

Padmavati row: SC rejects plea seeking deletion of alleged objectionable scenes

20/11/2017 09:08 by admin

A day after the makers of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's magnum-opus Padmavati, Viacom 18, deferred the release of the film amid the ongoing nation-wide protests, the Supreme Court on Monday termed as "premature" and rejected a plea seeking deletion of alleged objectionable scenes from the movie.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra was informed that the film has not yet received the certification from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC).

"Our interference in this writ petition will tantamount to pre-judging, which we are not inclined to do," the bench, also comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, said.

Advocate M L Sharma, who had filed the petition, alleged that though the Censor Board has not given a certificate to the movie, the songs of the film have already been released.

Sharma had approached the court seeking a direction for removal of all scenes of alleged 'character assassination' of Queen Padmavati from the movie before its release.

The scheduled release date of the film, mired in controversy over conjectures that it "distorts history" regarding Rajput queen Padmavati, was deferred from December 1 yesterday. A new release date will be announced once the "requisite clearances" are in place, Viacom18 Motion Pictures said.

The vitriol over the movie went up a notch today after Haryana's BJP chief media coordinator said he would double the bounty on the heads of actor Deepika Padukone and filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali, to Rs. 10 crore.

Surajpal Amu, the party's chief media coordinator who made the announcement, also threatened to "break the legs" of Ranveer Singh, who plays the role of Alauddin Khilji.

With the Karni Sena being up in arms against the film, and political leaders backing their protests seeking nationwide ban on the movie, trouble for the Padmavati team only seems to have worsened, after being banned in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

"Padmavati" won't release in Madhya Pradesh: CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan

In another addition to political groups backing Karni Sena's claims of alleged 'distortion of history' in Padmavati, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said that the film won't be allowed to release in Madhya Pradesh.

Chouhan said that a film which has "distorted facts" about Rajput queen Padmavati and shows or says anything to disrespect her, will not be released in Madhya Pradesh.

"The insult will not be tolerated," Chouhan said, eliciting a rousing applause from the audience. While calling Padmavati

'Rashtra Mata' (mother of the nation) Chouhan said, "The film which distorts facts and disrespects 'Rashtra Mata' Padmavati will not be allowed to screen in any part of Madhya Pradesh."

He said even if the movie is passed by the censor board for release in the country, it won't make it to the screens in the state.

His comment followed a meeting he had with representatives of the Rajput community on Monday morning.

Nobody will tolerate distortion of history: Punjab CM Amarinder Singh

Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday expressed his support for the protests and said that, "Nobody will tolerate the distortion of history".

He also illustrated that mainstream parties will not risk offending Hindu groups who are opposed to the movie.

Won't allow 'Padmavati' release unless controversial portions are removed: UP Govt

The Uttar Pradesh government on Sunday said that it will not let "Padmavati" be released in the state unless its controversial portions are removed.

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said the legendary queen had sacrificed her life instead of surrendering before the Mughals and made a place for herself in the history.

"Islamic invaders created a lot of mayhem in the country. The 'Rani' burnt herself alive in 'Jauhar' for her 'satitva' (pride) and dignity," he said.

As an Entertainment Tax minister also, I say that we will not let the movie be released in Uttar Pradesh unless its controversial portions are removed, Maurya said.

Vasundhara Raje wants 'necessary changes' made to 'Padmavati'

Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje on Saturday wrote to the Centre seeking "necessary changes" in the movie before its release, so that "sentiments of any community are not hurt".

In a letter to Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani, the Chief Minister said: "A committee of eminent historians, film personalities and members from the aggrieved community should be formed, who would watch the film and discuss it in detail.

"After that, necessary changes should be made to the movie so that the sentiments of any community are not affected."

However, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday supported the filmmakers, and in a veiled attack on the BJP, said that the controversy over Bhansali's "Padmavati" was a calculated plan of a political party to destroy freedom of expression.

She urged film industry members to come out in support of Bhansali and his film.

"The Padmavati controversy is not only unfortunate but also a calculated plan of a political party to destroy the freedom to express ourselves.

"We condemn this super emergency. All in the film industry must come together and protest in one voice," Banerjee said in a tweet.

Padmavati stars Deepika Padukone as Rani Padmini, Shahid Kapoor as her husband Maharawal Ratan Singh, and Ranveer Singh as Alauddin Khilji. The film is based on the 1303 siege of Chittorgarh by Alauddin Khilji.

The release of Padmavati has been postponed indefinitely. The CBFC has even turned down the application of the Padmavati makers to speed up the process.

The controversy around the movie began early this year when Karni Sena protestors manhandled and misbehaved with the crew of Padmavati and damaged many equipments in Jaipur. Even director Sanjay Leela Bhansali was assaulted for "distorting" the historical facts.

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