

The Power of Social Media and the Crisis in the Indian Cine Industry

Virendra P. Singh*

Abstract

Social media in India now has access to a large number of youths both in the rural and urban areas and is capable to construct and spread various kinds of social, political, and cultural narratives at the mass level. In the last few years, Indian Cine Industry popularly called "Bollywood" has been at the center of discussion not only in main media but also on social media for different reasons. Twitter and Facebook are two important platforms that set the trends on social media and have an influence over the main media. In the last three years, a large number of local, regional, and national level journalists have started their YouTube channels and created a separate audience. The Indian Cine Industry faced the wrath of people on social media in 2020 when a young cinema actor was found dead in his apartment. The popular public opinion was that he was murdered and some influential Bollywood celebrities were involved in the conspiracy of his murder. This issue prolonged on main media and social media for about 3-4 months and also attracted the attention of the international media and social media. A boycott campaign against Bollywood boycott again launched recently by a section of society on indecent picturization of Hindu Gods on some Bollywood movies. This time boycott appeal trended in a big way over social media particularly on twitter, Facebook and Whatsapp. As a result, a number of Bollywood films miserably flopped at the box office. The present paper explores and investigates the factors responsible for such a phenomenon in the Indian film industry.

Key Words: *Indian Cinema, Globalization, social media, box office, Hindu Gods.*

The modernity in India has a colonial legacy. With the establishment of the British rule in 1860, the Britishers promoted western education to create human resources which can facilitate them in administrating the local population. In 1854 first Indian university was established in Calcutta (now known as Kolkata) on the initiative of East India Company. The university had its jurisdiction from Lahore (Now in Pakistan) to Rangoon (Capital of Myanmar) and Cylone (now Sri

*Virendra P. Singh is Chairman, GREFI and Former Professor of Sociology (Assam University Silchar) and Former Professor of Globalization and Development Studies, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj-India

Lanka). It had affiliated the existing colleges to regulated the content and quality of education. Later on, universities were established in Bombay (18 July 1857), Madras (5 September 1857), and Allahabad (23 September 1887). Although, western education was imparted in various missionary schools and colleges in major towns of the country under the control of East India Company.

Printing Press as modern mass media in India came in the form of books, newspapers and magazines, pamphlets etc. The first printing press in India was established at the Jesuit St. Paul's College in Old Goa in 1556. The first Indian-owned printing press was established in Calcutta in 1780. Printing presses played a significant role in spreading Western ideas and culture in India, as well as in disseminating information about the country to the rest of the world (<https://historyflame.com/history-of-printing-press-in-india/>).

Phase I: Initial Phase of Indian Cinema (1912-1930)

Cinema was another form of modern mass media. With the screening of the Lumière and Robert Paul moving pictures in London in 1896, commercial cinematography became a worldwide sensation and these films were shown in Bombay (now Mumbai) that same year. N.G.Chitre and R .G. Torney of Bombay were the first to make a film based on a story. It was PUNDALIK, a film based on the life of a Holy man in Maharashtra, it came out in 1912 (<https://www.davuniversity.org/images/files/study-material/History%20of%20Indian%20Cinema.pdf>).

However, first silent movie in India was produced by Dhandiraj Govindraaj Phalke (popularly known as Dada Saheb Phalke). Phalke dis one-year course from J. J. School of Art, Bombay in Drawing in 1885 and in 1886 he moved to Baroda where he joined Kala Bhavan, the Faculty of Fine Arts, at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda and completed a course in Oil painting and Watercolor painting in 1890. He also achieved proficiency in architecture and modelling. In the same year, Phalke bought a film camera and started experimenting with photography, processing, and printing. In 1895, he started his career in photography at Godhara. He got protection from the Prince of Baroda but could not do much in this field. He then started the business of painting the stage curtains for the drama companies. This got him some basic training in drama production and fetched him a few minor roles in the plays. He learnt magic techniques from a German magician and at the end of 1901, Phalke began to hold the public performances of magic. In 1903, he got a job as a photographer and draftsman at the Archaeological Survey of India. However, not satisfied with the job, Phalke resigned in 1906 and set up a printing press at Lonavla under the name of "Phalke Engraving and Printing Works" with R. G. Bhandarkar as a partner. In 1911, He watched a movie at the America India Picture Palace, Girgaon, Bombay. He started collecting various film related material like catalogues, books, and movie making equipment from Europe. He bought a small film camera and reels and started showing movies at night. Phalke wished to go to London to get technical knowledge of filmmaking but had difficulties getting finances for his trip. With the help of Yashwantrao Nadkarni and Abasaheb

Chitnis, he secured a sum of ten thousand. On 1 February 1912, he boarded a ship for London. film director, producer, and screenwriter Cecil Hepworth of Walton Studios. Hepworth allowed Phalke to visit all the departments of the studio and their workings along with the demonstration of filming. At the advice of Cabourn and Hepworth, he bought Williamson camera for fifty pounds and placed an order for Kodak raw film and a perforator. Phalke stayed in London for two months and returned to India on 1 April 1912. He founded the “Phalke Films Company” on the same day. He started on the project of making a movie on a historical and mythological character “*Raja Harishchandra*” who has been a legend character of Indian Hindu mythology famous for his firm belief on the “truth” (Freedom movement leader Mahatma Gandhi was greatly influenced from his character and followed the concept of Truth in his whole life. *Raja Harishchandra* was released on 3 May 1913. In 1917, Calcutta Studio also started to release movies “*Satyavaadi Harishchandra*” (1917) and “*Keechakvadham*” (Keechak was a character of famous epic Mahabharata, killed by Bhima). “But Phalke’s Nasik studio was the first regular studio where he could also train many promising young people as film technicians. It was still the era of silent movies all over the world. Phalke produced seven silent movies, ‘*Mohini Bhasmasur*’ (1913), ‘*Satyavan Savitri*’ (1914), *Lanka Dahan* (1917), *Shri Krishna Janma* (1918), *Kalia Mardan* (1919), *Sant Namdeo* (1924) and three sound movies, *Setubandh* (1932 & 1934), and *Gangaavtaran* (1937).

During the Silent Era (1896 – 1930) over a thousand films were made in India; however, only ten of them survive, now restored and preserved in the Pune archives. Meanwhile, American and European films continued to grow in popularity, though a major source of worry for the imperial Government was that they would ‘corrupt’ Indian minds.

The silent movies were not totally silent but some background music and titles were also included to explain the scenes of the movie. Dialogue was presented through inter – titles, which were often in English, and two or three Indian languages. Almost every film had a background score, which ran through the length of film. The score was ‘live’, and helped to dramatize the narrative. Sometimes there was only a piano accompaniment, but there were several films where a violin, a harmonium, *tablas* and other musical instruments could be added. Silent movies continued in India for another decade. It is noteworthy that Phalke’s all the movies were based on Hindu religious and mythological characters and this trend was followed by most of the successful film makers. This strong socio-cultural foundation of Indian Cine Industry continued over a period of time and also became a formula of the success of the movies on box office. The following are the other movies of silent era:

Nala Damayanti (1921) and *Noor Jehan* (1923) by J. J. Madan (Madan Theatres Ltd.)

Sariandhri (1920) and *Savkari Pash* (1925) by Baburao Painter (Maharashtra Film Company)

Guna Sundari (1927) by Chandulal Shah (Ranjit Studio)

Sakuntala (1920) by Suchet Singh

Veer Abhimanu (1922) and *Anarkali* (1928) Ardeshir Irani (Star Films)

Gopal Krishna (1929) by V. Shantaram (Prabhat Film Studio)

Chandramukhi (1929) by Chandulal Shah (Ranjit Studio)

Hatim Tai (1929) by Seth Manecklal Patel

Achhut Kanya (1936) Bombay Talkies

Street Singer (1938) by New Theatre casted K. L. Sahgal in Lead role.

Phase II: Age of Sound: Talkies

First Indian talky, “*Alam Ara*” was released in 1931. The movie was produced and directed by Ardeshir Irani (A Parsi). The advent of sound in Indian cinema brought the theatrical idioms to early Indian talkies. Under the influence of the Parsi theatre most of the studios started to produce filmized plays imbibing elements of the oriental and mythological subjects and costumes. The progression of the narrative through songs and dances was yet another element that was borrowed from the Parsi theatre. According to Hansen (1999: 25), Urdu was the main language used in Urdu-Parsi theatre; almost all the hundreds of Urdu dramas written were from before the 1920s. Parsi theatre was very popular in northern India and was having popular performers like the comic actor Khurshedji Balivala and the female impersonators ‘*Pesu Avan*’. The modes of entertainment in the 19th and 20th centuries were closely interrelated to each other. The interaction between various modes of performance like theatre, nautanki; the music recording industry and cinema made Cinema a hybrid space for the convergence of various artists and performers from different backgrounds. Many artists and film personnels who came to Bombay via the theatre route brought a vast repertoire of performance traditions to cinema which impacted the cinematic texts that were produced by them (Niazi 2021: 32).

Most of the playwrights of Parsi theatre plays were so popular that recording companies re-recorded the same songs by various singers. Although, the main narrative of the plays was in Persianized-Urdu, but the lyrics were generally written in very simple language (Hindustani*). At that time, every theatrical company had a dance-master and lyric writers on their rolls. This tradition continued in Indian talkies. Much of the phenomenal success of the Indian film was due to the popularity of music, song and dance right from the advent of the Talkies.

In the early talkie period, the influence of Parsi theatre dominated the dialogues, and the language had the artificial lilt of theatrical *betbaji* (poetic couplets). This trend continued over a period of time became the basic structure of Indian cinema. In 1936, the All-Indian Progressive Writers’ Association was founded in Lucknow by Sajjad Zaheer and his fellow writers; it became one of the most important movements that shaped Urdu literary culture, giving it a critical edge that was sharpened by the discourses of decolonization. Many Urdu Progressive writers went on to work for film studios as writers, and lyricists in Bombay, Poona and Calcutta. There are innumerable memoirs, biographies on the Progressives that map these journeys of Urdu writers to film cities (Niazi 2021: 29). In 1940s, the impact of national movement can be seen on Indian Cine Industry. Prominent leader of national freedom movement M. K. Gandhi expressed his views

about the Indian Cinema in a negative manner while another leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak expressed a positive attitude towards the cinema since the days of silent movies and promoted the efforts of Phalke to make movies based on Hindu mythology. He saw this emerging new media as a vehicle of social change. During the early period of talkies, there was no playback singing. Thus, the actors had to sing their song live with musician hidden in background at the time of recording. Thus, the actors and actresses who had skill of singing were taken for acting in films. Suraiyya, Noorjahan, Shyama Devi, Surendra Nath, Shyam Kumar, Ashok Kumar, Devika Rani, Johra Bai, Amir Bai are the name of actors and actresses of that time. One legendary artist of that period was K. L. Saigal who began his career from Calcutta with New theatre. His film *Yahudi Ki Ladki* (1933) was superhit on box office. It was a Urdu/Hindi costume drama film directed by Premankur Atorthy.^[1] Produced by New Theatres Ltd. Calcutta, the cast included K. L. Saigal, Rattan Bai, Pahari Sanyal, Gul Hamid, Nawab and Kumar.^[2] The film was adapted from Agha Hashar Kashmiri's play of the same name *Yahudi Ki Ladki* which had been written in Bengali as *Misar Kumari*. He also wrote the screenplay and lyrics. The film saw Pankaj Mullick's debut as a Hindi music director. The dialogues were by Wajahat Mirza.^[3] The story revolves around the rivalry and revenge between the Jewish merchant Prince Ezra and the Roman priest Brutus ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahudi_Ki_Ladki_\(1933_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahudi_Ki_Ladki_(1933_film))).

Saigal's association with New Theatres continued to bear fruit in the successful films *Didi* (Bengali), *President* (Hindi) in 1937, *Deshar Mati* (Bengali), *Dharti Mata* (Hindi) in 1938, *Saathi* (Bengali), *Street Singer* (Hindi) in 1938, *Dushman* (1939), *Jiban Maran* (1939) and *Zindagi* in 1940, with Saigal in the lead. There are a number of songs of this era which form the rich heritage of film music in India. Also, in *Street Singer*, Saigal rendered the song "Babul Mora Naihar Chhooto Jaye" live in front of the camera, even though playback was becoming the preferred method of singing songs in films. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._L._Saigal).

In December 1941, Saigal moved to Bombay to work with Ranjit Movietone. Here he acted and sang in a number of successful films. *Bhakta Surdas* (1942) and *Tansen* (1943) were hits during this period. The latter film is still remembered for Saigal's performance of the song "Diya Jalao" in *Raga Deepak*; in the same movie, he also sang "Sapta Suran," "Tin .. Gaa-o Saba Guni Jan" and "Room Jhoom Room Jhoom Chaal tihari". In 1944, he returned to *New Theatres* to complete *My Sister*. This film contained the songs "Do Naina Matware" and "Ae Katib-e-Taqdeer Mujhe Itna Bata De". Saigal died in his ancestral city of Jullundur (now Jalandhar) on 18 January 1947, at the age of 42. However, before his death, he was able to churn out three more hits under the baton of Naushad Ali for the film *Shahjehan* (1946). These are "Mere Sapnon Ki Rani", "Ae Dil-e-Beqaraar Jhoom" and "Jab Dil Hi Toot Gaya". *Parwana* (1947) was his last film, released after his death, in which he sang under the baton of Khawaja Khurshid Anwar. The four songs which Saigal sang in *Parwana* are: "Toot gaye sab sapne mere", "Mohabbat mein kabhi aisi bhi

haalat”, “*Jeene ka dhang sikhaae ja*”, and “*Kahin ulajh na jaana*” ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K. L. Saigal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._L._Saigal)).

In 1947, the Indian Cine Industry, got a setback with the partition of the country on the basis of religion. A number of Muslim artists migrated to Pakistan and many Sikh and Punjabi Hindu artists left Lahore (another Centre of Film making in undivided India) and settled down in Bombay. Although, many Muslim artists remained in India and continued to work in film industry. One important change during this period was the end of studio system in which artists had to sign a contract for few years to work exclusively for a particular studio. The prevailing communal environment had compelled the film makers to change the screen name of the actors because of the fear that they will not be accepted by the audience if their real name is displayed in the casting of the film. The dominance of Urdu plays also declined with the entry of new writers. Although, a number of lyricists and Music directors belong to Muslim community were accepted with great zeal and given respect by the audience. Naushad, Khayyam, Kaifi Azmi, Sahir Ludhianwi, Majaruh Sultanpuri, Shakil Badaunwi, Hasarat Jaipuri, Shamim Jaipuri etc., had attained great success. The decades of 1950s and 1960s were dominated by the films related to social problems and nationalism and themes promoting the cause of modernity. This was a period when best films of Indian Cine Industry were produced. V. Shantaram, Raj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar (Yusuf Khan), Dev Anand, Rajendra Kumar, Sunil Dutt, Bharat Bhushan, Balraj Sahni were the leading actors and of that period. However, legacy of Parsi theatre continued in the form of dances and songs as essential elements of Bombay film industry. Urdu based ghazals and Kavvalis were still popular among the Indian masses.

The *Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)* was set up by the Government of India in 1960 in *Pune*. Almost at the same time, the National School of Drama, one of the foremost theatre training institutions in the world and the only one of its kind in India, was set up by the Sangeet Natak Akademi as one of its constituent units in 1959. In 1975, it became an independent entity. It was fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Training in the School is highly intensive and is based on a thorough, comprehensive, carefully planned syllabus which covers every aspect of theatre and in which theory is related to practice. As a part of their training, students are required to produce plays which are then performed before the public.

The artists produced in these institutions started to enter in Bombay Film industry in 1970s. Two important changes were brought by the artists of these two institutions. Firstly, a movement of Art Films/Parallel Cinema was started by the artists of FTII and a number of left oriented films were produced by the producers and directors like Shyam Banegal, Govind Nihalani, Prakash Jha, Girish Karnad (Ankur, Akrosh, Ardhya Satya, Chakra etc.). These were small budget films and most of them could not be hit on the box office but opened the doors for these artists in commercial films. Rajesh Khanna emerged as a superstar of the film industry in 1970s and gave a number of hit films. Script writer like Gulshan Nanda became the guarantee of a hit film. Rajesh

Khanna started the trend of stardom in Bombay Film industry. This was the time when underworld mafias were very active in Bombay. It is believed that they started to invest and control the film industry. Haji Mastan was a famous mafia don of Bombay from 1960s to early 1980s, and Karim Lala was the leader of the Pathan gang. The Bollywood was greatly influenced with the activities of these mafia dons. It is said that the iconic character (Vijay) of film *Deewar* (1975) was loosely based on Haji Mastan. This has created a new genre of "Action Films" in Bombay film industry. *Zanjeer* (1973), *Sholey* (1975), *Don* (1978), *Aparadh* (1972), *The Great Gambler* (1979), *Khoun Pasina* (1977), *Adalat* (1976), *Agent Vinod* (1977), *Amar, Akbar Anthony* (1977), *Kala Patthar* (1979), *Trishul* (1978) are major action films of 1970s. *Dayavan* (1988) is a remake of the South Indian movie *Nayagan* by Ratnam, based on the life of mafia don Varadarajan Mudaliar. Directed by Ram Gopal Varma, *Company* (2002) explores the underworld, its corporatized workings, and complex web of relations.

This trend continued in Indian Film industry for next three decades and more than 100 action films did well on the box office. Script writers like Salim and Javed became topmost screen play writers of this period. Kader Khan is another name in this category. This trend has given more emphasis on violence, sex and deterioration in quality of songs, story. It is believed that at this juncture, interference of underworld dons particularly Dawood Ibrahim increased in film industry. Heroes and heroines visited Dubai to attend parties hosted by the don. In 1992, there were nationwide communal riots in the country after the demolition of disputed structure in Ayodhya. In revenge of this, in 1993, Bombay was hit by bomb blast and the investigations by the agencies found that it was planned and executed by the Dawood gang. Sanjay Dutt, an actor was arrested on the charge of helping the gang and convicted. It indicates that the underworld was able to established closed link with Indian Cine industry. The crisis in Indian cine industry deepened with the murder of famous film producer and industrialist Gulshan Kumar (1951-1997).

Gulshan Kumar was an Indian businessman, film and music producer who was the founder of the Super Cassettes Industries Limited (T-Series) music label in the Bollywood industry (Nihalani and Chatterjee, 2003:20). He founded T-Series in the 1980s and established it as a leading record label in the 1990s. Gulshan Kumar was a devoted worshipper of *Shiva* and especially *Vaishno Devi*. He sung many religious and traditional songs in favour of almost all major deities in *Hinduism*. Due to traditional faith, love and respect towards *Vaishno Devi*, he ran a free of cost meal assistance service in which free meals are offered as '*Prasad*' to all the devotees visiting *Vaishno Devi Temple*. It was first started in 1983 at *Baan Ganga* location which is situated in between of the *Vaishno Devi Temple's* pilgrimage. T-Series emerged as one of the top music labels in India with the release of *Aashiqui* in 1990.^[13] In the early 1990s T-Series was largely responsible for sparking a boom for the Indian music industry. (https://www.filmfare.com/features/top-25-films-between-the-years-1985-1994_-26676-1.html) With its music and film production, the annual earnings of T-Series grew from 20 crore (\$16 million) in 1985 to 200 crore (\$88 million) in 1991 (India Today,

January 15, 1991) and by the time of Gulshan Kumar's death in 1997, had reached 500 crore (\$140 million) (<https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/the-mafia-calls-the-shots/204098>). It continues to be a major label and controls more than 60% share of the Indian music market. In international market, T-Series enjoys a turnover in excess of \$4.2 million, and exports to 24 countries across six continents. In India, it has the largest distribution network of over 2500 dealers. Gulshan Kumar Dua died in a shooting outside the Jiteshwar Mahadev Mandir, a Hindu mandir dedicated to *Lord Shiva* of which he attended daily in Jeet Nagar, Andheri West suburb of Mumbai, on 12 August 1997. He was shot 16 times. A Mumbai underworld organization called D-Company is considered to have been responsible for this assassination. The police also accused film composer Nadeem Saifi of the music duo Nadeem-Shravan of having paid for the murder due to a personal dispute and fled the country after the murder.

This suggests that there were close linkages between some of the underworld mafias and Indian cine industry personnels. A popular perception among the masses developed that After the murder of Gulshan Kumar, Cine industry surrendered to the mafias and started to work on their agenda. It has also been said by many Bollywood insiders that the industry has not only started to create false narratives through films but also involved in narcotic business of these mafias indirectly. They created a lobby in the industry and started to control the newly entered actors and actresses. Those who were not joining them were refused to give work or were eliminated. It is believed that actress Divya Bharti, Actor Sushant Singh Rajput who allegedly committed suicide, were actually eliminated by the underworld.

In 2014, there was change of power at the Centre, Shri Narendra Modi of BJP became the Prime Minister of India. A number of actors, who are said to be associated with "D-company" (a term used to indicate the mafia gang of Dawood Ibrahim, who allegedly involved in Bombay Blast of 1993 and now allegedly lives in Karachi, Pakistan; He runs his empire from Dubai and many persons from Bollywood industry used to visit his place in Dubai on certain occasions. It is also believed that he financed a number of Bollywood films and has influenced film world) had opposed Modi's candidature as PM charging him responsible for Gujarat riots. This has created a different narrative on social media in support and against Modi. A number of Film industry actors openly supported Modi (Anupam Kher, Kangana Ranawat, Ashok Pandit and many others). As a result, film industry is now divided in two categories: Supporters of Modi (very few) and those who were against Modi (a large number of industry people including left-oriented film makers, actors, and actresses).

The Power of Social Media

Social media is now becoming more and more powerful. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp and You Tube are major platform of social media in India. Among these, You Tube is emerging most prominent one as a number of journalists, celebrities, retired army officers, writers, critics, Competition coaching classes teachers and many intellectuals have their channels on this

platform. A group of specialists consist of a former journalist, film maker, retired RAW officer, retired army general and others started a campaign in different parts of India by personally visiting various towns and cities and delivering speeches on issues like U/S 370 and 35 of Indian Constitution which in their opinion are discriminatory to Hindus of Kashmir. This campaign got momentum when video clips of one of the speakers whose speeches were very blunt became popular on Facebook, twitter and You tube. This has generated a collective consciousness in favour of the ruling party BJP. This kind of speeches were opposed by the Left-liberal Hindus and Fundamentalists and radical elements and they engaged in spreading counter narratives particularly against the PM and the ruling party. Naturally, supporters of opposition parties joined this kind of narratives and expressed their views on social media.

Apart from these developments, the main TV media particularly News Channels (there are more than 100 channels of Indian origin) have a number of programmes right from 5.00 pm to 10.00 pm in the debate format and invite experts from different fields to participate on issues of current interest. Panels are drawn from journalists, political analysts, (so called) Hindu and Muslim Religious Preachers, women activists, representatives of political parties, journalists from Pakistan so on depending on the nature of the subject. It has been observed that almost same set of experts are repeated daily on the same channel. Some experts appear on different channels on the same day at different timings. In the name of the debate, the anchor provokes the experts of opposite views to attack on each other to increase TRP of their channel. This kind of debates generate lot of heat and audience is also divided on the issue as per their orientation. The TV channels are also divided in their orientation. Even audience is also aware about the orientation of the TV channel, whether it is supporter of the ruling party or a critique of the ruling party or supporter of a particular party. Experts are also branded accordingly. Thus, most of the debates are futile and the audience absorb the arguments of its own choice from their favorite expert. Audience also choose TV channels to watch on this basis. In other words, the main media is not only divided but also polarized on the basis of political orientation, left or right orientation, and religious orientation.

Social media and the TV News channels are interconnected. Initially, Facebook was used to share photos, ideas and messages among the friends. In last two years most of the TV channels have their page on Facebook. They post small video clips of latest or breaking news on these pages to attract the audience. Youtubers also have their pages on twitter, Instagram and Facebook to catch a wider audience to their channel. This interconnectivity between different social media platform and the main media news channels make the social media more powerful.

You Tube today is most effective social media. Home Page and News Genre of You tube cover mainly private channels of You Tubers on variety of topics as well as video clips of the main media TV News channels. Thus, the viewer can watch channels of his/her choice here. Here also channels are divided on the above-mentioned lines and consequently audience also. The main

advantage of You Tube channel is that their discussions on a particular issue have a range of 12 minutes to 1 hour. Small clips are generally on breaking news and aimed to update their audience. They have two-three fixed live programmes daily and generally invite one subject experts on that particular issue. After 30-35 minutes they give reply of the questions raised by the audience.

In comparison to the debates on main TV news channels, the audience prefers to watch You Tube channels and understands various dimensions of the issue. Today, people spend more time on You Tube than any other social media or TV channel.

Sushant Singh Rajput Case and the Bollywood

The Indian Cine Industry faced the wrath of social media in 2020 when a young cinema actor Sushant Singh Rajput was found dead in his apartment. The state government authorities tried to suppress the case but some channels continuously raised the questions on police and the state government. Finally, the case was handed over to Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). There was also Narcotics angle in this case and many Bollywood actors and actresses were found as regular consumers of drugs during the investigation by the Narcotics Department. For 3-4 months this issue attracted the attention of national and international media and social media. The popular public opinion was that he was murdered and some influential Bollywood celebrities and underworld were involved in the conspiracy of his murder. As the murder mystery is still unsolved many social media narrative setters launch a boycott campaign against Bollywood. However, this has damaged the image of the top celebrities of the Bollywood because of their silence on this case. There was calls to boycott the films of Bollywood on the social media but it has not having much effect as it was Corona period and theatres were closed.

Some incidents happened on national television show also widen the gulf between the majority and minority community over the dispute of Gyanwapi Temple in Varanasi. This kind of acts have raised high level of resentment among the members of the majority community. These developments have polarized the majority and the minority communities. Some of the intellectuals of the majority community decided to expose the acts of radical elements of the minority community. Those who were in the field of film making decided to make a film on the massacre of the Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir in 1991. The film *Kashmir Files* was financed by some the organizations who wish to highlight this issue.

In the meantime, a number of films released by the Bollywood were boycotted by the majority community and the crisis in Bollywood deepened. The Bollywood was charged to tarnish the image of Hindu god and goddesses in their film and showing the villains in their films as a religious Hindu. You Tube channels started this campaign in their programmes and cited many examples from the films like *Sholey* and *Deewar*, *PK* etc. There are at least 50 You Tube channels engaged in this kind of discourse. These channels promote each other are interconnected.

When film *The Kashmir Files* was released it was very successful on the box office and broken all the records. Bollywood along with liberals criticized the film and denied the truth of the film and called it a propaganda film of BJP.

Recently, another film *The Kerala Story* exposed the linkages of ISIS in Kerala and how three girls were converted and sent to Syria to fight for ISIS. Again, this film was successful on the box office. The films of Bollywood are having very few audiences and unsuccessful on the box office. The majority community now wish to dismantle the Bollywood and intended to promote such films which show the gods and ideals in a positive way. A new site to establish new film industry in NOIDA (UP) has been allocated by the state govt. It seems that the crisis of the Bollywood will be more deepen in the time to come in case they continue with their present structure and attitude.

Conclusion

On the basis of above discussion, it can be said in last one century, Indian Cine Industry has passed through many phases. Beginning with silent movie era which was dominated with religious and moral value based movies, it suddenly moved to a new trend in talky era with a heavy influence of Parsi theatre which was already very popular among the masses. During middle of 20th century, national movement had some influence on movies but it was not very explicit due to the control of the Censor Board. The nationalist values and social issues reflected more in post independence period. This period can be said as a formative period of Indian cinema. Bombay became main centre of Hindi cinema after partition as Lahore base film industry also divided and persons moved from Lahore to Bombay and many Muslims left India for Pakistan. Although, many Muslims stayed back in Bombay and continued to work in Indian cinema without any problem. They were wholeheartedly accepted by the masses. However, in last two decades of 20th century, character of Bollywood films changed suddenly. Two new trends: Small Budget "Parallel or Art Cinema" and "Action Films" emerged in this period. The first one was largely oriented with leftist ideology and was overloaded with its narratives. The second one which prevailed in Commercial films highlighted sex and violence, crime in cinema. These films also started to attack on the god and goddesses of Hindu majority in very soft way. By the end of century, a division in film industry started with the murder of Gulshan Kumar who was trying to make religious films during the page of so called action films. In last two decades, political developments in India not only changed the political scenario, but also transformed the cine industry. In last one decade, social media exposure of the masses has been increased and it has emerged as a very effective and powerful media. The divided film industry is now in a crisis situation as social media is influencing the masses to make a choice of a film to be watched in theatre. Thus, we can conclude

that social media today is very powerful and is able to create, disseminate the narratives in an effective way.

References

- Bist, Raju 2004: Indian film financing comes of age, *Online Asia Times*, May 28, 2004 (http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/FE29Df05.html)
- Hansen, Thomas Blom 1999: *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India*, Princeton University Press.
- Niazi, Sarah 2021: *Cinema and the Urdu Public Sphere: Literary imaginaries in the making of film cultures in north India (1930-50)*, Ph.D. Thesis, WestminsterResearch, <http://www.westminster.ac.uk/westminsterresearch>.
- Nihalani, Govind; Chatterjee, Saibal 2003: Overview Bollywood: Hindi Cinema through the decades, in Gulzar, G. Nihalani and S. Chatterjee (eds.) *Britannica Encyclopaedia of Hindi Cinema*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan. p. 20.
<https://historyflame.com/history-of-printing-press-in-india/>
<https://www.davuniversity.org/images/files/study-material/History%20of%20Indian%20Cinema.pdf>.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahudi_Ki_Ladki_\(1933_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yahudi_Ki_Ladki_(1933_film)).
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._L._Saigal).
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K._L._Saigal).
https://www.filmfare.com/features/top-25-films-between-the-years-1985-1994_-26676-1.html
<https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/economy/story/19910115-as-music-market-expands-rapidly-india-becomes-one-of-the-largest-producers-of-cassettes-813888-1991-01-14?onetap=true>.
<https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/the-mafia-calls-the-shots/204098>