

Film Censorship Regulators in Malaysia and Bangladesh

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Abstract: Regulatory bodies and its primary activity are to protect public interest. It is established on the basis of legal instruction. Regulatory bodies practice a supervisory function such as imposing requirements, restrictions and conditions in relation to any activity and safeguarding compliance or enforcement. The aim of this paper is to examine the film censorship regulators in Malaysia and Bangladesh. The researcher mainly adopted qualitative methods. The information has taken from many readings, articles, books, newspapers and statutes[1][5]. The researcher also conducted interview with the member of the film censorship board, directors and actors of both countries. For this, the researcher used semi-structured form of interview. Film censorship law playing an important role to protect public from negative influence and it is working as a mechanism to protect society.

Index terms: Film; Censorship; regulator; Malaysia; Bangladesh;

I. INTRODUCTION

There are some regulatory bodies and its primary activity is to protect public interest It is established on the basis of legal instruction. Regulatory bodies practice a supervisory function such as imposing requirements, restrictions and conditions in relation to any activity and safeguarding compliance or enforcement .Regulatory bodies cover a wide variety of works, for example General Medical Council, it registers doctors to practice medicine and its purpose is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public [5][18]. Another example is Bar Council. It is also a regulatory body and its purpose is to maintain and improve the legal profession .The Film censorship board is also a regulatory body. As a regulatory body, film censorship boards are regulating films. The films are controlled by the three types of regulatory schemes. The first type of regulatory scheme is an industry based self-regulatory system which is,

This organisation was established early in 2012 by the cinema industry to centrally classify the films according to the parameters set by the film industry[4]. The for example, represented by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) of the USA where the rating values and regulations are set by the US film industry itself[10]. The second type of regulatory scheme is an independent body. Films are also regulated by an independent body. The example of the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) of the United Kingdom can be referred to in this regard[2].

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third type of regulatory scheme is a state-based regulatory scheme which is legislated under the established law to examine the films before it is released to the public[6][13]. It is governed by the government bodies like the Ministry or Cultural Department that has legal authority to censor the films [15]. This scheme is widely used and practiced all over the world, including Malaysia and Bangladesh[3]

II. FILM CENSORSHIP LAWS IN MALAYSIA AND BANGLADESH

This section clarifies the structures of film censorship laws as applied in Malaysia and Bangladesh. Such clarification is important in order to understand the systems as adopted by the said countries for film censorship laws. The discussion is provided below.

III. FILM CENSORSHIP LAWS IN MALAYSIA

The film censorship laws in Malaysia can be found in two main regulations which are (a) Film Censorship Act 2002 and (b) Film Censorship Guideline of 2010.

A. Film Censorship Act 2002: there are eight (8) different parts provided in this Act. Each of the parts specifically covers different aspects of film censorships. The preliminary matters (sections 1 to 3) can be found in Part I of the said Act. The relevant sections relating to the Malaysian Film Censorship Board and its establishment are provided in Part II of the said Act. According to this Act, chairman, vice-chairmen and others members (not less than two) of the Board shall be appointed by the Minister. But it did not mention any qualification of the member of the film censorship board matters concerning alterations to the films, the censorship certificates' issuances, the control and publicity for film materials can be traced in Part III of the Act. Part IV of the Act is referred for the details on the Appeal Committee and provides the procedures of appeal against the decisions of the Malaysian Film Censorship Board. Part V prescribes the authority of the Home Minister in relation to directions, exemptions, regulations and prohibitions as permitted by the Act. Matters in relation to enforcement such as, powers to investigate, search, seize, arrest and the relevant penalties which are connected to breach of the Act can be traced in Part VI. Miscellaneous matters such as, prosecution of offences for breach of censorship are provided in Part VII. Part VIII gives the details on repeals and transitions of the Act. In addition to the eight (8) parts, a schedule can be found at the end which provides the procedures for administration and the conduct of the Appeal Committee and the Malaysian Film Censorship Board

B.Film Censorship Guidelines of 2010: is a set of guidelines (issued by the Prime Minister's Department) which are used by the Malaysian Film Censorship Board in making censorship decisions. The said Guidelines have seven parts. Part I discusses the general policy, general principles, evaluation policy and decision of the film censorship board. This part states that the general principle of film censorship is protection of Malaysian society from any possible negative and immoral influences from watching films; prevention for exhibition of anti-government films or offensive films towards Islamic or ASEAN countries; prevention for exhibition of films which insult any religion, false teaching and deviations; prevention for exhibition of films which disturb racial harmony; promotion of noble values of Malaysian society and not against them; prevention from misuse of films for destroying the reputation of individuals or 1556rganizations[7][16][17]. Part II is the main part of this guideline[9]. In this part, four main aspects have been discussed and Members of the film censorship board will examine films in the light of these four aspects which provide as follows:

*Security and Public Order:*The subject matter of films that go against the principles of the Federal Constitution, violence and anarchy related themes that affect the country's law, unlawful comments used in film that indicate dishonor to the ruling government or directed to any foreign government are prohibited.

Religion: Films that contain religious themes need to be given attention and scrutinized so that they do not create any controversy and doubt among the general public. A lesson against God and Religion, criticism of any religion misinterpretation of Jihad should not be contained in any film's storylines. Films that are related to the Islamic religion need to be scrutinized in such a way so that they do not create any controversy and doubt in a multicultural nation. Any doubtful question about the purity of Islam, any type of comments that go against Islam, are strictly prohibited. The name of the film Noor Islam (Eponym) (1960) and Rumah Itu Duniaku (Home Sweet Home) (1964) were banned on the ground of religious purpose

Socio-culture: There are some socio-cultural issues that are not permitted. Degradation of the sovereignty of the Malay rulers, governors and national issues, uncertainty of lifestyle that may lead the destruction of Nobel values of a society, scenes and dialogues with sexuality, display of full nudity of the human body and excessive violence; horror movie's superstitious worship, horrifying and shocking circumstances, mocking of any culture of a country, films and dialogue with a negative perception on cruelty, scenes of oppression of a race or society, extreme scenes with action, sex scenes between a man and a woman; homosexual and unnatural sex scenes; indecent dresses, revealed or close up scenes of secret body parts, nudity, kissing scenes that arise sexuality, erotic sounds; gang rape scenes should all be avoided in making of films. The name of the film is Durjana (Evil) which was banned on the ground of cultural values in 1960'

Decorum and Morality: Films in which the actors wear revealing clothes exposing much of their bodies; scenes that promote and glorify a character committing a wicked deed

or the wicked deed itself; portrayal of artistic skills such as dancing, theatre, music, visual arts and fashion that are deemed to be disrespectful and in conflict with the artistic values of the Malaysian society; derision and mocking of the lives of the disabled or the marginalized, uncivil, obscene language, code-switching, hate-filled utterances and misspelt words; code-switching that is consistent with the storyline is allowed on conditions that the subtitles in Malay are correct and accurate; disrespectful or extreme behavior towards parents, senior citizens, women, children and the disabled should not be shown in a film. The name of the film is Akademi Seni and it was banned on the ground of moral values in 1988.

Part III discusses the good practices in the making of advertisements for films, trailers and film publicity materials. Part IV discusses the languages. This part mentions some Malay words, English words, Chinese words, Tamil words, Hindi words Bengali words and Panjabi words and language which is discouraged to be used in films. Part V mentions some further elements, if these elements are present in a film, that film would not get approval for screening. Films must respect Malaysia as a sovereign country. If any film undermines sovereignty or Rukun Negara, it will also not get approval to screen. Part VI discusses the process of getting approval. This part says that the owner of the film has to submit the complete film in order to obtain approval. The final part of this film censorship guidelines is part VII. This part discusses about the classification of films. This part states that films will be classified under three categories, those being, U, PG-13 and 18.

C.Film Censorship Laws in Bangladesh:!The film censorship laws in Bangladesh can be found in three main regulations which are (a) Censorship of Film Act 1963, (b) Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules 1977 and (c) Code for Censorship of Films 1985.

D.Censorship of Film Act 1963:The jurisdiction and enforceability of the said Act can be found in section 1 which stipulates that the said Act is applied to the whole of Bangladesh for censorship of films for public view. The interpretations of terms used in the said Act can be found in section 2. The establishment of the Bangladesh Film Censor Board is provided in section 3 of the said Act. The said Board accordingly must consist of a Chairman and fourteen (14) members who will be appointed by the Government. However, this Act does not mention any qualifications of the members of the Film Censorship Board of Bangladesh. For the purpose of exhibiting films in Bangladesh, the film practitioners must obtain approval from the said Board. The approval of the said Board will be issued in a form of a certificate. Moreover, the government has the power to make rules for carrying out the purpose of this Act and the government may exempt any film from all or any of the provisions of this Act.

E.Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules 1977: has been adopted in exercise of the powers conferred by section 10 of the Censorship of Films Act 1963. These rules are very important for the Bangladesh film censorship board because it mentions everything specifically. According to these

rules Film Censorship Board shall consist for a term of one

year. The Bangladesh Film Censorship Board shall consist of a Chairman, Vice- chairman and such numbers of other members as the Government may deem fit to appoint. The Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting shall be appointed as a Chairman of the Bangladesh Film Censorship Board and the Government shall appoint a Vice-Chairman from the members who are in the service of the Republic. Secretary and film inspectors also shall be appointed by the Government and they shall work a secretariat of the board. They shall be in direct control and supervision of the Chairman and Vice- Chairman. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Film Inspectors shall exercise such power as the Government may direct from time to time. In the absence of a Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall act as Chairman. In order to make any decision it is essential to have a formal meeting which is also known as meeting of the Board. It is required that the attendance for the meeting of the board must not be less than one-third of members. Therefore, any order to make any decision the member who attends the meeting must be more than one-third or more than one-third. This will be carried out by the Chairman. The Remuneration of the secretary and the members of the board shall be selected by the Government.

F. Code for Censorship of Films 1985: has been adopted under rule 13 of Censorship of Film Rules 1977. In this code the government has adopted some general principles for following instructions for examining films. Members of the censorship board will examine films in the light of these principles which are provided as follows:

Security or law and order: to protect the security or law and order of Bangladesh, the film censorship board will not allow in film any incident or dialogue or scene which is dishonours or is intended to dishonour Bangladesh or its people or their tradition, culture or dress. The name of the movie is Aral (Hidden). It was banned on the ground of security or law and order in 2016.

International relations: Under this provision, the film censorship board will censor any scene, dialogue or incident which is harmful for the relations with any friend country and the censorship board will also not allow any occurrences or sceneries which are harmful for the prestige of any person or group of the history of the nation.

Religious sensibilities: Film censorship board will not allow any ridicule, hate or strike against any religion; any effort to hurt religious faith, communal conflict, caste or racial malice; any condemnation of altercation related to social issues or raising or applying the issue of religion and any ridicule of strong religious faith with a motive to blame under this provision[12].

Immorality or obscenity: it is one of the most important issues under this law. Film censorship board will not allow any immorality or obscenity in film. If any film shows any corruptive activities such as an obscene life as fascinating and glorious; any exposure to sympathy or respect to sinful or corruptive character; the reasonability to obtain respect through dishonest and defective means; any real sexual activities, rape or obscene type lustful love; any obscene

conversation, song or immodest meaningful speech; any sensitive parts of the human body, it will be censored by censorship board. Fifty Shades of Grey is the best example which was banned on the ground of obscenity in 2015.

Bestiality: it is another important issue under this law. The film censorship board will not allow any bestiality in film such as, uncontrolled cruelty or brutality to lower animals; any scenes which will make severe frightening, torture and cruelty or serious trouble; any secret information which is not useful to the society through excessive torture. For example, Dhongsho Manob (Destructive Human). This movie was banned on the ground of bestiality in 2016.

Crime: Showing crime is also not permitted in film. If any film shows any criminal activities which create new criminal ways and create criminal(s) and efforts to get sympathy for the criminal, it will be censored by the censorship board. It will also be censored, if the film shows the person(s) engaged in establishing fair justice and responsible government officer(s) are ridiculed or insulted when those person(s) search the criminal(s) and the corruptive or criminal occurrences significant as usual and profitable happenings. in most cases the censorship board will not allow anything which encourages people to do crime.

Copy/Plagiarism: Film censorship board also discourages plagiarism. If any film makes an exact copy from any old or under developing local or foreign film, it will not be permitted by the film censorship board.

V .THE PROCESS OF FILM CENSORSHIP IN MALAYSIA AND BANGLADESH

This section provides the details of the process of film censorship as practiced in both Malaysia and Bangladesh.

A. The Process of Film Censorship in Malaysia:The application of film censorship law in Malaysia begins after the completion of film making. Before the film's exhibition and distribution to the public, the whole completed film is required to be submitted to the Malaysian Film Censorship Board for the purpose of examining (Rosnan, 2012). Based on section 9 of the Film Censorship Act 2002, when the film is submitted to the Malaysian Film Censorship Board, the Chairman of the said Board has to appoint three members or more as a panel in accessing the film. If the film possesses controversial issues which are difficult to examine, the Chairman of the said Board may appoint a larger number for the panel. The decision for the censorship of the film must be made according to the Film Censorship Guidelines of

Under this provision, Lena was charged by the film censorship board of Malaysia. She screened a documentary film in Kuala Lumpur without taking approval from the film censorship board. The name of the film is "No Fire Zone: The Killing Fields of Sri Lanka" which focused on the Sri Lankan civil war. The punishment for this offence is not less than five thousand ringgit and not more than thirty thousand ringgit or shall be liable to punishment for a term not exceeding three years or both. After the formation of the panel, the film will be viewed and the said panel will ascertain whether the film has to be altered based on the said Guidelines. Such viewing is based on the scene, sound, dialogue and subtitles as derived

from the film. As provided under section 10 (1) of the Film Censorship, the panel can make three different manners of decisions which are: (i) to

allow the film's exhibition without alteration, (ii) to allow the film's exhibition with alteration, and (iii) to refuse the film's exhibition. The films which receive approvals are subjected to section 15 of the Film Censorship. The films are accordingly classified based on categories for public views. These categories of films were changed Based on categories provided in 2010, there are specifically five main categories for the films Based on the recent change of the categories of films in 2012, the categories are divided into three main categories of films such as (i) U (for general audience): suitable for viewing by all levels/ages; (ii) P13: not recommended for viewing by audience aged 13 years old. Guidance from the parents and guardian are needed; (iii) 18: the audience is restricted to person aged 18 years old and above only. Such reduction of the categories of the films is done for the purpose of simplification, especially for the public and the film makers.

B.The Process of Film Censorship in Bangladesh:Like Malaysian film censorship law, the application of film censorship law in Bangladesh begins after the completion of film making. Before the film's exhibition and distribution to the public, the whole completed film is required to be submitted to the Film Censorship Board of Bangladesh for the purpose of examining. After submission to the censorship board, Censorship board will examine it For the examination of a film, there are some principles that need to be followed by the Bangladesh Film Censor Board. The principles are: (a) the film must not portray or should not be likely to decrease the moral standards of the viewers by extenuating vice or crime or by depreciating social values (b) the film story or incident or dialogue must not offend or would be likely to offend sentiments of any section of the public; (c) the effect of the film story incident or dialogue must not be harmful or likely to be harmful for children under 12 years old; (d) any element which lowers national ideology (includes absolute trust and faith almighty Allah, nationalism, democracy, socialism meaning economic and social justice) must not be present in the film; (e) The film must not be a plagiarised film; (f) Third country rule is considered when any element which is decreasing good relations between Bangladesh and any other country, this must also not be exhausted. If any person who desires a film to be certified as suitable for public exhibition, they should submit an application to the film censorship board in a prescribed form. After the certification of any film, if it is found at any time that new information or false or incorrect information which was not given before, the applicant would be liable and would be punished under section 8. The decision on the certification of the film shall be in accordance with the decision of the board, if a film is examined by the board. If a film is examined by the committee, the committee shall make a report thereafter to the Chairman. The Chairman shall decide on the basis of the report of the committee. Rules 16(5) of the Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules 1977 provide, if any film is being rejected by the board, the board shall notify the decision to the film owner with the reason for the rejection (Islam, 2017).

On the basis of the report, the Chairman shall certify the film as suitable for unrestricted public exhibition, or shall certify for public exhibition restricted to adults only, with or without excision. At the same time, on the basis of the report the Chairman shall not certify the film for public exhibition. If the Chairman, on the basis of the report of a committee, decides that the film is suitable for unrestricted public exhibition with or without excision, a "U" certificate shall be signed by the Chairman. If the Chairman decides that the film is suitable for public exhibition only to adult (person not below eighteen years of age) with or without excision, "A" certificate shall be signed by the Chairman. Therefore, the film censorship board of Bangladesh is practicing two types of film categories and it was adopted by the Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules in 1977. This rule provides the power of exemption to the Government. According to this rule, by order in writing, the Government may exempt subject to such conditions and restrictions, any film from all or any of the provisions of these rules

VI .VIEWS OF FILM PRACTITIONERS

Interviewees were asked about the competency and suitability of the members in the Film Censorship Boards.

Some interviewees consisting members of the Board themselves opine that members of the Board are competent and suitable for the responsibility. Members of the Board view that members are competent because they received training and senior members guide and develop junior member. In contrast, film directors expressed different opinions. Film director Dr. Mahadi J Murat for instance, said that "the members of censorship board are not film maker". Because of this lack of expertise and experience, their censorship in cutting scenes, for instance mutilates the storytelling in the film and such would not be welcomed by film makers. For him, they must have basic training on films so that they could appreciate the art. That is why they damage the film. Another film director Amir Mohammadsaid that "[m]ost of the members of film censorship board are retired person and they do not have any experience regarding films".

Similar questions were also posed to respondents from Bangladesh. Corresponding to their counterpart in Malaysia, members of the Bangladesh Film Censorship Board viewed that the members are suitable and well place to discharge their functions. According to Md. Zakir Hossain (member of film censorship board)the members are "very eminent personalities" who have long experience in government service looking at issue from various angles including the issue of national security. Another member of the Film Censorship Board Abdur Rahmanshares the same view but asked for an increase in the number of members coming from the film industry.Respondents from the film industry have a contrary view. Film practitioner Omar Sani (actor) for instance, strongly disagree with the appointment of a government servant as the Chairman of the Film Censorship Board which should be a person with deep knowledge in the film industry. The need for a competent person was repeated by Motin Rahman(film director) who

opined that experience in the cinema should be a

prerequisite of membership of the Board. Members who are tasked to decide on matters of the cinema should have an artistic mind. Failure to have one would result in the butchering of films through the process of cutting of scene indiscriminately. Looking at the views of film practitioners in both countries, most ask for the members of the Board to have experience in cinema to appreciate films as an art, not simply images.

The main function of the Film Censorship Board is to approve films for exhibition in theatres. In its decision-making, some may question the impartiality of the Board. For Inau Edin Nom (member of film censorship board of Malaysia), members of the Board are independent since they make decisions in accordance with the law. Their decisions are made without any pressure from anybody. There are few film directors who agree that members of the Board are independent. For film director Dr. Mahadi J Murat, the independence level of the Board is adequate. However, there are other film practitioners that do not share this view. Amir Mohammad, a film director, noted that “members of film censorship board are not independent to make their decision because they are being appointed by the Minister of the Government and they are always trying to make them happy”. Another film director Amirul Fadhli agrees with this view and said “they are government employee and they are being controlled by the government”.

These diverging views of the members of the Board and the film practitioners in general are repeated in views taken from Bangladesh. Md. Zakir Hossain and Abdur Rahman who are members of the Bangladesh Film Censorship Board views the board to be independent and there is no obstacle for them to be independent. The film practitioners meanwhile do not share the positive views of the Board. For Omar sani, since the members are selected by the government, the Board would not allow for films depicting corruption or abuse of power by the government. These controls are in the form of direct or indirect controls which, according to Ustaz Jahangir Alam, is not out of ordinary in developing countries. The differing views between members of the Board and film practitioners in both countries are repeated here. While the members of the Board have positive view regarding their ability to be independent in their decision making, film practitioners perceived the inability of the members to be independent because of their close connection with the government of the day.

Interviewees were also asked regarding the powers of the Minister which include powers to give general directions to the Board, to make regulations and to give exemptions for films from the requirement of approval from the Board. Film directors agreed that too many powers should not be given to the Minister. However, members of the Board think that the powers of the Minister are not harmful to the film industry. Abdul Ghani Bin Ibrahim, a member of the Board, noted that in discharging his power, the Minister does consult relevant officers and it is also necessary for the Minister to oversee the work of the Board

as a check and balance. His view is echoed by other members of the Board. However, Amir Mohammad, a film director, viewed it differently. According to him the powers of the Minister are “barriers to develop our film industry”. For him, it is adequate to have a Film Censorship Board and an Appeal Committee without involvement of the Minister.

Members of the Bangladesh Film Censorship Board echo the views of their counterpart in Malaysia regarding the powers of the government in the film censorship. For Md. Zakir Hossain, a member of the Board, the Minister does not interfere with the decisions of the Board because a film producer who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Board could make an appeal to the Appeal Committee. The film practitioners meanwhile do not share the positive views regarding the power of the government. Omar Sani (actor) and Ustaz Jahangir Alam (actor) film practitioner’s view that discretionary power of the government should not be included in censorship laws [8]. It is a threat to the film industry and it should be demolished from censorship laws. Members of the Board in both countries do not have negative views regarding the role of the Minister in film censorship because of the proper processes in place for decision making. However, for the practitioners, the processes in place are more than enough in putting obstacles in film production and thus do need any additional filter or obstacles from the Minister.

The Film Censorship Board of Malaysia adopted the system of classification of films in 1993 through its 1993 guideline as revised in 2010. There are 3 classifications, namely “U” for films which have no age restrictions on viewers; “PG13” which restricts the viewers to those 13 years old and above for films in which there are some scenes of violence or horror; and “18” which restricts the viewers to those who are age 18 and above for films that have some scenes non-excessive scenes of violence, horror or sex. Dr. Mahadi J. Murat (film director) views film classifications as a form of self-censorship where viewers could choose which films to view. He pointed out, if Malaysian watches uncensored movies online, there are no categories imposed by the Film Censorship Board.

Other film directors similarly appreciate film classifications. However, for Amir Mohammad and Amirul Fadhli, the film classifications do not necessarily provide freedom to film makers because even for “18” the Board is too strict. Abdul Ghani Bin Ibrahim, member of the film censorship board, explained that the categories were made with the children in school age in mind. “U” films open for all, even for primary school children who are 12 years old and below. “PG-13” refers to primary school children and “18” refers to school leavers.

Also, Interviewees of Bangladesh were asked about the current film categories. Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules discuss two categories of film such as “U” and “A”. These categories are practicing since 1977. It is too backdated. Respondents of Bangladesh give views regarding its revision in Bangladesh. Md. Zakir Hosain pointed out that an updated film category system will be adopted by the government in new national film policy. Motin Rahman, a film director, meanwhile voice his doubt whether such a system could be implemented in Bangladesh if the system allows a production of an adult film for instance and classified as such.

All respondents of Bangladesh accept the

desirability of new film classification in helping viewers to select which films to watch. The reservation of some of the respondents is whether classification could be implemented in a way

that provides freedom to film practitioner to create the film they want to or it is just an additional layer of obstacles in restricting film creation and exhibition.

VII.COMPARISON OF FILM CENSORSHIP LAWS IN MALAYSIA AND BANGLADESH

By a matter of comparison, it is found that there are some similarities and differences between the film censorship laws as applied in Malaysia and Bangladesh. Such similarities and differences can be summarised based on the following issues:

A.Similarities :

Film examination system: it is found that Malaysia and Bangladesh have a similarity in connection to their film examination system. According to their film censorship laws, both of the countries subject any film for exhibitions in public to be examined and approved by their respected Film Censorship Boards.

Appointment of members in the Film Censorship Boards: it is found that the appointments of members in the Film Censorship Boards are subjected to the discretionary consideration of the Minister. Similar with the position in Malaysia, the members of the Bangladesh Films Censorship Board are appointed by the government.

Qualification of members in the Film Censorship Boards: it is found that there is no clear reference to the qualifications of the members in the Film Censorship Boards, either in Malaysia or Bangladesh. There is no specification as to how to measure whether the members are qualified as film censors; except they are citizens of the country and appointed as members of the Film Censorship Boards. By referring to the Film Censorship Act 2002 and the Film Censorship Guidelines of 2010, there is no provision discussed about qualification of the said members

Absolute power for the Minister or Government: this position is similar for Malaysia and Bangladesh. It is found that in Malaysia, there is an absolute power bestowed upon the Minister in exempting or prohibiting any film regardless of whether the film is approved or prohibited by the Malaysian Film Censorship Board. In Bangladesh, the Government may exempt any film from all or any of the provisions of the Film Censorship Laws. The sole consideration for the Minister or Government is public interest (which is not defined in any of the Film Censorship Laws). The researcher views this also as a weakness of the laws of both countries.

B. Differences:

The categories of films: it is found that there are differences in categories of films as applied in Malaysia and Bangladesh. In Malaysia, there are three categories of films such as, one category for viewing by all levels/ages in society, another category for those who are 13 years old

(which subjected to the parental advise) and above only, and the last category for those who are 18 years and above only. There is no such specification provided under the film censorship laws of Bangladesh. After the examination of the film, if the Board decides that the film is suitable for all, they will provide a "U" certificate and if the board decides that the film is suitable for adults only, they will provide "A" certificate. They did not mention any contained elements for viewing by adults or for viewing by all levels. The researcher views this as a weakness of the laws of Bangladesh.

Language: According to the Malaysian Film Censorship Guidelines, a film that includes dialogue or phrases that are obscene or directed at obscenity in any language is discouraged. It has specified some languages for consideration of the Malaysian Film Censorship Board. Examples of the words are "piki mak, anak haram, fuck, mother fucker, hand job". As for Bangladesh's film censorship laws, there are only general guidelines provided. The Bangladesh Censorship of Films Rules 1977 stipulates that the film must not portray or must not be likely to decrease the moral standards of the viewer by extenuating vice or crime or by depreciating social values and the film story or incident or dialogue must not offend or be likely to offend sentiments of any section of the public.

IX. CONCLUSION

Malaysia and Bangladesh have been examining their films through the Film censorship Board from the beginning. The Film censorship board of Malaysia is following film censorship laws and guidelines to examine films. The film censorship board of Bangladesh is also following the film censorship law and film censorship rules to examine films. Film censorship laws of both countries provide for some discretionary powers to the government body. So, it is easy for the government to control the censorship board. This type of provision should be demolished from the censorship laws.

In addition, Malaysian censorship guidelines mentioned film categories such as U, P13, 18. Malaysia has updated their film guideline and film categories several times such as 1996, 2010 and 2012. At the same time, Film censorship guideline of Malaysia specified some language which is discouraged to be used in the film. On the other hand, Bangladesh did not do that. Bangladesh is following the censorship of film rules 1977 and lastly, Bangladesh adopted the Code of Censorship of Film in 1985 which is more than 30 years ago. Due to this there are no updated film categories still today. Therefore, Bangladesh can adopt film categories U, PG-13 and 18 like Malaysia. In the light of the above discussion, the researcher preserves that Malaysian film censorship laws are better in their coverage in comparison to Bangladesh's film censorship laws[11].

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