

Creativity speaks for itself at Cannes

KHONDOKER MD SHOYEB, back from Cannes, France

CANNES. More often than not, people associate the city in the French Riviera with the world's oldest, prestigious and the most influential of film festivals, the Cannes International Film Festival. But the city, every year, not long after the film festival ends, flocks in another bunch of artistic minds for the Cannes Lion International Festival of Creativity.

A group of cinema screen advertising contractors, on seeing the film festival, wanted something similar for the advertising world, and in 1954, was born the International Advertising Film Festival, in Venice, Italy. The trophy handed out was in the shape of a lion, inspired by the lion of the Piazza San Marco, the principal public square of Venice.

From 1984 the festival was held at Cannes and hence its current name. This year, the festival took place from June 17-23, and saw a congregation of the world's brightest advertising professionals, designers, digital innovators and marketers to debate, learn and be inspired. And be bestowed with the greatest industry honours, be celebrated for pushing creative communications forward, along the way.

But the festival, this year, was made more special by the presence of the former US President Bill Clinton, who delivered a keynote speech on the penultimate day of the festival.

"We need people like you to fire our imaginations, to fill our brains with the facts that will overcome an inherent resistance to change. As communicators, you can have a profound effect on the next 30 years," said Clinton, who came as a guest of Brazilian communica-



CANNES LIONS

The Indian team that won gold in Film Craft Lions category pose at one of the four award giving ceremonies in the festival in France.

tions company Grupo ABC.

He called out to the ad world to form "diverse networks of creative co-operation that will capture the world's imagination. There is wisdom in diversity as long as your ultimate goal is to come up with an answer".

The prizes handed out are in a total of 15 categories, with the honours varying between grand prix (the highest), gold, silver and bronze. As many as 34,301 entries from 87 countries were submitted and Bangladesh, too, was among them.

Bangladesh Brand Forum (BBF) took a team to Cannes to participate in the 'Young Lions Competition', where advertising professionals of up to 28 years of age working in teams of two are given 24-48 hours time to come up with a winning campaign on either of: print, cyber, film or media. The Bangladeshi team took part in the print category, but unfortunately the team from Singapore bagged the gold medal.

India participated in the festival in a big way this year, with a total of 1,182 entries were sent out by 81 Indian agencies, at a cost of nearly 3.4 crore rupees. Awards they won, and present they were in the jury boards, of all but the Mobile Lions category.

Mumbai Mirror's ad campaign titled "I am Mumbai" bagged the Film Craft Gold Lions award. The film presents a series of stories featured in the paper with a notion that for some time now, one voice every morning has been amplifying some of the sounds a city does not get to hear, but should.

Another gold award was won by India, in the Outdoor Lions category, for campaigns pertaining to Western Union. The ad demonstrated the strength of Western Union in transferring money of Indians abroad to their folks in India via interactive images of Abraham Lincoln, Queen Elizabeth II and Gandhi on a billboard, which shows the change from dollar or pound to rupee.

Indian Ministry of Tourism's campaign, the Hinglish Project, to help tourists read Hindi easily, bagged the gold award in the Design Lions category. A font was invented for the campaign where it became possible to tell the phonetic sound of any Hindi character while looking at the corresponding English word.

The Grand Prix award of this category, though, went to the German advertising agency Serviceplan Munich, for the campaign it ran for Austria Solar. The campaign shows the texts and graphics of Austria Solar's annual report spring to life when it comes under sun's ray, but become invisible when taken off it.

United Colours of Benetton's "Unhate" campaign, conceptualised by Italy's Fabrico Treviso, featuring world leaders who are at loggerheads Palestine and Israel; USA and Venezuela; Germany and France -- kissing one another, won the Press Grand Prix award.

The Radio Grand Prix was taken home by Talent São Paulo for its "Repellent Radio" a campaign for Go Out-



CANNES LIONS

People take part in a seminar at the 59th Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in France on June 17.

side Magazine. The work saw a high frequency broadcast essentially turn a radio into a mosquito repellent.

Sports giant Nike was a big winner with its campaign for its new product Nike+ Fuelband. The product is a sleek, simple wristband that allows its wearers to track the calories they burn, not just through their workouts but with any physical activity they do during the day. The campaign which shows that everything you do counts, won the prestigious Cyber Lions Grand Prix and Titanium and Integrated Grand Prix. The campaign, the jury felt, took a product that was initially aimed for runners and made it into a mass product.

The Outdoor Lions Grand Prix went to the "Invisible Drive" campaign for Mercedes Benz, which was described by Lo Sheung Yan (Mayan), the jury board president for the category, as "truly innovative".

According to Daimler: "We made people experience F-Cell the same way the environment does, like it's not even existent. In practice: We disguised the B-Class F-Cell with mats out of LEDs on the one side and fixed a camera on the other side of the car."

"The camera filmed everything that happened behind the vehicle and transferred every action directly to the

LED mats." As a result, the B-Class became invisible for the passers-by in the immediate vicinity.

Reinvention of Coca-Cola's classic "Hilltop" commercial leveraging the reach of Google, scooped the Mobile Lions Grand Prix award. While American Express picked up two Grand Prix awards, in Promo & Activation and Direct categories, for its campaign "Small Business Gets an Official Day", by Crispin Porter + Bogusky Boulder, USA.

PR Lions Grand Prix was won for Puerto Rican bank Banco Popular De Puerto Rico's campaign "The most popular song". Playing to the salsa hit "No Hago Más Na", which translates to "I Do Nothing", the campaign shows the day in the life of a lazy man, who can afford to be thanks to his bank which looked after his finances well. At a time when banks are particularly disliked, the campaign increased the bank's image and reputation index to a record 80 percent.

Along with the four award ceremonies, many seminars, workshops and social events were held, for the purpose of networking and exchange of ideas.

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Budget too weak to combat poverty

FARID AHMED CHOWDHURY

THE budget for the year 2012-13 seems to be based on a bureaucratic mindset. The outlay is fat with a deficit of Tk 52,000 crore and the glimpses are to impress the common people.

The fundamental parameters for successful implementation of the budget depend on financial discipline, political stability and the rule of law. From historical perspective, most of the sector portfolios get into a trap of statutory regulatory order prior to the budget declaration -- a hike in the prices of gas and electricity is an instance. Such a decision impacts the overall financial activities of the country, leading to high inflation and affecting the poor, the middle class and the fixed-income group the most. This year also, the government adopted a Machiavellian policy of increasing the prices before the budget declaration so that no resistance comes from the people after the announcement of the budget. It seems the country is heading towards such a state where denying the basic rights of the common people is very common practice.

For the last few decades, we are grappling with a 'naked economic' culture in the name of free-market, instead of adopting a balanced concept. The objective of freedom was based on the principle of discrimination-free society, but that could not create any opportunity for the have-nots. The budget also failed to draw an appropriate roadmap for poverty elimination or creation of new jobs. I do agree that it is not possible to establish a classless society but it is definitely possible to establish a society free from discrimination.

The problems of Bangladesh are enormous and that have been compounded with unethical and sick political practices. The government believes in the notion of 'market economy', but the budget does not have any pragmatic plan to curtail unnecessary public expenditure by reducing the size of the government machinery, cutting the number of foreign tours by the government officials, and reducing imports of duty-free cars or allocation of luxury vehicles to upazila chairmen.

The government's administrative costs could be reduced by denationalising all its losing concerns and commercial units.

The budget also failed to take steps to rein in the drainage of foreign currency by allowing import of unproductive luxury items. People expected that the budget will have some definite policies to discourage the outflow of foreign exchange used for the import of huge luxury items. But the government measures fell short of the expectations.

Whenever there is a rise in the prices of fuel, gas or electricity, the burden directly goes onto the shoulder of the common people in the guise of a hike in the prices of essential commodities and fares of bus, rickshaw and taxi. The common people are never responsible for a rise in the government's spending on subsidy on fuel and electricity, rather it is the owners of private industries and transports who use much of the power, fuel and gas.

Hence, a burden arising out of the rich should not be borne by the common people. In these cases, the government should consider options for 'subsidy recovery' and 'subsidy adjustment' meant for the affluent classes only. This can be an effective tool/instrument to prevent frequent hikes in prices of electricity and fuel, and if such a policy is adopted the market is bound to behave rationally.

The rental and quick rental power projects have worsened the situation with a burden of long-term debt. The government should have considered renewable energy projects such as windmill and seawave electricity projects. Apart from this, there should be an assessment on how viable the import-based coal power plants would be. Refurbishment and maintenance of the old power plants can generate an additional 1,000MW to 1,500MW of electricity.

Over the years, we have been observing that the budget speech of the finance minister is full of hope and inspiration. But actually, the budget serves the interests of a politically privileged group or syndicate. As a result, the poor are becoming poorer and the rich richer.

The writer is the former president of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

DIABETES

Early detection is cost-effective

Jens Sandahl Christiansen of the University of Aarhus in Denmark speaks on primary intervention

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A leading healthcare expert yesterday called for early detection of diabetes and primary intervention as improving diabetic care is more cost-effective than treating its complications.

Benefits from early detection are four times the cost of healthcare service and primary intervention can help recoup 12 times the spending, said Jens Sandahl Christiansen, a professor of medicine at the University of Aarhus in Denmark.

"Early diagnosis and enhanced treatment will reduce direct healthcare costs, improve the patient's quality of life and minimise lost productivity," Christiansen said at a programme at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in Dhaka.

The Danish expert highlighted the world's largest observational study ever into the safety and effectiveness of insulin treatment.

The world's biggest insulin maker Novo Nordisk has disseminated the results of A1chieve, which is the largest ever study on the use of insulin therapy in type 2 diabetes, involving 66,726 people from 28 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America.

Bangladesh was also a participant in the study with 1,093 patients and 48 doctors. Before entering into the study, people were started on one of three Novo Nordisk insulin analogue regimens based on their physician's clinical judgement.

After 24 weeks of treatment with a Novo Nordisk insulin analogue, there was a significant reduction in blood glucose control or HbA1c levels of 2.1 percentage points from 9.5 percent to 7.4 percent.

Patients' reported quality of life improved significantly as well.

Christiansen said A1chieve is a fantastic achievement. "It gives us a lot of knowledge of what is going on in various countries in the developing world. It is a very helpful study. I think it will change a lot of clinical practices, also here in Bangladesh."



Jens Sandahl Christiansen

The study will allow physicians across the world to begin to see the results and how they can positively impact the treatment of people with diabetes in their own practice, he said.

He said the burden of diabetes is already enormous and is going to be significantly worse in the years to come. "The global epidemic of diabetes has to be managed. We need to do something for it. I am not sure whether we will be able to prevent it."

The expert prefers to go for primary prevention to tackle diabetes. "But we have two problems. We are not absolutely sure what we should do and we are certainly very much in doubt of how we should do it."

He said the westernised lifestyle is a major problem, he told The Daily Star in an interview.

Christiansen said they will see new analogues coming on the market. "We have already seen some. I am pretty sure in 10 years' time we will see all availability of insulin. We will have clever insulin which acts when the glucose is high, thereby elim-

inating all the risk of hypoglycaemia."

He said the study was conducted in evolving economies. In developing countries, the care of diabetes, in some areas, is certainly in need of improvement.

Christiansen said there are significant costs to individuals and the wider economy. Direct costs include healthcare costs, particularly treatment of complications, and indirect costs include suboptimal performance/time off work, and financial losses.

Much of this cost comes from treatment of diabetic complications. As diabetes prevalence increases, future costs associated with treatment will increase as well, he said.

Officials of Novo Nordisk Pharma (Pvt) Ltd say the incidence of diabetes is increasing by the day, and at present one new case of diabetes is diagnosed every 10 seconds in the world.

In Bangladesh also, the scenario is threatening. About six million Bangladeshis are said to be suffering from diabetes. The number is expected to cross 10 million in the next 20 years due to changes in lifestyle, rapid urbanisation, obesity, lack of physical work and ageing of people.

Novo Nordisk has already tied up with Eskayef Bangladesh Ltd, a leading local pharmaceutical company, and set up a high-tech insulin manufacturing plant in Bangladesh amid hopes of providing world-class medicines to the country's growing diabetic patients.

The Danish company enjoys more than 80 percent share in the insulin segment of diabetic care market in Bangladesh.

Transcom Distribution Company Ltd is the distributor of Novo Nordisk. Prof AK Azad Khan, president of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Prof Hajera Mahtab, professor emerita and chief consultant of medicine at BIHS Hospital, Prof Nazmun Nahar, director general of BIRDEM and Md Faruque Pathan, a professor of Department of Endocrinology at BIRDEM, and A Rajan Kumar, managing director of Novo Nordisk Pharma (Pvt) Ltd, also spoke.