

Dhaka Day by Day

City's Decaying Video Culture

by A S M Nurunnabi

The medium of video had opened up a new horizon in the world of entertainment. The video culture had its inception in the late seventies. The next decade marked an unchallenged progress of that culture. It spread at such a fast pace that nearly all the big and small towns of Bangladesh including even village bazaars witnessed a mushroom growth of video cassette shops. These shops ushered in a booming business which somewhat led to an adverse impact on the cinema industry.

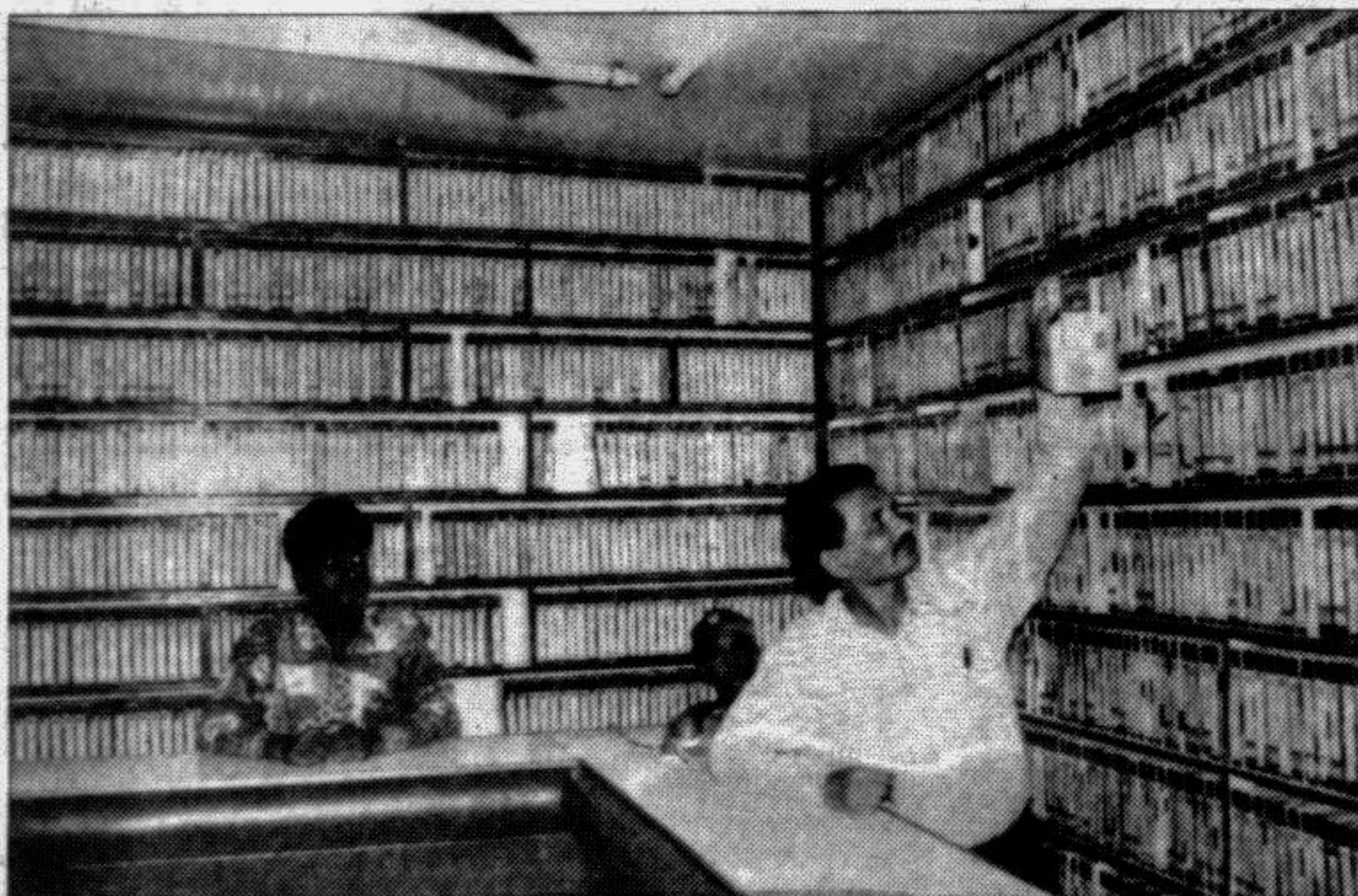
That glorious era of video culture seems to be on the wane. The causative factor is said to be the satellite channels which are increasingly getting in vogue among city's TV owners. Though initially a high tariff was charged for installation of the new system, lately there has been a substantial reduction of that charge. Now with a deposit of Tk 1,000 and a monthly rent of Tk 200, this new facility is available, adding, in the life of the urban people, a new item of bill, i. e. satellite bill to the other utility ones, such as electricity, gas, water and telephone.

The new system has brought to our homes a good number of TV channels which cover a large part of the globe, such as, BBC, CNN, Star Plus, Prime Sports, etc. Now with the push of a button of your TV equipped with such a system, a world-wide fare of entertainment comprising cinema, cartoon, news, music etc is presented before you. This also provides a wide scope for selection of TV programmes to our liking. This innovation in the electronic media may be considered a blessing by a still limited number of city

highly popular films particularly in Bangla and Hindi and, in some cases, English action and thriller films made roaring business for video shops. The situation has now come to such a pass that there is very little demand for such films, since it has now become easy to view them through satellite channels. Gone are the days when trouble was taken for renting a video film from a shop and returning it in due time.

In some neighbourhoods, video shops are already facing a crisis on account of the new development. Signs of the decaying video culture are much in evidence in the Dhaka Stadium area, particularly in the north gate area of Baitul Mukarram and western side of outer stadium. At these places, video cassettes which once got prominent display in video shops are now being offered for sale at cheap prices (Tk 10 to Tk 20 apiece). They are stacked in large numbers on cycle vans and old rickshaws.

Since most of such cassettes are worn-out copies of once well-known films, they do not command a good price, as observed by some sellers of these cassettes. The result is that a seller has to remain satisfied if the turn-over reaches somewhere between Tk 200 to Tk 300 per day. The source of supply of these cassettes is said to be other moribund video shops in the city. The volume of such cassettes offered for sale is so large that it bears an ill omen for the video culture. The conclusion is inevitable that the satellite TV is irrevocably eroding the foundation of video culture. Perhaps the day is not far off when the new technology will introduce a very



Gone are the days of roaring business. — Star photo

dweller. But a trend is discernible of a steadily growing number of people avid for such facility. There are indications that this new trend is posing a challenge to the popularity hitherto enjoyed by video films supplied by numerous video shops spread all over the city. In fact, this has already initiated a dull period in the business of city's video shops. Once the

common instrument of entertainment. Some observers, however, harbour misgivings about the adverse influence of the fast spreading phenomenon, since much of the shows projected through satellite channels indicate preponderance of sex and violence. That is perhaps the inevitable price that has to be paid for technological advance.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the tree plantation programme of Bangladesh Police by planting a sapling at the Police Headquarters in the city yesterday. — PID photo

PM plants tree at police HQs

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia opened a tree plantation drive by Bangladesh Police at its headquarters in the city yesterday morning, reports UNB.

Speaking on the occasion, Begum Zia stressed the need for planting more trees in all police units as part of the ongoing nationwide tree plantation campaign.

She said, people are becoming conscious about keeping the environment more friendly.

She was told that about 4 lakh saplings, including those of fruit bearing trees of various species, would be planted in all police lines, police schools, training institutes and police units.

Earlier on her arrival the Prime Minister was received by Inspector General of Police ASM Shahjahan.

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury was present on the occasion.

Qatar Charitable Society opens

Minister for Religious Affairs Muhammad Keramat Ali has called upon the authority of Qatar Charitable Society in Bangladesh to help in the socio-economic development of the poor people of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The minister was inaugurating Qatar Charitable Society in the city yesterday as the chief guest.

The Qatar Charitable Society in Bangladesh has taken up a programme to bear the expenditures of 842 orphans and setting up of 20 tubewells.

Besides, the society has

the programme for rehabilitation of poor widows, medical care to the orphan's families, construction of schools, madrasahs, providing relief to disaster affected people, providing agricultural inputs to poor people and paying zakat to rehabilitate the distressed families.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Rashid Ahmed, son of late Khan Bahadur A M Arshad Ali of Comilla will be held at House 28, Road 13A Dhanmondi after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

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JCD blames BCL for spreading falsehood

By DU Correspondent

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), the student wing of the ruling BNP yesterday accused the Bangladesh Chhatra League (S-P) of giving false statements in different national dailies.

"We are surprised to see the misleading and fabricated statements on the results of some college union elections in different parts of the country," said Nazimuddin Alam, the general secretary of DUCSU, at a press conference at the DUCSU building.

JCD called the press conference to protest what it said, the falsehood of BCL and to explain their position regarding the DUCSU polls.

Nazimuddin said, JCD is winning different college union polls across the country with the massive support of the students.

JCD has already won some 250 such polls since 1994-95 academic session, he claimed.

He alleged the BCL leaders are confusing the people by saying that they have won most of the polls.

Fazlul Hoq Milon said, JCD has been demanding a fresh date for DUCSU elections for quite a long time.

But the university authorities had to postpone the

elections twice because of the terrorist activities of BCL, he added.

JCD also urged the authorities to announce a fresh date for the polls.

The press conference was also attended by Mosharrar Hossain, Muniruzzaman, Shahid Uddin Choudhury Anney.

Notice served on four Scouts leaders

A legal notice has been served on five persons, including President of Bangladesh Scouts Mahbubuzzaman and its chief National Commissioner Manzurul Karim, reports UNB.

Advocate AKM Badruddoza of the Supreme Court served the notice on behalf of Deputy Regional Commissioner of Dhaka (Programme) Zahurul Haq charging them with misuse of power, nepotism and activities contrary to scoutism.

The other accused are Regional President of Dhaka Moyezuddin, Regional Commissioner of Dhaka Afroza Begum and Regional Secretary of Dhaka Rezaul Karim Joarder.

SAARC quiz contest begins today

The preliminary round of the second SAARC quiz competition will begin at National Broadcasting House of Radio Bangladesh in the city today, reports UNB.

A two-member national team comprising college and university-level students each from Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and host Bangladesh, will participate in the three-day competition.

The semifinals of the competition will be held on Thursday and the final on Friday.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman will distribute medals and certificates among the winners as chief guest on the concluding day. Information and Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam will attend the function as special guest. Heads of the diplomatic missions of the SAARC countries will also attend.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR SWEET ORIN



— NAHID ANWAR & M ANWARUL HAQ

Liberian president greeted

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday felicitated President David Kpomakpor of Liberia on the occasion of the national day of his country, reports BSS.

In his message President Biswas said, "I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes for your health and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of the people of Liberia."

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in a separate message felicitated President David Kpomakpor on the occasion of the national day of Liberia.

She expressed the confidence that the existing friendship and cooperation between the two countries would be further strengthened in the years ahead.

She wished President Kpomakpor good health and long life and the people of Liberia progress and prosperity.

SAARCFUW launched

A draft charter to form a SAARC Federation of University Women (SAARCFUW) was adopted by delegates from five SAARC countries at a meeting of the Sri Lanka Federation of University Women (SLFUW) on July 17 in Colombo.

Delegates from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were represented at the meeting, says a press release.

The meeting discussed amendment and acceptance of the draft charter and with its adoption the SAARCFUW was launched.

Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka signed the charter. While Bhutan and the Maldives which do not have university women's associations did not attend the meeting.

The SAARCFUW delegates discussed the role of university women in the region and access of women to technological and management employment in the participating countries.

Group discussion on policies, advocacy, skills development and extension, and support services, also were held.

The participants identified key problems and common issues and proposed strategies which university women in the SAARC regions could pursue.

Selina Khaleque and Munira Khan of Bangladesh were elected one of the three vice-presidents and publicity and press officer respectively while Jazima Ismail and Manel Abeysekara were elected president and secretary respectively.

Dr Kamal off to Cameroon

Gano Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain left the city yesterday for Cameroon in connection with Cameroon's application to join the Commonwealth, reports UNB.

Dr Kamal will lead a four-member Commonwealth Mission, which is expected to submit a report on Cameroon to the Commonwealth Secretary General Chief Anyaku.

Commonwealth heads of government on the basis of the report will finalise the fate of Cameroon to join the Auckland summit, said a press release.



Participants at the recent SAARCFUW meeting in Colombo in Sri Lanka.

JU student sustains head injury

By JU Correspondent

A student of the Jahangirnagar University received serious injuries on the head after he fell from the roof of a bus on the campus yesterday.

Musum, a first-year honours student of the English department, fell from the roof of the university bus near the Transport Pool on the campus after being hit by an overhead electrical wire at 3.30pm.

He was immediately taken to the PG Hospital and his condition was stated to be critical.



Rotary Club of Dilkusha in association with Inner Wheel Club of Dilkusha and Rotaract Club of Dilkusha held a tree plantation programme on Friday at Mirpur Indoor Stadium premises and its adjoining areas. President of the three clubs Rtn. Kazi Wahidul Alam, R/Ann Tahera Wahid and Rtr. Habibur Rahman Chunnun are seen, among others, planting a sapling.

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