

Little love from audience shows Yash Raj Films losing magic

Embarrassed by the way the audience has cold-shouldered its four recent films in a row - Yash Raj Films (YRF) is once again disappointed with the dismal performance of 'Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic'.

Aditya Chopra, who practically produced the movie for Kunal Kohli Productions, has sought to make a scapegoat of Kohli, saying that the latter, as a director, should own up the responsibility for the new movie's box-office failure.

According to trade reports, the collections of this Saif Ali Khan-Rani Mukerji starrer have already started hovering between 30 percent and 40 percent across the country since the movie was released last Friday.

The overseas collection figure is not yet available.

Bollywood trade circles are confused at the repeated duds being ditched out by YRF, a banner which, until recently, was known for producing successful movies.

People in the trade are asking about the yardstick YRF applies to judge a film project before deciding to go ahead with it?

The question is being asked in oblique reference to the reported showdown that erupted Monday between Chopra and Kohli over the failure of 'Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic', soon after the reports of initial collection figures started coming in.

In a meeting, while Chopra blamed Kohli for coming out with a lacklustre movie despite YRF's logistical support, Kohli sought to shirk creative responsibility for the movie's failure by seeking alibi in YRF's 'poor business judgement'.

In the midst of this dismal scenario, at least one organisation is quietly counting its blessings that it did not burn its fingers in the movie.

Though UTV is now keeping mum over it, a Bollywood trade magazine reported last week that UTV had offered Rs.620 million to YRF for world distribution rights of 'Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic'.

The offer was reportedly rejected outright by YRF because it has its own worldwide distribution network and it could not have gone against its policy of not to sell the distribution rights of its movies to others.

In any case, YRF's vice president, production, Aashish Singh has denied that UTV had made any such an offer. On its part, UTV, too, has refused to comment on it.

But during his alleged showdown with Chopra, Kohli reportedly referred to the UTV offer indirectly, albeit as a last resort to defend himself. He is quoted as having said that, had the offer been accepted, both YRF and his production firm would at least have been able to make some 'table profits'.

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