Twitter Thread by Soumyadipta

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Bollywood is going through an unimaginable crisis.
Many big budget films are rotting in the cans while most under-production films are stuck.
The multiplexes are bleeding and single screens are gasping for breath.
The OTT platforms have become really choosy.
Who will report this?



Nobody from the journalism world seem to be interested to report this.
So here's a thread about how Bollywood has been severely impacted by the recent events and how it might be a body blow to the entertainment industry as we know it, if the situation doesn't change in six months

I was chatting with @taran_adarsh today.
He says that most big banner films are wait-listed for the theatres and they have all been rescheduled to 2021.
But here's the problem.

There will be a huge backlog as and when situation normalises in 2021 and people come back to theatres.

But the worst sufferers, as @taran_adarsh, concurs with me, are productions on a budget.
They are the ones which have and will be suffering the most because of lack of space.
"This situation is beyond anybody's control. Nothing can be done. We can just wait and watch," Taran says

OTT platforms haven't been able to come to the rescue.
The recent debacle of few over-hyped films have put them on the backfoot.
Nobody is ready to shell out dollars without watching the content and calculating its viability. The OTT sell prices on offer have drastically reduced.

Bollywood movie business was a near monopoly market.
The big banner releases got prime slots and charged a premium at the multiplexes.
The ticket prices in the first week would be around 400 to 600 in some plexes.
Filmmakers calculated success in terms of a unit called 100 crores

The big banners fought among themselves for screens and show slots.
Evenings were premium business slots and no one else (Hollywood, regional and medium-budget films) were allowed.
On the OTT platforms, content is king. The same films are now competing with the best in the world!

Suddenly the business model changed. Even small films scored big on the OTT platforms while big banner films (like the comeback film of a veteran, controversial filmmaker) bit the dust. Another film was boycotted by netizens.
Another top-star film flopped due to its content.

Bollywood is reeling from aftershock. They are used to adulation and idol worship. The flurry of criticism has unnerved them.
They feel it is affecting their business.
Filmmakers are now switching off comments on social media, youtube and even switching off likes and dislikes.

Nobody is saying or talking about the huge losses that production house are incurring but several have re-started their shooting schedules in the hope that the situation will normalise soon.
Truth be told: The situation won't normalise and people won't flock to theatres soon

Most trade analysts say that the effect is going to fall on the take-home incomes of big stars.
Believe it or not, 70% of a film's budget (even more) was given to its stars. Sometimes, it was bartered with distribution rights.
The stars will see a salary cut to the tune of 60-70%

The Bollywood stars are becoming poorer in other terms too. Many have lost brands they used to endorse.
That was big money for most of them.
Most brands have put their contracts on pause or have replaced them with social media influencers.
They proved to be cheaper and effective.

Some of the stars embroiled in recent controversies have lost big-banner films. Others have lost films after their last OTT release proved to be a huge dampener. Many stars are actually sitting at home, twiddling their thumb.

Two star kid launches have been put on the backburner.

Overall, Bollywood will take a long time to recover from this crisis.
The film business is still on a halt and when it opens, it won't race to a situation where they used to rake in almost 30 crores on the first day itself if they had big stars. Irrespective of the content.

The overseas markets are having deep impact on the business. One isn't sure, how things will shape up.
The total loss of the Bollywood film industry due to the pandemic will run into several millions of dollars and will have long-lasting effects.
The industry might change forever

Now, let's talk some numbers.
Pandemic broke while #Baaghi3 was in its second week and #AngreziMedium had just released. Both were impacted.
As per @moneycontrolcom, "As 2020 comes to a close, the Bollywood box office report card reads a mere Rs 780 crores."
That's a pitiable sum

The fact remains that if in 2021, Bollywood scores about Rs. 500 crores in total, then it should consider itself lucky. I don't see it happening unless people flock back to theatres. That seems unlikely as there's no vaccine in sight and audience won't take risks to watch a film.

Let's look at numbers of 2019 (via Moneycontrol).
In 2019, Rs. 4400 crores had come in from just the release of Hindi films.
In 2018: Bollywood netted Rs 3,600 crores, which was a record as well.
2020 was expected to deliver upwards of high Rs 5,000 crores
https://t.co/VusTeYom6m

So when the expected business volume was supposed to be to the tune of 5000 crores, the industry has done no more than 800.
Isn't this a crisis?
Sadly no-one has reported about it.
There is a complete silence all around.
Mint has written few reports but they are behind a paywall.

Thanks for reading.

Sometimes the real news is hidden away to maintain a curated image.
And the real news is, Bollywood is going through an existential crisis that might change the way it functions, creates content and sells it.
The crisis is deepening by the day.

Thread closed


LOCKDOWN