhouse, who worked in Beijing at the turn of the century. His information

HERE goes my people I must follow them because I am their leader. This had been the golden pronouncement of Mahatma Gandhi, he followed it in deeds all throughout his life as the leader of the Indian in dependence movement. Dr Md Yunus, at the fag end of the 20th century, has now emerged, as I see it, as the new Mahatma of an economic instead of political, vintage. His people are the poorest, the landless of Bangladesh. His deeds are to follow them, not lead them, and listen, instead of talk, to them. He has become, undoubtedly, the leader who has the faith and the vision. The new found, Grameen

Mahatma This was my reaction after reading his compilation of 12 speeches and one article published in his Pather Badha Shoreya Nin. Manushke Egute Din — a book of inspiration to any true patriot of this country The articles are all of current topical interest so much so that our Planning and Finance Ministers if not the Prime Minister herself, might feel in spired as well. But the purpose definitely, was not to influence the Government — the appeal of his writings as well as the crave for listening to his speeches have been increasing day by day. It also appears that during the last two years of the last regime. Dr Yunus was conspicuous by his total silence as a guest speaker in any forum although seminars and work shops had by then already become a thriving industry.

The book sharply highlights the fact that Dr Yunus is truly the heart and spirit of the poorest of the poor. While politics and indenting have captured the minds of the middle class. Dr Yunus delinks himself from such petty bourgeoisie aspirations and is devoted to apparently included diaries. documents and verbal information from the Forbidden

However, it appears Backhouse fabricated the information. He described 200 visits to the Forbidden City and to the empress dowager, including details of his sexual experiences with the old lady.

But, says Seagrave, Backhouse never met Cixi and certainly did not perform any sexual acts with her. In a judgement which has lessons for contemporary politics and international disinformation campaigns. Seagrave says that the fraudulent account was a success because it was exactly

lost their lives, rather than the 300 of popular belief. He says no Boxer ever appeared at the legations, but the panic-ridden Westerners mistook Chinese troops sent to quieten the situation for attackers and started to kill Chinese at ran-

Thousands of Chinese were killed for no reason at all. The Boxers mainly killed Chinese who had converted to Christianity - atrocities ignored by Westerners in Beijing wrapped up in their own imaginary problems.

Chinese scholars have taken the same view about their last empress because the negative image of the old feudal rulers

BOOK REVIEW

Chinese Translation of Dragon Lady by Sterling Seagrave

Published by Vintage Books, New York.

wanted to hear at the time.

European countries were engaged in a power struggle within China. So it was important to paint the Chinese in the worst possible light.

Also new is Seagrave's interpretation of the "Siege of the Legations" in 1900, an attack on foreign embassies in Beijing by the Boxers, a rural anti-foreigners movement.

The conventional Western view is that heroic diplomats felt they were under siege from irrationally violent Chinese. The result was a major military intervention by the West and the occupation of

Ultimately. China had to pay the Western victors \$300-million compensation.

According to Seagrave, 66 foreigners, mostly marines,

what the Western powers suited the post-revolutionary leadership.

> The English and German versions of the book failed to spark off a serious discussion among sinologists. But Seagrave is not discouraged.

"Personally, I get a lot more satisfaction out of knowing that my book will be read by many thousands of Chinese, so it will gradually but permanently change the perception of history in Asia," he says.

"Many older sinologists in England and America will be offended by the critical and contrary tone of the book." agrees Seagrave. "So they will choose to ignore it and hope it goes away. It makes them look like lazy and opportunistic,

Younger sinologists "criticise the book because it is written by a journalist and not

It is a gigantic task. Single-

handed, he will continue to

fight no doubt, but a national

upsurge to unanimously adopt

its efficient management and

strict discipline would gener-

ate the necessary as well as

sufficient conditions to jump

the passage that separates the

least developed Bangladesh

from a newly industrializing

Bangladesh. The book through

its wide-scale dissemination

should assist in the creation of

the desirable awareness so that

eventually the massive upsurge

might occur. His speeches in

the book do not deal with only

the rural crisis — his vision

stretches to what bio-technol-

ogy and genetic engineering.

micro-electronics and com

puter chips should bring about

through revolutionary changes

is remarkable. He does not re-

frain in condemning terrorism

at the universities, or forging

strong economic cooperation

links with India which have

the potential to open the huge

Indian market to our goods

and services. Boldly, he has

also put forward the possibility

The boldness of his writing

to our national economy.

the Grameen ways including



Empress Dowager Cixi: Murderous or meek?

one of their number," he says. They are energetically advancing their careers, so they deride anyone who does not serve their cause.

Sinologist R G Tiedemann. lecturer in the history of the Far East of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, says that "as far as I know, the facts in Seagrave's book are cor-

For many Chinese today, the summer palace in Beijing, where Empress Cixi lived, is simply a place for a day out, to wander around, go rowing on the lake, eat ice cream. Their only concession to history is a stall where tourists can get a picture of themselves disguised as emperor or empress.

But the new version of history will trickle through. Many Chinese books and films have been inspired by Backhouse's distorted view of Empress Cixi. Seagrave undoubtedly will provide inspiration for new interpretations.

FONS TUINSTRA is a Dutch journalist currently living in

cooperation following the suc-

cessful ASEAN model among

our eastern neighbouring

of political linkage for the pur-The New Found, Grameen Mahatma pose of intensive subregional by Shahed Latif

BOOK REVIEW

Pather Badha Shoreya Nin, Manushke Egute Din by Dr Mohammed Yunus

Published by Subarna, 150 Dhaka Stadium, Dhaka 1000

institution building and poverty alleviation on a sustainable, ever increasing scale. However, the speeches of

Dr Yunus clearly reveal that he has gone much beyond the building up of a rural credit institution. He could be the successful builder of the nation provided the Government as well as the opposition firmly backed him up and extended the necessary support. Unfor tunately, the vital cooperation is essentially lacking. Grameen Bank today has a credit operation of over Tk 100 crore ev ery month and the entire amount has gone to the poor est families of Gram Bangla Given the vital cooperation, it can be developed into a Tk 1.000 crore monthly programme for a massive thrust against poverty which would not only secure the liveable in comes for the poorest 50 per cent of the population, but at the same time, ensure health through pure drinking water sanitary latrine as well as production and consumption of vegetables in particular; vastly improved housing and a self inspired literacy programme to bring about education for all within the shortest possible

Dr Yunus has gone through years of painstaking efforts in the very heart of Gram Bangla where today half the popula tion are landless, denied of

countries. His ideas, plans and programmes are not abstruse. inaccessible or expensive They are also pragmatic schemes designed to be made operational through annual development programmes or reform and new legislation, in particular for vigorous local government institutions. two square meals a day while suffering from ignorance and disease. He has successfully attacked the problems and secured victory for millions of the poor of this country. Yet much more needs to be done.

accept plans and programmes of Grameen Bank origin is only the reflection of an undesirable complex, perhaps psychological in origin in the minds of important decision-makers Let us call it monumental iner tia and Newton's first law of motion is doubly reinforced hence we have fallen into a low level equilibrium trap and government is determined to keep it that way. The aid dependent traditional path of development that was followed in the past is still being followed there has been no change or reform. Dr Yunus has shown time and again number that it is not sustainable: Tk' 100,000 crore worth of past foreign aid

have mostly gone down the drain It is incredible but true that while Grameen Bank has been creditably sustaining its 98 per cent repayment rate, the government through actual deeds and the opposition through words of mouth are deter mined to convert agricultural loans into grants. Rampant credit indiscipline is being further encouraged which is perhaps indicative of the deliber ate non-recognition of Dr Yunus along with his Grameen Bank. But it does not matter. The rest of the world knows his worth. Best of all, the

triots know him best. from Shambazar at the east to Babubazar at the west. Most of the eye-catching buildings were erected along the street Because of visual and physical access to the river, the land along this street was expensive. This allowed only the affluent of the city to get a piece of land and build a house in the

poorest majority of his compa

The above narration at tempts to give a precise account of the urban situation of

the central library stays open which is 9 PM. Under housing rules in the Ordinance there are several which I can only call the However, the reluctance to 'absurd' rules. One example of the absurd rule is that when a

girl moves into the hall, she can have her clothes, her books and that is all. No tape recorders, no buckets (perhaps baths are not encouraged), no irons (neat clothes aren't encouraged either), no stoves or toasters etc. More absurd then the rules them selves is that, female students are given the list or Rules and Regulations and made to memorize it then rewrite the whole thing by hand. The list is kept by hall authorities and not for public perusal. The list that Shumi provided me with was in fact, a smuggled piece that had been photocopied en masse in secret. The fact is that most of these rules are not followed. The parents provide all these illegal con traptions. A parent's main con cern after all, is that their child's education flows smoothly, with as few problems as possible. So naturally, if a tape recorder, or a stove will make things easier, it will be provided. Hardly anyone ever eats in the caleteria in any of the girls hostels because the food is unpalatable. Therefore, most girls spend the time from when the gates close to about nine or ten at night cooking, washing and other household chores, making it impossible for them to study before then. If they could spend this time constructively in the library, it would be so

University authorities have been hesitant in making any commitments to change in the halls, girls are now behaving as per their demands. They sign in the log book to explain all their activities and come in by nine in the evenings. The authorities are being lenient in

much easier to get work done.

In the boys hostels, "tokai" are

available to do the washing

cleaning and fetching for small

ful people in his government who were involved in the business, but he had also severed the lifeline of thousands of ordinary Kenyans who depended on the mitumba for their livelihood.

the presence of mitumba and cheap articles of clothing from the Far East continues to stifle the growth and survival of the

the fact that rejects and off season brand-new clothes are disposed of in Kenya by foreign

ROBERT OKINYI OTANI IS O Kenyan freelance journalist.

India: Cable and Scissors

Foreign satellite networks climb over each other (and the censors) to reach hundreds of million viewers in South-Asia. Mahesh Uniyal of Inter Press Service reports from New Delhi.



COFI's Sharma also complains against STAR's insistence that operators buy decoders to receive the encrypted channel. STAR sells the machine for US\$770. which Sharma says can be bought overseas at a cheaper

But Delaporte says the demand for STAR decoders is growing in India. STAR insists on selling its decoders to ensure standardisation and a "controlled system", he adds.

The controversy over the STAR movie channel has created a rift among Indian cable operators. Rakesh Datta of the Cable Networks Association of 800 operators says COFI is protesting because they find it difficult to get subscribers to pay the small extra charge for the STAR movie channel.

Most cable operators in the country have only 250 subscribers, against the minimum 1,000 each should have in order to be able to make a profit and expand the network, says Datta.

"We represent some of the more progressive cable operators," says Datta. "The future lies with pay channels which will help cable operators to grow in size

So far, he says, cable operators have relied on video films that are mostly of poor quality

the face of such a united and unanimous student movement. But it is not what we want" Shumi tells me in her clear tone," we want there to be a definite change in the laws. The University claims that to change the Ordinance and Regulations they'll have to go to Parliament but legally that is incorrect. All that needs to be done is have a University Syndicate be set up to review and amend the Sunset and other absurd laws. One only needs to go to parliament to change the Presidential Order. not the rules made by the University Syndicate.

What Shumi did not say, but gather is that the VC and other authorities in charge are loathe to make changes because University posts these days are after all, political. The slow islamization process and fundamentalist views that have been creeping into our government has been creeping in to other supposedly independent sectors as well. Parental objection however, is most often cited by the authorities. Most parents do not know the rules that govern the halls, if they did they would want changes as well". Shumi told me, and I think I'd have to agree. She also insisted that most parents live far away and cannot really comprehend what goes on behind the walls of the hostels.

The Provost in a recent edition of Jai Jai Din was quoted as saying that they (the authorities such as himself) are so busy with non academic pursuits of handling killings and "gola guli that they cannot guarantee the lemale students salety on campus, the responsibility must therefore got to the local guardians. He is indemnifying the responsibilities that go with the job! That is his crime. Shumi stated

Safety on campus is a prob-

lem one that female students

living under the Sunset Rule understand only too well. They do not demand freedom to party simply freedom to per form their tasks as students better. To attend cultural activ ities and debates on campus. to live as ordinary citizens equal to any male student Currently under the Sunset Rule they are treated as jail birds and shut up in their hostels promptly at sundown while the fatuabaj acid throw ers, chhintais and terrorists roam the streets free. If the roles were reversed such as in Sultana's Dream, and the men were secluded in the Murdana, there would be no need for a Sunset Rule or the modification of one Unfortunately that is not a reality. We must all actively support the Women's Movement against the Sunset Rule, so that they can make their own reality on campus. one that women and men can

live with

and infringe copyright laws. Datta adds that cable operators need not fear police raids because under the cable television ordinance, police can take action only on the advice of an official notified by the I and B ministry. While STAR TV denies its movie channel is prurient, Jain TV, an India-US venture that uplinks from a Russian satellite, has begun trial midnight telecasts of adult films.

The films are shown every Saturday and telecasts will continue for the next couple of months to gauge viewer reaction. Ironically, cable operators will not get into trouble for distributing Jain's adult fare. because the cable TV ordinance does not apply to free channels.

We have studied the cable ordinance thoroughly and we are sure that by airing adult movies we are not contravening any law," J K Jain, a member of parliament and the Indian partner of the network, is quoted saying by newspa-

The single-channel Jain TV is already popular with viewers for its Hindi and regional language movies and offers the main competition to the multichannel STAR TV in India.

There will soon be a new entrant on the scene in the form of the US-based Turner Broadcasting System which has begun a free, round-theclock movie and cartoon channel, now reaching only northeast India.

Turner's TNT channel beams 14 hours of cartoons and 10 hours of films, unlike only films by STAR movies and will turn into a pay channel from December. Also early next year, TNT will shift to the Apstar-2 satellite and be available all over India.

The only home-grown competition is from the state-run Doordarshan network that has a vaster reach than any satellite network and has been perking up its dull programmes to maintain its large viewership.

of General Bison who wants to

take over the world. This is

Viewing Video

by Lenin Gani

ems like the child every parent would love to have. He is intelligent and excels in everything he does in particular sports. Unfortunately his parents

ORTH (Elijah Wood) se-

are too busy bickering about petty issues to notice their son's needs. So North takes the unprecedented step of a getting a court order to separate him from his parents. North now embarks on a

worldwide search for the perfect parents. His journey takes him from Tokyo to Hawaii. But each time his choice is made somehow they have to be rejected on certain grounds.

During his mission North frequently meets Bruce Willis who often trys to offer advice.

Realising that one's parents come only once. North ultimately gives up the search and returns home.

North is a family cornedy worth watching.

Just when we thought the people at Tinsel Town had exhausted all the ways to get a story. They decide to make a film from a popular video game Street Fighter. And they even had the nerve to give Jean Claude Van Damme top billing

Guile, leader of an elite group of soldiers lighting the forces

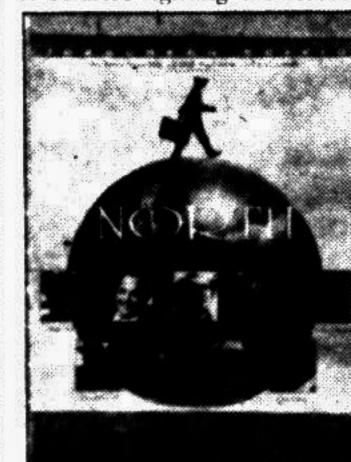
Van Damme plays Colonel

your typical 'Good' verses 'Evil'. so following the story won't be a problem. If you are a Van Damme fan I'm afraid he doesn't do much until he meets Bison during the final battle sequence. Since they employed so many characters we shouldn't blame him. Blanka looked like the real thing but ken could have been a bit more muscular. However, what was more surprising was that Sagat proved to be more of a wimp rather than a fighter.

In Direct Hit, John Hatch (William Forsythe) is a government agent who decides to go against the orders of his own organisation when assigned a mission to eliminate a young woman (Jo Champa) who had a one-time relationship with a US politician.

Hatch almost carries out the job, but circumstances dictate otherwise. After learning she may be just a pawn in a vicious game played by the politician, Hatch decides to turn the tables on him and even his own boss (George Segal) who sends Richard Norton to kill him and the girl. But Hatch always seems to be one step ahead.

After dealing with Norton. Hatch goes after the politician.



NAME

What k I still

13 Only The Strong

14 Bad Company

15 Love Murder

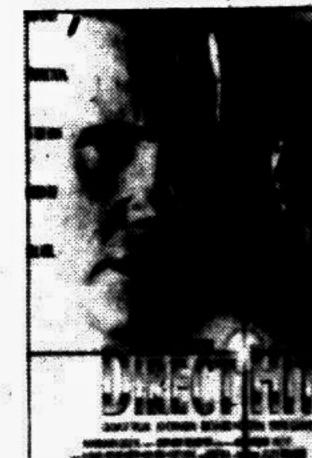
16 Four Junior

Detectives

(i) Direct 1He

11 The Ascent

12 War Dogs



CAST

Dan Aykroyd

Tim Robbins

l'im Robbins

Spradling

Don Wilson

Scott Valentine/

Charlie A Vampire

William Forsythe/George

Segal/Richard Norton/Jo

Sophia Loren/Julia

Anthony Hopkins/

Roberts/Kim Basinger/

Brad Pitt Sharon Stone

Jean Claude, Van Damme

Elijah Wood/Bruce Willis/

ENGLISH TYPE

Street Fighter [Action] North (Comedy) 4 Preta Porter (Comedy) Legrinis Of Fall (Hist/Drama) Cold Steel (Act/Thritler) Body Bags 1 (!forror) (Dir John Carpenter) The Shawshank (Drama) Redemption 8. To Sleep With (Drama)

(Action) [Action]

Vincent Spamo/ Hen Cross Netl Duncan/ Vincent Ricotta

Champa

Mark Dacascos Ellen Darkin Scott Valentine/Vancasa Angel

Source Film Fair Video and other clubs

(Thriller)

(Children/Com)

Urban Situation

Continued from page 11 main concern being legal

Urban Form

Baba Adam's and Binat Bibi's mosque certainly tell the presence of substantial building ac tivities in Dhaka long before the arrival of the Mughals. But the nature and method of construction in the those days are obliterated through ravage and vagaries brought about with time. Real extensive building ac

tivities were generated during Dhaka's status as Mughai capital beginning right from the 17th century till the advent of the 18th century. The Maghals, born-builders, inspired with the zeal of the Roman spirit and technique, did their architecture splendidly with local materials like brick. Bri ck, a unit consistent with human scale, was exploited to bring about buildings of grand scale. They maintained their experience and knowledge from their Central Asian origins and boldly used them

wherever they moved, setting aside indigenous cultural ne eds of the place. Sympathies to the vernacular were limited to local materials and climate Most of the masons they brought with them settled in the city and practiced their trade. New ideas with the new architects from the central capital inspired them while constructing new buildings When the seat of power was transferred to Murshidabad. the impetus stopped. Masons and local architects remained involved only in assimilating

what they already had. With the coming of the British new ideas and order came along in contract to the practice prevailing in Dhaka. The fusion took place and a colonial expression emerged in the early 19th century buildings, a mix of Mughal and British architecture is found. Trabeated roofing with tiles and rafters replaced massive vaulted roofs, pure arches emerged. Columns appeared

with capitals bearing modified

Ponic and Corinthian orders. classical entablature with distinctive parts of architrave, frieze and cornice was there.

With the advent of the 20th century, the practice of colonial architecture reached its climax. The local masons had already developed the skill to manipulate the colonial order and the materials they were using. Generally, buildings of the colonial era might be clas sified into the following typologies:Private villa or man sions, dwellings, shophouses, administrative and institutional building, factories and warehouses and religious buildings.

Most of the colonial build-

ings were built along the river bank of Buriganga on the part of Dhaka they found unutilised. None of the existing historical buildings were destroyed or intruded upon. The British having a superior technological background felt the need to protect the river front which was regularly eroded during the monsoon They proposed and built and embankment called "Buckland Bundh"

This strip stretched

Dhaka in the colonial era

Today, manufacturers claim Continued from page 12

When he lifted the ban. President Moi said: "I have realised that banning the second-hand clothes will be a great injustice and inconvenience to Kenyans. I have also realised that most Kenyans wear them. Even my cabinet ministers are putting them

local textile industry.

"We particularly take note of

Tailoring Workers Union

departmental stores to create room for the new season's stocks," griped Johnson Ajowi Ogendo, secretary general of the giant Kenya Textile and