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Maharashtra Film ‘Khalid Ka Shivaji’ Faces Backlash

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A new Marathi film, *Khalid Ka Shivaji*, has stirred controversy in Maharashtra for allegedly distorting historical facts related to the legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. The film, which recently received certification for release, has drawn criticism from political figures and public groups who argue that certain portrayals in the film misrepresent Shivaji’s army and cultural traditions.

Several leaders across political parties have expressed concern over what they describe as “deliberate mischaracterization” of Maratha history. Critics claim the film’s narrative undermines Shivaji Maharaj’s stature by inserting fictional or misleading elements about his military and governance. Specific objections have been raised over scenes that allegedly depict foreign influence in the Maratha court and question the portrayal of traditional values associated with Shivaji’s rule.

Prominent groups, including the Sambhaji Brigade and Shiv Sena (Shinde faction) have called for an immediate review of the film’s certification by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). Some have also demanded a halt to its public screening until a thorough verification of its historical claims is conducted.

The film’s producers, however, have maintained that *Khalid Ka Shivaji* is a fictional work inspired by historical themes and not intended to be a documentary or factual representation. They have urged the public to view the film in its entirety before passing judgment, stressing that creative interpretation is part of cinematic storytelling.

Nonetheless, the growing public discontent has reached the Maharashtra government. State Cultural Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar has stated that any film that offends sentiments tied to Maharashtra’s historical icons will not be tolerated. He confirmed that officials will examine complaints received about the film and, if necessary, seek clarification from the CBFC.

Protests have also erupted in parts of Pune, Kolhapur, and Mumbai, where local youth organizations staged sit-ins outside theaters demanding that the film be pulled from distribution until an official review is completed. In some areas, screenings were paused following requests from police to prevent potential unrest.

Supporters of the film argue that opposition to *Khalid Ka Shivaji* may stem from a misunderstanding of its artistic liberties. However, with Shivaji Maharaj occupying a revered place in Maharashtra’s historical and cultural consciousness, any deviation from the accepted narrative often leads to swift and widespread reactions.

Legal experts have pointed out that while filmmakers are allowed creative freedom under Indian law, any content perceived as offensive to religious or regional sentiments can be subject to legal challenge. The CBFC, as the certifying authority, may be asked to reconvene and assess whether the film violates any guidelines under the Cinematograph Act.

As the controversy continues to unfold, the debate highlights the persistent tension between artistic expression and historical sensitivity in Indian cinema. The outcome of the review could set a precedent for how future historical-themed films are scrutinized, particularly those involving figures of great cultural significance.