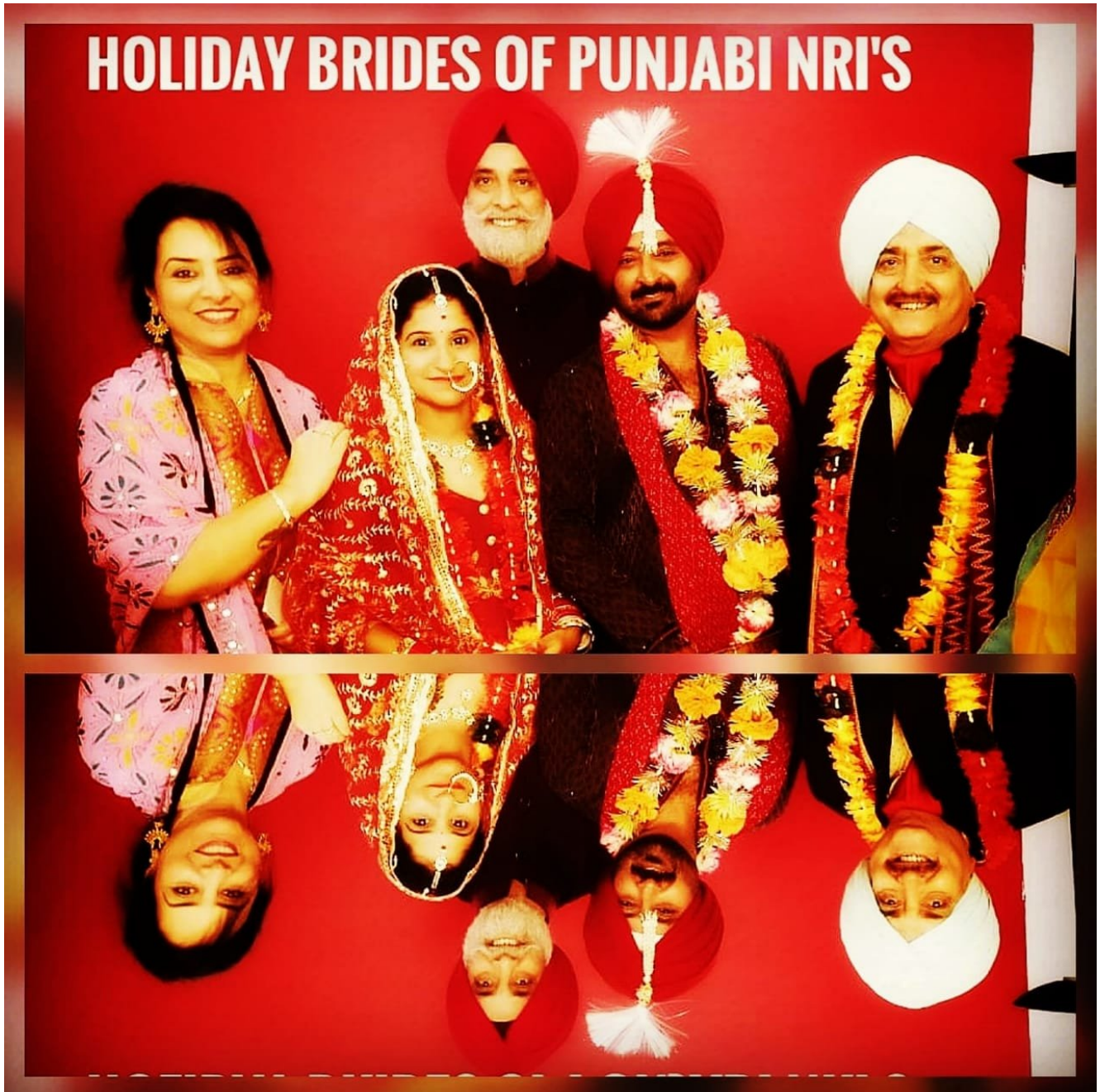


A film about how unsuspecting brides of Punjab fall victims to some NRIs



“Thousands of Brides are waiting for their NRI grooms in Punjab... This is perhaps amongst the top social malice of Punjab...” According to the director of the film, Satya Prakash Sabarwal, “These Runaway Grooms should be given capital punishment for this heinous crime.” You can watch this film

and see if you agree with him.

This film is the latest, in a continuing web based series on Social Issues by TVNF.

Watch the film on this link

Holiday Brides of Punjab

Doordarshan Schedule July 2018



PRASAR BHARATI

(India's Public Service Broadcaster)
Directorate General: Doordarshan
Copernicus Marg: New Delhi-110001
Films Division

File No-26/1/2017-P-6. Film Dated: 12.06.2018

Subject: Schedule of Hindi Feature Films to be telecast from
01.07.2018 to 31.07.2018 on DD-NATIONAL Network.

(Shahrukh Khan Special movies will be telecast from 01st
July'18 to 10th July'18)

S.NO

DATE AND TIME OF T/C

NAME OF THE FILM

STAR-CAST

01.07.2018

Sunday Retro At 12:00 Noon

(Guru Dutt Special)

KAAGAZ KE PHOOL

Guru Dutt,

Waheeda Rehman

Mehmood

01.07.2018

Sunday Blockbuster at 09:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

MAIN HOON NAA

Shahrukh Khan,

Sunil Shetty, Zayed Khan

02.07.2018

Monday-Funday at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

PHIR BHI DIL HAI HINDUSTANI

Shahrukh Khan, Juhi Chawla,

Paresh Rawal

03.07.2018

Tuesday Action at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

ASHOKA

Shahrukh Khan Kareena Kapoor Danny

04.07.2018

Wednesday Romance at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

DIL TO PAGAL HAI

Shahrukh Khan, Madhuri Dixit Karishma Kapoor Akshay Kumar

05.07.2018

Thursday Drama at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

DEVDAAS

Shahrukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai, Madhuri Dixit

06.07.2018

Friday Houseful At 09:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

FAN

Shahrukh Khan

07.07.2018

Saturday Jubilee At 09:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

OM SHANTI OM

Shahrukh Khan,

Deepika Padukone, Arjun Rampal

08.07.2018

Sunday Retro At 12:00 Noon

(Guru Dutt Special)

CHAUDHHVIN KA CHAND

Guru Dutt, Waheeda Rehman

08.07.2018

Sunday Blockbuster at 09:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

CHALTE CHALTE

Shahrukh Khan, Rani Mukherjee, Satish Shah

09.07.2018

Monday-Funday at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

BILLU

Shahrukh Khan, Irfan Khan, Lara Dutta

10.07.2018

Tuesday Action at 07:00 PM

Shahrukh Khan Special

HUM TUMHARE HAI SANAM

Shahrukh Khan, Salman Khan, Madhuri Dixit

11.07.2018

Wednesday Romance at 07:00 PM

TEEN PATTI

Amitabh Bachchan, R. Madhavan, Ben Kingsley, Siddharth Kher

Abhay Deol

Preeti Desai

12.07.2018

Thursday Drama at 07:00 PM

CHOR MACHAYE SHOR

Shashi Kapoor, Mumtaz, Asrani

13.07.2018

Friday Houseful At 09:00 PM

TUMHARI SULU

Vidya Balan, Neha Dhupiya,

Manav Kunal

14.07.2018

Saturday- 'Divanjali' At 12:00 Noon

(Sh. Jagannath Rath Yatra will be held on 14.07.2018)

JAI JAGANNATH

Sarat Purari, Sadhu Meher, Sritam Das

14.07.2018

Saturday Jubilee At 09:00 PM

BUDHIA SINGH- BORN TO RUN

Manoj Bajpai, Mayur Patole

15.07.2018

Sunday Retro At 12:00 Noon

(Guru Dutt Special)

SAHIB BIBI AUR GHULAM

Guru Dutt, Meena Kumari, Waheeda Rehman

15.07.2018

Sunday Blockbuster at 09:00 PM

BOMBAY VELVET

Ranbir Kapoor Anushka Sharma

16.07.2018

Monday-Funday at 07:00 PM

BUDHA MAR GAYA

Paresh Rawal, Om Puri

17.07.2018

Tuesday Action at 07:00 PM

OMKARA

Ajay Devgan,

Saif Ali Khan, Kareena Kapoor

18.07.2018

Wednesday Romance at 07:00 PM

DESI BOYZ

Akshay Kumar, John Abraham, Deepika Padukone

19.07.2018

Thursday Drama at 07:00 PM

CHUPKE CHUPKE

Dharmendra, Amitabh Bachchan Sharmila Tagore, Jaya Bhaduri

20.07.2018

Friday Houseful At 09:00 PM

MOM

Sridevi, Nawazuddin Siddiqi, Akshay Khanna

21.07.2018

Saturday Jubilee At 09:00 PM

HUMSHAKALS

Saif Ali Khan Ritesh Deshmukh Tamannaah Bhatia

22.07.2018

Sunday Retro At 12:00 Noon

DEVAR

Dharmender, Sharmila Tagore, Shashikala

22.07.2018

Sunday Blockbuster at 09:00 PM

HEROPANTI

Tiger Shroff Kriti Sanon, Prakash Raj

23.07.2018

Monday-Funday at 07:00 PM

CHINTU JI

Rishi Kapoor, Priyanshu Chatterjee

24.07.2018

Tuesday Action at 07:00 PM

GHAJINI

Aamir Khan, Asin

25.07.2018

Wednesday Romance at 07:00 PM

LOVE AAJ KAL

Saif Ali Khan,

Deepika Padukone

26.07.2018

Thursday Drama at 07:00 PM

THAKSHAK

Ajay Devgan Manoj Bajpai, Tabu

27.07.2018

Friday Houseful At 09:00 PM

PYAAR KA PUNCHNAMA-2

Kartik Aaryan, Nushuat Bharucha, Sonnalli Seygall

28.07.2018

Saturday Jubilee At 09:00 PM

ROY

Ranbir Kapoor, Jacqueline Fernandez, Arjun Rampal

29.07.2018

Sunday Retro At 12:00 Noon

HAATHI MERE SATHI

Rajesh Khanna, Tanuja

29.07.2018

Sunday Blockbuster at 09:00 PM

JOLLY LLB

Arshad Warsi, Amrita Rao, Boman Irani

30.07.2018

Monday-Funday at 07:00 PM

TOM DICK AND HARRY

Dino Morea, Jimmy Shergill, Anuj Sawhney, Kim Sharma

31.07.2018

Tuesday Action at 07:00 PM

RAAVAN

Abhishek Bachchan, Vikram, Aishwarya Rai, Govinda

Introduction to a Film on

Female Genital Circumcision by it's lead Meenal Kapoor

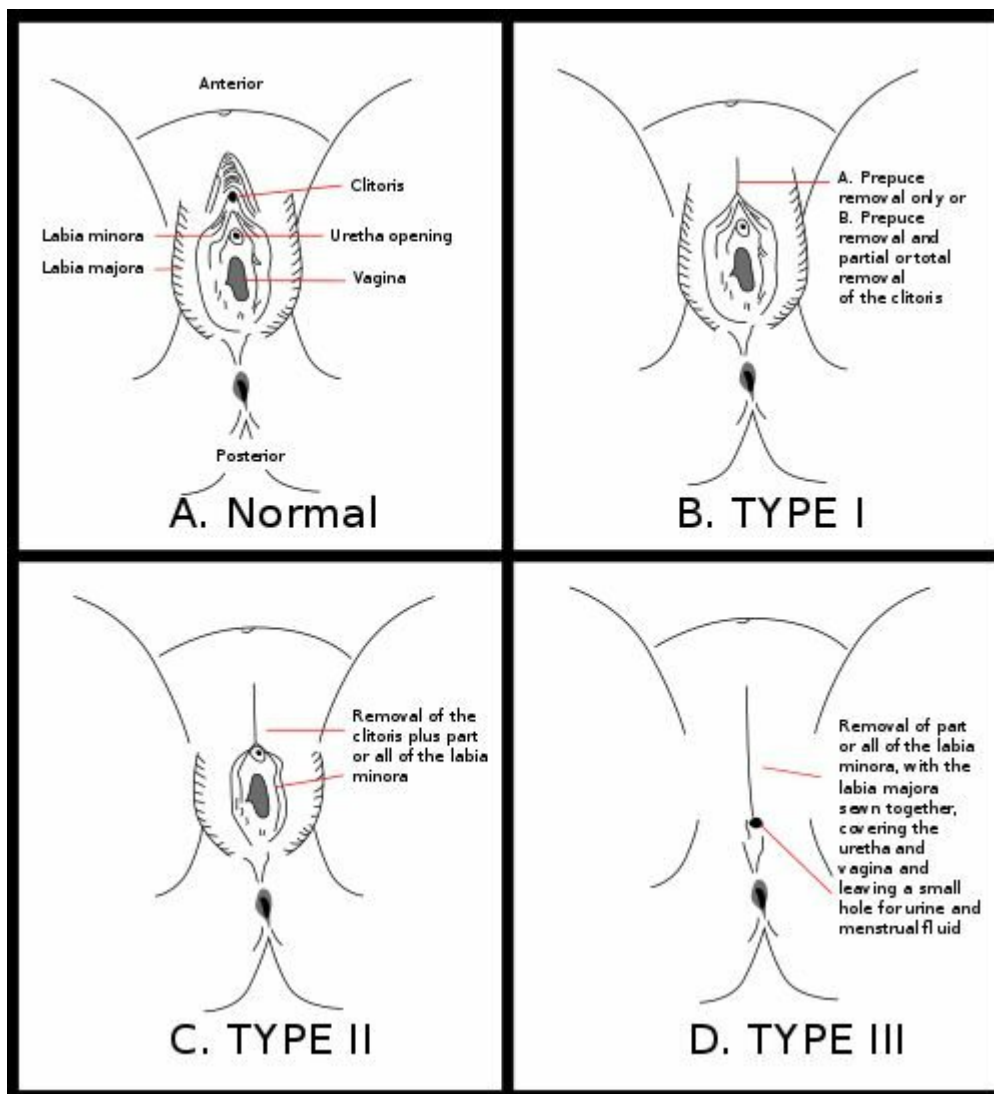


[ratings]

The film is based on an important issue which has been overlooked because of ignorance about the subject. This film fills that void. It creates awareness about the urgency for banning the horrid medieval practice. Meenal's performance

holds the film together. The intensity with which she has delineated her character reflects on a conviction in the actor about the theme of the film. One must also congratulate the Director for communicating about the practice in such a short film. – Editor

Female Genital Circumcision or FGC as it is commonly known is India's best kept secret. This tradition is practiced in 21st century India within a small and conservative community of Dawoodi Bohras. This is a curse to any women and must be banished. We have made this film to bring awareness to our fellow citizens to abolish this draconian era act which has no place in our society.



This short film 'Female Khatna', directed by Shashank Upadhyay, is on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or also known

as Female Genital Circumcision (FGC). Similar to circumcision of boy's FGM, it's a reality that is still practiced in our country albeit by a small minority community. Our team received threats from several people demanding to drop the film, they infact have vowed to cut the young director's throat. However, he is determined to release this movie which focuses on the draconian era practice of circumcision of little girls often between the age of 6 to 12 years. This is a bitter truth which almost 90% of Indians are unaware about. Our mission is to bring awareness on this cruel, secretly performed practice and ensure that FGM is not allowed in our civilized society. Most developed nations like the USA, Australia, France & many more have banned FGM/FGC. There are however no such laws yet in India to stop this social evil practice. Ironically this is the nation where girls are revered as Sita Maata or devi, yet there is such blatant human rights violation on a girl child. We have also petitioned with the government to enact laws to make FGM illegal and bring a complete ban on this practice although yet to receive any concrete reply.

So we seek the public support to make the movement against FGM in India a success. Remember everyday more than 10,000 girls between the age of 6-12 years are subjected to this cruelty. We urge you to create awareness against FGM and share about this to as many people as you can. Perhaps one day the government may listen to us. You may join our group and on our Facebook page. With your support we are certain that India too will ban the practice of FGM/FGC sooner or later.

<http://stagebuzz.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/VID-20180629-WA0015.mp4>

Bollywood's Underbelly Chatterjee

s
–

Shadowy
Partha



Far away and long ago in 1959, Guru Dutt made *Kagaz Ke Phool* in Black and White and Cinemascope. In it an unhappily married director falls in love with his protégé. It was a truly felt love-story, which was a resounding flop, commercially. Now, in 2006, it is a cult classic appreciated even by non-Hindi speaking audiences in Europe and America. Nothing has been produced of its calibre in Hindi Cinema in the last forty years.

In truth, the Hindi Cinema of Mumbai, erstwhile Bombay, has regressed into an infantilism that can be attributed to spiritual malnutrition. This decline is part of a larger

social malaise, a lumpenisation following the abdication of all responsibility, social and political, by a microscopic educated elite, which has allotted to itself every financial and political privilege.

Cinema, in India as elsewhere, has been an entertainment industry. In other parts of the world hedonism, as a logical upshot of rampant consumerism endorsed by America, has found expression in films. Notwithstanding a very small coterie of dissent representing artistic, mature, committed cinema. In India, particularly Bollywood – as Mumbai's Hindi film Industry has come to be known – no such force exists.

Legitimate financing of films has always been a problem. Producers, beginning their careers, and even later, have to borrow money from loan sharks at a back-breaking 4 per cent per month (or 48 per cent per annum), thus inflating costs due to production delays; mostly attributed to clashing dates of Stars who 'sell' films and try to make the most of their usually short-lived careers. Banks, rarely if ever, back films for they regard them as high-risk investments.

Corporatisation can certainly streamline production methods; keep films within budget by completing them on time. It can, in the near future, also attempt to create an exhibition chain, parallel to the existing one, which represents certain unseen, vested interests. What corporate investment in mainstream Hindi film production cannot guarantee is meaningful yet entertaining films. Entertainment translates as 'manoranjan' in Hindi. It is an exquisite word, meaning painting or rather illuminating the mind – since any idea of painting involves light.

Things are quite different in reality. The average Hindi film celebrates mindless sex and violence, and mirrors consumerism imposed from without by America and its adjunct, satellite television. In Bollywood, there is hardly any attempt to open the mind to beauty. It is assumed that the average filmgoer

whether the rural poor, middle class, rich and city bred is no more than a creature responding to limited aesthetic stimuli.

He likes to see on screen flashy clothes, fast cars, skimpily-clad women, huge gaudy sets with the latest gadgets and people putting away enormous quantities of alcohol and rich food: to top the topper – blood and gore punctuated by inane dialogue and ‘item numbers’ that show acres of female flesh gyrating to loud music. This assumption is both true and untrue because it is precisely those Bollywood products that contain these elements that succeed financially. But box office success also has a rider, that the film be interestingly narrated. It is incorrect to assume that people, rural and urban, cutting across class barriers, want to see only one kind of cinema. For the record, only ten percent of the commercial Hindi films released make money, another fifteen percent break-even and the rest sink without a trace.

The exhibition, distribution and financing of motion pictures in Mumbai is usually controlled by a shadowy Underworld. It dictates the kind of films that get made and seen. The strategy of this conglomerate is simple – limit the choice of the paying customer and make him believe what he sees is what he likes. This formula does not always work, because of the shabbily written scripts and badly structured, sluggishly paced editing.

It is no secret that black money had entered the film industry by the mid-1960s. There is a photograph still in circulation of Hindi Cinema’s greatest showman – Raj Kapoor touching the feet of Mirza Haji Mastan, the first known gangster-smuggler of Bombay who started as a coolie on the docks. Ratan Khatri, king of the numbers racket, even had a film made on himself. The Dholakiya brothers, who once owned Caesar’s palace, a nightclub, which was mainly a rendezvous for prostitutes and their clients also had a financial interest in certain films. Dawood Ibrahim and his lieutenant Chhota Shakeel had others front the productions they had backed. Producer S H Rizvi –

said to be Chhota Shakeel's man – was picked up by the police on the basis of a tapped cell phone conversation in which he had named a prominent Indian right-wing politician who had always gone out of his way to help him. To say that gangsters and politicians work hand in hand these days is an unassailable fact.

It is now possible for a fugitive from justice to be a resident of Dubai and actually dictate through his operatives in Mumbai the kind of films that are to be made and the people who will feature in them. Recent revelations in the press of non-controversial singers like Alka Yagnik and Kavita Krishnmoorthy having sung at Dawood Ibrahim's sister's wedding fifteen years ago only confirms the idea of the Hindi film industry as always having been an extension of the Underworld. The prospect is both frightening and revolting.

Amitabh Bacchan's biggest hit in 2005 is Sarkar, modelled on Mario Puzo's The Godfather. It is directed by Ram Gopal Varma, a Hyderabad entrepreneur who rode to fame and fortune on the crime wave. He did Satya, a well-researched glamourised look at the world of crime, then followed it after several years and films later with Company. His assistant E. Niwas did Shool, on an honest police officer whose wife is violated by thugs and who is himself largely marginalized by politicians and gangsters working in tandem – till the last ten minutes before the finish.

What of Prakash Jha's two films that profess to be on the side of the law? In Gangajal you have a strong committed cop going hammer and tongs to straighten out a corrupt town run by a nexus of thugs and politicians. Apaharan has a decent, unemployed boy forced to take up with gangsters and to kidnap a Chief Minister's daughter. Whatever the message tacked on at the end of either film, violence is glorified and the triumph of evil over good obliquely suggested.

If gangland money is not involved in the production of a large

number of Hindi films, why then is there a glorification of the gangster? Why is there a palpable suggestion that the State itself is in connivance with organized crime and is indeed giving it a fillip? No matter which party in power, crime and politics seems to feed off each other and terrorize the law-abiding citizen through the police.

Samuel Johnson had observed that patriotism was the last resort of the scoundrel. A rash of patriotic films like Refugee, Gadar, Border, LOC Kargil and Lakshya only make clear that dubious intentions of the filmmakers and the backers, seen and unseen. Wars from time immemorial have been fought for strictly commercial reasons. The only morality involved is amorality.

The advent of the multiplex in cities has raised the price of admission tickets by at least three-fold. But the films that get shown in these claustrophobic halls, usually equipped with state-of-the-art projection facilities, are mostly mediocre. There is, contrary to the vociferous claims of the industry and its supporters, a woeful lack of talent. Not technical talent – God knows there are enough cameramen, sound recordists, editors and special effects personnel who can deliver a product of international quality. But there are no directors or scriptwriters of vision and integrity. Bollywood perhaps does not need them.

What would corporatisation achieve other than a cosmetically pleasing product that can be marketed to captive NRI audiences in the U.S., Canada, Australia and England? Today a film's national box office revenues account for only 40 per cent of the total earnings; the other 60 per cent comes from overseas rights, sale of music albums and DVDs. Unless there is a clear segment of the market a corporate film concern wishes to target with films that are not only technically fine but aesthetically pleasing, nothing of lasting value can be achieved.

The Italian, Irish and Jewish mafia in the USA went legitimate by gradually laundering its black money through investments in big, reputed industrial concerns. It is rumoured that something similar is happening on the Indian subcontinent. Although there are new players in the game, Dawood Ibrahim's shadow continues to loom large over Bollywood. The content of a film is as important as the technique used to express it. Hindi films continue to be caught in a reactionary political, social time warp. What good then can possibly come of Adlabs being bought by the Ambanis who own Reliance?

Will the day ever come when simple, elegant, deeply felt films shall engage with an audience of mainstream Hindi cinema? Will such efforts be made possible by the active patronage of a paying audience? One can only hope.

On Seeing Padmaavat By Partha Chatterjee



Rating

[ratings]

Sanjay film Padmaavat based on Malik Mohammad Jaisi's long narrative poem from the 16th century, has finally been released after much bloodshed and violence across northern and western India. Things got so out of hand in Gurugram, Haryana that a mob owing allegiance to the Rajput Karni Sena founded by Lokendra Singh Kalvi mercilessly stoned a school bus carrying small, terror-struck children cowering under the seats not wanting to get grievously injured. Mysteriously the Karni Sena has suddenly gone silent along with its leader and the film is doing roaring business. Bhansali and his financiers are laughing all the way to the bank. The BJP Government is silent about the abominable acts of terror and mindless violence unleashed by the Karni Sena, which like the ruling party is Right Wing and blatantly Hindu.

Padmavati, according to legend was a Singhala princess whom the Rajput prince Ratan Sen (Singh) fell in love on his search

for priceless pearls on the island. He brought her back to Chittor (Rajasthan) as his second wife much to the chagrin of his first spouse Nagmati. Padmini's lambent beauty has been a part of folklore since the 14th century. Her love for her brave, chivalrous, not very intelligent husband and the supposedly obsessive desire of Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316), the 13th and early 14th century Sultan of Hindustan to possess her body and soul is the stuff of legend. Chittor, according to folklore fell to the better armed and numerically superior Khilji army after a fight unto death. The womenfolk-old, young and children- are said to have committed Jauhar by immolating themselves. This is the story, with suitable embellishments and digressions in the very many versions that exist which have been fed to the upper castes, meaning the Brahmins, Banias and Rajputs, who have remained at the apex of the caste hegemony of majoritarian Hindu India over the last thousand years and have enjoyed all the economic and political privileges even when living under conquerors. Status quo prevails even today in independent India.

Bhansali's film is all that it should not be – retrograde, overly sentimental and crass. There is no story really apart from the populist legend handed down over centuries. It is driven by dialogue that would befit a second rate Television serial and a lot of grand standing. The camerawork, if it can be called that, is completely dependent on special effects as is the entire production, most of all the sets, the outdoor battle scenes, the utterly revolting and inhuman long sequence of Jauhar at the climax of the film. The costumes and jewellery and weaponry and other props would do credit to any desi-chic fashion designer. It is really difficult to know how exactly royalty, both Rajput and Turki Khilji, dressed in those days or how they ate, slept, made love, fought wars. In these matters it is best to let the imagination roam, as long as it does not resemble a fashion show, which this film does. But would it have mattered if the film had argued its case in the 21st century idiom of morality and ethics?

The historical period in which a film is set is unimportant;

what however is the treatment or how the subject is treated. Surely Jauhar, in theory and practice would have been revolting to women at the time it was practised, trapped as they were by the tentacles of patriarchy. Women were regarded as custodians of the family's therefore clan's honour. There were no nations then. The truth is they were regarded as goods and chattel in India till well into the 20th century. Defeat in war and resulting conquest by the enemy always resulted in the search for scape goats, which conveniently ended with women. Jauhar was committed to save the honour of the community. The men, of course, could be co-opted by the conqueror, as they usually were, regardless of what the legends said. Bhansaali's Padmaavat is set conveniently in the medieval period thus giving it a status of myth. The cardinal reason behind its runaway success is that Indians ''uncontaminated'' by an occidental education who form the overwhelming majority are addicted to myths.

The alarming thing about Padmaavat is its openly communal stance. Ratan Sen (Singh) and his followers are shown as being brave, chivalrous, trusting and honourable. Alauddin Khilji and his fellow Muslims are depicted as being dishonourable, treacherous and woman-hungry. Even the penultimate scene in which Ratan Singh is killed is because he is brought down in a hail of arrows directed at his back by Khilji's army. The drawn out Jauhar sequence at the end, is shot with a neurotic love that reveals a completely retrograde mind.

Since Bhansali, through his film, reveals a mindset as backward as that of his so-called adversary Lokendra Singh Singh, founder of Karni Sena, it would be only natural that he legally adopt the filmmaker as his son and heir!

Tumhari Sulu | Vidya Balan | Released on 17th November 2017

Tumhari Sulu (English: Your Sulu) is a 2017 Indian comedy-drama film directed by Suresh Triveni and produced under the banners of T-Series and Ellipsis Entertainment. The film stars Vidya Balan as the titular character, an ambitious housewife who becomes a radio jockey for a late-night relationship advice show.

Written by: Suresh Triveni

Produced by: Bhushan Kumar; Tanuj Garg; Atul Kasbekar; Shanti Sivaram Maini

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

Bhushan Kumar; Tanuj Garg; Atul Kasbekar; Shanti Sivaram Maini

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

Bhushan Kumar; Tanuj Garg; Atul Kasbekar; Shanti Sivaram Maini

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Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

Bhushan Kumar; Tanuj Garg; Atul Kasbekar; Shanti Sivaram Maini

Production company: T-Series; Ellipsis Entertainment

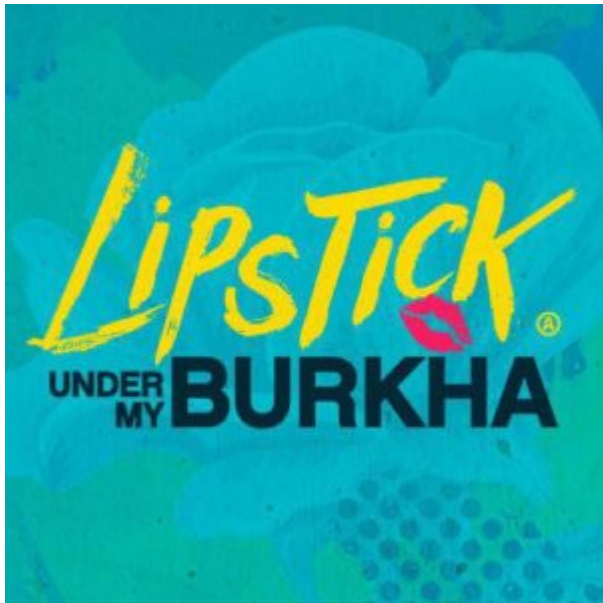
Watch “PARMANU: The Story Of Pokhran | OFFICIAL TRAILER | John Abraham, Diana Penty, Boman Irani “

<https://youtu.be/XQFb12N0Arc>

Watch “VEERE DI WEDDING Trailer [HD] (2018)

<https://youtu.be/XlUikh2CMqk>

Lipstick Under My Burkha—A Review by Raj Ayyar



I enjoyed watching Lipstick Under My Burkha this afternoon—the film is now in its once a day matinee phase, about to exit the big screen.

The film is a great commentary on the suppression of female sexual desire and sexualities in contemporary India. Pornography, phone sex and endless erotic fantasy are the substitutes.

The lead figure in a Hindi porn novel series—Rosie, becomes the fantasy persona of two of the women in lead roles—Ratna Pathak as the older sexy Buaji and Plabita Borthakur as Rehana Abidi, the young Muslim woman, who spends most of her spare time fantasizing about sex in the Rosie persona.

Both women are oppressed by their families; Rehana once her kleptomania is revealed, and Buaji for her erotic fantasies as an older woman. Past 40, women In India are not supposed to think of sex.

Her phone sex with a stud—a swimming life guard, plus her hidden porn stash, get her thrown out of her family and out into the streets. Bua's situation reveals the sanctimonious ageist sex prohibition (aside from a generalized sex phobia, homophobia, transphobia and more), rampant in India—older women and men are supposed to be sexless nurturers of the

young and nothing more,

Konkona Sen Sharma is disappointingly reduced to sidekick status at best in this film—a shame, given her considerable acting talent (remember Konkona in Mr. & Mrs. Iyer?).

In the end, the major characters are manifestations of the porn novel Rosie character—porn is the real hero of Lipstick.

For me, the glaring melodramatic flaw in the film: the lifeguard who flirts with Bua Usha, and enjoys phone sex with her in her camouflaged Rosie persona, exposes her publicly in her neighborhood, and turns her family and most of her friends in that ghetto against her. Topping it off with a stream of ageist abuse. Given his studly narcissism and enjoyment of the phone sex, it is out of character for him to attempt such a wholesale destruction of one of his admirers.

No, this is Ekta Kapoor channeling thru the director of the film, back to the weepy, the overdone, the implausible melodramatic excesses of Ekta's soaps. Tsk, tsk.

<https://www.facebook.com/LipstickUnderMyBurkha/>

Dancing Away the Big Bad Wolf

**Dancing Away the Big Bad Wolf:
Culture as a Site of Resistance to Big Capital**

Joya John



I recently saw Madhuri Dixit's comeback film *Aaja Nachle*. However before you tell me that it is a little too late for a film review, I must clarify this not a film review. For those of you who have not seen the film a quick overview of the plot is necessary to see where my argument will lead.

Madhuri Dixit, or Diya as her character is called, returns from New York to the town of Shamli to revive a dance theatre called Ajanta, embodied in a performance space, that is to be mowed down to build a mall. Diya, strikes a deal with the rather flamboyant M.P. of the town played by Akshay Khanna, that in two months if she is able to stage a successful performance enacted by performers from Shamli itself, the M.P. will have to reconsider the proposal of building a mall. It is an uphill task, for Diya as she struggles with local goons and a motley crew of actors with no experience of performance or dance. The local businessman, played by Irfan Khan who has a vested interest in seeing the mall built tries to jeopardize the performance by buying off the local magnate, who was initially supporting the project, and also spreading vicious rumors about Diya's past (Diya had eloped with a American journalist leaving her parents to bear the social stigma).Needless to say the project is a success, the performance of *Laila Majnu* by the group is a roaring success and the destruction of Ajanta is temporarily halted.

Art and Culture is often the site where this conflict between public resources and private interest, or small enterprise versus big capital is fought out. There are equivalents of it in Hollywood. The film, *Sister Act*, starring Whoopi Goldberg, portrays a state school the

only hope for black children from the ghettos, on the brink of closure. A 'successful' performance by the school choir helps to stall attempts to close down the school. What nobody notices in the bargain is the pressure on schools to show themselves as performing assets to continue getting funds from the government. The film *When Harry met Sally*, portrays a small community based bookstore threatened by the opening up of a multimillion chain of bookstores. The USP of the small bookstore owned, by Meg Ryan, is its personalized customer care as opposed to the impersonality of the big chain. It however cannot compete with the magnitude of books and choices the big chain can provide at a less price. Here the romantic entanglement of Meg Ryan who runs the small bookstore and Tom Hanks the CEO of the chain provides a resolution to the conflict between small enterprise and big business capital. Big Capital (Tom Hanks) learns that it has to have a *heart* while doing business and it has much to learn from the expertise of the small bookstore. Meg Ryan's bookstore however does close down, while the values it epitomizes get transferred to that of that the big chain. So the big chain wins out in the end anyway.

While these attempts reflect a certain subliminal awareness of a conflict between the public and private interests the resolutions that these films suggest remain inadequate. Often enough the critique of private, commercial interest seems to spring from assumptions of its crassness. Ajanta theatre is art for art's sake, the *sanskriti* of Shamli, while the mall is only grimy commerce. Pitting a rarefied field of culture versus commerce is a risk. These oppositions are one that commerce and private interest would only be too comfortable with because this opposition de-links art from the processes of survival and livelihood. After all, an employee in a mall doesn't need to be an accomplished dancer and performer to make a living. What stakes does a potential, uncultured, employee of a mall have in the preservation of an Ajanta?

The problem with *Aaja Nachle* lies in the circumscribed role it gives to art. While Shamli risks losing a public space because of the vested interests of business and local politicians the troupe struggles to stage a performance of *Laila Majnu*. The distance of Ajanta, from the

hub of the city, is replayed in the remoteness of its theme, deliberately shorn of any topicality. The alienation and decrepitude that Ajanta faces, and which becomes a rationale for its destruction, perhaps springs from its deliberate eschewing of a more politically sharpened content. While Laila and Majnu meet their tragic fates a teary eyed Shamli, is temporarily united by art. However romance cannot take away the fact that someday someone in Shamli will still want to use public land to build a plush mall.

Joya John is a lecturer in the English department, Gargi College