



Does Censor Board need to be reformed?

Description

Yes :-

- Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) is curtailing movie makers' freedom of expression beyond necessity.
- Movies on contemporary issues involving present politics are facing serious difficulties with Censor board, while obscene and full of violence movies are being passed without any cuts.
- Incidences of bribes are on the rise in CBFC.
- There is an increasing interference of politicians in CBFC's matters and its members' appointments.
- The rules of Cinematograph Act are very old and should be modified in order to comply with present times.
- CBFC is forcing story-altering cuts.
- The decisions of Censor Board are being influenced by selfishly mobilised rallies.
- Documentaries, which are meant to expose truths, are also undergoing many cuts.
- All committees on Censor Board recommended that it should be made as only a Certification Authority.
- Cinematograph rules are different in different states. Movie, which passed in Hyderabad may not be passed in Bangalore.
- Previously, In CBFC intellectuals, writers, journalists, lawyers were only allowed to become its members. But these days, this principle was diluted.
- There are lots of short films and films available in the internet. So, there is no point in implementing cuts in movies.
- In 1989, Supreme Court's judgement said that CBFC should consider the changes in the society and need to act according to it.
- In 2016, Bombay High Court rejected almost all the cuts imposed by Censor Board on 'Udta Punjab' Movie, which depicts the drug menace in the Punjab state. In this case Bombay High court said that CBFC does not have the power to censor movies.

No :-

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- We can't be more open. If there are no restrictions, hurtful remarks & vulgarity may become more common. Freedom of expression shouldn't hurt others' sentiments.
 - Certification of movies are increasingly not taken into consideration. Children are also watching 'A' certified movies, filled with full of violence. Accessibility of movies has increased considerably. So there is a need to remove scenes of too much violence and vulgarity.

Basics :-

- Article 19(1) of Indian constitution ensures the right to freedom of speech and expression for all. Hence, this right is also applicable to movie makers, writers etc.
- Article 19(2) specifies the freedom of expression should not threaten sovereignty and integrity of Nation. Censor Board was established based on this principle.
- Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) was formed in 1951. It follows the rules of Cinematograph Act, 1952.
- CBFC certifies and differentiates movies as 'U' (Unrestricted Public Exhibition), 'U/A' (Parental Guidance for children below the age of 12 years), 'A' (Restricted to adults), 'S' (Restricted to any special class of persons).
- In 1969, GD Khosla committee recommended that freedom of expression should not be curtailed.
- Cinematograph rules were revised in 1983.
- Mukul Mudgal Committee, 2013 & Shyam Benegal committee, 2016 recommended reforms in CBFC. But the recommendation weren't implemented yet.

Conclusion :-

Indian movies are increasingly getting International fame. The threat to reverse this condition need to be checked. And more importantly, the right to freedom of expression should be protected. Hence there is an urgency to reform the Central Board of Film Certification.

Afterwords :- Do you think CBFC is doing its duty well? What are your thoughts on this topic? Let us know your opinion in the comment section below.