

Date: 17/05/2017

Appellate Tribunal Minutes

I reached at Delhi early in the morning and reached to Film Division at 10 AM. I met Mr. Hiteshi who was in-charge of auditoriums, he explained about charges of different auditoriums. I was ready to pay whatever amount would they tell. They insisted me not to run the film on DCP as it could charge high to me, instead, to screen it in small auditorium on MP4 and I said whatever convenient to them, I will be happy to pay whatever amount will be.

Before screening, I met Mr. Ganesh, FCAT chairperson who asked me about censor issues with the film and I tried to explain all cuts given by examining committee of CBFC. The screening supposes to start at 2 PM but it started at 2.30 PM. We were not allowed to be in auditorium and told to sit outside the auditorium, in lobby.

Around 5 PM screen got over and committee took around 15 minutes to discuss in auditorium only. First they call us in Auditorium to discuss but then they came in the VIP lounge area. All committee members where there and we were told to sit in front of them. They all looked very disturbed. The first question came from the chair person of committee Justice...

Mr. Dakxin, I could not understand at that end...what was going on at the end?

I humbly asked "sorry sir, I did not get you"

Other members interrupted, eager to talk, but Honorable Chair Person said "What do you want to say through your film?"

Before I speak, my advocate interferes and he responded that Sir it is a fiction film on terrorism take place in different part of India and it is about....

Chairperson interrupted, "Mr. Harsh I know that it is about terrorism, so do you want to say that Terrorism was sponsored by the state? You mean the bomb blast in all over the country was done by Gujarat Home Minister? Do you want to say that state has been using ATS for their political gain? State orchestras violence?"

Adv. Harshvardhan, "But Sir it is a fiction film, please look things in the context. Its not a new thing that we have shown politician involve in the violence..."

Shazia Ilmi interrupted "why you have shot in Bakery?"

I asked, "what is the problem with Bakery location?"

"Don't you know Bilkis Banu Bakery case?" She questioned to me.

I said, "Ma'am, I never had this thing in my mind, you are unnecessary relating it with my Bakery scene."

"Why you haven't shot in factor or any other place? Why only Bakery?" She again questioned to me.

Madam, we were shooting in the area where we got bakery in nearby area and we shot, what is the problem in it. Its convenient to shoot at nearby location to avoid big shifting.

“No no...you deliberately shot in Bakery...”

I was shocked!

She also pointed out that “why you have shown your lead character as State agent, why you haven’t shown him ISIS agent?”

“Madam, in every film we have showing this, everybody wants to make a film on different story. I made it on different plot.”

Mr. Dakxin why have you used FTII and JNU student clashes news in your news scroll?

I said, “Ma’am, my film is about 2015 and during 2015 JNU and FTII was in news for various things, story comes from the universe we live, what is wrong in it if I use it in news scroll.

Honorable Chairman told me “Mr. Dakxin, let me know what can you do with last 12 minutes of the film?”

Before me and my advocate responds, he further stated,

“What a bloodshed you have shown in after bomb blast scene, its too much”

“But Sir, it’s a song, and barely we have used around 1.5 to 2 mins injured people shots and rest of shots are of child’s flashback.” Adv. Harshvardhan told.

“No...no...Its not 2 mins its more”, honorable chairperson told.

“But in the film we have shown only one blast and used only few shots.” Adv. Harshvardhan responded.

“Tell me Adv. Harsh, do you think that 5-year-old child can watch this movie? You tell me.” Asked Chairman to Adv. Harshvardhan.

Adv. Harshvardhan responded, “I understand 5 years can’t but but sir we have applied for UA, it can be watch under parental guidance.”

“No..no...not acceptable...what do you want to say about last 12 minutes.”

Sir, that is my film, my film’s suspense reveals there. What is the problem in it?

Poonam Dhillon interupted, “Why you have chose that dialog “Chai Se Chutiya”...Sir I may leave, I am getting late for my flight.

Honorable Chairperson requested to wait for a moment.

In few minutes, she left the room.

Yes, tell me what you can do with last 12 minutes? Again asked by honorable chairman.

Me and my advocate were shocked and speechless. My advocate looks at me and I said let me think over it, there is less possibility...

My advocate said "Sir, let us think about it but what about other cuts."

"Forget about other cuts Mr. Harsh, see Mr. Harsh, you have to think about to edit last 12 minutes, its crucial, terrorist has been shown as a state agent, we all know about Gujarat, there are encounters, riots etc. this film is connecting all dots together and saying that state is involved in it."

Shazia Ilmi: It's a question of State's integrity and dignity.

But Madam it's a fiction account

"No, it cannot be fiction account." Shazia stated.

Chairperson: "If this could be a documentary film, I would see the authenticity in the film but as this is a fiction account, how can we permit to exhibit such film. If this film will get release, somebody will file lawsuit against this young man (pointing out at me), BJP president will fine the lawsuit (He gave example of some recent lawsuit in which somebody has filed Rs. 15 crore defamation lawsuit.) and his life will have gone. How you will bare such things. There is a serious problem with the kind of message this film gives to audience."

"But sir, if we need to change last mints, we need to re-shoot it and we can't afford it."

I said, "Sir, it's a small budget film and it is not possible to re-shoot." How can i...

"Sir, let us think what can we do with last 12 minutes", Adv. Harshvardhan said.

Chairperson asked me about the budget and I said it could be around 80 to 90 lacs. Chairperson emphasized that who says that they are poor, they have money. Mr. Dakxin, you have made an excellent movie and you are going to be rich, I like your film very much but accept last 12 mints which you need to edit.

I was nodding and trying to make him understand that re-shoot is not possible at all.

Honorable Chairperson said that then show me again the film with last 12 mints cuts and will decide. Now I am not giving ruling, I will issue that letter that you need time to think about last 12 mints cut and I have granted it,

Then Honorable Chairperson said to Mr. Ganesh to write the letter as he dictates. After few mints, the letter came, Chairperson did some changes and he went back to reprint with correction.

Then chairperson said that he will be on leave from 4th June to 24th June, out of country so will try to fix this as early as possible. Advocate requested him that we will show him the cut before that he please give us time before that.

He hastily said that first show me edit of last 12 mints and then we will see what can we do. We went out from the Film Division, I was at Adv. Harsh's car with him, an official came and took my sign on the paper. I corrected spelling of my name from "Bajrangi" to "Bajrange".

Everybody left from the room.

Dakxinkumar Bajrange (Chhara)
Director, Sameer