

Shamshera

Shamshera is a 2022 Indian Hindi-language period action drama film produced by Aditya Chopra under Yash Raj Films and directed by Karan Malhotra. The film stars Ranbir Kapoor in a dual role, alongside Sanjay Dutt, Vaani Kapoor, Ronit Roy, and Saurabh Shukla.^{[5][6][7][8][9][10]} It follows the captivity of an oppressed warrior tribe during the British Raj. This was Ranbir Kapoor's comeback film after a four-year hiatus, mainly due to the making of this film which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shamshera was released on 22 July 2022 to mixed reviews from critics and eventually emerged as a box-office failure.^[11]

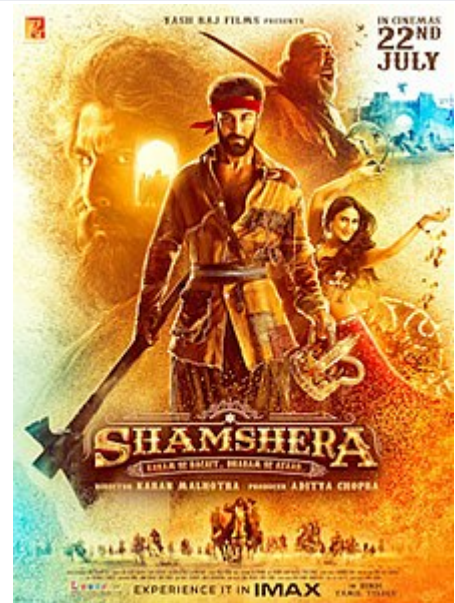
Plot

1896: Balli is a tribesman from the *Khameran* tribe, who aspires to become a cop where he is asked to provide a test, to a conniving Indian cop named Shudh Singh. Shudh Singh asks him to beat a child to prove his worth, but Balli refuses and takes the child's place and bears the punishment. That night, Balli learns about his father Shamshera's past.

1871: Shamshera is a Khameran tribesman, who along with his people was oppressed by the people of Kaza because of caste and status discrimination. Due to this, Shamshera counterattacks and pillages the kingdom, which leads to Kaza, creating a fearful reputation against the Khamerans. The kings and the wealthy men of the empire seek the help of the British to drive away the Khameran tribe from their village forest. The British accept the deal in exchange for 5000 gold coins.

The British attack the Khameran tribe, but Shamshera and the tribal people fight valiantly and the British flee. Shamshera receives a message that their tribe could live peacefully and regain their lost respect if they promised to stop plundering Kaza and move to a fortress outside the city premises. Shamshera and his men arrive at the forest where they realize that it is a trap led by Shudh Singh, and are captured where they are tortured mercilessly. Shamshera is told by the British to provide 10,000 gold coins, in exchange for sparing the Khameran tribe.

Shamshera



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<u>Karan Malhotra</u>
Written by	<u>Neelesh Misra</u>
Screenplay by	<u>Ekta Pathak</u> <u>Malhotra</u> <u>Karan Malhotra</u>
Story by	<u>Khila Bisht</u>
Produced by	<u>Aditya Chopra</u>
Starring	<u>Ranbir Kapoor</u> <u>Sanjay Dutt</u> <u>Vaani Kapoor</u>
Cinematography	<u>Anay Goswamy</u>
Edited by	<u>Shivkumar V.</u> <u>Panicker</u>
Music by	<u>Mithoon</u>
Production company	<u>Yash Raj Films</u>
Distributed by	<u>Yash Raj Films</u>
Release date	22 July 2022 (India)
Running time	159 minutes ^[1]
Country	India

Realizing that the deal would be difficult to achieve inside the fortress. Shamshera forms a plan to help the tribe escape from the fortress, but to no avail where he tells his wife about his plan to frame himself as a traitor and also tells her to cook-up a story to save the tribe from getting killed. Shamshera tries to escape by climbing the wall of the fortress where the officers-in-charge spots Shamshera and shoots him, leaving Shamshera wounded and later getting hanged by Shudh Singh. Believing that Shamshera is a traitor, The tribe develops a hatred against him, thus leaving the truth to be buried.

Language	Hindi
Budget	₹150 crore ^{[2][3]}
Box office	₹63.58 crore ^[4]

1896: After learning the truth, A bird saves him from death and Shamshera appears as a Ghost. Balli fakes his death and escapes from the fortress with the help of Shamshera's trusted ally Pir Baba. When Shamshera decided to move to the fortress, a few Khamerans decided to stay back, where they are now residing in a town named Nagina, and had camouflaged their identities, doing all petty jobs in the town for a living and they were waiting for Shamshera, as he would come and help them regain their lost respect and dignity. As advised by Pir Baba, and with the help of a local dancer named Sona, Balli starts looting the rich people of Kaza and refers himself as Shamshera.

The British General is worried about the new Shamshera. Shudh Singh invites the General for his wedding, where the General deduce that Shamshera would come to the wedding. Balli is able to steal the gold from Shudh Singh's wedding, but his youngest gang member is shot by the sadistic cop. With the information given by a gang member of Balli, Shudh Singh conducts a crackdown and confiscates all the gold that the gang had stolen until now, where Sona (who is pregnant with Balli's child) is caught by Shudh Singh, where he attempts to kill her and Balli's child, but the General stops him.

Though heartbroken, Balli plans to steal the Queen's Crown, which is supposed to arrive at Kaza. Despite tight security, Balli steals the Queen's crown and puts a blot on the British General's reputation. Balli makes a deal with the General to free the Khamerans, in exchange for the Queen's Crown. The General agrees and Balli returns with the surviving members of his crew to the Kaza Fortress. Shudh Singh kills the British forces, and places the blame on Balli, and takes the credit for returning the crown to the queen, but forgets about placing the blame on Khamerans.

The Khamerans learn about Shamshera's sacrifice from Pir Baba, where they get enraged and breaks the fortress's gates to fight alongside Balli. They slaughter the police force. Balli fights Shudh Singh, and he hangs Shudh Singh in the same way, in which he hanged Shamshera. Balli leaves the Queen's Crown to the British General, due to him having saved Sona's life. The Khamerans ride alongside Balli, and are hopeful that they will be able to live a dignified life hereafter.

Cast

- Ranbir Kapoor in a dual role as
 - Shamshera, a Khameran tribesman and leader of their resistance against the monarchs of Kaza.
 - Balli, Shamshera's son,^[12] known to be a risk taker, has a child like personality, and is an acrobatic thief.
- Sanjay Dutt as Daroga Shuddh Singh,^[13] the psychopathic warden of the Khameran's concentration camp and ally to the British, whom he eventually betrays.
- Vaani Kapoor as Sona, Balli's wife^[14] and a skilled dancer. She later has his son.

- Saurabh Shukla as Doodh Singh, a close friend of Shamshera and active member of his resistance.
- Ronit Roy as Pir Baba, Shamshera's deputy and a skilled warrior.
- Iravati Harshe as Shamshera's wife, Balli's mother
- Craig McGinlay as Colonel Freddy Young, the English colonel who's tasked with apprehending Bali.
- Saurabh Kumar as Choocha
- Chitrak Bandhopadyay as Raasho
- Mahesh Balraj as Upreti
- Rudra Soni as Pitamber, a young aspiring resistance warrior who's killed by Singh.
- Prakhar Saxena as Bhura, a member of the resistance who betrays them out of fear.
- Nagesh Salvan as Dada
- Vijay Kaushik as Gulfi
- Gauransh Sharma as Keshu
- Paran Murmu as Paran

Production

The original story for *Shamshera* was created by Khila Bisht, a college friend of Neelesh Misra who co-wrote it.

Casting

Shamshera officially launched in May 2018 by Yash Raj Films through a motion poster, starring Ranbir Kapoor as the titular character Shamshera.^[15] Sanjay Dutt was cast in a pivotal role, and Vaani Kapoor was signed to play the female lead.^{[16][17]} To prepare her role, Vaani Kapoor took professional training in Kathak.^[18] Kapoor portrays a dancer.^{[19][20]}

Filming

Principal photography begun in December 2018.^[21] For the film, a massive fort was built at Film City, Goregaon, requiring 2 months of preparation and the effort of nearly 300 workers.^[22] Filming ended in September 2020.^{[23][24][25]}

Music

Shamshera's soundtrack was composed by Mithoon with lyrics by Mithoon, Karan Malhotra and Piyush Mishra.^[26]

Hindi

No.	Title	Lyrics	Singer(s)	Length
1.	"Ji Huzoor"	Mithoon	<u>Aditya Narayan</u> , <u>Shadaab Faridi</u>	4:09



Vaani Kapoor, Ranbir Kapoor and Sanjay Dutt at the trailer launch (from left)

Shamshera

Soundtrack album by Mithoon

2. "Fitoor"	<u>Karan Malhotra</u>	<u>Arijit Singh</u> , <u>Neeti Mohan</u> , <u>Sudeep Jaipurwale</u>	5:08	Released	22 June 2022 ^{[26][27][28]}
3. "Kaale Naina"	Mithoon, Traditional	<u>Shadaab Faridi</u> , <u>Neeti Mohan</u> , <u>Sudesh Bhosle</u>	5:24	Recorded	2021
4. "Shamshera" (Title Track)	Mithoon	<u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	5:32	Studio	YRF Studios
5. "Hunkara"	<u>Piyush Mishra</u>	<u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Richa Sharma</u> , <u>Mithoon</u>	5:08	Genre	Feature film soundtrack
6. "Parinda"	Karan Malhotra	<u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	4:57	Length	Hindi version: 30:18 Tamil and Telugu version: 30:20
Total length:			30:18	Label	<u>YRF Music</u>
				Producer	<u>Aditya Chopra</u>
Mithoon chronology					
		<i><u>HIT: The First Case</u></i> (2022)	<i>Shamshera</i> (2022)	<i><u>Ek Villain Returns</u></i> (2022)	

All lyrics are written by Madhan Karky

Tamil

No.	Title	Singer(s)	Length
1.	"Aethukkoa"	<u>Shadaab Faridi</u>	4:09
2.	"Ondraagudhae"	<u>Yazin Nizar</u> , <u>Neeti Mohan</u>	5:08
3.	"Kannale"	<u>Neeti Mohan</u> , <u>Yazin Nizar</u> , <u>Sudesh Bhosle</u>	5:26
4.	"Shamshera Thoandrumboadhu"	<u>Abhishek Nailwal</u> , <u>Yazin Nizar</u>	5:32
5.	"Singam"	<u>Chaganti Sahithi</u> , <u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	5:08
6.	"Theeporiya"	<u>Abhishek Nailwal</u> , <u>Yazin Nizar</u>	4:57
Total length:			30:20

All lyrics are written by Chaitanya Prasad

Telugu

No.	Title	Singer(s)	Length
1.	"Ji Huzoor"	<u>Shadaab Faridi</u>	4:09
2.	"Nee Paina Picchi Preme Kadhaa"	<u>Yazin Nizar</u> , <u>Neeti Mohan</u>	5:08
3.	"Aame Kallu"	<u>Neeti Mohan</u> , <u>Yazin Nizar</u> , <u>Sudesh Bhosle</u>	5:26
4.	"Shamshera" (Title Track)	<u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	5:32
5.	"Chamak Chamak Sithara"	<u>Chaganti Sahithi</u> , <u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	5:08
6.	"Malli Egirev Gaa"	<u>Sukhwinder Singh</u> , <u>Abhishek Nailwal</u>	4:57

Release

Theatrical

Shamshera released in cinemas on 22 July 2022.^[29] Originally planned for cinema release on 20 December 2019, it was highly delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[24] It was then rescheduled to 25 June 2021. Due to the second wave of the pandemic, the release was postponed to 18 March 2022, then was again delayed due to the Omicron variant spreading at the time. It released on 22 July 2022.^[25] The film was released in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu and in IMAX theatres.^[29]

Home media

The digital streaming rights of the film are sold to Amazon Prime Video. The film digitally streamed on Amazon Prime Video from 19 August 2022 in Hindi and dubbed versions of Tamil and Telugu languages.^{[30][31]}

Controversy

The film faced online controversy at the time of its theatrical release, by some right-wing Hindu nationalists, for portraying the primary antagonist - portrayed by Sanjay Dutt - as an orthodox upper-caste Hindu, labelling it as anti-Hindu.^[32] It was further subjected to a lawsuit for plagiarism by Bikramjeet Singh Bhullar who alleged that the film was based on his story *Kabu na chhadein khet*; this delayed the release of the film on OTT platforms. The Delhi High Court allowed its release online in the interim to enable Yash Raj Films to fulfill its prior contractual obligations.^[33]

Reception

Box office

Shamshera earned ₹10.25 crore at the domestic box office on its opening day. On the second day, the film collected ₹10.50 crore. On the third day, the film collected ₹11 crore, taking a total domestic opening weekend of ₹31.75 crore.^[4]

As of 11 August 2022, the film grossed ₹50.57 crore (US\$6.3 million) in India and ₹13.01 crore (US\$1.6 million) overseas, for a worldwide gross collection of ₹63.58 crore (US\$8.0 million).^[4]

Critical response

Shamshera received mixed to negative reviews from critics.^[11] Anna M. M. Vetticad of *Firstpost* rated the film 3.5 out of 5 stars and wrote "Ranbir is gorgeous in every imaginable way in *Shamshera* in terms of his acting, sex appeal, dancing, liveness in the action scenes and magnetic personality".^[34] Tina Das of *The Print* rated the film 3.5 out of 5 stars and wrote "While RRR relies heavily on VFX, Ranbir Kapoor's *Shamshera* affects the heart and feels more realistic with its new caste angle and Vaani Kapoor's acting".^[35] Avinash Lohana of *Pinkvilla* rated the film 3 out of 5 stars and wrote "Karan Malhotra's *Shamshera* starring

Ranbir Kapoor, Vaani Kapoor and Sanjay Dutt is in line with the ongoing trend of workable films, and has the right amount of drama, action, romance, humour and all other masala potboiler elements to entertain the audience".^[36] Mugdha Kapoor of *DNA India* rated the film 3 out of 5 stars and wrote "Ranbir Kapoor shines in the double role, and the film marks the perfect comeback for the actor".^[37] A critic for *Filmfare* rated the film 3 out of 5 stars and wrote "The South film industry has been making such films for the last few years, and *Shamshera* is Bollywood's bold attempt at replicating the formula. The Hindi film industry needs a renaissance and let's hope this film becomes a catalyst towards it".^[38]

Rachana Dubey of *The Times of India* rated the film 2.5 out of 5 stars and wrote "To sum it up, director and co-writer Karan Malhotra surely seemed to have had a grand vision at the onset, but it's his execution that seems to have betrayed him".^[39] Sonil Dedhia of *News 18* rated the film 2.5 out of 5 stars and wrote "*Shamshera* doesn't really have the punch or the thrill that is required to pull off a film of this scale. The film feels a little too long, blame it on weak editing".^[40] Shalini Langer of *The Indian Express* rated the film 2.5 out of 5 stars and wrote "Ranbir Kapoor is efficiently good as Shamshera, a leader of a tribe first treated as outcastes and later betrayed and kept enslaved in a fort".^[41] Tushar Joshi of *India Today* rated the film 2 out of 5 stars and wrote "*Shamshera* is a mess that needs more than just star power to come to its rescue".^[42] Sukanya Verma of *Rediff* rated the film 2 out of 5 stars and wrote "*Shamshera's* problem is a shocking inability to support its bombastic ideas with gripping drama. The result is the wastage of not one but two Ranbir Kapoors".^[43] Taran Adarsh rated the film 1.5 out of 5 stars, called the film an 'epic disappointment' and wrote, "Even Ranbir Kapoor's star-power cannot save this ship from sinking".^[44] Saibal Chatterjee of *NDTV* rated the film 1 out of 5 stars and wrote "Moral of the story for Ranbir Kapoor - the actor should henceforth read his scripts with a more critical eye before buying into them. He owes it to his talent".^[45]

Undertaking a critical comparison between *Shamshera* and the "pan-India" films from South India releasing at the time, Arkadev Ghoshal of South First wrote that *Shamshera* had good characters, and good actors playing them,^[46] but "neither Pir (played by Ronit Roy) nor Doodh Singh (played by Saurabh Shukla) became audience-favourites like *Kattappa* from the *Baahubali* films."

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