

# CINE BROTHERS

SYED MAQSUD JAMIL



The director is a pivotal figure in the making of a feature film. The singular focus ensures the homogeneity of the plot and of the story of the film. The redoubtable Dilip Kumar in his twilight years used to dabble in the work of his director. The Hindi version of Sagina Mahato is mentioned as a reference.

Two directors coming together and making a movie is rarely heard of. The Belgian Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne brothers are an exception. They are notable film makers in the cine world. They won their first major international film prize when Rosetta won the Palme d'Orat in the 1999 Cannes Film Festival. The story of Rosetta is about the strong resolve of a seventeen year old girl to keep her job. Living in a trailer she is burdened with an alcoholic mother. Her strong will to spurn off amorous liaison comes from her contempt for her mother's loose ways. Realism of Rosetta is overpowering.

They won the Palme d'Or a second time for their film 'L'Enfant (The Child), putting them in an elite club. The story of L'Enfant is of a baby born to an unwed teenage couple. Their poignant desperation with the baby is a stark reality of western society; their film The Kid with a Bike won the Grand Prix at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival.

Films in our region also had two cine brothers - Ehtesham and Mustafiz. They however made films separately. These two brothers made notable contributions during the founding years of Dacca film industry. Ae Desh Tomar Amar is Ehtesham's first movie made in 1959. The movie is a landmark in Dacca film industry and in that, Shabnam and Shubhash Dutta made their debut appearance. His next movie was Rajdhanir Booke. Those who lived the time remember Shuvash Dutta's role of a Rickshawala in Ehtesham's Urdu movie Chanda singing Hum Rickshawala Bechara. Ehtesham's most popular Urdu movie was Chakori (1967). It was possibly matinee idol Nadeem's debut appearance.

Mustafiz's first movie was Harano Din. Shabnam was in a stellar role. Chand Aur

## MUSINGS

Chandni was Mustafiz's popular Urdu movie. Nadeem and Shabana were in the leading roles. The songs of the movie had liting tune. Masud Rana sang *Teri yaad aa gayi*. In Mustafiz's another Urdu film Daag, Mehdi Hassan sang a soulful tune *Tum zid to karrahi ho*. In Ehtesham's popular film *Chakori* Mujeeb Alam sang *Wo mere samne mere khabo ki taabir bane baithe hai*.

The local film industry of the time owes much to these cine brothers. While Belgium's Dardenne brothers are lauded for their focus on reality, Ehtesham and Mustafiz made the local film industry vibrant with popular films of public adulation.

Film industry is a community bonded together by professional brotherhood. They are a family loved by a wide following. It is a tinsel world where dreams are made into films.

There were cine brothers in Bombay film industry. Ashok Kumar and his two other brothers, actor singer Kishore Kumar and Anup Kumar, acted in the film *Chalti Ka Naam Gari*. The director was however Satyen Bose. It was a comedy film.

The other Bombay cine brothers were Raj Kapoor, Shammi Kapoor and Rishi Kapoor. They did not, however, act together but they were trendsetters and endearing cine presence.

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## HERITAGE

Once upon a time, it used to mark the terminus of the largest city of undivided Bengal; currently it lies uncared for, surrounded by bushes, covered by posters, in a shadowy corner of Dhaka University campus. It is the Dhaka gate, popularly known as the gate of Mir Jumla, the Mughal governor of Bengal, renowned for securing Dhaka and its inhabitants from the raids of pirates and slave traders. From 17th to the beginning of the 19th century, this gate was the main entrance to Dhaka city which, at that time, flourished on the banks of the Buriganga River.

According to popular belief, during the reign of Mughal emperor, Aurangazeb, Dhaka, the capital of Bengal – a Mughal province much larger than current Bangladesh – started to expand rapidly. The then governor of Bengal, Mir Jumla, surveyed the city to build some fortresses and gates to protect its citizens from the Magh pirates. After determining the city area, Mir Jumla, in around 1663 AD, erected this gate to mark the northern entrance of Dhaka. Outside the gate, Mir Jumla established a beautiful garden and named it Bagh-e-Badshahi (the emperor's garden). Afterwards, the British rulers converted the garden into a race course and, after Bangladesh's independence, the race course was replaced by the Suhrawardi Uddyana, one of the most popular city parks of Dhaka.

However, after the fall of the Mughal Empire, Dhaka lost much of its splendour and the gate was almost ruined. According to archaeologists, British magistrate Charles Daws may have rebuilt the gate in 1825. The gate's structure reflects a European architectural style which is not common among Mughal structures situated in different parts of Dhaka.

An unknown photographer took a photo of this gate in 1875 – the only source that allows us to see the gate's original structure. The entire structure can be divided into three parts: two sliding walls and a central pillar. Each segment of the sliding walls is supported by several pillars supporting the structures. The pillars and the upper portion of the walls are decorated with cornice shaped designs and patterns. The pillars are also crowned with decorative spherical

# THE FORGOTTEN HISTORY OF DHAKA GATE

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS



PHOTO: COURTESY

Dhaka Gate in 1875.

structures. The blurry, old photo taken in 1875, shows people riding on elephants through the gate, which proves that the gate was still functional during the British rule.

After partition, Dhaka, under the Pakistan government, underwent further expansions. It is said that the gate was further reconstructed to widen the roads during late 1950s. Currently, the sliding walls are covered with moss and algae as no one cares about this ancient structure. The central pillar is also used as a panel for sticking posters and advertisements.

Although this monument has been enlisted as one of the protected sites by the government, there is no public service announcement to make people conscious of the structure's historical significance.

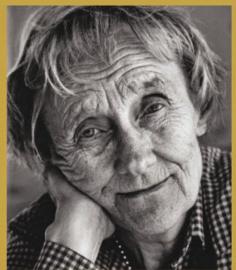
Another factor threatening the site's existence is that the proposed metro rail goes through it. As a result, the department of archaeology is not making any efforts to preserve it, according to its officials. On the other hand, although it is situated in Dhaka University campus, the university authority cannot take care of the structure as, by law, it has to be

protected by the department of archaeology. It is very unfortunate that due to such bureaucratic complexity, one of Dhaka's most important monuments is decaying in front of our very eyes.

It is very hard to believe that such a significant heritage site of our city is being ruined at Dhaka University campus, the city's intellectual heart. Without any further delay, the government must take measures to preserve the structure, paying special attention to the possibility of irreparable damage during construction work around this heritage site.



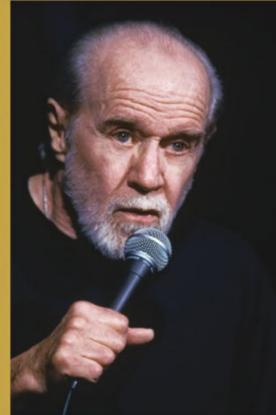
## PEARLS OF WISDOM



"A CHILDHOOD WITHOUT BOOKS – THAT WOULD BE NO CHILDHOOD. THAT WOULD BE LIKE BEING SHUT OUT FROM THE

ENCHANTED PLACE WHERE YOU CAN GO AND FIND THE RAREST KIND OF JOY."

ASTRID LINDGREN  
Swedish writer



"DON'T JUST TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO READ. TEACH THEM TO QUESTION WHAT THEY READ. TEACH THEM TO QUESTION EVERYTHING."

GEORGE CARLIN  
American stand-up comedian, social critic, actor, and author



"CHILDREN ARE MADE READERS ON THE LAPS OF THEIR PARENTS".

EMILIE BUCHWALD  
Austrian Author