

Chapter – X
FILM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

IN THE CLUTCHES OF MULTINATIONAL IS IT A BANE OR BOON

The year 2007 was celebrated by the people of India as the 150th anniversary of the sacrifices of the people of India for the liberation of the country from the clutches of the British Yoke.

Millions of rupees out of the public funds were allocated by the Government of India through the ICHR to various institutions colleges and universities. The object was to encourage scholars history students and historians to dig out the great deeds of martyrs out of District records, archives and libraries who had remained unsung for the last over 150 years . Hundreds of seminars were held throughout the country where people from various walks of life participated and read papers.

However if a sincere survey is conducted one will find that selected group of persons were invited by practically each establishment many of them read same paper every where. This way the very object was defeated.

In fact young students of history should have been invited to research on the subject at various places to dig out the hidden history of the those who sacrificed their life ,family ,properties for the nation and not for any personal gain . The true facts which remained buried in the District records and in the thick layers of the Archives so far are still out of the reach of the common man. They are at the verge of extinction and will get destroyed in the next few years. The other object was to expose such people who supported the British to enslave India obtained wealth and properties for this unholy service to the British and crime against the people of this country and the motherland.

Here I want to express my views about the role of Indian Cinema or Film Industry's contribution in exposing the Crown's misrule and open loot of the country and its people by British as well as Indians who were loyal to the Crown and had contributed in 1857 to enslave the country.

After the failure of 1857 efforts of the Martyrs, the British established directly or through their loyal Indians mostly big business establishments, started English news papers to propagate the so called good governance of Crown. They selected and engaged scholars from the

institutions started by them or graduated from England to write highlighting the deeds of the British Government's so called rule in India. These people wrote against our own people particularly against those who opposed the establishment of British Rule in India.

However the ground realities were just the reverse. The so called good governance of the Crown and the so called development achieved for the last 175 years till the end of 19th .Century by East India Company and the British Queen and Kings brought the condition of common man of the country pathetic. Famine in one part or the other of the country became the permanent feature of the Country .The domestic and cottage Industry of the country which was so strong which attracted the Europeans in India and called it "Sone ki Chirya" became the country of beggars and snake charmers . Here I will quote him statement of Lord Macaulay in British Parliament on 2nd of February 1835:-

Lord Macaulay's address to the British Parliament on 2nd February 1835:-

"I Have traveled across the length and breath of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar ,who is a thief ,such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values , people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country , unless we break the very backbone of this Nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage. Therefore, I propose that we replace her old AND ANCIENT EDUCATION SYSTEM, HER CULTURE, FOR IF THE INDIANS THINK THAT ALL THAT IS FOREIGN AND ENGLISH IS GOOD AND GREATER THAN THEIR OWN, THEY WILL LOOSE THEIR SELFESTEEM, THEIR NATIVE CULTURE AND THEY WILL BECOME WHAT WE WANT THEM • TRULY DOMINATED nation."

One can understand from the above the mean mentality of the Europeans and the basic object for which they came to India which certainly was not Business. They destroyed the cottage industry; and made the artisans and other technical workers out of job. When people started dying due to hunger the British took them as bonded labor to Figgie Ghana Mauritius etc used them in most inhuman conditions as slaves. They were recruited in Army not as officer but

Jawans under British officers and used them for expansion of British empire in other parts of the world as fodder against their enemy's gun. In this way by our poor men the British enlarged their army and fought many wars in Burma, China, Crimea Middle East, Iran etc. Not only this they used Indian against Indian and enslaved the entire Nation.

There was no source or media to expose the misdeeds of the British. The news papers were mostly owned or controlled by British or their loyal Big Business houses.

By 1897, the film industry in India started the silent moving shorts which could not have been used as the media to highlight any thing. The first time full length silent feature film was released on 3rd May 1913 by G. D. Phalke. It was in 1931 when Mr. Ardeshir Irani of Imperial Film Company released the 1st Talkie full length film 'Alam Aara"on 14th March1931.

It was there after many well meaning people realized that in guise of entertainment for common man the problems of the people of the country can be exposed to the world to know the real picture of the Indian economy and the fraud of the British in the name of developments. The only thing they developed was railway line but the purpose was not for the people's good but for fast movement of troops from one

part of the country to the other to crush any rising against British .

They realized that through the media of films the pathetic condition of the common man and their exploitation by the agents of British such as money lenders, zameendars , thekedars, and British loyal big business houses can be exposed. By making films on social theme the grievances of the people and their exploitation can be brought to light, that what is being projected British stooge print media is not the real picture.

Thus persons like D.G. Phalke, J. J. Madan, Homi Masster, Krishna Perful Ghose, Ardeshir Irani, Agha Hashar Kashmiri, Chandulal Shah, K. Rathod, being prominent out many others took the mantle to expose the British controlled print media 's falsehood .

Next generation followed after the above great personalities brought persons like , V. Shantaram, Mehboob R. Khan, A. R. Kardar, S. S. Vasan, Guru Datt, Bimal Roi, Satyajeeet Roi and others. If you view the films produced by the Producers of the that era you will find that these great people highlighted the miseries of the people and their exploitation in the hands of the British loyal money lenders and big business houses who had adopted a system in connivance of the British authorities by which they will keep the people of India permanently poor and hand to mouth so that the cruel rule of

British and their agents remain permanently on the country.

I quote here Mr. A. K. Biswas, I. A. S. (retired) and a former Vice Chancler of B. R. Ambedkar University Darbhanga from his book, "Sepoy Mutiny (1857-1858) and Indian Perfidy":-

“Men in prominent position,e.g. Rajas, Maharajas, Zameendars and Chiefs ,Besides intellectual class of the day and reputed periodicals and feudal class demonstrated their pro-British solidarity.”

Similarly Shri Amrish Misra in his book "War of Civilization India A.D.1857 writes:-

“Even die-hard anti 1857 concede that instead of being preserve of Tatas, Birlas, Parsis, and Marwaris, forces siding with the British in 1857and the pro-British Rai Bahadurs, Bureaucrates, the New Indian state(India after 15-8-1947)would have been attuned more to the needs of the peasantry ,the working people ,middle class and the Nationalists. The Tatas , Birlas were junior partners in the British colonial policy of starving millions of Indians and turning a great world super power into a backward ,third world Nation.”

Amrish Misra further writes:-

“It is basically the indigenous ,writers,music talentsthat kept Bollywood alive”.

To name Bombay film industry as “Bollywood” instead Boimbay Film Industry or Bombay Film Industry itself is a fraud. Why name of our Indian Industry be likened to and American Industry? What was wrong with Indian Film Industry? Is it not on the same lines of Lord Maculæ’s statement in British Parliament on 2nd.February 1857, quoted above to make the Indian believe that what is foreign is better than their own and only by this way India can be enslaved.

The great stalwarts like V.Shantaram ,Mehboob Khan,Bimal Roi ,Guru Dutt and such others while making films like “Do Ankhen Bara Hath”,”Dr.Kutnis Ki Amar Kahani”,”Aurat” or “Mother India”, “Bandini”,”Kaghaz Ke Phool”,”Do Bigha Zameen” etc. What were the issues and subject matter of these films ? Nothing but ,highlighting the pathetic condition of the people of the country in the hands of the British administration and their stooges like Money lenders, zameendars ,business houses ,rajas and Nawabs as loyals of Crown.

The year 2007 was celebrated as the 150th.year of war of independence and I waited for the full year 2007 some one may write about the role of Indian Film Industry in the freedom movement of India. It is unfortunate that no one ventured on this aspect. Especially I expected person like Mahesh Bhat.

I feel that those producers who highlighted social issues and the exploitations of the common men of the country by under the British administration and its system and when British were in power deserve to be put in the category of FIGHTERS OF FREEDOM and should be honored so .They used the Films as the media to counter the wrong propaganda praising the British Raaj by various news papers mostly owned by the Big Business Houses of the Country and British loyal intelligentsia.

These producers were not business men. They were artist, creators like poets, writers, and were concerned for the problems of the people and voiced their grievances .In fact through their films fighting against the British system and wanted to liberate the humanity from the clutches of British system of Imperialism and forged Nationalism.

The British, American imperialist mentalities realized the power the film Media and tried to curb its power. The British with aim of putting spanner in the National activities of the Producers introduced the censorship system and nominated such persons in the censor board who were British loyal so that no film is allowed to be put on the screen which may instigate the people to revolt against the British Raaj . Even after the independence of the country mostly such people cornered our politicians who were loyal to British. The congress government appointed such persons as finance minister who were basically of capitalist mentality and were in the hands of the big business houses of the country who saw to it that film media is not able to flourish to counter the print media which were in the hands of capitalists had surrounded the leaders and using them for their benefit and for the development of the country, Here again I will quote Amrish Misra which will support to my above contention .He wrote :-

“The capitalist class which supported the Congress during the second phase of the passive Freedom Struggle and acquired the spoils after 1947, supported, by and large the British in 1857 the Tatas, Birlas and Ambanis of today, were all junior partners in the British colonial policy of starving millions of Indians and turning a great world superpower into a backward, third world nation, in 1947, they simply did not possess the ambition or the intention of making India a super power . India’s Gandhian and non-Gandhian political class also fell far short of the ambition displayed by 1857 fighters.”

“On 1947 eve the Indian political and capitalist class, lost the nerve to fight a real, genuine, patriotic, civil war, which would have swept away; the vestiges of colonialism and the British invented feudalism.”

“In art and cinema, it was basically the indigenious, writing and music talent from U.P. Bengal and Punjab that kept Bollywood alive; only hardboiled 1857forces, steeped in rugged, sensational, sophisticated Bahadur Shah Zafar- Nana Saheb, aesthetics were capable of making ,

Mother India, Ganga Jamuna, Sholey, Mughal-e-Azam, Mera-Gaon Mera Desh. The 1970s angry young man, phenomenon was actually scripted by personalities with direct links to 1857. (Javed Akhtar, whose ancestor was hanged in Lucknow in 1857. The entry of uppie , mushy , pretentious, pseudo-English , not-hardboiled , anti 1857forces in the Hindi film industry has killed Hindi cinema, and brought slavish import of foreign European influences and the neglect of both high and low desi Indian art.”

The forces described by Mr. Misra who jumped to the band wagon of Congress on the eve of 1947, manipulated with the newly born Government of India leaders to see that Cinema the greatest media of the country; which could influence the common man to make the government to shape the future course of the National Policy as a real National Government , is not able to flourish and survive. They saw to it that laws concerning to film industry are made in such a way that it become if not impossible at least to force the films industry to keep on making efforts to some how survive rather than develop in free India.

It was impossible to get a license to import equipments from out side India for betterment and improvement of the technical side of the film production and also sound recording as well as projection . The late finance minister Shri Morarji Desai was highly prejudiced with the film Industry .He was made believe by the big business houses that it is film industry which is the mother of Black Money production> I had the occasion to go to him with late Mehboob Khan during 60s when Mehboob Khan used to call upon him asking him to relax the import rules as that the Studio owners ,laboratory owners ,Producers and other connected with the Film Industry are able to import better equipments so as to be able to produce technically better films to compete with the films being produced by other developed countries , but every time he will rake up the issue that film people indulge in black money transaction. No amount of persuasion that it is not only the film people who are involved in black money transitions the bulk of black money transition are through other bigger industries. The car manufacturers openly charge black money against sale of each car besides other products manufactures. The involvement of film Industry in Black Transactions may not be even two to three percent of the total Black money transactions. But his mind was so much poisoned by big industrialists against

the film Industry that he will not ready to any logic against it. Mehboob Khan used to impress upon him that let banks and other financial institutions start providing finance to film Industry so that all transactions will be through the banking channel which will eliminate the cash transactions. But he will not be convinced to any reasoning.

All sorts of taxation, duties and restrictions were imposed on the film industry on all its sections, Production, Exhibition studios and laboratories, import of raw materials. Even the proposal to start units to manufacture colour and even black and white raw material was not approved.

In spite of such hostile attitude from the Government and other Industries against the film industry, I have no hesitation to say Bravo Indian Film Industry which with stood with the situation and not only survived the naked onslaught but developed and competed with the world cinema.

Such phenomenon not only survival, but development of the film industry in such hostile conditions the big business houses conspired to capture and takeover the Film Industry itself and dislodge the genuine Producers. First they brought the parallel entertainment channel by satellite. They started the transmission of the films and film based program illegally and inflicted loss to the Industry as well as to individual Producers and to Exhibition and Distribution wings of the industry.

Now they brought the concept of Multiplex. This killed the existence of single screen cinemas. Since the last about a decade more than 75% single screen cinemas have been demolished or lying closed. This has created unemployment as in place of forty to fifty persons working in a cinema on minimum wages basis group of multiplex cinemas are operated by ten to fifteen persons. In a country with so much poor uneducated people any system which dispensed with the worker can not be termed as public purpose. Besides the above cinema as always considered poor mans entertainment has been made beyond the reach of the common man. • Ticket which was available for 10 to 30 rupees in an air-condition cinema is now costing 150/- minimum.

The big business houses for whom the cinema has been taboo have jumped into the film industry in a big way not only as multiplex owners but as producers and distributors as well. The Chandni Chowk of Delhi, Naaz Cinema Building of Mumbai, Bantick Street of Calcutta, Old Railway Road of Jullundur, M.I. Road of Jaipur and other places where the film Distribution activities were agog morning to evening daily are now the deserted lot.

These big business houses in cooperation with multinationals by forming public company i.e. on public funds have captured all saleable artist, technicians, directors etc. by paying exorbitant price which creative producers can not dream to pay. The playing time is in control of these big business houses owning multiplexes and have installed one person with a computer in each business center to handle the distribution of the films controlled from Mumbai.

In short the Indian Film Industry, which was a Media countering the colonial mentality; of the Print Media and was a field where those with creative bend of mind operated, artists were working to prove artistic abilities, Architects were able to show their talent of conceiving comfortable building designs and so on has been captured rather enslaved by big business house just for making money with National responsibilities except making money. The genuine producers who were all along working with the object to highlight the bad governance, exploitation of the poor, social evils etc. have been pushed out of the business and distributors who were the one who took the risk and were taking the films to every and each town as far as possible and have been discarded as untouchables, generation old cinema owners are forced to close their shop and dislodged the workers who have been working for twenty to thirty years and are now out of job.

The Indian Film Industry is no more Film Industry and has become only an Industry. The day may not be far away when these business houses who have jumped into this business when they will find out that those who were in this creative field are no more there they will close down the shop for ever.

The trend has started showing the decline .One is fully aware that the business of films during April to July used to be at the peak every year. This year, 2008 most of the cinemas be it single screen or multiplex are starving for films. The day will not be far away that these so called multinationals or big business houses have either purchased the old cinema houses or forced them to close down , will close the cinema business in their commercial complexes and will utilize the space for other commercial activities. Today the state governments are asking the existing cinema owners or those purchasing the same to demolish them to construct commercial building ,to construct one small cinema will change their rule when these big business houses will want to do so and will bribe them. In fact Madam Mayawati the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister has expressed her intention to do so.

Those who sacrificed their life, property ,family for the Nation during 1857 and thereafter have been forgotten in 150 years by the ungrateful people of this country then how much time it will take them to forget those who established film Media not only an entertainment source for the common man but a very strong source to highlight the sufferings of the people . The Industry which was born in 1897 and produced people who became the voice of poor man has been enslaved by the big business houses in connivance with the colonial mentality foreign yokes, as the country was enslaved by British with the help of the local Rajas, Nawabs, Zameendars, Taallukedars and big business houses of the country,

The advice of Lord Maculae which he gave to his people on 2nd February 1835 in British Parliament is being followed even today.

But who cares. We Indians are used to it .In the words of Amrish Misra:

“In India, Indians, the victims, have little clue about what happened to them and their ancestors according to conservative estimates, out of total [population .of a fifteen crore plus about one crore i.e. about 7% of the population were killed , in the Second World War more than ten million lost their lives i.e. 2.5% of the world population ,in the first world war when the population was even less,ten million Indians lost their lives and their has not even been a kurmur” against the British .

No one asked the British since 1947 till date to at least apologies to the nation for genocide they committed during 1857 and thereafter in India, and for the loot they committed not only of the wealth but of the culture and our dignity. What could have been the Biggest Holocaust in the World History.

If the people of Film Industry will not realize the intention of the so called multinationals or the big business houses and can not stand up against this naked invasion to the field of activity which your fore fathers nursed since 1897 i.e. for the last 111years the future generation will not forgive you.