

'Avengers: Endgame' set for biggest Hollywood release in India

- 'Avengers: Endgame', to be released across 2,500 screens, is looking at an estimated ₹250 crore in box office collections in India
- A morning show ticket for 'Avengers: Endgame' is available for ₹350 while ticket prices of shows later in the day have surged to ₹750

New Delhi: Close on the heels of its first instalment, Marvel's latest superhero movie *Avengers: Endgame* that releases Friday is looking at a bumper opening in India with an estimated box office collection of ₹250 crore, according to film trade experts. Last year, *Avengers: Endgame's* predecessor, [Avengers: Infinity War](#) became the highest grossing Hollywood film in India at close to ₹228 crore. The bar has been set higher for the new Anthony and Joe Russo-directed movie. Online ticket booking website BookMyShow sold a record one million tickets within a day of advance booking that started Saturday. *Avengers: Endgame* releases in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu, besides English.

According to trade website Box Office India, *Avengers: Endgame* sold 500,000 tickets in a matter of hours, beating last year's biggest Hindi opener *Thugs of Hindostan* that had sold 200,000 tickets. Ticket prices for the highly anticipated film have been hiked too: A morning show ticket for 'Avengers: Endgame' is available for ₹350 as compared to ₹155 for other movies. Ticket prices of shows later in the day have also gone up to ₹750 from from ₹350. "I don't recall any other film, including in Hindi, witnessing such anticipation," said Atul Mohan, editor of trade magazine *Complete Cinema*. He predicted a ₹40 crore opening day and ₹120-125 crore opening weekend for the film. *Avengers: Infinity War* currently holds the record for the highest opening day (₹31.30 crore) and opening weekend (₹94.30 crore) for a Hollywood film in India. Meanwhile, Walt Disney Inc., the distributor of the movie, is also going all out to localize the Avengers franchise for Indian audiences. Music composer A.R. Rahman has come up with an *Endgame* anthem in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. Popular Tamil writer and director A.R. Murugadoss (known for blockbusters like *Ghajini*, *Thuppakki* and *Sarkar*), was engaged to write the Tamil dialogues while superstars Vijay Sethupathi and Andrea Jeremiah will voice the characters of Iron Man and Black Widow, respectively. In the Telugu version, actor Rana Daggubati will dub for Thanos.

Endgame co-director Joe Russo was in India earlier this month to launch the Rahman anthem and for a contest celebrating Marvel fan art. In a live video conference held simultaneously in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai, Robert Downey Jr., who plays Iron Man, interacted with his fans in India.

Disney has also inked a number of brand associations. Chinese handset maker OPPO will launch a new F11 Pro Marvel's Avengers limited edition smartphone. Fashion retail brand Max has launched a special collection of products across apparel, footwear, toys, bags and accessories for men, women and boys in association with the film. Toymaker Hasbro Inc. has launched a line of *Avengers: Endgame* products such as action figures, roleplay toys and other collectibles.

According to film industry experts, Disney could make anything between ₹20 lakh and ₹2 crore for a brand deal for a film like *Endgame*. "India is a critically important market for us, and the impact of localization in expanding fan bases is significant," said Bikram Duggal, head of studio entertainment at Disney India. Duggal said Marvel has emerged as one of the most popular entertainment and pop culture brands in India in the past 11 years and is synonymous with emotional storytelling, relatable characters and universal themes. "All our marketing, distribution and brand strategies are geared towards deepening the emotional connect that fans already have or getting new fans on board. And while some people can fulfil those expectations from the English version, for another set, nuances can be best brought about in their local language," Duggal said. He declined to comment on how much Disney has spent on marketing *Avengers: Endgame* but said the expenditure is one of the highest across the industry.

Disney is estimated to be spending ₹15-16 crore on marketing and distributing *Avengers: Endgame* in India, with a focus on digital media, television and outdoor entertainment, according to Jones Mathew, professor of marketing at Great Lakes Institute of Management, Gurugram. "Head-to-head, Hollywood superhero movies have been far better at raking in money against Bollywood movies, be it Indian mainstream, Indian art house, Indian small-budget or Indian superhero movies. The Indian marketing of *Endgame* is definitely in line with the global Hollywood strategy of popularising their movies uniquely in large growing markets," said Mathew. *Avengers: Endgame* marks the culmination of a series of 22 superhero films from the Marvel Cinematic Universe. The series chronicles the war between the Avengers and Thanos, the evil demigod. The movie is expected to release in over 2,500 screens, the highest ever for a Hollywood film in India.

The story can be read online [here](#).