

Dhaka's free TV channels not 'free' in Kolkata

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

Kolkata cable operators bar Dhaka-based satellite television channels from going on air there despite a growing demand for Bangladeshi programmes among Bangla-speaking people in the capital of West Bengal.

By contrast, all Indian free-to-air and pay channels have access to Bangladesh, as cable operators here are bound to show Indian free-to-air channels in a package deal with pay channels -- a business strategy to help the Indian free channels earn revenue from advertisements.

"We have tried to air our

programmes in Kolkata as a free-to-air channel. But the RPG, the main local cable operator in Kolkata, demanded money to televise even the free-to-air channel," said Faridur Reza Shagar, director of channel i, a private television channel.

"We could not agree on principle as we are not showing their free-to-air channels on pay," he said.

The RPG seems to have different reasons for different television channels in Bangladesh.

"We were told that our channel cannot go on air in Kolkata because of our cigarette advertisements," said Sarkar Feroz,

senior vice-president of ATN Bangla, another private television channel.

The cable TV professionals in Bangladesh sound sceptical about the RPG arguments.

"We expect a friendly policy from Kolkata of showing free-to-air channels as they are not barred in any other country. Channel i doesn't show cigarette ads," a cable operator said.

Information Secretary Nazmul Alam Siddique said: "Our high commission in India told us the Indian government thinks our channels are not profitable. The Bangladesh high commissioner will discuss the issue with the

Indian government."

Some media market critics think the demand for Bangladeshi programmes in Kolkata is rising thanks to the quality of Bangladeshi channels and programmes and Bangla channels in Kolkata will face competition.

"There is a demand for Bangladeshi channels and artists in West Bengal as some Indian Bangla TV channels are airing news, drama, music from Bangladesh," an actor said.

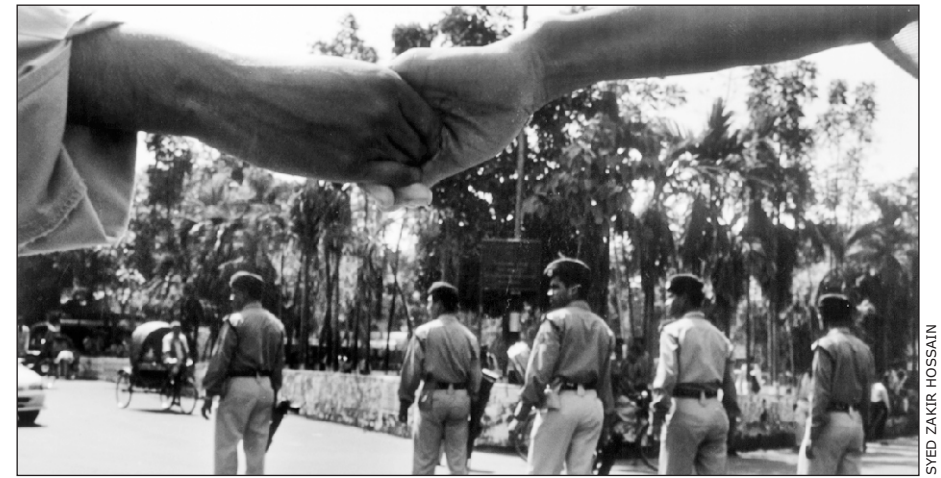
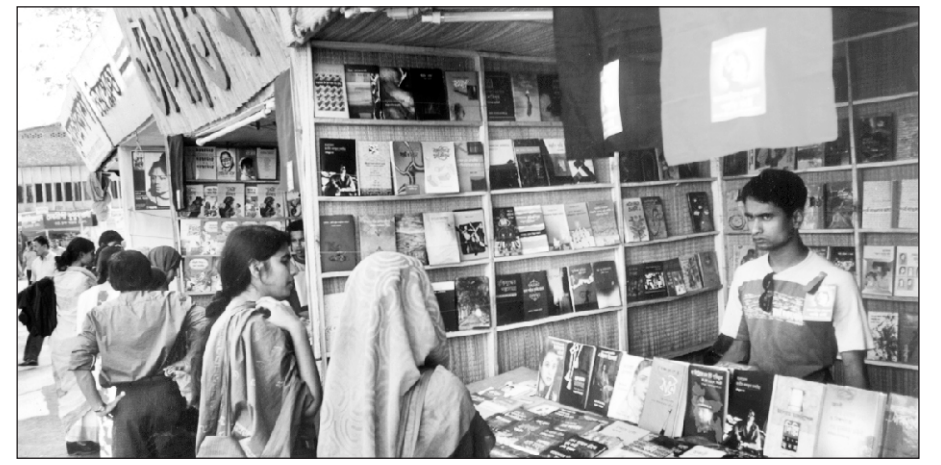
"Kolkata provides a market for Bangladeshi products, especially in border areas. But India doesn't want to patronise the market

showing Bangladeshi ads on our channels," the cable operator said.

On a different front, media marketing agencies feel Bangladesh should take a hard line on local product advertisements on foreign satellite channels, as they fear the intrusion of foreign cable television may eat up the share of advertising market of Bangladesh.

"A trend has set in to air ads on foreign sports channels like ESPN, Star Sports and Ten Sports. The Indian channels might take a share of the commercial ad market," a media-marketing manager said.

WAVE OF PROTESTS



The Dhaka University campus saw a wave of protests yesterday following attempt on life of Humayun Azad, a DU teacher and prominent author, on Friday night. The protests included black flags at book fair, human chain etc.

Stop invasion of dirty films



STAR PHOTO

Some cinema posters (indecent areas blotted out)

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Cinema halls are luring cinephiles with short porn flicks as dull, low-cost movies failed to stimulate moviegoing.

"Lack of good films has prompted cinema-hall owners to stoop to whatever means to survive, as the present-day movies do not attract the audience," said Saiful Islam Chowdhury, president of Bangladesh Motion Picture Exhibitors Association.

With the demand for pornography soaring high, a set of directors and producers is making steamy scenes that are later inserted into censored movies.

Sources blamed the overdose of X-rated scenes on some directors and producers within the Film Development Corporation (FDC), who have formed their own firms to make films for porn maniacs.

On a different front, traders are smuggling porn films into Bangladesh from other countries and distributing them in a country home to about 1,200 cinema halls, with only 300 of recognised standards.

The information ministry sent letters to divisional commissioners to form committees to monitor the movies and banned seven films packed with porn scenes.

Although most of the 35 cinema halls in Dhaka do not screen porn scenes, the environment of some halls are not suitable for all cinegoers.

"Our cinema industry needs thorough restructuring from production to screening to match the global standards and save it from falling apart," said Ujjal, general secretary of the Film Producers and Distributors Association.

Established on April 3, 1957 after a bill passed in the first session of the East Pakistan Assembly, proposed by Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the FDC could not develop technical facilities and build an institution to create professionals to produce quality movies.

"The government will have to take initiatives to establish a film institution as it is earning about Tk 20 crore from the FDC a year," Ujjal said.

The FDC has a monopoly in the film industry with a yearly earning of about Tk 100 crore but fell short of attracting educated people because of scandals.

"The industry like cinema needs educated people. It is also an employment opportunity," Ujjal said.

Most kabiraj still lack medical education

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

They claim to be healers of all possible ailments people suffer from. Their business stretch from the pavements to high society homes. They are known as the *kabiraj* or hekim.

Yet not all of them provide indigenous medical treatment in the city can be called qualified doctors as most of them lack institutional education.

In most cases these self-proclaimed *kabirajs* deceive the unsuspecting common mass.

"I saw how a chicken trader became a *kabiraj* and started giving potion," said Abdul Awal of Bailey Road. Awal said that the chicken trader brought in medicinal herbs from Chawkbazar and sold them in the form of side business and later made it into his main means of earning.

A reputed *kabiraj* at Tajmahal Road in Mohammadpur claimed that he was a 1988 graduate of Government Unani and Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital when this correspondent approached him while in reality the college was established in 1989.

"The first batch passed out from this college in 1998," said Dr Md. Muslim Uddin, local consultant (AMC) World Health Organisation.

"They never attended any medical college that teach indigenous

medicine and claim they learnt the skill from their forefathers," said Rokomuddin Parvez, student of Government Unani and Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital at Mirpur.

Ispahani Manir Ahmed, another student complained people do not trust them as properly trained doctors as fake herbal medicine providers have distorted the image of qualified practitioners.

"Students at our college go through a 5-year long course. They then do internship for a year to get the Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery or Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery degrees. It is unfair if someone categorise us with untrained *kabirajs*," he said.

The students said two streams of indigenous methods called Unani and Ayurvedic are different only in their origin. "Unani originated in Unan province in Greece and ayurvedic originated in India," said Md Belal Hossain.

The college is supervised under "Homeo and Indigenous Medicine Project" of Directorate General of Health Services and has a panel of teachers from other medical colleges. It has 250 students in total studying in two streams.

"Students learn anatomy, physiology and other subjects that are needed for a medical degree," said Belal Hossain, another student of

the college. He said the only difference between BUMS and MBBS doctors is that BUMS doctors apply herbal or indigenous medicine instead of allopathic.

Sixteen other medical colleges exist in the country offering 4-year diploma courses in unani medicine and surgery or ayurvedic medicine and surgery. Tibbia Habibia College at Bakshibazaar, NoorMajid Ayurvedic College at Armanitola in Dhaka, Momenshahi Unani Medical College in Mymensingh and Akber Ali Technical College in Comilla in the Dhaka division are colleges that offers such courses.

Chittagong hosts five such colleges while rest of them are situated in Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet. Bangladesh Unani and Ayurvedic Board supervise all these colleges.

Practitioners of indigenous methods are supposed to be registered with Homeo and Indigenous Medicine Project of Directorate General of Health Services. "Those who are not registered but selling medicines are deceiving the common people," said Dr. Muslim Uddin.

Presently 99 unani doctors and 79 ayurvedic doctors have registered with the directorate. Also 138 unani and 112 ayurvedic doctors doing internship are registered.

marketprice

Daily Market Summary

Dhaka New Market, Dhaka

CEREALS

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 17.67
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 14.83
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 33.00
Wheat Grain (Local White) kgs 12.92

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 53.00
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 41.00
Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 21.00

SPICES

Onion (Deshi) kgs 19.33
Onion (India big) kgs 21.00
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 32.00
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 34.00
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 47.33
Ginger (Imported) kgs 52.67
Turmeric kgs 67.33

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 5.67
Bitter Gourd kgs 28.00
Okra kgs 18.00
Cauliflower Average Size pcs 6.00
Cabbage Average Size pcs 4.67
Tomato Ripen (Deshi) kgs 9.00
Carrot Medium Size kgs 5.67
Local Bean Green kgs 11.00
Lau (Water Gourd) pcs 17.67
Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 11.00
Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 9.00

Papaya Green kgs 7.33

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 8.00
Apple (Pakistan) kgs 65.00
Orange (India) 4 pcs 18.00
Coconut pcs 15.00

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 135.00
Hilshakgs 195.00

Mesua Bazar, Mymensingh

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 15.00
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 13.50
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 31.75

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 41.70

OIL & OIL SEEDS

Mustard seeds kgs 59.50

SPICES

Onion (Deshi) kgs 17.00
Onion (India big) kgs 19.00
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 21.00
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 38.00
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 45.50
Turmeric kgs 45.67
Chili Green kgs 20.00
Chili Dried (Imported) kgs 98.75

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 8.00
Bitter Gourd kgs 28.00
Okra kgs 16.25
Cauliflower Average Size 100 pcs 4.50
Cabbage Average Size 100 pcs 4.00
Tomato Ripen (Deshi) kgs 6.00
Carrot Medium Size kgs 9.75

Local Bean Green kgs 8.25

Lau (Water Gourd) 100 pcs 10.00

Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 11.00

Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 9.00

Papaya Green kgs 6.00

Radish White kgs 5.00

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 6.00
Apple (Australia) kgs 65.00

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 158.75

Rangpur Municipal Market, Rangpur

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 14.20
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 12.90
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 28.40

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 47.60
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 45.20
Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 19.80

SPICES

Onion (Deshi) kgs 18.40
Onion (India big) kgs 18.20
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 43.20
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 38.80
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 40.80
Turmeric kgs 62.80
Chili Green kgs 18.80
Chili Dried (Deshi Bogra) kgs 102.00

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 4.40
Cauliflower Average Size kgs 5.80
Cabbage Average Size kgs 3.40
Tomato Ripen (Imported) kgs 11.60
Carrot Medium Size kgs 10.00

Local Bean Green kgs 8.80

Lau (Water Gourd) kgs 4.40

Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 10.00

Bitter Gourd kgs 23.00

Papaya Green kgs 6.80

Radish White kgs 2.40

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 5.80
Apple (India) kgs 55.60

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 141.00
Hilshakgs 156.00
Chingri Small kgs 120.00

FERTILIZER

Urea (Local) kgs 6.00
TSP (Imported) kgs 15.50

Reazuddin Bazar, Chittagong

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 15.65
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 14.65
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 33.60
Wheat Grain (Local White) kgs 10.70

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 44.60
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 39.00
Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 21.00

SPICES

Onion (India big) kgs 17.60
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 51.60
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 35.00
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 39.00
Ginger (Imported) kgs 37.00
Turmeric kgs 55.00
Turmeric (India) kgs 69.60
Chili Green kgs 23.00
Chili Dried (Deshi Bogra) kgs 93.00

Chili Dried (Imported) kgs 81.00

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 6.80
Bitter Gourd kgs 23.00
Cauliflower Average Size kgs 5.40
Cabbage Average Size kgs 5.40
Tomato Ripen (Imported) kgs 9.60
Carrot Medium Size kgs 11.00
Local Bean Green kgs 9.40
Lau (Water Gourd) kgs 6.40
Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 8.60
Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 9.60
Papaya Green kgs 9.00
Radish White kgs 6.40

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 9.80
Pineapple 4 pcs 45.00
Apple (Australia) kgs 71.00

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 136.00
Hilshakgs 139.00

Comilla Chaka Bazar, Comilla

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 46.80
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 39.20
Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 22.00

SPICES

Onion (India big) kgs 19.00
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 44.80
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 34.40
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 38.00
Ginger (Imported) kgs 32.40
Turmeric kgs 80.00

Rajganj Bazar, Comilla

Onion (Deshi) kgs 16.60
Onion (India big) kgs 19.00

Chili Green kgs 25.60

Chili Dried (Deshi Bogra) kgs 92.00

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 5.60
Cauliflower Average Size kgs 11.80
Cabbage Average Size kgs 7.20
Tomato Ripen (Deshi) kgs 9.20
Local Bean Green kgs 11.00
Lau (Water Gourd) kgs 11.20
Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 11.60
Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 11.80
Papaya Green kgs 8.80
Radish White kgs 7.40

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 9.20
Apple (Australia) kgs 76.00
Apple (India) kgs 63.00
Orange (India) 4 pcs 31.00
Coconut pcs 12.40

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 159.00
Hilshakgs 168.00
Chingri Small kgs 141.00

Khulna Sadar Bazar, Khulna

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 14.40
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 13.35
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 34.20

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 44.40
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 44.80
Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 22.40

SPICES

Onion (Deshi) kgs 16.60
Onion (India big) kgs 19.00

Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 25.60

Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 36.80

Ginger (Deshi) kgs 45.60

Turmeric kgs 70.80

Chili Green kgs 22.80

Chili Dried (Deshi Bogra) kgs 95.00

Chili Dried (Imported) kgs 108.00

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 5.40
Cauliflower Average Size kgs 5.80
Cabbage Average Size kgs 4.40
Tomato Ripen (Deshi) kgs 6.80
Local Bean Green kgs 8.80
Lau (Water Gourd) kgs 7.40
Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 10.80
Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 8.80
Papaya Green kgs 5.40

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 7.40
Apple (Australia) kgs 67.00
Apple (India) kgs 62.00
Orange (India) 4 pcs 20.80
Coconut pcs 12.80

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 127.00
Chingri Small kgs 84.00

Islamia Bazar, Sylhet

Rice (HYV) Aman Medium kgs 15.60
Rice coarse (HYV) kgs 14.30
Rice Chiniguri (Aromatic) kgs 35.20

PULSES

Masuri Dal (Deshi) kgs 50.80
Masuri Dal (Imported) kgs 43.20

Khesari Dal (Deshi) kgs 23.40

SPICES

Onion (India big) kgs 16.40
Garlic Deshi (common) kgs 26.80
Garlic Big (Imported) kgs 36.40
Ginger (Deshi) kgs 38.40
Turmeric kgs 72.00
Turmeric (India) kgs 78.00
Chili Green kgs 21.60
Chili Dried (Deshi Bogra) kgs 97.00
Chili Dried (Imported) kgs 102.00

VEGETABLES

Potato (Holland) kgs 6.00
Bitter Gourd kgs 20.80
Barbati Green (Long bean) kgs 18.80
Cauliflower Average Size kgs 10.40
Cabbage Average Size kgs 5.40
Tomato Ripen (Deshi) kgs 5.60
Carrot Medium Size kgs 12.40
Local Bean Green kgs 11.20
Lau (Water Gourd) kgs 9.60
Brinjal (Long purple) kgs 10.80
Pumpkin (Sweet) kgs 8.60
Papaya Green kgs 10.80
Radish White kgs 6.40

FRUITS

Banana Sagar (Medium) 4 pcs 7.40
Apple (Australia) kgs 73.00
Orange (India) 4 pcs 23.80
Coconut 4 pcs 47.00

FISH

Ruhi (Deshi) kgs 164.00
Hilshakgs 175.00

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Sources: Agricultural Marketing Department.