

BURNING UP YOUR TIME

By CHAITANYA KALBAG

If you're the sort of person who expects value for every paisa you spend, go see **SHOLAY**. 23 reels and three and a half hours later, you'll stagger out of the auditorium and gulp in the sweet air outside. Your ears will have been assailed by stereophonic

(Dharmendra) and Jai (Amitabh Bacchan) help Baldev Singh fight off the marauders.

The police officer, who is a Thakur (landlord) when he's not pounding the beat, captures a much-wanted dacoit, Gabbar (Amjad Khan). Gab-



sound of the theatre had facilities for it, your senses will be reeling under the combined assault of more than two dozen stars (*The Greatest Star Cast Ever Assembled*) and your opinions about Salim and Javed will be worth recording (*The Greatest Story Ever Told*).

SHOLAY starts off with a dacoits - chasing - and - way-laying-train sequence that jars simply because you expect only lunjuns to pour down a slope with war cries and flying hooves. On board, there's a police officer, Baldev Singh (Sanjeev Kumar) taking two notorious crooks to prison. When the dacoits attack, the jalbards, Veeru

HAILED AS IDEAL FARE FOR CHILDREN!
RAVEE NAGAICH'S



Photographed - Directed by: **RAVEE NAGAICH**
Written by: **G. D. MADGULKAR**
Music: **VASANT DESAI**
LIBERTY deluxe
3. 6-15. 9-30

The armless Thakur now remembers Veeru and Jai. He hires them to get Gabbar for him, alive. There's a big reward out for Gabbar, and the Thakur offers to give the pair a bonus for their efforts. The audience now sits back and heaves a sigh of relief. It knows Gabbar's finished now. With Dharm and Amitabh on his heels, there can't be another ending. The rest of **SHOLAY**, therefore, is a fore-gone conclusion with the usual mirechi-masala thrown in.

Director Ramesh Sippy knows that you can't have two big stars in a tiny village, and not have any "romantic interest". So you find a very unlikely tongawali providing the hamlet's public transport—a double-chinned, made-up female called Basanti (Hema Malini). And Veeru flips for her.

Veeru and Jai now organise rebellion in the village. Gabbar's representatives are sent scurrying back when they come to collect the monthly tribute. Gabbar can't swallow this insult, of course. He begins reprisal raids on the village. Follows carnage and heroics from Veeru and Jai.

At this stage you begin to realise that you have had enough value for your money.

* GUP SHUP *

Eerie, mysterious goings-on were taking place in a residential flat. The *pooja* began at midnight. There was a very well kindled but smokeless flame. Vague rites were being practised. Among the audience was **PRAMOD CHAKRAVARTY** and a few of his unit men, trying to lift an idea from this skulduggery, and use it in their next film.

If you're in search of an authoritative statement on the latest developments on the **RAAKHEE-GULZAR** affair, go to **JEETENDRA**, for correct reports and expert comments.

His skin may crease and his hair may grey, but **DEV'S** eyes are as sparkling as ever. In the wake of the **DON** scandal between girl **ZEENAT** and man **AMITABH**, Dev's doing a **Don Juan** with a cute, new bird.

The **KHANS** are forever in the news, and mostly on the wrong side of it. This time the scene is the *Chemist Shop* at a posh five star hotel Enter **SANJAY**. Wanted—a female oral contra. Prescription? Sanjay yanked it out. "Name please," said the assistant, raising one eyebrow. "Sanjay," came the sharp retort. "Sanjay what?" said the assistant raising the other eyebrow. "I'm the actor," said Sanjay making growling noises all the while. The assistant's nose joined his eyebrows. "Shall I write your name as Sanjay the actor?" he inquired. Some **REALLY** rumbling noises from Sanjay. But he slammed down the money, grabbed his package and left without staging one of the famous Khan scenes. Remarkable.

DHARMENDRA drinks milk to give him strength but he takes it in his unique, outstanding way. The first glass is at **HEMA'S** place. The last glass? I don't know!

SHOLAY (*The Flame*) has been burning up your time. Our heroes seem to be taking mighty long in devising a plan to nab Gabbar. The villagers turn against the Thakur and his gunmen when they find Gabbar's taking revenge with a vengeance. Sanjeev's histrionics convince them they are wrong. And you're beginning to nod off.

And then, all of a sudden, Salim, Javed upset a hornets' nest. Gabbar kidnaps Basanti and Veeru (who in the meantime has been betrothed to her) gallops to the hideout to try to rescue her. And like you guessed, Veeru's captured, too. But there's Jai. Good of Jai frees Veeru and Basanti and holds off the dacoits, while the lovers make it back to safety.

The rest of the movie is disproportionately rapid in sequence. Veeru comes with reinforcements, to discover that Jai is dying. The entire village, strangely, turns up to witness the last moments of the Bacchan. The distraught Veeru nips off again to Gabbar's hideout (the number of trips people make to that

You should see **RAMAN KHANNA** when he's got a glass in his hand. After the first peg, he's off to ask anything classified under Female for a dance. Then he goes into the second movement—cuddling his catch. Third movement—Raman trying to hook another bird!

KOMILLA WIRK stays alone in Bombay. But she has an interesting companion when she feels like a drive on one of those sleepless nights her manservant! Good fairy-tale, what?



Big-mouth **SHOTGUN** has longtime scars on his face, which give him a you-know-what look. Tracing clues, we find that they are the souvenirs of a merciless kicking he got at the **FTII**. Believe there was much ado about a woman.

SATISH KAUL has a unique way of insinuating himself into female company. The *modus operandi* is as follows. Over to the lass crowd—"Is Neena or Meena or... (whatever name he can find on his lips) here? I heard she's been looking for me." Unfortunately for him, nine times out of ten, he gets politely eased out of the gang.

REENA ROY can drive you up a wall with her bad manners on the sets. Her behaviour with newcomers and even with artistes junior to her, is atrocious.

There's this place in Khar (a northern Bombay suburb) where you can get your 'sis washed off'. Confidence and privacy are guaranteed a hundred per cent. The fees? Not too high for the average filmi "sinner". On the list of distinguished patrons—**RAAKHEE, MUMTAZ**, and lately, **REKHA**. A few newcomers are also clients, but alas their mouths don't open as easily!

Knock on **SULAKSHANA PANDIT'S** door at breakfast. If you're invited in by lunch-time, thank your stars. But if you're expecting to be fed, forget it. She'll miss her meal, but you'll never get to feed yourself at her joint.

PARVEEN BABI'S "Bed"-sitting is a big, big chore. She takes care of the kids when hubby and wife aren't around, smokes with Protima when Kabir isn't on the scene, and God knows what with Kabir when Protima is out.

The **KISHORE - YOGITA** marriage seems to have got the all-clear because sonny **AMIT KUMAR** has developed an immense liking for her. Will someone please define "LIKING", and its immense nature?

REKHA'S latest obsession seems to be with pregnancy. Her idea of a jolly good prank is to pose in-between shots with a made-up tummy. Unfortunately, only the light-boys are amused.

SHOLAY began on a not-so-good note. When **Basant Cinema** received the 70 mm print, its stereo system failed, and thus the screening was in 35 mm. New **Excelsior** screened quite some shows before the 70 mm prints arrived. Only **Minerva** screened the movie in 70 mm from the start. Looks like 70 mm and stereo aren't cut out for Bombay's circuit.

GODFATHER

feared place is amazing—must be like a **SHOLAY** attracting the moths), overpowers the whole place, and pins a hapless Gabbar to the ground. You see what real rage can achieve? Veeru's attempts to grind Gabbar into the dust are interrupted by the Thakur, who proceeds to give a good demonstration of savate, and mercifully brings this story to an end.

SHOLAY is technically above reproach. The stunt scenes especially draw gasps from the staidest characters. R. D. Burman's music, however, is again below par. The gipsy song-and-dance sequ-

ence (with Jalal Agha and Helen) is pretty good. R. D. should try and find out if the Pathans need playback singers. He'd do better there.

Most of the stars give good performances. Amjad Khan is superb as Gabbar. He makes the audience hate him, and yet, when the denouement comes, there is a tinge of sadness because he's been ultimately brought to his knees.

Like I was saying, go see **SHOLAY**. And afterwards, go home and sleep it off (*The Best Rest Ever Earned*).

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Now on celluloid

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