

THE INDIAN FILM  
SOME  
FACTS AND FIGURES

Issued with the compliments of the Film Section,  
Information Service of India, India House, London.

THUMB-NAIL FACTS ON INDIA'S  
FILM INDUSTRY

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TODAY India has one of the largest film industries in the world, ranking next to America and Japan in the quantity of its output.

THERE are about 300 production companies producing an average of 250 feature films a year.

THERE are 75,000 workers employed in the film industry:

Production(including artistes,writers & composers):	20,000
Distribution & allied establishments.....	5,000
Exhibition.....	50,000
	<u>75,000</u>

THERE are 3,500 permanent cinemas and 800 temporary or touring mobile vans.

Estimated total seating capacity in permanent cinemas: 22,275,000. Average seating capacity per cinema: 650.  
Average daily total attendance in cinemas: 2½ million.  
Estimated average annual attendance: 730 million.

THERE are 63 film studios in operation. 28 in the Western Region, 11 in the Eastern Region, and 24 in the Southern Region.

THERE are 39 film processing laboratories. Two of which process colour film in Gevaert, Eastman and Agfa colour.

THERE are three main centres for India's film industry, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Each centre works as an independent unit almost as large as any in Europe. In Bombay films are mostly produced in Hindi, in Calcutta in Bengali, and in Madras in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. Bombay is the principal centre for film production with 60 per cent of the producing companies, 33 per cent of the studios and about 66 per cent of the total productions.

THERE are about 800 distributors or distribution agencies in the country. They enjoy rights of distribution for areas or territories which are known as circuits. India is divided into 5 such circuits.

THERE are 26 concerns or agencies who distribute short films in 35mm and 16mm on a commercial basis.

THERE are 20 distributors and importers of foreign films. The distribution of such films is mainly carried out by affiliating organisations of the foreign producers themselves, though there are a few Indian concerns also in the field.

TODAY Indian films occupy over 5 per cent of the world's screening time. And Indian films have an established market in Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, South and East Africa, Aden, Malaya and Indo-China. In recent years Indian films have found a new and expanding market in the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, as also in China, the United States of America and the United Kingdom. Total earnings from the various foreign markets are estimated at 20 million rupees (1 rupee = 1/6d.).

TODAY motion pictures are imported for exhibition from the United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R., Pakistan and China. Italy, France, Rumania, Germany, Japan, Holland and Czechoslovakia have also started sending their films to India.

TODAY the programmes in cinemas showing Indian feature films generally consist of one feature only, its length varying between 11,000 and 15,000 feet. The running time of the average Indian feature film is 2½ hours. South Indian films generally have a longer average running time of about 3 hours.

#### CAPITAL INVESTMENT (approximate figures)

Total capital invested in the industry.....	£33,000,000
Investment in studios, labs., & equipment..	£ 4,560,000
Investment in cinemas(total).....	£20,000,000
Investment in production & distribution....	£ 7,600,000

#### COSTS, INCOME AND TAXES

Average cost of a feature film production...	£30,000
Estimated total gross box office collection (average year).....	£23,000,000
Estimated total entertainment tax paid (1954-55).....	£5,320,000

SOME FACTS ON SHORT FILM PRODUCTION & THE WORK OF THE  
FILMS DIVISION, MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING

BETWEEN 1920 and 1946 about 1,670 short films were produced. Indian documentary films are exhibited in over 3,000 cinemas throughout India and are seen by 600 million people a year, and not only in large cities and towns. For only 20 per cent of the cinemas are located in cities with a population of 100,000 and over. Eight hundred of the cinemas are touring cinemas moving from village to village. Two hundred and thirty mobile film vans are maintained by State Governments, and these units are used to take films to the peoples in rural areas and small townships. To assist in this important work the Government of India provides, free of charge, one copy of each documentary and newsreel to the State Governments in the language version required.

ABOUT twenty independent short film companies make short films in 16 and 35mm. However, the production of short films has never proved very profitable commercially, and this has been one of the basic reasons why so few independent Indian producers have turned to this type of filming. To encourage independent producers the Government of India purchases twelve documentary films yearly from commercial companies.

SINCE the establishment of the Films Division of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting in 1948, a total of 372 documentaries have been released for exhibition. These documentaries which were till recently produced in five languages (English, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu), are now being produced in eight languages also - Assamese, Gujarati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya and Punjabi.

WEEKLY newsreels, entitled "The Indian News Review" are also produced by the Films Division in five language versions. Monthly and quarterly editions of the Indian News Review are also produced for non-commercial exhibition overseas through India's missions and embassies.

THE normal annual programme of the Films Division consists of the production of one newsreel and two short documentaries every week. Some of the documentaries are produced in colour. A new activity is the production of Educational and Instructional films. The present plan calls for an annual production of 12 films in each category.

## LOCATION, ORGANISATION & METHOD OF WORK

THE FILMS DIVISION is located in Bombay and is directly under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting of the Government of India.

THE CHIEF PRODUCER (Documentaries) is the technical head while the Controller of Administration is the administrative head of the Division.

THE DIVISION is divided into three main departments:

1. Production
2. Distribution
3. Administration & Publicity.

THE PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT is further divided into the following sections:-

- i. Documentary Section
- ii. Newsreel Section
- iii. Camera Section
- iv. Sound Recording Section
- v. Editing Section
- vi. Studio Section
- vii. Library Section
- viii. Arts Section
- ix. Cartoon Section
- x. Commentary Section
- xi. Music Section.

### FESTIVAL AWARDS

A CONSIDERABLE number of the Films Division's productions have won awards at International Film Festivals, a selection of these films are listed below:-

"GLIMPSES OF ASSAM"	Certificate of Merit, International Documentary Film Festival, Canada, 1954.
"SYMPHONY OF LIFE"	"Grand Premio" (highest award for Experimental Film), Montevideo Festival, 1956.
"KHAJURAHO"	Silver Carabao Award, Manila Film Festival, 1956.
"SPRING COMES TO KASHMIR" (colour)	Silver Bear Medallion, Berlin Film Festival, 1956.
"BHARAT DARSHAN" (colour)	Prize for "Friendship Among Nations", International Festival, Karlovy Vary, Czechoslovakia, 1956.
"GOTAMA THE BUDDHA"	Special mention for "exceptional moral and artistic beauty" Cannes Film Festival, 1957.

"MAGIC TOUCH"	Diploma of Honour, International Display of Cinematography, Milan, Italy, 1957.
"WONDER OF WORK"	First prize, film competition on Occupational Health, Helsinki, 1957.
"OPERATION KHEDDA"	Silver Cup, International Review of Specialised Cinematography, Rome, 1957. Diploma and Bronze Medal at Moscow International Festival, 1957.
"STARS MAN HAS MADE"	Awarded a Cup for its "technical and artistic qualities", 5th International Exhibition of Electronics and Nuclear Science, Italy, 1958.

PARTICIPATION in international film festivals is not only a matter of national prestige, it also provides a useful opportunity for India's film industry to test the reactions of international audiences to their film treatments. INDIA'S documentary films, quite apart from their commercial exhibition overseas, are screened non-commercially throughout the world through Indian missions' own distribution set-ups. They are also screened aboard the great passenger liners as they cross the oceans of the world. The Films Division's documentaries are loaned for exhibition to schools, universities, hospitals, community centres, museums and film societies, where they are seen by a very large number of people. For example, in the first half of 1958 over 130,000 people (excluding television audiences) in the United Kingdom and Eire saw Indian documentary films.

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HISTORY OF THE INDIAN  
MOTION PICTURE

Feature films were still in their infancy in the west when the Indian film "Raja Harischandra", produced by Dadasaheb Phalke ("the Father of the Indian Film Industry") was screened at the Coronation Cinema, Bombay, in May 1913. Its release opened new vistas for enterprising men and a new medium of mass entertainment and education was realised, though its great potentialities were not fully appreciated at the time. Since then over 1,500 movies were produced till 1936, when the production of silent films gave way to the talking picture. Phalke himself contributed nearly a hundred films during his 21 years in the industry.

THE SILENT FILM  
ABROAD

When Phalke took his first three films, "Raja Harischandra", "Bhasmasur Mohini" and "Savitri" to England in the early days of the Indian motion picture, he found little difficulty in finding an appreciative audience.

It was, however, "The Light of Asia", produced by the Eastern Corporation Ltd., of Lahore that placed the Indian film on the international map. Having its London premiere in 1926, it had an uninterrupted run for over ten months and was shown by Royal Command before King George V and Queen Mary.

#### FIRST INDIAN CINEMATOGRAPH ACT PASSED

Though the number of films produced during these years was small when compared to those imported from abroad,

the importance of motion pictures in the social life of the country received recognition by the Government in 1918 when the first Indian Cinematograph Act was passed, giving legal recognition to the industry. The Act laid down fundamental rules regarding the place and exhibition of films and established Provincial Boards of Film Censors. Nine years later, the Indian Cinematograph Committee was appointed to examine the problems of production and exhibition. The report submitted by the Committee was regarded by the Government as "of great value both as a comprehensive presentation of conditions now obtaining in India and as material for the determination of future policy."

#### THE ADVENT OF THE TALKING FILM

March 14th, 1931 marked the opening of a new chapter in the annals of the Indian film

industry, for on that day the first Indian talking film, "Alam Ara" was screened. The natural protection of language afforded closer contact with the audience, and the film became the recipient of an increasingly popular patronage. The national film began rapidly replacing the imported film, and by 1935 about 95 per cent of the cinema houses in India began showing Indian films almost exclusively.

#### THE FILM INDUSTRY EXPANDS

Between 1931 and the outbreak of World War II, the industry expanded rapidly, with Bombay becoming the

main centre of production. Several outstanding films were made and innovations such as colour films, cartoons and dubbing in English were attempted. The steady progress of the industry was highlighted by the international recognition given to Prabhat Film Company's "Sant Tukaram" at the Fifth International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art in Venice, 1937. During World War II, the cinema spread much further and faster among the population. The number of permanent cinemas increased from 1,500 at the outbreak of the war to 2,090 in 1945, and a progressive increase in the production of feature films was witnessed.

FILM ENQUIRY COMMITTEE  
APPOINTED

In 1949 the Government of India appointed a Film Enquiry Committee to enquire into the growth and organisation of the industry, and to examine measures enabling the film in India to develop into an effective instrument for the promotion of national culture, education and entertainment, and to enquire into the possibility of the manufacture of raw film and cinematographic equipment. Some of the recommendations of the Committee, which reported in 1951, have been implemented and others are in various stages of implementation. The Government has recently taken the decision, following the recommendation of the Committee, to establish a Film Production Bureau designed to give advice and guidance in regard to the selection of themes, treatment of subject, settings, costumes, music, etc., and a Film Institute which will provide training in cinematography, sound engineering, editing, art direction, make-up and costumes, and will undertake research into problems of common concern and interest to the industry.

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Film Enquiry Committee, the Government of India has decided to set-up a factory for the manufacture of raw film during the Second Five Year Plan. The factory, when completed, is expected to produce about 5 million square metres of photographic material each year, of which 3 million square metres would be cinema film. In terms of running feet this will be 300 million feet.

FILM CENSORSHIP

As referred to earlier, the Indian Cinematograph Act of 1918 introduced the system of provincial censorship.

With a view to bringing about uniformity, the Government of India in 1951, established the Central Board of Film with its headquarters in Bombay, and Regional Offices at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. Films are classified into two categories, namely, those given "U" Certificates for unrestricted public exhibition and others given "A" Certificates for exhibition to adults only.

CHILDREN'S  
FILMS

Recognising the need for giving a fillip to the Children's film movement in India, a Society, called the Children's Film Society, was established in May, 1955. The principal aim of the Society is to undertake, aid, sponsor, promote and coordinate the production, distribution and exhibition of films, specially suited to or of special interest to children and adolescents. The Government provides grants-in-aid to the Society for this purpose. So far three films have been produced: "Char Dost" (Three Friends), "Jaldeep" and "Scout Camp", and a short film "Ganga-Ki-Laharen". The film "Jaldeep" won first prize in the category of entertainment films for children of the age group of 13 to 16, for its "charm and exaltation of generous feelings" at the IX International Exhibition of Films for Children at Venice, 1957.

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INDIAN FILM INSTITUTE TO BE SET-UP

Following the Government of India's decision to establish a Film Institute and a National Film Archive, an Officer on Special Duty (Mr.K.L.Khandpur, Assistant Chief Producer in the Government's Films Division in Bombay), has been appointed to prepare a blue-print of the set-up, including staff and technical requirements.

The decision to establish a Film Institute followed the recommendations of the Film Enquiry Committee, which was appointed by the Government in August 1949, and published its report in 1951. The Institute will provide training in direction, photography, sound engineering, editing and other aspects of production. The Institute will be equipped with a small studio to enable practical training to be given to students. It is expected that the Institute will be located in Bombay, one of the main centres of India's film industry.

FILM CLUBS FOR UNIVERSITIES

The Children's Film Society, New Delhi, is now expanding its activities to cover film appreciation in universities. Film clubs will be established in universities and colleges and shows will be arranged for members . The existing facilities for showing films at the universities and colleges will be made available to the clubs.

To begin with six films of outstanding merit, preferably those which have won international recognition, will be selected each year for club screenings. The scheme will be run on a no-profit-no-loss basis.

The Children's Film Society will set-up a separate committee to run this scheme. consisting of eminent educationists and it is expected that work will start in the current university financial year.

AUDIO-VISUAL EDUCATION

The National Board for Audio-Visual Education was established in India in 1952 and its first meeting was held in May 1953. The Board recommended the establishment of State Government Visual Boards, local museums by educational institutions, adequately stocked film libraries on a State-wise basis, and the formation of uniform policies in respect of films and filmstrips. Some of the important schemes to be implemented are:

- 1) The introduction of audio-visual education in Teachers' Training Institutes.
- 2) The supply of mobile film vans to all districts.
- 3)The publication of a periodical on audio-visual education.
- 4) Research in the evaluation of films in education in cooperation with certain institutions.

CENTRAL FILM LIBRARY

About 600 films and 40 filmstrips were added to the Central Film Library, New Delhi, in 1957-58. The Library enrolled 136 members during the same period, bringing the total membership to 1,126. The Mobile Cinema Unit organised 300 film shows and 45 previews.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR AUDIO-VISUAL EDUCATION

A sum of £375,000 (Rs.50 lakhs) has been sanctioned for the establishment of the National Institute. The Institute will provide regular training facilities to teachers in the field of audio-visual education. This scheme is a part of India's educational development programme under the Second Five Year Plan, and will help to raise a corps of trained personnel in the production and use of audio-visual aids.

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