

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF OPERATION KARAOKE

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ABSTRACT

Recently, some series of sting In this recent operation karaoke some very well known celebrities of Indian film industry and television industry were terribly exposed as they were found willing to accept large sums of cash in exchange for posting favourable messages on behalf of various political parties and make it seem like this is their personal opinion. This operation involves some very famous personalities and the total number of celebrities exposed in this operation were 36 in number, this includes popular personalities from both television and film industry. Basically, the cobrapost posed as a PR agency and approached the celebrities through their respective agents. After that, they conducted a meeting with the respective celebrity and then the conversation between them begins regarding the process of executing the political agenda from their personal social media handle. If we have to say in simple words then it was selling of a public figure's personal social media handle to someone to post any content driven by some political agenda.

COBRAPOST OPERATION

In the interviews, the PR Agency clearly mentioned that this needs to be purely confidential between them and the celebrity to which they agreed which full conviction. Now, PR Agency explained the celebs that what do they need to do for the money. They said that the PR Agents will provide them the content which would be related with he favourable works of that particular party in some particular field and then such content would be posted through personal social media handle in their own style as it was already clearly mentioned by the company that the post should be portrayed in such a way that it must not look like any political agenda but celebrities own point of view and observation, so that it could be more effective and eye catching for the people who follows these public figures in their social media. They clearly shared their believe that in political campaign public don't get influenced that much because of the simple fact that they perceives such things very obvious and normal but if any celebrity or public figure appreciates anything in such a manner that it seems like their own point of view then people gets influenced.¹

The PR Agents clearly mentioned at the starting of the interviews that this basically an indirect way of political promotion where the celebrity needs to kept it confidential and this should not look like any political campaigning but rather as a personal view of the celebrity. Now comes the quantum of posts per month to which they agreed upon 4-5 posts per month with keeping in mind that they need to keep it as a normal point of view of the celebrity and not any political agenda. Some were even ready to do 15 posts per month based on the amount they get for such activity.²

PLATFORMS WHERE THE CONTENT WAS PLANNED TO POST

The expose was planned to ask the celebrities to sell their personal social media handles like TWITTER, FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM to promote the political agenda of a particular political party . Basically, at the beginning of the meeting cobrapost asked to celebrities about the number of followers of the celebrities on various social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Then they manage and decide the quantum of posts the celebrity needs to do from his/her personal social media handle. Now comes the amount of money which a celebrity would charge to sold his public trust for an indirect political campaign. The rate is very much depends upon the number of followers that person has and reach of the

audience of the particular celebrity. Some celebrities asked for 50 lakhs and some for 1 crore for selling their public trust for a indirect political agenda.³

CELEBRITIES INVOLVED IN EXPOSE

There were 36 celebrities who were found exposed by the cobrapost but there were 4 other celebrities as well who refused to sell their public trust for this agenda. The 4 celebrities who refused to sell their fans trust and these celebrities are ARSHAD WARSI, VIDYA BALAN, SOUMYA TANDAN and RAZA MURAD.

On the other hand, the celebrities who were found guilty are VIVEK OBEROI, SUNNY LEONE, SHREYASH TALPADE, RAJPAL YADAV, SONU SOOD, PUNEET ISSAR, HITEN TEJWANI, SAMBHAVANA SETH, MAHIMA CHAUDHARY, AMEESHA PATEL, KAILASH KHER, RAJU SRIVASTAVA, SUNIL PAL, VIP, KRUSHNA ABHISHEK,

1. WWW.COBRAPOST.COM
2. Abid
3. WWW.NEWSLAUNDRY.COM

JACKIE SHROFF, ABHIJEET BHATTACHARYA, SHAKTI KAPOOR, MIKA SINGH, GANESH ACHARYA, RAKHI SAWANT, PANKAJ DHEER, AKHILENDRA MISHRA, SURENDRA PAL, TISCA CHOPRA, DEEPSHIKHA NAGPAL, ROHIT ROY, EVELYN SHARMA, MINISHA LAMBA, KOENA MITRA, SALIM ZAIDI, UPASANA SINGH, BABA SEHGAL, AMAN VERMA, RAHUL BHAT, POONAM PANDEY were exposed by the cobrapost in their operation karaoke. Some of them even recommended better strategy to the agents who came to buy their morality they are Vivek Oberoi and krushna Abhishek.

But apart from all this, what was more shocking is their discussion in relation with the mode of payment to which almost all these celebrities were strongly agreed to receive majority of their payment in black means by cash and a nominal percentage of payment in white. Now, this makes this case even worst that these so called celebrities firstly selling their morality by playing with public trust and later executing this shameful act in the form of black money is scary and shocking for the society and country.

MAIN STREAM MEDIA SILENT ON THE MATTER

This act more or less brings and unfolds the true and harsh reality of these so called celebrities who portrays themselves nothing less than an ideal and responsible public figure of the country. They claim themselves honest responsible towards their followers and fans but this Cobrapost operation exposed them badly. The saddest and interesting part is that the media is not even covering this big expose and is busy in finding out how many times did Taimur cried last day after having any specific meal. So, this is a very shameful condition of our media in recent times. One more reason behind such ignorance is that the Cobrapost already exposed most of the sold media houses who generally focuses on irrelevant and stupid topics to distract the public from main and important issues which the country and government needs to addressed. So most of such media houses are finding

themselves under scanner which is preventing them from covering such news and forcing them to find a nano chip in the new 2000 note. Celebs consented to advance the gathering being referred to make an ideal situation before 2019 general decisions. Some of them even tweeted without having been paid any cash to demonstrate their enthusiasm to our columnists. ⁴

MODE OF PAYMENT IN BLACK

A large portion of them were happy to acknowledge the heft of their expense in real money, which at the end of the day implies dark cash. Celebs would change the substance on different issues to be given to them before posting the equivalent on their internet based life profiles to make it look as their own.

4. www.Newslaundry.com

5. www.ndtv.com

They would shield the legislature even on disputable issues, for example, assaults and lethal mishaps, for example, a scaffold breakdown all over. ⁵

They were eager to sign a spurious contract for underwriting of items to camouflage the genuine idea of the intermediary political crusading. They consented to send us their PAN and banking subtleties, and numerous really did as such. They vowed to keep the whole exercise a mystery, and the plan covered up. A few performing artists even recommended that they would intermediary advance the ideological group in their press briefings amid the advancement of a film or an occasion. Some even proposed to post recordings via web-based networking media and influence them to become famous online with the assistance of their adherents.

The gathering being referred to was, in a large portion of the cases, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Congress Party at times. The names of ideological groups were utilized, in accordance with some basic honesty and open enthusiasm, for story reason just, and this isn't an intimation of their real contribution in the training. The examination was made to uncover the celebs willing to underwrite a political motivation as a byproduct of financial additions. These big names did not flicker an eye before saying "Yes" to the recommendation, requesting a charge which extended from Rs. 2 lakh to Rs. 50 lakh for each message. Some even cited a charge of Rs. 20 crore for an eight-month contract, and practically none of them said no to dark cash when Cobrapost revealed to them a greater part of their expense would be paid in real money.

To review, in 2012 Cobrapost had examined the wild utilization of dark cash in the Indian film industry. The Dirty Picture had celebrated Bollywood biggies like makers Vashu Bhagnani and Anees Bazmi and chief Anubhav Sinha appeared at acknowledge tremendous speculations of dark cash in their forthcoming film ventures. Activity Karaoke again reminds us nothing has changed in media outlets with all these celebs willing to acknowledge a major segment of their charge in real money, even some thinking about whether they could be paid all in real money. ⁶

SHOCKING STATEMENTS MADE IN THE EXPOSE

Minissha Lamba, for instance, needed her expense to be paid completely in real money. She was disillusioned when she came to know no less than 20 percent of her charge would be paid in white. "Lekin aapne mujhe bola tha ki saara money hoga (But you had disclosed to me installment will be made

6. WWW.PUNJABTODAY.COM

altogether in real money)," she pondered. Like her, Aman Verma likewise needed just money. "I would love all in real money," he said.

Bollywood trouble maker Shakti Kapoor, who got down to business applauding demonetization, a declared point of which was to diminish dark cash, had the get up and go to shout, "Number one mein daalo tangle (Don't pay in number one)." Pankaj Dheer, another BJP helper, had this to state on money, "I am entirely agreeable on the grounds that under tight restraints I am loaded till here." Cobrapost met these celebs, in larger part of occurrences, through certain specialists. These specialists addressed the celebs subsequent to getting a brief from Cobrapost group. It was these operators who encouraged Cobrapost's gathering with celebs after properly advising them of the motivation.⁷

One such specialist was Sameer Matai, for example, who got the Cobrapost group in contact with Evelyn Sharma and Minissha Lamba. Sameer was so shrewd in this exchange he trained that cash matters, that is, expense to be paid to a celeb and method of installment, ought to be talked about just with him, none else. After the group had shot several celebs, he started questioning on the off chance that they were leading a sting activity and started demanding to visit their Delhi office which never existed. Despite the fact that Cobrapost group endeavored to assuage him, there was no point seeking after the examination further with him for clear reasons. In any case, before this offensive improvement occurred, Sameer had messaged them giving subtleties of the big names who might chip away at the task and the expenses they would charge. He even gave names of some more famous people who he could prospect for them.

Now and again, a specific celeb would help Cobrapost group contact others. Surendra Pal, for example, got them in contact with Puneet Issar and Upasana Singh. Strikingly, a portion of these VIPs expedited their relatives board. Hiten Tejwani, for example, restricted in his life partner Gauri Pradhan. So also, performing artist Pankaj Dheer recommended to bring the two his child Nikitin and his little girl in-law Kratika. While Mika Singh proposed to expedite board a portion of his companions, Rohit Roy informed to advise that his sibling, Ronit Roy, is ready. While at times, supervisors took the onus of managing cash matters in the interest of their supervisors, in the majority of the cases, the big names were available when dealings for cash went on. A lion's share of

these celebs consulted for an expense a lot higher than at first proposed or they could direction in the market. Albeit practically out of employment in Bollywood, Mahima Chaudhary, for example, requested Rs. 1 crore for a solitary message. "BJP toh kuchh bhi de sakti hai. They can give one crore a month (The BJP can give you anything. They can give 1 crore a month)," she said.⁸

7. www.ibtimes.co.in

8. Ibid

Sonu Sood, then again, cited a cost of Rs. 20 crore to embrace the task. Cobrapost detailed that "Not happy with the expense we would put on his table, Sood requested Rs. 2.50 crore a month, saying, "Principle aapko bataoon straightforwardly since agar fundamental aapse aise baat kar raha hoon dekho mera aisa maanana hai ki murmur na primary genuinely karoonga paanch bhi ho sakte hain saat bhi ho sakte hain my messages will be solid and pleasant fundamental usmein koshish karenge ki paanch nahi bole aaj chaar hee karenin hain ek kisi aur ne kiya maine rehash karke uska jawaab de diya, for instance, theek hai. Toh wo sab karenge primary ek aadh ka yet I feel ki jo apan 1.5 crore soch rahe hain it ought to be at any rate 2.5 (Let me let you know legitimately ... Since on the off chance that I am conversing with you ... you see I figure I will work genuinely. There can be five or seven [posts/tweets]. My messages will be, solid and pleasant. On the off chance that I state I will do just four not five on a given day ... I will continue something composed by another person, for instance, and I will add my response to it. Is that alright? I will do all that ... yet I feel that the cost 1.5 crore you have cited, it ought to be in any event 2.5)." ⁹

Huge numbers of these celebs proposed they would ad lib on the substance they would be accommodated this intermediary advancement, while some recommended their own piece to do it in an all the more persuading and successful way.

Abhijeet Bhattacharya, for example, proposed he would utilize his cell phone to make recordings for the advancement of the BJP in circumstances which look normal. He stated, "Hoon, characteristic lage na kahin khade traffic mein gaadi ke andar baith ke bol diya chaay pee rahe hain café pe bol diya toh wo ... haan common (It should look normal. Assume, I am at a traffic flag and I state something while at the same time sitting in my vehicle or tasting tea at a café ... yes [that would look] normal)." Here as well, the artist did not lose an opportunity to regurgitate venom against Muslims. Alluding to a questionable articulation made by one of the BJP administrators from Hyderabad, Bhattacharya watched, "Ye isne bahut accha kiya tha Raja Singh bhi insignificant paas aate hain Hyderabad se BJP ke MLA Raja Singh bilkul wahan ke Yogi hain. Usne bola tha na Rohingya ko itna kyon de rahe ho seedha goli maar do. Baahar jaate hain toh theek hai warna goli maar do. Toh wo frame of mind hona chahiye ... nahi principle boloonga Rohingya ko goli maar do jo support karte hain unko goli maar do pehle unko maaro baad mein unko maaro (This individual made the best decision. Raja Singh, the BJP MLA from Hyderabad, visits me. He is Yogi [Adityanath] of Hyderabad. He had said why give Rohingyas any safe house, why not shoot them. This ought to be the disposition ... No, I will say shoot the Rohingyas and shoot the individuals who bolster them. First slaughter their supporters and after that them)." If you may review, Bhattacharya in September 2016 made a shudder when he lashed out at Karan Johar and Mahesh Bhat for "reproducing" and "bolstering" Pakistani artistes. Bhattacharya was captured by the

9. www.mumbailive.com

Mumbai Police for mishandling a lady writer on Twitter. In April a year ago, the vocalist again kicked a tempest when he called an embellished senior armed force officer Pak supporter after the officer condemned Major Gogoi utilizing a supposed stone pelted as human shield binds him to the hood of his jeep. After two months his record was suspended after he mishandled understudy pioneer Shehla Rashid and other ladies Twitter clients.

Kailash Kher, who has given his voice to the title tune of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, shock - shock he cosied up to Cobrapost group and acknowledged their recommendation, notwithstanding demonstrating his ability to acknowledge dark cash. Guaranteeing them, he says, "Wo saara wo hee batayenge ... wo saara ho jayega aap unse baat kijiye (They [his agency] will enlighten you regarding it ... that will be finished. You converse with them)." Choreographer Ganesh Acharya offered, "Dekho kya hai na mera jo hai na ... baat karni hai na move ke liye tweet maroonga na toh lakhon tak pahunchati hai, karodon tak pahunchati hai ... toh aap mujhe content bhejenge usko thoda sa move structure mein aisa ordinary baat karoonga toh do adolescent lakh tak pahunchata hai (You see what happens ... in the event that I need to discuss move and tweet about it, it achieves a huge number of individuals ... so on the off chance that I state something in a move structure on the substance you will send me, it will achieve two-three lakh individuals)." ¹⁰

Bollywood veteran Jackie Shroff said he is anything but a common man and advised to play the diversion keeping in view his age, yet despite everything he came the tide. At the point when Cobrapost inquire about this incident.

CONCLUSION

So, overall this is a very serious incident to which we should come together and criticize such activities as they are doing nothing but putting the trust of millions of their fans in stake. Selling their own identity and personal social media handles for indirect political campaigning is not acceptable as they should have better done it as a political campaigning by admitting it in front of the public that they are doing this for money and rather than pretending this as their own way of appreciating any particular political party. We need to show them what mistake they have done because none of them are ready to accept it as a mistake and portraying this as a normal activity which is a shameful thing in itself because if someone is not ready to admit his/her mistake then how can it be corrected.

10. www.abplive.in