

'Baahubali' Sets Rs 500 Cr Bar For Bollywood

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MUMBAI: The highest earning film in India this year -- "Baahubali 2: The Conclusion" -- was neither an original Hindi movie nor featured an established star. That says a lot about the changing dynamics of Bollywood which, in 2017, saw a mixed bag of projects that drew audiences mainly with solid content, notwithstanding star power.

Salman Khan's "Tubelight", Shah Rukh Khan's "Jab Harry Met Sejal" and Ranbir Kapoor-starrer "Jagga Jasoos" are cases in point. They failed to elicit the expected response despite the buzz -- falling flat in such a way that Salman and Shah Rukh reportedly compensated the distributors for the losses they incurred due to their movies.

There is no centralised agency to record Bollywood's box office numbers. But as per trade experts, while no Bollywood film has so far managed to cross the Rs 400 crore mark at the domestic box office, S.S. Rajamouli's magnum opus "Baahubali 2: The Conclusion" -- featuring Prabhas, Rana Daggubati and Anushka Shetty -- did the unexpected by minting Rs 510.99 crore.

Siddharth Roy Kapur, Presi-



dent of the Film and Television Producers Guild of India, says "Baahubali 2: The Conclusion" -- the sequel to hugely successful fantasy drama "Baahubali: The Beginning" -- was a game changer as "a dubbed Telugu language film became the biggest Hindi language blockbuster of all time".

"It really says a lot to everyone who works within Hindi cinema.

It says that we can't make any excuses. 'Baahubali', in conventional terms, had everything going against it.

"The Hindi audience has traditionally not looked at southern stars as appealing and those who featured in 'Baahubali' had no name recognition in the Hindi market. Largely, it boils down to the fact that if you give people a

cinematic experience and have the confidence and the gusto and the flair to be able to tell that story uninhibitedly in the way you want to tell it, then the audience will come and watch the film," Kapur added.

As far as Bollywood originals are concerned, nine films marched past the Rs 100 crore benchmark in a year when the central government introduced Goods and Services Tax (GST) -- for tickets below Rs 100, it stands at 18 per cent and for tickets above Rs 100 at 28 per cent.

"Tiger Zinda Hai" turned out to be the highest grosser with a collection of Rs 206.4 crore till December 28. Even the team of Reliance Entertainment-backed "Golmaal Again" laughed its way to the bank with a collection of Rs 205.67 crore.

There were others -- "Raees" (Rs 137.71 crore), "Kaabil" (Rs 103.84 crore), "Jolly LLB 2" (Rs 117 crore), "Badrinath Ki Dulhania" (Rs 116.68 crore), "Toilet: Ek Prem Katha" (Rs 134.22 crore), "Judwaa 2" (Rs 138.61 crore) and the latest, "Tiger Zinda Hai" (Rs 173 crore and counting).

"Tubelight", though not counted among Salman's hits, also went past the Rs 100 crore mark by minting Rs 119.26 crore.

According to Kamal Gianchan-

dani, CEO, PVR Pictures, "Tubelight" was one example of how "stars on their own are not enough to pull in audiences".

"See Salman in 'Tiger Zinda Hai'. It's an established franchise but also a film with a strong nationalistic flavour and content that's appealing to a broad section of people. It has been a respite at the box office, but see the same Salman in a long and slow film like 'Tubelight', which was not suitable to the actor's image," Gianchandani told IANS.

"Naam Shabana", "Hindi Medium", "Sachin - A Billion Dreams", "Mom", "Lipstick Under My Burkha", "Bareilly Ki Barfi", "Shubh Mangal Saavdhan", "Secret Superstar" and "Fukrey Returns" were some such titles which found resonance with the audience. As always, content was king.

The movies which fell flat against expectations include "Ok Jaanu", "Rangoon", "Begum Jaan", "Noor", "Sarkar 3", "Meri Pyaari Bindu", "Raabta", "A Gentleman", "Simran", "Bhoomi", "Haseena Parkar", "Chef" and "Firangi". Besides that, the big-ticket "Padmavati", which was due to release on December 1, got caught in a spiraling controversy which has kept it away from hitting the screens.

SRK In A Dwarf Avatar In 'Zero'

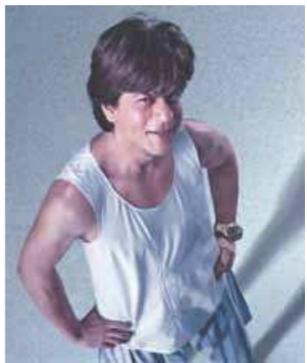
MUMBAI: Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan on the first day of 2018 treated his fans with the title and teaser of his first creative collaboration with director Aanand L Rai. The film, "Zero", features the actor as a dwarf.

According to Rai, this is a story that celebrates the imperfections in one's life.

The teaser unveiled shows Shah Rukh essaying a vertically challenged man, dancing away at a party. The teaser ends with a dialogue in which he talks about people call him a "zero" and how he amplifies the lives of others if he stands behind them.

On casting Shah Rukh, Rai told IANS: "I had no option but Khan saab because I needed an intelligent actor, who also can carry that happy-go-lucky attitude."

Explaining the thought behind making such a movie and zeroing in on a title like "Zero", Rai said:



"Like the way we say that perfect is boring, imperfection is much interesting... Our film is also celebrating the same. The story of the film is celebrating a perfect love story of two imperfect people."

The central character of the Red Chillies Entertainment film is described as 'Paagal', 'Aashiq', 'Awaara' and more, but he is seen happy in his own world, not seeking empathy from any-

one. His disability does not stop him to live a happy life.

"In the last few years, there are certain terms that we are hearing a lot and we can see how people have become over-sensitive on things that earlier used to be taken on a much lighter note. For instance, body shaming. I am oversized and if my friends calling me 'motu', I will not take that to my heart and sulk over it.

"Even my friends will not go to that extent to make me feel bullied or humiliated. But it is happening now. I think this is the story we should celebrate now, to realize that we all are incomplete, we all are imperfect, but if we can change our perspective, we can complement each other to make things complete."

The film, releasing on December 21, 2018, also features Anushka Sharma and Katrina Kaif.

CBFC Wants Change In Name For 'Padmavati'

MUMBAI: The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has decided to give a U/A certificate "along with some modifications" to Sanjay Leela Bhansali's controversial film "Padmavati" and has asked the filmmaker to "likely" change the movie's title to "Padmavat". However, the suggestions have been slammed by a Mewar royal and some members of the film industry.

The makers of "Padmavati", featuring Deepika Padukone as Rajput queen Padmavati, were also asked to give a few disclaimers -- one regarding not glorifying the practice of Sati and also relevant modifications in the song "Ghoomar" to "befit" the character portrayed, a CBFC statement said on Saturday.

The decision was taken after a committee meeting was held on Thursday in the presence of CBFC chief Prasoon Joshi. The panel consisted of Arvind Singh from Udaipur, Dr Chandramani Singh and Professor K.K. Singh of Jaipur University.

As per CBFC, the film was approached with a "balanced view keeping in mind both the film-

makers and the society". The board asked for modifications and a name change, before giving the film the certification for being shown in theatres in India. Reports saying 26 cuts were ordered were denied by the CBFC.

Considering the complexities and concerns around the film, the requirement for a special panel was felt "to add perspective to the final decision of the official committee", the CBFC said.

"Padmavati", which was earlier slated for release on December 1, got embroiled in controversy after the Karni Sena, an organisation of the Rajput community, urged a nationwide ban on the film claiming that it "distorts historical facts". Members of the political organisation also physically assaulted Bhansali during the film's shooting in Jaipur.

The row took an ugly turn when threats were issued against Bhansali and Deepika.

Despite the go-ahead by the CBFC, the Shree Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena on Saturday demanded a complete ban on the film and said they will vandalise the theatres which show the film.

Karan Johar's Wishes For Janhvi, Ishaan Khatter



MUMBAI: Filmmaker Karan Johar has penned a love note for Sridevis daughter Janhvi Kapoor and Shahid Kapoor's brother Ishaan Khatter as the two newcomers look forward to make their Bollywood debut with "Dhadak".

Karan is backing the film, an adaptation of the acclaimed Marathi film "Sairat", through his banner Dharna Productions.

The director read the note on his show "Calling Karan" on 104.8 Ishq FM on Monday, read a statement.

"It's a new year which means new beginnings and time for new relationship goals... Dear Janhvi and Ishaan, you are going to embark on a new journey of stardom

this year. You will face many firsts in 2018 from promotion to paparazzi to link-ups and trolling to fame and failures. You are going to see it all," Karan wrote.

"Through all of this, I just want to remind you to not take yourself too seriously and absorb every new experience because these initial days will never come back again. Janhvi, Ishaan your best qualities are that you all are still students. "That you both really stand by your beliefs and the fact that you really don't take yourself as seriously as I sometimes think you should. I love the fact that you are still vulnerable and innocent, please hold onto that," he added. "Dhadak" is scheduled for release in July.

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