

# Menace of obscene movie posters

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

Obscene posters of movies currently screening in different cinema halls have captured the walls of the city and are even pasted in front of schools.

Recognising the threat these posters pose on impressionable young minds, information minister M Shamsul Islam in an inter ministerial meeting on June 24 termed obscenity as "a crime like drug abuse and terrorism."

"This should be stopped by any means otherwise it could ruin our future generation," said Islam.

The minister vowed to bring obscene filmmakers, actors and actresses, cameramen, producers, directors, distributors, exhibitors and owners of the cinema halls to book to rid the society of this evil.

The meeting decided that an inter-ministerial committee would monitor obscenity in movies and find out effective ways to resist the menace.

The minister directed the Bangladesh Film Censor Board officials in Dhaka and the task forces headed by deputy commissioners at district level to strengthen their drive against indecent films and posters.

But some censor board officials said that with only five inspectors available to track down obscene films and posters throughout the country, it was not possible for the Board to tackle the problem. Besides, the inspectors are often preoccupied with table work.

"It should be the responsibility of the police to stop posters being displayed in front of schools as they patrol the city," said a high-ranking official of Bangladesh Film Censor Board requesting anonymity.

Censor board members also think that the law enforcers alone cannot help curb obscenity as the filmmakers can go to court to protect their rights. They often disown the posters with erotic images.

"The producers can easily superim-

pose the signature and seal of the censor board and put it in the posters," said an official of the censor board.

But if the government is sincere, it can easily stop this illegal and immoral practice believes a member of the Censor Board.

"Posters are pasted between 12am to 4am on Thursdays before the film's release on Friday. So that is the time to nab the people involved in making obscene posters," said the official who also did not wish to be named.

By keeping a close eye on the activities of laboratories and studios like the Film Development Corporation (FDC), Department of Film Publication (DFP) and Bari Studio where films are made, obscenity can be checked, felt a producer.

Meanwhile, there was no sign of any special drive in the city against the obscene posters.



Cinema posters pasted near a school.

STAR PHOTO

# Vendors occupy sidewalks in busy business hub



At Dilkusha yesterday.

KAUSER ISLAM AYON

Vendors are back to re-occupy sidewalks and parts of the roads in Motijheel-Dilkusha, the city's busiest area, where fish, meat, vegetables and kitchenware are sold.

On hearing that a report was in the making last week by a Star City correspondent on encroachment, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) initiated by the district commissioner (DC) himself, had the market evicted during the time queries were made.

But the vendors have started gradually re-occupying the same areas after the temporary eviction. This illegal market pollutes these commercial areas, hampering their characters.

According to greengrocers, the shops have been mushrooming over the last six months.

"I sell fish in this market from the beginning of this year and to continue without disruption, I bribe the police regularly," said a fishmonger. He migrated to Dhaka from Jamalpur because of river erosion last year.

The situation is worse in the Dilkusha area, from the American Express bank building to BCIC auditorium. About a 100 makeshift shops sell all possible kitchen items producing a huge amount of waste a day in the process.

Neither Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) nor the police had taken any action against this encroachment till last week. It is alleged that the police regularly collect at least Tk 3,000 a day and about Tk 1 lakh a month in extortion money from these shops.

"A lineman of police regularly collects

illegal tolls from us, varying from Tk 20 to Tk 50 a shop, depending on its size," a shopkeeper said.

Although this market has blocked entry to the Bangladesh Rifles camp housed in an under-construction building of Peoples Insurance Company Limited, BDR officials did not want to comment on the issue, when contacted.

It is alleged that workers, staff and high officials of the offices in the area are indirectly responsible as they regularly patronise this market.

"As part of society they do not stoop to think how their support has almost turned the entire area into wasteland," said an official of BCIC, claiming that he never patronises these vendors.

But regular customers believe it eases their lives.

"There is no kitchen market in this area and I am left with no choice but to shop at these makeshift market," said a class four employee in Motijheel.

Hundreds of others, like him rush to this market regularly. According to shopowners the peak hours of this market are immediately after offices close for the day, between 3:00pm and 6:00pm as most customers shop on their way home.

DCC's Chief Estate Officer Abu Taleb said the DCC has nothing to do, as they run short of workers and funds.

"To evict these shops and markets we need police assistance, which does not come when we ask for," he said.

Contacted, AKM Rafique Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Motijheel Police Station, showed annoyance at this correspondent.

"Should I explain my job to you? I know what I should do. It would be better for you not to interfere," he sternly reacted.

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROJECT

# WB to provide fund for one more year

CITY CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank (WB) will be bankrolling the air quality management project of the Department of Environment (DoE) until December 2005, according to a recent decision on fund extension.

The multilateral lending agency was scheduled to provide fund until December this year but extended it up to the end of next year in a meeting on June 30, said Project Director SM Abdul Kader. With the withdrawal of WB fund support for the project, the DoE will run it on its own.

He says the DoE needs to buy more machines at a cost of about Tk 3 crore for effective air quality monitoring, which was delayed as an international organisation did not send equipment specifications.

The DoE invited tenders for machinery a second time, which may take another six months to complete the official procedure.

"A condition for purchasing machinery is certification from the United States Environment Protection Agency," Kader added.

The project was launched in April 2002 to make people aware of air quality in Bangladesh. The level of air pollution is much higher than standards and Dhaka is the worst among the cities reeling from air pollution, he said.

The phase-out of two-stroke

autorickshaws from the city in 2002 helped cut air pollution and particulate release from diesel engine and black carbon smoke from rickety petrol-driven automobiles are now mainly blamed for the pollution.

Monitoring data says the capital faces more air pollution in the dry season than monsoon. The density of particulate matter (2.5 micron) in the city was 119.30 micro gram per cubic metre in February, up from the standard 65 micro gram per cubic metre.

"We have submitted a chart on air pollution limits to the law ministry for approval," Deputy Project Director Rezwan Haq said.

"Now the same standards are maintained for all vehicles, but we have set different standards for different vehicles and engines. The diesel engine and petrol engine have to maintain different standards," Rezwan Haq said.

After the approval of the standards chart, the DoE will make an air-quality index and build awareness among people through print and electronic media with the help of data.

The project cost has been estimated at Tk 29 crore. Nine satellite stations will be built across the country to monitor air quality, with five of them in the city. An air quality management camp will be set up in Chittagong.

# healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH		MARKET CLOSED		TAXI CAB		LIBRARY & INFO							
													
<b>Hospitals</b>  <b>Heart</b> National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59  <b>Burn</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital Burn Unit-8626812-6  <b>Cancer</b> National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9  <b>Diabetes</b> Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50  <b>Mother &amp; Child Care</b> Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62 Azampur Mother & Child Health		Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980  <b>Eye</b> Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315 National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807  <b>Dental</b> Dental College -9002035  <b>Orthopaedics</b> National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150  <b>General</b> Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6 Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819 Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9 Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,		Shamarita Hospital- 9131901 Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800, 9122560-69 Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6 Cholera Research Hospital (ICDDR)- 8811751-60 Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135  <b>Blood Bank</b> Red Crescent Centre- 9116563 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061,7319022 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9  <b>Eye Bank</b> Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040  <b>Ambulances For</b> <b>Dead Body</b> Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,		Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday Elephant Road-Friday Bishal Center-Friday Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday Powell Market-Friday BCS Computer City-Friday Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday, Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday Stadium Market-Friday Bangabazar Market-Friday National Museum-Thursdays Ahsan Manzil--Thursdays. New Market-Tuesdays Gausia Market-Tuesdays Mouchak Market-Sunday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesdays Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesdays Eastern Plaza-Sunday Farmview Super Market-Sunday Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday Dhaka Zoo-Sunday Shishu Jadughar-Sunday		<b>Yellow Cab</b> Navana 9558065 Salida 9344477, 0171620881 Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191 Cab One 7113282-3 Nihon 8624741-2 Orion 9347277 Anudip 8125285 and 8127611 Capital 9352847  <b>Union</b> 8130485 Kool 0171826731  <b>Black Cab</b> Cab Ex 9358401 Cabline 8321162 JBS Cab 019364575 Sajan 018126036 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611  <b>Subarna Express</b> Mahanagar Prabhati Mahanagar Godhuli Turna Parabat Express Joyantika Express Upaban Express Tista Express Ekata Express Upakul Express Agnibeena Express		Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7:30 am Leaves Dhaka at 3-15 pm Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 6-40 am Leaves Dhaka at 12-45 pm Leaves Dhaka at 9-45 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 8-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm  Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm Reaches Chittagong at 1-55 pm Reaches Chittagong at 10-55 pm Reaches Chittagong at 6-40 am Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-15 Reaches Noakhali at 5-00 am Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm		<b>Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers</b>  Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673 Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407 Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation- 8116133 Alliance Francaise- 8611557 British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7 Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604 Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6 Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096 The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412	