

The Code for Censorship of Films in Bangladesh, 1985

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
NOTIFICATION
Dhaka, the 16th November 1985

No. S.R.O.478-L/ 85.-In exercise of the powers conferred by rule 13 of the Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules, 1977, and in supersession of the Code for Censorship of Films in Bangladesh, the Government is pleased to issue the following instructions for the purpose of examining and certifying films for public exhibition, namely:-

1. Application of general principles.- In the light of the broad principles, a film shall be regarded as unsuitable for public exhibition if it has the feature given below :-

I. Security or Law and Order :

- (a) Brings into contempt Bangladesh or its people, its tradition, culture, custom and dress.
- (b) Tends to undermine the integrity or solidarity of Bangladesh as an independent state.
- (c) Violates any instruction issued by the Government from time to time in the interest of preservation of Law and order and, of the security aspects of the country.
- (d) Portrays sedition, anarchy or violence with political motive.
- (e) Reveals military or other official secrets likely to affect security of the state.
- (f) Leads to breach of law and order or creates sympathy for violation of laws.
- (g) Ridicules or brings into contempt the Defense Forces, Police Force or any other Force responsible for maintenance of law and order in the country. Portrayal of any character falling in this category in a manner that might help to correct any corrupt element therein will be permissible.
- (h) Portrays the Defense Forces or Police Force in derogatory uniforms.
- (i) Gives a general impression of predominance of violence and lawlessness in the country and shows forces of law absent or inactive.
- (j) Has an inadequate story intended to cover-up sequences predominantly consisting of lawlessness, violence , crimes or spying likely to affect adversely the average audience.

N.B.- While invoking sub-clause (a), place and context should be taken into full consideration.

II. International Relations:

- (a) Contains propaganda in favor of a foreign state having a bearing on any point of dispute between it and Bangladesh or against a friendly foreign state which is likely to impair good relations between it and Bangladesh.
- (b) Violates the third country principle, that is which adversely affects friendly relations with the other country or countries or wounds the susceptibilities of foreign nations.
- (c) Portrays maliciously incidents or sequences which are prejudicial to the prestige or history of any people, race or nation.
- (d) Distorts historical facts particularly maligning Bangladesh and its ideals and heroes.

III. Religious Susceptibilities:

- (a) Ridicules, disparages or attacks any religion.
- (b) Causes hatred or strife among religious sects, castes or creeds.
- (c) Exploits religion to denounce or uphold controversial social issues.
- (d) Ridicules religious persuasions so as to offend its believers.

IV. Immorality or Obscenity:

- (a) Condone or extenuates acts of immorality.
- (b) Over emphasizes, glamorizes or glorifies immoral life.
- (c) Enlists sympathy or admiration for vicious or immoral character.
- (d) Justifies achievement of a noble end through vile means.
- (e) Tends to lower the sanctity of institution of marriage.
- (f) Depicts actual act of sex, rape or passionate love scenes of immoral nature.
- (g) Contains dialogue, songs or speeches of indecent interpretation.
- (h) Exhibits the human form, actually or in shadow graphs-
 - (i) in a state of nudity;
 - (ii) indecorously or suggestively clothed;
- (iii) indecorous or sensuous posture.
- (j) Indecently portrays national institutions, traditions, custom or culture. (This covers kissing, hugging and embracing which should not be allowed in films of sub-continental origin. This violates accepted canons of culture of these countries. Kissing may, however, be allowed in case of foreign films only. Hugging and embracing may be allowed in sub-continental films subject to the requirements of the story, provided that the same do not appear to be suggestive or of suggestive nature.)

- N.B.- (i) Deception of attempts or indication to rape may be permissible on when it is intended to condemn it.
- (ii) Bikini or bathing costume scene may be permissible in case of foreign films.
- (iii) Modern dress and suitable bathing costume in local production may be allowed in export quality films, provided these are of modest presentation.
- (iv) In case a picture creates such an impression on the audience as to encourage vice or immorality, the film should not be certified even it shows that the vicious to the immoral has been punished for his/her wrong.

V. Bestiality:

- (a) Exhibits wanton cruelty to animals.
- (b) Shows exaggerated horror, torture or cruelty or suffering which creates severe adverse reaction among the spectators.
- (c) Depicts third degree methods unless otherwise it is for the betterment of the society.

VI. Crime:

- (a) Condone criminal acts.
- (b) Portrays the modus operandi of criminals which may help to introduce new methods of crime.
- (c) Makes heroes of criminals or elicits sympathy of audience on their behalf.
- (d) Maliciously ridicules or belittles public officers engaged in the prevention or detection of crime or punishment of criminals or entrusted with the dispensation of justice.
- (e) Suggests wrong-doings or criminal activities as profitable or as normal incidents of ordinary life.
- (f) Overemphasizes criminal activities in such a way as to arouse sympathy.
- (g) Familiarizes the adolescents and young people with crime and acts of violence as normal incidents of ordinary life and not to be reprobated.
- (h) Shows science as a means of acquiring devilish powers by master criminals and highly equipped and most modern laboratory as his headquarter.
- (i) Upholds trafficking women, children, liquor, drugs, and smuggling of any kind.

VII. Plagiarism :

Plagiarism in any form from any old or under production foreign or Bangladeshi film.

- N.B.- (i) A plagiarized film is that which comes to near the original as to suggest the original in the mind of every person seeing it.
- (ii) Plagiarism shall not, however, be deemed to prohibit exceptions being made in suitable cases in the local production of well-known classics of folk-tales or where a producer of an old film produces a better version of his film or he is legally authorized to remake or reproduce the original.

VIII. Miscellaneous:

Displays dowry unless it is done to condemn it.

2. It is not proposed that a film should be banned altogether if the dilation of a part or parts thereof can render it suitable for general exhibition. Outright banning of a film should be resorted to only in case of films, which, in the opinion of a board, cannot be certified as suitable for adults only even with or without excisions in terms of these instructions.

By order of the President
K. M. EHSANUL HAQ
Deputy Secretary