

= Pathala Bhairavi =

Pathala Bhairavi (English : The Goddess of the Netherworld) is a 1951 Indian bilingual fantasy film written by Pingali Nagendrarao and directed by Kadiri Venkata Reddy . The film was produced by B. Nagi Reddy and Aluri Chakrapani under the banner Vijaya Vauhini Studios . It was co -@-@ written by Kamalakara Kameswara Rao and features N. T. Rama Rao , S. V. Ranga Rao and K. Malathi in the lead roles . Pathala Bhairavi is based on Kasi Majilee Kathalu , written by Madhira Subbanna Deekshitulu , though it was also partially inspired by the story of Aladdin .

The film centres on the lives of two strangers ? the son of a gardener named Thota Ramudu who has to amass wealth equal to that of the king of Ujjain to marry his daughter Indumathi , and a sorcerer who has to sacrifice an intelligent and brave young man to Goddess Pathala Bhairavi to gain access to a statuette which can grant any wish . The sorcerer tries to sacrifice Ramudu but gets killed by the latter who wins the statuette and fulfils his goals . When the sorcerer comes back to life and kidnaps Indumathi along with the statuette and all of his wealth , Ramudu fights back for them and kills the sorcerer before marrying Indumathi .

Although principal photography only took eight to nine months , the production phase continued for a whole year starting from 5 February 1950 until 8 February 1951 , due to the film being shot simultaneously in Telugu and Tamil . Ghantasala composed the film 's music and Marcus Bartley served as the cinematographer . The film was edited by the duo C. P. Jambulingam and M. S. Money , while Madhavapeddi Gokhale and Kaladhar were the film 's art directors . The Telugu version was released on 15 March 1951 , and the Tamil version on 17 May 1951 . Both the versions were released with a final reel length of 5 @,@ 227 metres (17 @,@ 149 ft) .

Upon release , Pathala Bhairavi received critical acclaim and was commercially successful , becoming the first Telugu film to have a direct run of 200 days . It is considered to be a breakthrough film for both Rama Rao and Ranga Rao , and was also the only South Indian film to be screened at the first International Film Festival of India held at Mumbai on 24 January 1952 . On the centenary of Indian cinema in April 2013 , CNN @-@ News18 included Pathala Bhairavi in its list of " 100 greatest Indian films of all time " .

= = Plot = =

The queen of Ujjain is keen for her daughter Indumathi (alias Indu) to marry her brother Surasena , a timid and mentally unstable person . When the gardener 's son ' Thota ' Ramudu beats Surasena at a concert for irritating the common people , he is summoned by the king to the court . His boldness leaves a considerable impression , but when Ramudu declares his love for Indu a day before his death sentence for meeting Indu secretly , the king is reminded of the astrologers ' prediction that only a brave man can save her from a wicked sorcerer . He then challenges Ramudu to amass wealth equal to that of his to marry Indu , to which Ramudu agrees . He is released from prison .

Ramudu meets a Nepali sorcerer during the latter 's magic show in a street . The sorcerer , who is ordered by Goddess Pathala Bhairavi during his prayers to sacrifice an intelligent and brave young man before her to be granted a statuette which grants any wish , feels that Ramudu is suitable for the sacrifice . While taking a holy bath in the nearby pond , Ramudu kills a crocodile that immediately transforms into a woman after being killed . The woman informs Ramudu that he had freed her from a hermit 's curse and also reveals the sorcerer 's intentions . Just before the sacrifice , Ramudu sacrifices the sorcerer and wins the statuette , consequently amassing the wealth equal to that of the king . In return , the king lives up to his promise and accepts Indu 's wishes to marry Ramudu .

The sorcerer 's apprentice Sadajapa discovers his master dead at the Pathala Bhairavi 's shrine and brings him back to life with the help of Sanjeevani . Upon resurrection , the sorcerer makes a deal with Surasena , who was about to commit suicide , to bring the statuette in exchange of everything Ramudu has , including Indu . Surasena agrees and steals the statuette , then handing it over to the sorcerer which changes the fate of Ramudu and Indu , leaving the former penniless .

Ramudu pledges to bring Indu his wealth back and leaves for the sorcerer 's lair along with his cousin , Anji .

While they are unable to locate the sorcerer 's lair , Indu refuses the sorcerer 's proposal to marry him . With the help of the statuette , the sorcerer brings Ramudu to his lair and tortures him in front of Indu with a hope that she would succumb to his proposal to marry him . Posing as an assistant , Ramudu shaves the sorcerer 's beard , making him lose his powers . Afterwards , Ramudu finds the statuette and wishes to bring the palace back to Ujjain . In a fight between Ramudu and the sorcerer mid @-@ way in the sky , the latter dies when Ramudu throws him out . The palace is back in Ujjain and Surasena apologises to both Ramudu and Indu before uniting them . While Anji marries Indu 's best friend , the film ends with the marriage of Ramudu and Indu with the elders ' blessing .

= = Cast = =

Male actors

N. T. Rama Rao as Thota Ramudu

S. V. Ranga Rao as Nepala Mantrikudu i.e. the Nepali sorcerer

Chilakalapudi Seetha Rama Anjaneyulu as the King of Ujjain

Relangi Venkata Ramaiah as Surasena

Valluri Balakrishna as Anji

B. Padmanabham as Sadajapa

Female actors

K. Malathi as Indumati

T. G. Kamala Devi as a Veera Katha performer

Hemalatamma Rao as Indumati 's mother

Girija as Pathala Bhairavi

Surabhi Kamalabai as Kanthamma

Krishna Kumari as an Angel

Savitri as a dancer in the song " Ranante Rane Ranu "

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

After making their debut with Shavukar (1950) , B. Nagi Reddy and Aluri Chakrapani of Vijaya Vauhini Studios signed Kadiri Venkata Reddy later in the year to make a folklore film . The film was based on a story from Kasi Majilee Kathalu , written by Madhira Subbanna Deekshitulu . Pingali Nagendrarao adapted the content and wrote the film 's story . Kamalakara Kameswara Rao and Venkata Reddy worked on the film 's screenplay . Nagendrarao was also inspired from the story of Aladdin . Vijaya Vauhini Studios team worked for three to four months on the film 's script and Ujjain in the state of Madhya Pradesh was chosen as the story 's backdrop . Pathala Bhairavi was made as a bilingual film , shot in Telugu and Tamil simultaneously with both the versions having the same title . The Tamil version 's dialogues were written by Thanjai N. Ramaiah Dass .

Tatineni Prakash Rao , who went on to make his directorial debut with Palletooru (1952) , worked as an assistant director for the film . Kasinadhuni Viswanath also joined the film 's crew as an assistant director , along with K. Raghava as the film 's action choreographer . Marcus Bartley was recruited as the film 's cinematographer and the duo C. P. Jambulingam and M. S. Money edited the film . Madhavapeddi Gokhale and Kaladhar were the film 's art directors . Ghantasala composed the film 's music . Chalapathi Rao and Jagannadham were the production executives .

= = = Casting = = =

Initially , Venkata Reddy had Akkineni Nageswara Rao in mind for the lead role . He later wanted to

cast Raja Reddy in the lead role but replaced him with N. T. Rama Rao in the last minute , who made his debut by playing a minor character in Mana Desam (1949) . Rama Rao was eventually signed as a part of his four @-@ film contract with Vijaya Vauhini Studios after Venkata Reddy was impressed with Rama Rao when he met him on the sets of Samsaram (1950) . With this film , Rama Rao became the first actor to have acted in two languages simultaneously .

Mukkamala was initially considered for the role of the sorcerer , the film 's antagonist . But with Rama Rao being signed as the protagonist , Venkata Reddy wanted to cast an actor without an image , thus S. V. Ranga Rao was signed . Ranga Rao wore costumes reminiscent of a Shakespeare 's anti @-@ hero and used the catchphrase " Sahasamsayara Dimbhaka " (Be adventurous man) . He used the same persona that he used for playing Shylock when he was a stage @-@ artist . Muthudhuta Peethambaram , who joined Vijaya Vauhini Studios in 1945 , helped Ranga Rao take on the appearance of a 105 @-@ year @-@ old man with the use of make @-@ up . Haribabu assisted Peethambaram in the make @-@ up process .

Malathi , who had earlier acted in Venkata Reddy 's Bhakta Potana (1942) , was signed to play the female lead role ? Indumathi , the princess of Ujjain . Girija played the titular role of goddess Pathala Bhairavi . Relangi Venkata Ramaiah and Balakrishna were signed to play supporting roles ; the former playing the role of the brother @-@ in @-@ law of Indumathi 's father played by Chilakalapudi Seeta Rama Anjaneyulu and the latter playing Rama Rao 's sidekick . Padmanabham was signed to play a supporting role as well . Savitri did a short dance sequence in the film .

= = = Filming = = =

Pathala Bhairavi was the first big budget film produced by Vijaya Vauhini Studios . Although principal photography only took eight to nine months , the production phase continued for a whole year starting from 5 February 1950 until 8 February 1951 , due to the film being shot simultaneously in Telugu and Tamil . Pasumarthi Krishnamurthy conducted the choreography for the song sequences . Major portions of the film were shot in large sets and many trick shots were used by Bartley during the process . Both versions were filmed using an Arri 11 CBR Camera .

For scenes in the film that featured the moon in the background , a circle was drawn on a screen which was lit to make it look like the moon . Though having other lights were not possible , Bartley made sure that all the characters in such scenes had their shadows away from the moon . Despite this , many of the transformations of elements in this film were shown using dissolve techniques . No lights were hidden behind the painted moon , as a source for lighting .

= = Themes = =

According to K. N. T. Sastry in his book Alanati Chalana Chitram , the film begins with the theme of Dhairye Sahase Lakshmi (Bravery gives wealth) which is present throughout the film . While the characters of Rama Rao and Ranga Rao epitomise heroism , the character of the princess played by Malathi epitomises innocence and sensuality . Pathala Bhairavi sets up an opposition between the worship of Rama by the protagonist 's mother and the worship of Pathala Bhairavi by the sorcerer ; the former being a frequent one inhabited in a domestic space while the latter being an uncivilised one .

According to Azim Premji University liberal studies faculty member S. V. Srinivas , Pathala Bhairavi was a blend of folklore and social drama . Srinivas stated that the depiction of the goddess Pathala Bhairavi before Ramudu sacrifices the sorcerer was reminiscent of the representation of Poleramma worship by dalits in the film Mala Pilla (1938) . He added that Pathala Bhairavi " ratifies certain social relationships by presenting them as natural and given " and " at the same time , some other practices are presented as inhuman and uncivilised " .

= = Music = =

The official soundtrack of Pathala Bhairavi was composed by Ghantasala , the lyrics of which were

written by Pingali Nagendrarao and Thanjai N. Ramaiah Dass for the Telugu and Tamil versions respectively . The sound mixing process was supervised by A. Krishnan and Siva Ram . It was processed by N. C. Sen Gupta and was orchestrated by A. Krishnamurthy . The songs were composed using Mohana , Bhimpalasi and Sindhu Bhairavi ragas , with " Prema Kosamai Valalo Padene " and " Kanugona Galano " notably being modulated on the same raga . The soundtrack was released on 1 December 1950 . Also , a digitally remastered version was released and marketed by HMV in 2003 ; the album cover depicts a still image from the film featuring Rama Rao and Malathi .

Relangi Venkata Ramaiah sang the comedy song " Vinave Bala Naa Prema Gola " which was filmed on himself . A costly Hammond organ was specially imported for this film which was played by Master Venu . For the Hindi dubbed version , T. G. Kamala Devi sang the song " Sunloji Sardaro " (" Ithihasam Vinnaara " in Telugu) and Jikki sang the song " Bindiya Chamke " (" Vagalo Vagalu " in Telugu) . The latter became the first Telugu film singer to record a song for a Hindi film with this Hindi dubbed version of Pathala Bhairavi . The soundtracks of both the versions were critically acclaimed and achieved cult status .

= = Release = =

The Telugu version of Pathala Bhairavi was released on 15 March 1951 , whereas the Tamil version was released two months later on 17 May 1951 . Both versions were released with a final reel length of 5 @, @ 227 metres (17 @, @ 149 ft) and were given a " U " (Universal) certificate by the Central Board of Film Certification with a run time of 195 minutes . Both versions were commercially successful , with the Telugu version completing a theatrical run of 100 days . Pathala Bhairavi became the first Telugu film to run continuously for 175 days , and the first Telugu film to have a direct run of 200 days . It completed the 175th day of its theatrical run in a total of 13 theatres .

S. S. Vasan acquired the film 's Hindi dubbing rights and reshot two song sequences ? " Ithihasam Vinnara " and " Vagalo Vagalu " in colour . The Hindi dubbed version was commercially successful . Pathala Bhairavi was the only South Indian film to be screened at the first International Film Festival of India held at Mumbai on 24 January 1952 . Sahitya Surabhi organised a programme at the Visakha Public Library in Vishakhapatnam on 7 March 2015 on the eve of the 64th anniversary of this film 's release and writer Rambhatla Nrusimha Sastry attended the programme as the chief guest .

= = = Critical reception = = =

Pathala Bhairavi received positive reviews from critics . Pesum Padam praised the music and technical features of the film and mentioned that the film " has many good features to its credit " . CNN @-@ News18 stated that the film was full of " mysteries and twists " , and " this Telugu film has a screenplay which is not only fast but is also able to engage the audiences " , adding that the way Rama Rao managed to bring out the innocence of the character is a " lesson in acting " . M. L. Narasimham of The Hindu stated that this film 's story was made into a " grand spectacle by the genius that Kadiri Venkata Reddy was , with excellent technical support " adding that he " mesmerised the audience with a smooth narrative " . He also praised the film 's cinematography , sound designing and art direction .

In his book Alanati Chalana Chitram , K. N. T. Sastry stated that Venkata Reddy deserves full credit for this film 's excellence and praised the performances of Rama Rao , Malathi and Ranga Rao in particular . In his book The Best of Tamil Cinema , 1931 to 2010 , G. Dhananjayan stated that the film attracted both children and old people for its grandeur and theme and praised the actors ' performances , Ghantasala 's music , Bartley 's cinematography and the art direction . In July 2010 , Hemanth Kumar of South Scope called Pathala Bhairavi a film that " took an entire generation by storm " and praised its special effects in particular , which Kumar felt were ahead of their time . In his book One Hundred Indian Feature Films : An Annotated Filmography , Srivastava Banerjee gave

a polarised review of the film by calling it " an extraordinarily meaningless modern myth " .

= = Cancelled plans of digitisation and colourisation = =

In late November 2007 , a Hyderabad @-@ based company named Goldstone Technologies acquired the film negative rights of 14 Telugu films produced by Vijaya Vauhini Studios , including Mayabazar (1957) and Pathala Bhairavi , to release their digitally re @-@ mastered versions in colour . After the success of the digitised and colourised version of Mayabazar released in January 2010 , its makers announced that Pathala Bhairavi would be the next film to be remastered and re @-@ released in colour . However Goldstone Technologies decided not to remaster the remaining 14 films including Pathala Bhairavi , saying that most of the producers who sold the rights of the negatives to TV channels lost control over them , adding that there were also a lot of legal issues over ownership and copyright issues whenever other producers try to do something on their own .

= = Legacy and impact = =

Pathala Bhairavi achieved cult classic status and is remembered for the actors ' performances along with the film 's technical aspects , in particular its cinematography by Bartley and dialogue by Nagendrarao and Ramaiah Dass . The lines " Nijam Cheppamantara Abaddham Cheppamantara " (" Shall I say the truth ? or shall I lie ? ") , " Sahasamsayara Dhimbaka " (" Be adventurous man ! ") , " Naruda Yemi Nee Korika " (" O Human , what you want ? ") became popular and phrases such as " dingari " (" servant ") and " dimbhaka " (" fool ") later became a part of Telugu vernacular . The film 's story is regularly staged as a play by Surabhi theatre group , known as Sri Venkateswara Natya Mandali .

During a programme Telugu Cinema Prasthanam organised by the film society of Vishakhapatnam , writer include actor Ravi Kondala Rao placed Pathala Bhairavi among other cult films like Raja Harishchandra (1913) , Bhakta Prahlada (1932) , Mala Pilla , Devadasu (1953) and Lava Kusa (1963) during a speech on the role of Telugu cinema in the hundred years of Indian cinema . On the centenary of Indian cinema in April 2013 , CNN @-@ News18 included Pathala Bhairavi in its list , " The 100 greatest Indian films of all time " .

The film is considered to be a breakthrough film for both Rama Rao and Ranga Rao . Rama Rao later starred in other folklore films like Chandirani (1953) , Rechukka (1954) and Jayasimha (1955) ; all of which were commercially successful . When the film 's unit was travelling by train to attend the 100th day celebrations of Pathala Bhairavi at Bellary , the then Union Home Minister C. Rajagopalachari was travelling in Madras Mail . When both the trains happened to halt at Guntakal , people who had come to greet Rajagopalachari rushed to the other platform to have a glimpse of the film 's unit , which left Rajagopalachari amazed by the popularity that the film had attained .

Pathala Bhairavi 's success prompted Vijaya Vauhini Studios to produce the Hindu mythological epic bilingual film Mayabazar , also directed by Venkata Reddy . The entire technical crew of Pathala Bhairavi was selected for Mayabazar . It went on to achieve cult status in Telugu cinema for its use of technology . It also inspired other filmmakers to make films based on fairy tales like Kanavaney Kankanda Deivam (1955) and Guna Sundari (1955) in Tamil which were commercially successful .

Pathala Bhairavi inspired Vijaya Productions along with its collaborator Chandamama to produce Bhairava Dweepam (1994) directed by Singeetham Srinivasa Rao starring Rama Rao 's son Nandamuri Balakrishna in the lead along with Roja . In the pre @-@ climax sequences of the Telugu film Okkadu (2003) , when Obul Reddy (played by Prakash Raj) is about to murder Ajay (played by Mahesh Babu) , the latter compares the former with Ranga Rao 's character in Pathala Bhairavi who was murdered by Rama Rao 's character . The film 's story was used as a play in the Telugu film Krishnam Vande Jagadgurum (2012) , which was based on the Surabhi theatre group .