

REPEAL ALL THE BLACK LAWS

Theatre Artistes are in the Tangle

by Fayazuddin Ahmad Setu

The new government has pledged to repeal all the black laws. The Daily Star, in its bid to create mass awareness against the existing repressive laws, has planned to publish a series of articles highlighting the anti-people nature of these laws. In the previous issues, we have highlighted the Special Powers Act, the Vested Property Law and the Indemnity Ordinance. This issue is on the laws that restrict freedom of speech and expression.

FREEDOM of expression, be it artistic or materialistic, is one's birthright. Natural justice is hindered by the titanic strength of vested interest. On the easy flowing stream of nature subjugates human being's freedom of expression. Of all the expressions of human beings, artistic expression plays a vital role in giving meaning to our worldly existence. The aesthetic part of man drives him to sing, dance, write, draw, act

man's freedom of expression. In developed countries good theatres are supported by the State. In our country, the theatre-goers, critics, even the concerned people in the government have unanimously put a feather on the cap of our stage play-productions by saying the theatre is the best fruit of our Liberation War and it is the brightest of all our art media. But contrary to this verbal reward, our theatre is practiced, for the last twenty-two years, in sub-human condi-

tion on their own feet. It will not be too much to expect that theatre in our country shall march forward with its reformatory and critical role without any discrimination.

This is the place from where our discussion begins. Our theatre activists are still under the Black Law named "Dramatic Performance Control Act of 1976" imposed in the British colonial period. The then situation was to suppress the native community from expressing their say. These all happened after the presentation of "Neel Darpan" by Dinabandhu Mitra. To dominate the society the law was imposed. If we read the law thoroughly, we may find the reality.

The intention is crystal clear to us now. And the matter to follow that without such permission one can publish his drama but can't stage it. The Ruler has gone in 1947

Fayazuddin Ahmad
Member, Law Review

Scheme of the Dramatic Performances Act 1876

* The local government can prohibit the performance of any play, pantomime or drama which in its opinion is —

- a) scandalous or defamatory
- b) likely to excite feelings of disaffection to the government
- c) likely to deprave and corrupt persons present at the performance.

* Not only the performance in open place can be prohibited, performance inside enclosed building can also be prohibited under this law.

* Organisers, artists and the owner of the place who violate the prohibition order can be convicted with 3 months imprisonment or with fine or with both.

* Spectators who are present in such prohibited performance are also subject to the same conviction.

* Local government can ask the author or printer of the drama and the owner of the place to furnish such information as the authority require.

* Police can enter by force, by night or by day, any place where such as drama is about to be performed. And can take into custody all person found therein and seize all scenery, dresses and other articles.

and finally to ride on the ethereal waves of the infinite, towards an expression and a meaning of existence.

Cultural rights are one of the basics that constitute human rights as a whole. The cultural practitioners and activists are by choice pro-people elements who have always struggled and are still struggling for men's welfare and a just cause. They are the ones who, along with others belonging to different strata of society, keep on upholding the cause of

whatever has been achieved in the field of theatre can safely be credited to the theatre activists of the country, who are now proudly standing

Quest to Win Back Continent's Lost Talent

by Pamphil Kweyuh

A programme designed to reverse the African brain drain is making slow progress against the major obstacles of wars, instability and poverty.

More than 100,000 of the most talented Africans have left for greener pastures — and higher wages — over the past 25 years.

The Kenya-based International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is seeking to woo these professional and high-skilled workers back to the continent.

"Many of them understand that their absence is not at all helpful to their sick economies, but argue that they can't eat patriotism," says Martin Vogt, Nairobi regional representative for the IOM.

"Many of the professionals are interested in returning to work at home, but domestic conditions are not conducive."

His organisation, which receives funds from the European Union, primarily helps refugees fleeing violence or persecution to relocate in Europe. But it also seeks to fulfil a role in helping African nations develop by utilising their own talent.

"Qualified individuals play an indisputably important role in raising economic productivity," says Vogt. "Africa has a tremendous need for them."

The IOM has tried for several years to win back talent, but has made little headway. So far, only 1,500 skilled Africans have returned with the organi-

ations and on two inadequate stages at New Bailey Road of Dhaka. The government, in spite of its promises on different occasions, has neither built an acceptable stage for the theatre practitioners of the country, nor has come forward with any assistance for the development of the country's theatre.

Whatever has been achieved in the field of theatre can safely be credited to the theatre activists of the country, who are now proudly standing

on their own feet. It will not be too much to expect that theatre in our country shall march forward with its reformatory and critical role without any discrimination.

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The Daily Star Entertainment Guide



Satyajit on Zee TV tonight at 9.30

Europe 1:00 BBC World Headlines
1:05 Madness 2:00 BBC World News 2:15 World Olympic Report
2:30 Time Out: The Earth Report 3:00 BBC World Report inc. World Business Report/24 Hours 5:00 BBC World News 5:10 The Money Programme

BBC

6:00am BBC World News 6:30 India Business Report 7:00 BBC World News 7:25 This Week 8:00 BBC World News 8:30 India Business Report 9:00 BBC World Headlines 9:30 Horizon 10:00 BBC World News 10:20 Britain in View 11:00 BBC World News 11:25 India Business Report 12:00 BBC World News 12:20 This Week 1:00 BBC World Headlines 1:05 Assignment 2:00 BBC World News 2:30 Time Out: Building 8:00 BBC World News 3:30 Time Out: Lisa Claydon: Alone Around The World 4:00 BBC World Headlines 4:05 Everyman 5:00 BBC World News 5:20 Stephen Hawking: The Big Question 6:00pm BBC World Headlines 6:05 BBC The Global Report 7:00 BBC World Headlines 7:05 BBC Global Report 8:00 BBC World News 8:15 World Olympic Report 8:30 Time Out: Top Gear 9:00 BBC World Headlines 9:30 Horizon 10:00 BBC World News 10:20 Earth Report 10:30 Time Out: Raymond's Blend Monge 11:00 BBC World News 11:15 World Olympic Report 11:20 Britain in View 12:00 BBC World News 12:20 Window On

BTV

3:00 Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary 3:10 Recitation from the Bible 3:15 Cartoon: Woody Woodpecker 3:45 Retranscast of Weekly Drama 4:00 News in Bangla 4:45 Anu Parmanu 5:00 News in Bangla 5:25 Sports Programme 6:00 News in Bangla 6:30 Jibonir Janay 7:00 News in English 7:05 Open University 7:25 Tagore Songs 8:00 News in Bangla 8:25 Janmathum 8:30 Shupla-Banipa Artha 9:00 Film Series: Akbar The Great 10:00 News in English 10:30 Shasthathatha 10:35 Sur Lohor 11:30 News in Bangla 11:35 Monday's programme 11:40 Close down

CHANNEL V

11:00am BPL Oye! 12:00 Sanskruti Hai 12:30 First Day First Show 1:00 Speak 1:30 Big Bang VJ Alessandra 1:00 The Ride VJ Trey 2:00 By Demand VJ 2:30 3:00 Spur 4:30 Frame By Frame

STAR PLUS

6:30am Votron 7:00 King Arthur 7:30 Classic Cartoons 8:00 Terry Toons 8:30 T-Bag 9:00 Thailand Panorama 9:30 India Business Week 11:00 Anu India Show 11:30 Kriker! 12:30 The Fall 1:30 Vegas 2:30 Best Sellers: "Rahman Exchange" 2:30 The Love Boat 5:30 World Around Us: Mysterious Places 6:30 Anu India Show 7:00 The Road Show 7:30 Snowy River: "The McGregor Saga" 8:30 Beverly Hills 9:0210 9:30 Picket Fences 10:30 Burke's Law 11:30

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STAR Sports

8:00am Spark 9:30 World Wrestling Federation Action Zone 9:30 Futbol Mundial 10:00 Asia Sport Show 10:30 Anu India Show 11:00 Anu India Show 11:30 Kriker! 12:30 The Fall 1:30 Vegas 2:30 Best Sellers: "Rahman Exchange" 2:30 The Love Boat 5:30 World Around Us: Mysterious Places 6:30 Anu India Show 7:00 The Road Show 7:30 Snowy River: "The McGregor Saga" 8:30 Beverly Hills 9:0210 9:30 Picket Fences 10:30 Burke's Law 11:30

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