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‘...*Aur Neha Nahin Bik Payee*’ Life Of A Eunuch

Eunuchs are a secretive community. This secretiveness is the commandment of their society. They never talk about their lives or their community to outsiders.

For the first time in their history, eight of them came together under the leadership of a very senior *guru* of Mumbai Saira Bano Sheikh and decided to document their lives, the hardship, exploitation and above all, the harsh reality of bonded labour that is an inescapable part of their daily routines. Saira Bano has seen many ups and downs in her eventful life of 75 years. She realised the importance of documenting the facts of the lives of eunuchs for posterity, so that society at large finally understands and comes to terms with their existence.

‘...*Aur Neha Nahin Bik Payee* – Life Of A Eunuch’ reveals true events in the life of a eunuch, Neha, who was born as Satish. He was evicted from his home at the age of 14 years, by his father. The main cast is comprised of the real eunuchs involved in the narrative, who imbue the film with an element of honesty and spontaneity.

Care was taken to ensure that most of the locales used in the film are the actual places where the events unfolded. It is not meant to be a slick production, characterised by glitz and glamour, with underlying values that are synchronous with the fallacies and fantasies that are harboured in the normal social psyche. It is rather, a thought provoking effort that may inspire society at large to critically examine the implementation of its cherished values of liberty, equality and freedom for all, which is taken for granted as a birth right by almost everyone other than this section of humanity.

The film has already stirred up a hornet's nest, even among the eunuch community itself. Vested interests, comprising primarily of the top *gurus* and *nayaks* of the community, as also Aruna *nayak* and Hasan *nayak*, who are among the top leaders of the eunuch community in India, have opposed the movie tooth and nail. It is obviously in the best interests of those at the pinnacle of the eunuch hierarchy to sweep the issue under the carpet, since it is the toil of those on the lower rungs that serves to fuel their avarice and lavish lifestyles. They do not wish any interference from outsiders, in an effort to maintain the status quo.

'...*Aur Neha Nahin Bik Payee*' depicts eunuchs as they really are - human, just like the rest of us.