

Film industry on the verge of collapse

PORIMOL PALMA

The film industry of the country has fallen into decline in the last one decade – both in terms of quality of films and its commercial viability.

Indifferent attitude of the government, anomalies in the censor board, video piracy and aggression of pornography from foreign countries have made the situation worse.

As a result, the industry lost a major portion of its viewers and about one-third of cinemas was forced to close down.

A section of producers are also responsible for such decline as they started producing vulgar movies to make an easy profit. But these low quality movies dominated by sex and violence led to an increase in crimes and violence in the society.

experts said.

Such situation made the people keep cinemas at bay. The number of film-goers in the capital has declined to three lakh a week now, down from about nine lakh a few years back. Same is the scenario in other towns and rural areas, said Mian Alaudin, law and cultural secretary of Bangladesh Motion Pictures Exhibitors Association (BMPEA).

The investment in the industry also decreased markedly – it went down to 60 crore in 2004 from about Tk 200 crore in 1995. The government earned a revenue of Tk 27 crore from the film industry in 1995 but only about Tk 9 crore in 2004, according to the National Board of Revenue (NBR).

As profit marked a sharp drop,

'Set up deep-sea port at Akram point'

Khulna Dev Action Committee to stage hunger strike Jan 29

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee will stage a dawn-to-dusk hunger strike at Shahid Hadis Park here on January 29 to press for its several demands, including setting up of a deep-sea port at Akram point.

The other demands are modernisation of Mongla Port, construction of Khulna airport, installation of a gas network, completion of construction of Shaikh Abu Naser specialised hospital and construction of Padma bridge at Mawa.

Political parties, including BNP, and professional and business organi-

sations have extended their support to the hunger strike and other action programmes, committee sources said.

The committee also called for taking stern action against 11 people identified by the government as members of a mafia group involved in creating obstacle to the development of Mongla port.

Iajuddin, Khaleda greet Kalam, Manmohan

UNB, Dhaka

Briefing for UK student visa holders Jan 31

BSS, Dhaka

British Council is organising a pre-departure briefing session for students, who have obtained a British student visa and are leaving for the UK, for the February 2005 academic session.

The briefing session will take place at British Council on January 31 at 3:00pm.

Students concerned have been requested to register their names and collect entry passes from January 26-30 between 10:00am and 3:00pm.

Students have been requested to contact Agatha Gomes, British Council, 5, Fuller Road, Dhaka-1000 Tel: 8618905-7 for registration and collection of entry pass.

cinema owners were forced to close down the movie theatres. About 400 cinemas, out of 1200, were shut down in the last one decade and many others are likely to meet the same fate.

Moon, Tajmahal, Rupmahan, Joyti, Mollika, Beatty, Lion and Modhumita Dhaka and Guzar, Khurshid, Mahal, Nupur, Jalsa, Hridam, Upahar and Alankar in Chittagong are vulnerable to closure, according to the BMPEA.

"As no good films are being produced nowadays, viewers do not turn up at the cinemas, resulting the closure of movie theatres," said Mian Alaudin.

The slide in film business has already rendered about two lakh workers jobless and about ten thousand more jobs are on the line, industry sources said.

Many producers shied away from producing films as there is no possibility of profit in the business, said KMR Manjor, president of Bangladesh Film Producers and Distributors Association (BFPDA).

On the other hand, some producers invested only Tk 30 to 40 lakh for a vulgar film with low-grade artistes to make a huge profit, whereas a good film requires an investment of at least Tk 1.5 to 2 crore, he said.

The artistes also get an honourarium at the minimum. The A-grade artistes, who received Tk 5 to 6 lakh for a film, are now getting Tk 1 to 2 lakh, said Labu Ahmed, office secretary of Bangladesh Film Artistes Association.

The producers of vulgar films use low-grade artistes who have neither any academic background nor any

artistic and creative sense, said Chashi Nazrul Islam, president of Bangladesh Film Directors Association (BFDAA).

These artistes and director-cum-producers are, in fact, dominating the industry, marginalising the good directors and producers, he added.

Low quality English movies, which are being screened across the country, are polluting the film arena.

The censor board censors only 20 English movies a year, KMR Manjor said, but at least 200 English films, mainly from Hong Kong and China, are screened in the country every year.

Producers are forced to produce vulgar films to compete with these foreign films and the cable television network, causing the film industry to suffer badly.

BFDAA leaders blamed the government for not taking any initiative to develop the industry.

"Such indifferent attitude of the government not only hampers the development of the industry but also helps promote a unhealthy culture," said film director Sohanur Rahaman.

Film producers, directors and artistes also complained that the government failed to stop video piracy as a vested quarter is engaged in such practice.

Badal Rahman, a film director, said, "The government efforts to curb crimes and violence have failed because of the impact of bad films on the society."

Film is the most powerful media and the government should promote it through creating scopes for study and research on films and incentives, he added.

Local BNP and Awami League workers also distributed relief materials among them.

Ctg Sangbadik Housing Society executives

BSS, Chittagong

Italian film show
Dhaka city unit of Jatiya Oikya Mancha organises an Eid reunion. Venue: Hotel Eden, Arambagh. Time: 10:00am.

DHAKA TOMORROW

Italian film show

The High Commission of India will screen three films titled 'Two Women', 'Flower' and 'The Gold of Naples' directed by celebrated Italian neo-realism filmmaker Vittorio de Sica and German Cultural Centre, Dhannondi. Time: 3:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:00pm.

Indian film show

The High Commission of India will screen three films titled 'Lakshya', 'Flower' and 'The Gold of Naples' directed by celebrated Italian neo-realism filmmaker Vittorio de Sica and German Cultural Centre, Dhannondi. Time: 3:00pm, 5:00pm and 7:00pm.

Drama

Sushama Natya Sampraday, a theatre group, will stage a drama titled 'Ahlidh Jannoutsav'. Venue: Mahila Samiti Auditorium, Bailey Road. Time: 5:30pm.

Exhibition

A two-day exhibition of books and documents will be inaugurated. Venue: National Institute of Mass Communications, Darus-salam, Mirpur. Time: 10:00am to 3:30pm daily.



PHOTO: PID
Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addresses a huge public meeting organised by Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at Langolokot in Comilla yesterday.

Body to probe Khulna fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A three-member committee was formed yesterday to find out the cause of the devastating fire that broke out on Saturday noon at Notun Bazar Chor area in which a teenaged girl was burnt alive and 1500 shanties were gutted rendering several thousands homeless.

Deputy Director of Fire Services Ashraf Ali will head the committee which will submit its report on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Khulna City Mayor has distributed cooked food, 1500 blankets, 1500 pieces of sarees and lungis, 1500 pieces of wrappers and winter clothes among the fire victims.

Local BNP and Awami League workers also distributed relief materials among them.

Ctg Sangbadik Housing Society executives

BSS, Chittagong

Italian film show
Kazi Jafur Islam and Swapna Mallik have been elected President and General Secretary of the Chittagong Sangbadik Cooperative Housing Society Ltd (CSCHSL) for 2005-2007.

Other members are Anjan Kumar Sen (Vice-President), Omar Kaiser and Mostaque Ahmed (members).

The names of the new executives were announced at a special general meeting of the organisation held at Chittagong Press Club yesterday, a CSCHSL press release said.

With CSCHSL Interim Management Committee Mohammad Youssuf in the chair, the meeting condoled the death of its members Prof Mohammad Khaled, Sadhan Kumar Dhar, Syed Mostafa Jamal, Aktherunnabi, Abdul Hamid and Osmanul Haq.

They also prayed for the eternal peace of the departed souls and conveyed their heart-felt sympathies to the members of the bereaved families.

Meter system in cabs, CNG auto-rickshaws in Ctg soon

BSS, Dhaka

Chittagong District Development Coordination Committee (CDDCC) at a meeting yesterday decided to introduce meter system in taxis and CNG-driven auto-rickshaws in Chittagong.

During the meeting held at the port city, the ministry concerned

has been requested to take necessary steps in this regard, an official handout said here yesterday.

The CDDCC members with former Commerce Minister Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury MP in the chair also urged the authorities to introduce a new ferry at Kalurhati and provide the round-the-clock

service to Talaipara ferry ghat. State Minister for Environment and Forests Jafur Islam Chowdhury, Whip Wahidul Alam and other officials attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, the District Law and Order Committee, at a meeting expressed satisfaction over the law and order situation in the district.



We Mourn

Hotel Agrabad Group mourned the death of Dr. M. A. Aziz, the Eminent Environment Scientist and Professor of Singapore National University who died on 17 January '05. We pray to Almighty Allah to give his soul rest in peace.

HOTEL AGRABAD GROUP

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority

WASA Bhaban, 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215

Memo No. 03/PFRP

Dated: 24/01/2005

Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) has been allocated public fund from the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (GoB) toward the cost of the "Post Flood-2004 Rehabilitation Project", and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this fund to payments under the project for consultancy services.

The services include:

1. Detailed survey and assessment of damages caused by recent devastating flood to the water supply and sewerage system of DWASA and identification of the extent and quantum of repair and rehabilitation works needed for restoration of the systems.
2. Preparation of design, drawing, cost estimates, technical specifications and tender documents for repair and rehabilitation works, materials and equipment/machineries (such as generator, electrical sub-station, chlorinator, submersible water/sewage pump, sewage disposal truck, vacuum truck etc.) and also to assist in tender evaluation.
3. Inspection of materials, equipment/machineries and supervision of all repair and rehabilitation works.
4. Preparation of as-built drawings of all repaired and rehabilitated works including incorporation of the as-built drawings in existing system maps of DWASA.
5. Preparation of inception, various periodical and final completion reports.

Required experience: The applicant (the consulting firm) must have at least 10 years overall experience in consultancy services for Water Supply and Sewerage/Sanitary/Civil Structure/Electro-Mechanical/Environmental/Water Resource/Transport Infrastructure Projects, preferably 2 years experience in Water Supply and Sewerage Project.

Implementation period: The tentative implementation period is 24 months.

Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (DWASA) now invite eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar operating conditions, availability of appropriate professional qualification and experience among staff, etc.).

Consultants may associate with other consultants to enhance their qualifications. Associations with foreign firms are encouraged but not mandatory.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the Public Procurement Regulations 2003 and Public Procurement Procedures issued by the GoB.

Interested consultant may obtain further information at the office of the Superintending Engineer and Project Coordinator, "Post Flood-2004 Rehabilitation Project", Dhaka WASA, WASA Bhaban (1st Floor), 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215 during normal office hours.

Expressions of interest shall be submitted in sealed envelope, delivered to the address of the Project Coordinator, "Post Flood-2004 Rehabilitation Project", Dhaka WASA, WASA Bhaban (1st Floor), 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215 by 14 February, 2005 up to 12.00 Noon, and be clearly marked "Request for Expressions of Interest for the Consultancy Services for Post Flood-2004 Rehabilitation Project", Dhaka WASA.

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOI proposals either partially or in full without assigning any reason whatsoever.

ANH Akhtar Hossain, PEng

Managing Director

Dhaka WASA

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- Law- LLB and LLM

Ms Gillian Ajayi, Associate Director, Murdoch International will be available for one to one consultation on the following date:

Date : Tuesday 1st February 2005
Time : 10:00am to 1:00pm
Venue : Australian Centre For Education
IDP Education Australia
CWN (A) 12, Kernal Ataturk Avenue, Gulshan 2, Dhaka
Tel : (880) 2 9883545, 9895913, 9896134, 98994581
Fax : +(880) 2 8823343 Email : Info@idp.com, www.idp.com

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