

Sam Bahadur – A lackluster effort which disappoints

A review by Sanjiva Sahai



Sam Bahadur, the biopic by Meghna Gulzar, attempts to bring Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw to life, but it's a lacklustre effort that falls flat. Watching his interviews or listening to audio recordings would have been a more engaging tribute.

Yes, the movie falls flatter than a pancake, lacking the cinematic excellence needed to do justice to this real-life hero's valour and contributions. The screenplay and execution, akin to a deflated balloon at a celebration, fail to capture the essence of his remarkable journey. It's almost as if the scriptwriters were aiming for a snooze fest rather than a compelling tribute to the national icon.

Furthermore, the core of the narrative hinges on the war sequences. Whether lifted from dusty archives in mere snippets or presented without leaving a discernible impact, these scenes fail to contribute meaningfully to the overall theme.

The movie adopts a docudrama-like tempo, punctuated by sporadic witty moments that aim to reflect the essence of Sam's character. Unfortunately, this approach falls short of creating a consistently engaging experience, leaving viewers yearning for a more dynamic and compelling storytelling rhythm.

Vicky Kaushal nails the postures but overdoses on drama in dialogue delivery, occasionally channeling Dev Anand – a peculiar choice. His characterization is more external that misses out on the depth. The actor who moved everyone of us with Sardar Udham, stays put on the periphery. Fatima Sana Sheikh's portrayal of Indira Gandhi lacks authenticity, bordering on the amateurish. Most of the actors in the movie come and go unnoticed. In the midst of the forgettable portrayals on reel, one can't help but salute the vibrant spirit of the real Manekshaw.

Talking about my generation- having grown up inspired by the valour and vibrancy of Manekshaw, listening to his words on the radio and later on TV, the movie proves to be a disheartening disappointment.

_____ Sanjiva Sahai