保护文化或保护主义？
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当一个诉状被提交，最高法院（HCD）的高等法院（HCD）要求政府解释为什么三个印度卫星频道不会被禁止在孟加拉国播映。HCD最终会做什么在这个法律斗争中，将是法律问题，由HCD来解决，而不是本文的意图来评论在HCD前的诉状的法律优点。然而，那些试图阻挠一些印度卫星频道和电影的，不只是印度，而是其他邻国的印度次大陆的人们，呼吁保护我们的文化和价值观。这篇文章是对这些集团提出的狭隘和保护主义的论点的评论。

一般，人们试图保护自己免受竞争的侵袭，当他们没有自信在更开放的环境下生存。高质量的剧作家和制作人如Humayun Ahmed和Atiqul Haque Chowdhury从来不用担心，更不用说哭泣保护他们的作品免受海外竞争，而是受到西孟加拉的大众欢迎。Humayun Ahmed甚至毫无保留地嘲笑了电影工业的担忧竞争的呼喊。有趣的是，尽管有许多印度频道，一般攻击的焦点是在那些被认为是‘威胁我们文化’的印度次大陆语言的频道。也许事实是，他们更受欢迎，在这个国家有庞大的观众，对一些人来说造成了头疼。

有趣的是，进口政策令，2012-2015，提供了这样的规定：“电影（英文版，无字幕）和其他语言的电影（不包括印度次大陆语言的字幕版），可以在孟加拉国进口。”这种对印度次大陆语言的电影的限制可以基于商业或文化考虑。如果它是基于文化考虑，那么无法理解为什么印度次大陆语言的电影会威胁到我们的文化，而外国电影不会。如果说任何事情的话，就是他们更受欢迎，有庞大的观众。如果因为某些亲缘关系，
with the culture among the neighbouring countries, it would seem that they would be more attuned to our cultural and moral values. This would imply that this restriction has more to do with commercial factors and less with cultural values. Even in commercial terms, despite enjoying protection for decades, there is little evidence to suggest that the shielded movie industry of Bangladesh has matured or even progressed in comparative terms.

The cultural warriors seeking to block Indian satellite channels from being telecast forget, or are wilfully oblivious of, the fact that if the door is shut for some channels, this would not necessarily mean bigger viewership of comparable programmes of local satellite channels. In this competitive world, if some overseas satellite channels are banned simply because some of our compatriots do not like them or that the programmes telecast in those channels allegedly influence some immature viewers to indulge in harmful or absurd activities, other overseas satellite channels may fill the void and the local channels may remain where they are.

While the merit of the efforts to block Indian satellite channels is being questioned here, the artistic merit or entertainment appeal of the programmes that these channels telecast is not being lauded. Indeed, like many of my compatriots, the kind of soap operas and many other entertainment programmes these channels typically telecast is far from what I would crave to watch. But who are we to dismiss the taste of millions? Or even more importantly what right does the government possess to harshly tell a very large segment of our adult population what to watch and what not to watch unless what they do choose for their viewing is patently immoral?

It was not too long ago when many Bengali speakers in India were striving to watch our dramas and soap operas. It would serve them if the entertainment industry insiders in this country could ask themselves some difficult questions that while the quality of our soap operas is in no way any worse than that of India's why and how have the Indian channels effectively taken away a big chunk of Bangladeshi viewership? What has made a segment of our entertainment industry feel so vulnerable? The answer probably lies in the distribution and marketing policies of many of the products of the industry.

Another argument put forward in favour of blocking Indian channels is about ensuring reciprocity, because Bangladeshi channels are effectively blocked in India, we should do the same for Indian channels. Obviously, this is intuitively appealing but in this case this response may not be very effective, and it is an open question as to what extent a much bigger market of the Indian channels would suffer from a Bangladeshi ban. Even if it
does, it would weaken the moral force of the arguments of a very large segment of Bangladeshi entrepreneurs that they face undue market access barriers in India. It seems that a better step for the entrainment industry would be to collectively lobby for effective telecast rights in India for Bangladeshi satellite channels.

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