

Voice recognition

July 28, 2020. The pandemic rages on, in particular in the city in which Bollywood is located. More than half its people live in areas we dismissively call “slums”, and a recent study by a famed institute located in this city concludes that more than 50% of them have probably been infected by Covid-19. Not that its “better areas” have escaped, but for these the figure drops to 16%. This has been roughly the pattern throughout the world, this virus has inevitably picked off many more of the aged and the vulnerable, especially from the poor, the marginalized, and the voiceless.

Far from voiceless is the head of a famous Bollywood family, of which some including he have tested positive for this virus, but luckily he is getting the best treatment in an elite hospital. Besides, the news channels are apparently 24 x 7 about them only, so much so I hear some muted voices have been asking if the remaining lakhs of cases were only flea bites. It is not clear if it was some of these who wrote to him saying they were praying for his demise, or others holding grudges against him from way back. What is clear is that instead of reporting to the police, this role model of millions all of sudden dropped in his blog of yesterday the persona of a caring patriarch, and flew into a most intemperate rage. So much so that, almost all dailies have today extended excerpts of this tirade with varying captions all betokening their complete surprise.

Big B’s voice was well-known even in 1984, when another plague, driven not by a virus, but by the virulent rage for revenge to which we humans are prone, especially if stoked on by the voices of those popular amongst the masses, had in a twinkling picked off thousands from those targeted. Notably in the national capital itself, even as the slain leader was constantly being shown lying in her home, surrounded by those bereaving—amongst them BB, to whom she had been like a *maasi*, because the new leader was a buddy from school, and their moms had been friends for decades—but these were not all silent mourners. Angry, loud and clear slogans of *khoon ka badla khoon* were allowed, by the then exclusively state-run television and radio, to be heard by millions.

In conversations since then many, who saw and/or heard these broadcasts, opine that one of these voices was the unmistakable baritone of the “angry young

man” of cinema. A few brave or misguided souls have even submitted affidavits swearing to this, of which some going further even place BB at one or other of the many places at which scores were done to death, often under the eyes of the police, or under the directions of some who were to remain ministers for years to come. Anyway, the sloganeering in itself was serious enough. It was incitement to mass murder. Indeed to, what was at long last conceded a few years back by the home minister, a genocide by the state of some of its own people.

However, after all these decades, it seems investigative agencies have still to secure, let alone forensically analyze, the now almost DNA like evidence of the audio and video recordings of the radio and tv news broadcasts of that week. As a matter of course, state audio-visual news media keep recordings on a permanent basis, and unless willfully destroyed, these must be extant. Voice recognition has steadily progressed to a level that some devices unlock even to whispers, but from a specific voice, and security of many user accounts uses this technology. Besides, here visuals are also available, and one would think other public speeches and cinematic utterances for comparison, so it should be fairly easy to identify, to a reasonable degree of certainty, all the prominent voices that were then engaged in this provocative sloganeering.

Of course some buddies were more proactive, so not only ear but eyewitness evidence of their direct involvement in murders is on record. Ironically it is from a fleeting mention of a video being introduced as evidence by one of these buddies—in an attempt to show he was at the prime minister’s house when per memory of a now ageing eyewitness he was elsewhere—does one learn that these official video recordings (or else some other) of these mourning cum sloganeering scenes were indeed extant till just a few years ago.

More indication of their existence comes from the fact that on the twenty fifth anniversary of that chemical gas accident, which occurred within a month of the above, some television channels repeatedly re-aired old video news recordings to show how Mister Clean—this sobriquet for the new leader has its genesis in an iconic advertisement of a toilet cleaner—had facilitated the clean getaway of this multinational’s head before he could even be interrogated.

By the way, Mr Clean got clean chits from all commissions that have probed this genocide, the last headed by a judge bearing the same surname but apparently unrelated to the doctor after which is named the elite hospital from which BB is blogging, who told a veteran journalist that, since we all know anyway who was responsible, there was no need to mention it in his report !

Below in full is BB's outburst on his blog of July 27, 2020 :-

.. they write to tell me ..'

"I hope you die with this Covid .."

Hey Mr Anonymous .. you do not even write your Father's name ,.. because you do not know who Fathered you .. there are only two things that can happen .. either I shall die or either I shall live .. if I die you wont get to write your diatribe anymore, by weathering your remark on a celebrity name .. pity .. for , the reason of your writing to be noticed was, because you took a swipe at Amitabh Bachchan .. that shall no longer exist .. !!

.. if by God's grace I live and survive you shall have to be 'weathering' the 'swipe' storm , not just from me , but on a very conservative level, from 90+ million followers .. I have yet to tell them to .. but if I survive I shall .. and let me tell you they are a force incensed .. they traverse the entire World .. from the West to the East from the North to the South .. and they are not just the Ef of this page .. that extended family shall in the flash of an eye become 'extermination family' .. !!!!

.. all I shall say to them is .. 'ठोक दो साले को '

मारीच, अहिरावन , महिषासुर, असुर , उपनाम हो तुम ; हमारा यज्ञ प्रारम्भ होते ही, तुम राक्षसों की तरह तड़पोगे , जान लो इतना की अब तुम ही केवल समाज की आवाज़ ना हो ; चरित्र हीन, अविश्वासी , श्रद्धा हीन , लीचड़ तुम हो ; जलो गलो पिघलो , बेशर्म , बेहया , निर्लज्ज, समाज कलंकी ...
May you burn in your own stew !!

In his blog of today there is a parable—which he says his astute followers should be able to decode—about a snake charmer whose chastened and sulking cobra got beaten, upon which the master said, “I only told you to stop biting, not to stop fanning your hood and hissing.” Not being as astute as these followers, I can only hazard a guess : is BB saying he is only fanning and hissing these days, but then who is this new charmer keeping him in check ?

A quick browse of the preceding days' blog posts gave no inkling to what grudges his trollers bore, but on July 22 and 23 we again find BB stewed up, but this time, from a comment, maybe at a tv media “witch” for reporting the celebrity was now covid negative but hanging on in hospital for publicity.

The comments are of fawning fans, but a few in Punjabi—one in Gurmukhi script—are as sinister : *aapji bas das deyo kiddhi shaamat aayi hai*, etc.

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