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Diva No 1  
MADHURI  
DIXIT-NENE

ZINGER  
AYUSHMANN  
KHURRANA

SONAM KAPOOR  
AHUJA'S  
MARRIAGE  
MANTRAS

# contents

Volume 69 # July 2020 / ISSN NUMBER 0971-7277



PHOTOGRAPH: SURESH NATARAJAN



22



50

## Editor's Choice

- 04** The ed remembers  
Sushant Singh Rajput
- 70** Mental health needs  
attention



44



56

## Masala fix

- 08** SRK on the big  
screen soon, Bhuj:  
The Pride Of India to  
release on OTT,  
Salman Khan shoots  
for Bigg Boss 14  
promo and more from  
the rumour mills...

## Fashion and lifestyle

- 18** Interview with stylist  
Tanya Ghavri

16

## Exclusives

- 22** Farewell, Sushant  
Singh Rajput
- 26** The best films of  
Sushant Singh Rajput
- 30** His own words:  
Quotes from Sushant  
Singh's Rajput's  
Filmfare interviews
- 34** Remembering Basu  
Chatterjee
- 36** Top films of Basu  
Chatterjee
- 40** Farewell, lyricist  
Yogesh

- 42** Goodbye, composer  
Wajid Khan
- 44** Sonam Kapoor tells it  
like it is
- 50** The magic of Madhuri  
Dixit-Nene
- 56** Ayushmann Khurrana  
on life during  
quarantine and more
- 60** Looking back with  
affection at Shakeel  
Badayuni

## Your say

- 66** Readers send in their  
rants
- 68** Shatrughan Sinha's  
wacky witticisms



10



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# Letter from the Editor

## A fulfilled life...

Those whom the gods love, die young. Or so we tell ourselves to stave off the flood of sorrow waiting to engulf us. Sushant Singh Rajput's untimely death came as a shock to the system. For some time, I was too numb to think, to speak. I kept thinking it was a hoax. That any minute a disclaimer would appear saying that it was a goof-up. Even the gory photos of his mortal remains didn't help. As they were too gruesome for the mind to comprehend. Slowly, as I read message after message on social media and attended call after call asking me about the incident, the news sank in. Sushant really was dead.

Subconsciously, memories of our meetings began to play in the theatre of my mind. I remembered our first meeting, when he had come over to the Filmfare office. He was full of energy, excited over his first film project. We chatted nineteen to the dozen about everything on earth. I realised he was vastly well-read. That his only interest wasn't just films or acting. That he believed in a world beyond filmmaking. Not that he was disinterested in films. On the contrary, he displayed a childlike curiosity about the subject. He wanted to know everything. And pumped me for some anecdotes regarding legends.

We developed a friendship of sorts over the phone and over social media. He would message me enthusiastically about the various things that were happening in life. Likewise, I was astonished to learn he had invested in a high-quality telescope. He reportedly even carted it to the outdoor shoot of Sonchiriyaa as the remote area would give him better access to the stars. I have yet to meet an actor, who had such diverse interests as him.

He was said to be crazily excited about Chanda Mama Door Ke, where he was to play an astronaut. It was to take him closer to NASA. He reportedly sponsored the trip of two school children to NASA to help them realise their dream. That project sadly couldn't lift off. Shekhar Kapur's ambitious project, Paani, failed to materialise either. He took all these setbacks in his stride, counting them as learning experiences.

There has been enough speculation about why he took his own life. There's no point in going there as we would never know. The mind is a complex thing. One doesn't know what triggers people to take extreme steps. I always saw him as a sweet, positive, full of life person. Always, cheerful, always inquisitive. And that's how I'll remember him.

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RNI No. 1619/1957. Price Rs 60. Printed and published by Joji Varghese for and on behalf of owners Worldwide Media Pvt. Ltd, (CIN: U22120MH2003PTC142239), The Times of India Building, Dr D N Road, Fort, Mumbai 400 001 and printed at Rajhans Enterprises No: 134, 4th Main Road, Industrial Town, Rajajinagar, Bangalore 560044, India.  
Processed by BCCL Production Prepress and published at Worldwide Media Pvt. Ltd, The Times of India Building, Dr D N Road, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Editor: Jitesh Pillai

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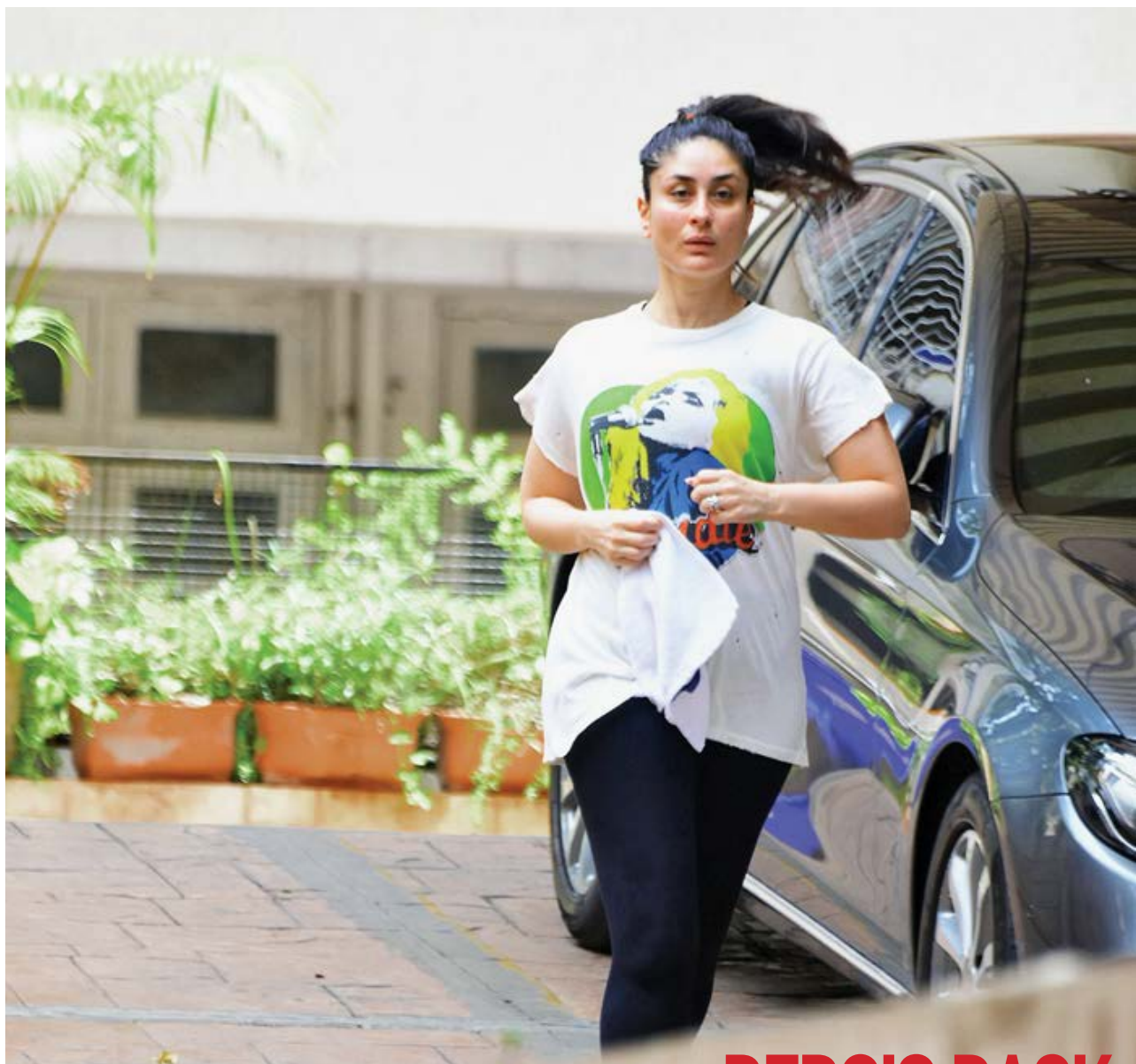
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# masala fix



## BEBO'S BACK

Kareena Kapoor Khan has been the muse of the paparazzi – given her gym trips, red-carpet treks or even her downtime with baby Taimur Ali Khan. But due to the lockdown, her fans missed seeing the Queen Bee in her everyday glory. So when *Unlock 1.0* unfolded, Bebo went for a jog in Bandra, giving the paparazzi a literal ‘run for their money’...

SRK's big screen surprise *pg 08*

Ajay Devgn's *Bhuj* to release on OTT *pg 12*

PHOTOGRAPH: YOGEN SHAH

# Rumours & More



## SRK'S BIG SCREEN RETURN

**Shah Rukh Khan's** fans can rejoice. Sources suggest that SRK is all set to return to the big screen. He reportedly has special roles in **R. Madhavan's** directorial debut *Rocketry: The Nambi Effect* and **Ayan Mukerji's** fantasy adventure *Brahmastra*, which stars **Amitabh Bachchan, Ranbir Kapoor** and **Alia Bhatt**. In *Rocketry*, SRK reportedly plays a journalist, who interviews scientist **Nambi Narayanan** and takes us through the protagonist's journey. *Rocketry* is based on the life of Padma Bhushan recipient ISRO scientist and aerospace engineer Nambi Narayanan. Recently, the superstar produced the espionage drama *Bard Of Blood* and the horror series *Betaal* for the OTT platform.

### MEANWHILE...

In an old interview, **Shah Rukh Khan** reportedly had said his son **AbRam Khan** and **Aaradhya Bachchan** could replicate his iconic pairing with Kajol in future. When asked about it recently, **Amitabh Bachchan**, happy with the idea reportedly reacted saying, "Unke mooh mein ghee shakkar aur doodh malai..."



## CHIRANJEEVI SARJA WILL BE MISSED

Kannada star **Chiranjeevi Sarja's** untimely demise left his fans and friends in shock. The star suffered a massive heart attack. He's survived by wife **Meghana Raj**, who's three months pregnant. Close friend/actor **Prajwal Devaraj** shared a WhatsApp conversation with him, which revealed his unfulfilled desire. The screenshot shows Chiranjeevi planning his next trip out with friends. His message read, "We don't know what's in store for us tom..." Our deepest condolences for his family and loved ones.



## Akshay to begin shooting

As the government has granted permission to start shooting, **Akshay Kumar** will resume filming his two biggies, *Prithviraj* and *Bell Bottom*. The sets of YRF's ambitious *Prithviraj* were dismantled during the lockdown. Now a similar set will be built indoors. They hope to wrap up the film by July. Akshay plans to begin filming **Nikhil Advani's** *Bell Bottom* in August in London. They're awaiting a clearance on the travel. *Bell Bottom* is inspired by true events and is touted to be an espionage thriller.



A SPECIAL DANCE NUMBER FOR SAI ALI KHAN-RANI MUKERJI STARRER, *BUNTY AUR BABLI 2*, WILL BE SHOT IN THE YRF PREMISES WITH MINIMAL CREW. THE FILM'S DIRECTED BY VARUN. V. SHARMA





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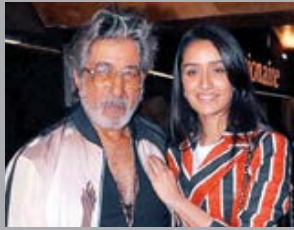
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## PROTECTIVE DAD SHAKTI



He may have played a cold-blooded villain on screen. But in real-life **Shakti Kapoor's** a soft-hearted and caring dad. He's particular about adhering to the lockdown rules and not stepping out for work. He won't allow his star daughter, **Shraddha Kapoor**, to do so either. Shakti was

quoted saying, "I will not go out for work, nor will I allow Shraddha to resume work. The threat hasn't gone. The worst is yet to come... It's better to wait than pay hospital bills." Shraddha was last seen in *Baaghi 3*, co-starring **Tiger Shroff**. She will now reportedly star with **Ranbir Kapoor** in *Luv Ranjan's* upcoming film.

## SALMAN GEARS UP FOR BIGG BOSS 14

Sources reveal that just as **Amitabh Bachchan** shot a video for KBC's upcoming season from home, **Salman Khan** might shoot the Bigg Boss 14 (BB14) announcement from his Panvel farmhouse. Apparently, Bigg Boss 14 will premiere in October. Sources add that Salman has asked the makers to add 'social distancing' as a key feature of this season. **Zaan Khan** of *Hamari Bahu Silk*, **Shubhangi Atre** of *Bhabiji Ghar Par Hain* and *Tujhse Hai Raabta* and actor **Shagun Pandey** have reportedly been approached for this season.



## Mahesh Babu teams up with Kiara

**Mahesh Babu's** next project, the **Parasuram** directorial film, *Sarakaru Vaari Paata*, may see him with **Kiara Advani**. The actress had made her Telugu debut opposite Mahesh Babu in the political drama *Bharat Ane Nenu* in 2018. Given Kiara's pan-India appeal, the makers believe this is a good choice. *Sarakaru Vaari Paata* is expected to go on the floors as soon as the lockdown is lifted. This film is an action drama and revolves around a banking scam.



## ALIA'S SWEET GESTURE

In an admirable act of affection, **Alia Bhatt** and her sister **Shaheen Bhatt**, surprised their house help, **Rashida**, with a birthday celebration during the lockdown. Rashida shared a video on Instagram in which the actress was seen cutting the cake with her and called it her 'dream birthday'. Alia desisted from having a piece as she was on a 'diet'. But the sweetness she spread by her thoughtful gesture is immense.



**SINGER MONALI THAKUR RECENTLY REVEALED THAT SHE HAD TIED THE KNOT WITH SWISS RESTAURATEUR MAIK RICHTER THREE YEARS BACK. SHE MANAGED TO KEEP IT A SECRET FOR A LONG TIME. A COUPLE OF TIMES WHEN HER RING WAS VISIBLE IN HER INSTAGRAM PHOTOS, FANS AND FRIENDS HAD ASKED WHETHER IT WAS HER WEDDING RING. NOW THEY KNOW...**



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## RANVEER'S A'90S KID

**Ranveer Singh** says he's a kid of the '90s. And that he's been shaped by the movies, music, pop culture and fashion of that era. While kids played outdoors, he was stuck to the 'idiot box' watching shows like Zabaan Sambhalke, Dekh Bhai Dekh and Chhaya Geet and re-runs of Ramayan and Mahabharat. Ranveer's awaiting the release of his film 83. The sports drama narrates the story of India's first-ever cricket World Cup victory in 1983. Directed by **Kabir Khan**, the film has him essaying ex-Indian captain **Kapil Dev**.



**AFTER KABIR SINGH AND THE UPCOMING FILM JERSEY, SHAHID KAPOOR MAY DO THE HINDI REMAKE OF SOORARAI POTTRU, A TAMIL FILM. TO BE PRODUCED BY GUNEET MONGA, IT'S ABOUT THE PIONEER OF LOW-COST AVIATION IN INDIA, GR GOPINATH.**



## Priyanka's bedroom secret

**Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Nick Jonas**, are making the most of their together time during the lockdown in Los Angeles. Recently, Priyanka revealed a bedroom secret. She said that hubby Nick enjoys looking at her face after she has just woken up. When she says she'll freshen up and apply some mascara and moisturiser he doesn't allow her to do that. He simply loves her sleepy face. Well, dreams are made of this.

## Ajay Devgn's Bhuj on OTT



Given the lockdown and the theatres being shut, many filmmakers are opting to release their films on the digital platform. But **Ajay Devgn's** fans believe his much-awaited film, **Bhuj: The Pride Of India**, should release on the big screen. They made the slogan 'Boycott Bhuj on OTT' trend on Twitter. Given the patriotic theme, they even want it to be tax-free. However, the film has been reportedly sold for a digital release for a whopping 180 crores. **Abhishek Dudhaiya's** film based on the 1971 Indo-Pak war, also features **Sanjay Dutt, Nora Fatehi** and **Sonakshi Sinha**.

## COVID – 19 IN COOLIE NO 1?

Will **Varun Dhawan's** Coolie No 1 talk about the COVID-19 pandemic? The question started doing the rounds when the actor shared a poster of his forthcoming movie, where he could be seen wearing a mask. It's not clear if he used the poster to spread awareness or the comedy will be tweaked to include a reference to the pandemic. Directed by **David Dhawan**, Coolie No 1, is a remake of the **Govinda-Karisma Kapoor** 1995 original. In the remake, Varun and **Sara Ali Khan** reprise the lead roles. The film was slated to hit the theatres on May 1 but the lockdown staggered the plan.

### MEANWHILE...

**Varun Dhawan** took to social media to share a glimpse of mother **Karuna (Lali) Dhawan's** midnight birthday celebrations at their home amidst the lockdown. In the video, dad **David Dhawan** and mom Karuna can be seen cutting the cake. "Happy birthday ma. Praying for happiness for all," Varun captioned the video.





## MALAIKA'S BUILDING SEALED

**Malaika Arora's** plush building in Bandra has been sealed after one of her neighbours tested positive for COVID-19. It's now turned into a containment zone. Her building has been sterilised. But all the residents have been placed under mandatory quarantine. Earlier **Rajkumar Rao** and **Vicky Kaushal's** buildings were marked as quarantine zones due to coronavirus cases as were **Karan Johar** and **Janhvi Kapoor's** homes.

## ARJUN'S MAD ABOUT MATRIX

While **Arjun Kapoor** is mad about ladylove **Malaika Arora**, he's as crazy about the American science fiction action series *Matrix*. Now that *Matrix 4* has been announced, he's super excited about it. The film, which will reprise **Keanu Reeves** in his iconic role as Neo, is set to release on May 21, 2021. Taking to his Instagram story, Arjun Kapoor wrote, "This one is going to be a cracker." He also added #ArjunRecommends on the side of the picture. We get you Arjun.



## What gives Janhvi 'khushi'

**Janhvi Kapoor** recently revealed what gives her 'khushi' during lockdown. While she enjoys making sugar-free Nutella, sister **Khushi Kapoor** disapproves of the desserts she prepares. However, annoying Khushi, is the ultimate joy these days for Janhvi. The doting sister also revealed that their fun skirmishes aside, she 'worships' her younger sibling. Janhvi will now be seen in the biopic titled *Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl*. To be released on the OTT platform, it's the story of the first woman Indian Air Force officer to enter the war zone. **Gunjan Saxena** flew a Cheetah helicopter in the Kargil war and helped rescue several soldiers.



## RANBIR-SANJAY TO SHOOT SHAMSHERA

**Ranbir Kapoor** and **Sanjay Dutt** have teamed up for Yash Raj Films' *Shamshera*. The film also stars **Vaani Kapoor**.

The shooting of the film is mostly complete. Director **Karan Malhotra** and his team utilised the stay-at-home period by beginning the post-production work. Producer **Aditya Chopra** and Karan have decided to film the remaining portions at YRF Studios with limited crew, keeping the safety precautions in mind.

SUSHMITA SEN AND MODEL BOYFRIEND, ROHMAN SHAWL, OWE THEIR LOVE STORY TO SOCIAL MEDIA. THE EX-BEAUTY QUEEN RECENTLY REVEALED THAT THEY CONNECTED ON INSTAGRAM DMS WHEN SHE ACCIDENTALLY HAPPENED TO OPEN HIS CHAT. THOUGH AGE IS IRRELEVANT IN LOVE, THE TWO HAVE A 15-YEAR AGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM. SUSHMITA IS 44 TO HIS 29.





## SHAHID REACHES OUT TO DANCERS

In keeping with the spirit of compassion amidst the lockdown, around 20 dancers from choreographer **Ahmed Khan's** team and 20 dancers from choreographer **Bosco's** team are being helped by **Shahid Kapoor**. The actor has transferred money to the bank accounts of the dancers with whom he's worked in the past. For the uninitiated, Shahid was part of **Shiamak Davar's** dance group before he joined films. He also featured as a background dancer in **Subhash Ghai's** *Taal*.



## SAVIOUR SONU

As we know, **Sonu Sood** is on a mission to help displaced Indians reach their homes during the lockdown. The actor has helped transport migrants via bus, train and air services. Sonu has also been distributing meals to underprivileged families across Mumbai. The actor recently launched his helpline number through which he can be contacted. Sonu has pledged to help until every single individual gets reunited with his loved ones. What started as an initiative of sending migrants to their homes, beginning from 200 people from Mumbai, has now turned into a nationwide initiative **#GharBhejo**.

## KAT'S BEAUTIFUL HEART

**Katrina Kaif** has pledged support for daily wage workers through her brand - *Kay Beauty*. She wrote on Instagram, "We have lent our support to the daily-wage earning families living in the villages around the Bhandara district in Maharashtra, with food and basic sanitary materials." She even urged her fans to contribute towards the cause. She mentioned that she has been inspired by colleague **Salman Khan**, who does exhaustive social work.



## BIG B ORGANISES FLIGHTS FOR MIGRANTS

In a bid to help stranded migrants reach their villages, **Amitabh Bachchan** arranged for four special flights to send about 700 people to their homes in Uttar Pradesh. Sources close to Bachchan said he wanted to book a train for the migrants but the logistics did not work out. The Big B didn't want to disappoint the migrants. Hence, he reportedly arranged for the flights that took off from Mumbai for Allahabad, Gorakhpur and Varanasi. He also arranged 10 buses for several migrants to reach their villages in Lucknow, Allahabad, Bhadohi and other places in Uttar Pradesh.

LATEST REPORTS SUGGEST THAT AMITABH BACHCHAN HAS BEEN APPROACHED BY GOOGLE MAPS TO LEND HIS VOICE TO NAVIGATE THE PUBLIC. CURRENTLY, NEW YORK-BASED ENTERTAINER KAREN JACOBSEN'S VOICE IS USED FOR NAVIGATION. APPARENTLY, THE BIG B HAS BEEN APPROACHED FOR THE SAME. WAITING FOR AN OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION



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## NAOMI MISTAKEN FOR DEEPIKA

**Naomi Scott**, who played the role of Princess Jasmine in Disney's 2019 film *Aladdin*, was in the news recently. In her interview to a channel she shared that a member of her film's crew once thought that she'd starred in the Ram-Leela song *Nagada sang dhol baje*, which features **Deepika Padukone**. Naomi loves the track and was playing it on the set. Naomi said she was flattered to be mistaken with someone as 'beautiful' as Deepika. In fact, the vibe of *Aladdin*, she shared, was inspired by the flavours of Bollywood.



## TIGER WISHES LADYLOVE



**Disha Patani** turned a year older in June. While there were wishes galore from fans and friends, the one that grabbed attention was the post shared by Disha's rumoured boyfriend **Tiger Shroff**. Tiger shared a throwback video and wished his 'rockstar'. Disha can be seen flaunting her moves to the music being played in the background. "3 waffles and 3 pancakes later... happy birthday rockstar @dishapatani," wrote Tiger. His mother **Ayesha Shroff** also took to her social media handle to wish 'Deeeeshu!' Disha shares a close bond with Tiger's sister **Krishna Shroff** too. She's reportedly staying with Tiger and his family during the lockdown. Disha will next be seen in *Ek Villain 2* with **John Abraham**.

## TAAPSEE'S POIGNANT POEM

**Taapsee Pannu** has always been socially aware and vocal about issues that plague the underprivileged. The Thappad actor recently narrated a heart-wrenching poem on migrants, titled *Pravasi* (migrants), on social media. The poem begins and ends with the same question: Hum to bas pravaasi hain, kya iss desh ke vaasi hain? It was accompanied by a series of images - visuals of migrant workers walking, cycling... for thousands of kilometres. She added that the images would 'never leave our minds'. In April, Taapsee had also featured in a morale-boosting video titled *Muskurayega India*, which encouraged people to support each other during the coronavirus crisis.



## RAKUL TRAVELS IN PPE GEAR

Actor **Rakul Preet Singh** took a flight to Delhi wearing the full Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) gear. The *De De Pyaar De* actor took to Instagram and shared



pictures of herself from the airport wearing masks, gloves and shoe cover as a precautionary measure against COVID-19. The actor posted another video from the flight, wearing a face shield and said she felt like she was 'going to space'. Rakul's upcoming movies include *Attack*, co-starring **John Abraham** and **Jacqueline Fernandez** and a family dramedy with **Arjun Kapoor**.



**DAYS AFTER A PREGNANT ELEPHANT DIED OF EATING CRACKER-STUFFED PINEAPPLE, ACTOR ANUSHKA SHARMA STARTED A DIGITAL CAMPAIGN #JUSTICEFORANIMALS, DEMANDING AMENDMENT OF THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT, 1960, TO METE OUT STRICTER PUNISHMENTS FOR OFFENDERS.**







Stylist  
Tanvya Ghavri

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**Tanya Ghavri on how style is as much about trends as about self-love...**



Kareena  
Kapoor Khan



Sonam Kapoor Ahuja



Malaika Arora



Katrina Kaif

# "ENJOY YOUR CURVES"

*From Kareena Kapoor Khan to Freida Pinto, stylist **Tanya Ghavri** has a cross-continent presence. **Analita Seth** converses with the fashion royalty*





Daughter of former Indian cricketer, Karsan Ghavri, Tanya Ghavri's scoring in another field – style and glamour. After a stint at the Parsons School of Design in New York in 2003, she began her on-the-job training, assisting stylist Pernia Qureshi on the hi-glam film Aisha (2009). Even as she continues styling for films, she's a personal stylist for several celebrities including Sonam Kapoor Ahuja, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Karisma Kapoor, Katrina Kaif and Freida Pinto. To their stunning silhouettes, Tanya adds her style. To their beauty, she lends soul. The co-founder of The Dhoom Dhaam Weddings, a fashion event company, for Tanya creating drama out of drapes is a 24-hour job... Excerpts



Shraddha Kapoor



Mrunal Thakur

#### WHEN DID YOU REALISE YOU WANTED TO GET INTO THE FASHION BUSINESS?

I went to study at Parsons School of Design in New York when I was 17. A year into the course, I realised that the fashion industry is where I belong. I was passionate about learning more about it and working in this industry.

#### HOW HAS IT BEEN SO FAR?

It's been an exciting, enriching and a huge learning curve for me. I've met amazing teachers and people along the way. I've travelled the world intensely, thanks to my work. I'm glad I've found my calling so early in life. I'm excited about what I want to accomplish in the future, personally and professionally.

#### HOW DIFFERENT IS EDITORIAL STYLING FROM RED CARPET AND PARTY ATTIRE?

It's as different as a gown from a short dress. Editorial styling has a completely different language, location and concept when compared to styling for red carpets and promotions. You can create a story and a specific mood in editorial styling. It's like a dream or a make-believe world. What you are creating is imaginary. But for red carpets and promotions, you have to stay true to the celebrity you're styling for.

#### WHICH OUTRAGEOUS RUNWAY LOOK WOULD YOU LIKE TO INCORPORATE IN EVERYDAY WEAR?

### 5 ALL-SEASON WARDROBE ESSENTIALS

- 1 Nude shoes
- 2 A great LBD
- 3 A pair of Spanx
- 4 Boyfriend jeans
- 5 Black or tan blazer

Kareena Kapoor Khan



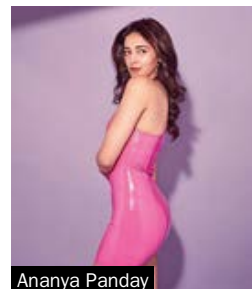
Katrina Kaif



Malaika Arora



Janhvi Kapoor



Ananya Panday

*"You can create a story and a specific mood in editorial styling. It's like a dream or a make-believe world. What you are creating is imaginary. But for red carpets and promotions, you have to stay true to the celebrity"*

Runway styling is always outrageous in terms of accessories - be it headgears, shoes, collars, bags and jewellery. But I'd love the idea of using outrageous collars in an everyday look. Maybe, I'd keep the rest of the look simple and let the collar do all the talking. It would be the statement piece in my look.

#### SHARE SOME STYLE HACKS TO FLATTER DIFFERENT BODY TYPES...

Understand your body type first. Educate yourself on that first and foremost. If you have

an hourglass body, enjoy your curves and own them. If you're someone with a small waist always accentuate that. Be proud of the tiny waist and the curvy top and bottom.

I love an hourglass body. Look at Marilyn Monroe for some style inspiration, if you will. A pear-shaped body is one that is big at the bottom, which is like a lot of Indian women. So accentuate the top half of your body with wide necks and beautiful blouses. Maybe, even with a plunging neckline. Don't experiment too much with the





## STYLE HACKS PICKED UP ON THE JOB

❶

**Silicon stick-ies or stick on bras are life-saviours. It can help you wear anything you want.**

❷

**Heel support cushions can get you through any party or shoot.**

❸

**A white shirt can be worn in innumerable ways.**

❹

**Match vintage jewels from your mother or grandmother's collection with the trendiest look.**

*"I'd love the idea of using outrageous collars in an everyday look. Maybe, I'd keep the rest of the look simple and let the collar do all the talking. It would be the statement piece in my look"*

bottom half. Do not wear light colours at the bottom. Always stick with darker tones.

A straight body, which most teenage girls have, is one that has no curves. It's more athletic or just rectangular. It's then important to enjoy prints and stripes. They make you look fuller. So learn to experiment and don't be afraid to try trends. Last but not the least is the apple-shaped body. For them polo or high necks is a big no-no. Also, big prints on top will only make you look bigger.



Parineeti Chopra



Kareena Kapoor Khan in Dev R Nil



Katrina Kaif in Jean Paul Gaultier



Tara Sutaria



Freida Pinto at Vanity Fair party

## A CELEBRITY EASIEST TO WORK WITH...

Kareena Kapoor Khan.

## THE MOST EXPERIMENTAL CELEBRITY...

Sonam Kapoor.

## TRENDS YOU LOVE TO WORK WITH

As a stylist, I'm always dabbling in trends but one that I truly love is the androgynous.

## TRENDS YOU DON'T LIKE...

Dungarees. I'll always avoid them no matter what.

## HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE YOUR PERSONAL STYLE WHILE PUTTING TOGETHER A LOOK FOR SOMEONE?

It's always part of all my looks in some way or the other.

## PICK A LOOK DONE BY SOME OTHER STYLIST, WHICH YOU LIKE...

God that's such a tough one. It would be the looks styled by Elizabeth Stewart over the years. So many iconic looks, especially those done on Cate Blanchett at the Oscars and the Cannes Film Festival.

## SOME FAVOURITE LOOKS FROM YOUR STYLE FILES...

It would be Kareena Kapoor Khan at a media event when I styled her in a Dev R Nil saree with a Christian Lacroix vintage jacket and Amrapali silver neckpiece. Also, the two times I styled Freida Pinto for the Vanity Fair post-Oscar party. And Katrina Kaif in the Jean Paul Gaultier gown for Filmfare Glamour & Style Award, which she wore for an award function.

## A LOOK THAT YOU REGRET DOING...

A long time ago when I first styled Parineeti Chopra, I guess I didn't do justice to her. I do regret that look.

## IF YOU WERE TO STYLE A GLOBAL CELEBRITY, DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD IT BE?

Jennifer Lawrence, Julia Roberts and Olivia Palermo and the late Audrey Hepburn.

# exclusives

what's on their mind?

## A STAR FOREVER



Acting was just one facet of his vibrant personality. Sushant Singh Rajput's obsessions went beyond the arc-lights. A National Physics Olympiad winner and seventh rank holder in the All India Engineering Entrance Examination (AIEEE), Sushant loved to track the twinkling galaxies above. While the world slept, he partied with the 'real' stars, watching their shenanigans through his top-of-the-line telescope.

While mortals crave for a place under the sun, the space enthusiast had reportedly even bought a piece of land on the moon in the Sea of Muscovy. Perhaps, he was preparing for a rendezvous with the stars. His passing away on 14 June, marked that transition. A celestial homecoming for the avid star gazer.

Filmfare pays a heartfelt tribute to the talented actor...

PHOTOGRAPH: SURESH NATARAJAN




**F** IN MEMORIAM



PHOTOGRAPHS: SURESH NATARAJAN





# SUDDEN ENDING

**SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT WAS AN OUTSIDER WHO MADE IT BIG.  
DEVESH SHARMA PROFILES THE ACTOR, WHO PASSED AWAY RECENTLY**

**(JANUARY 21, 1986 – JUNE 14, 2020)**

**His film career began with Abhishek Kapoor directed Kai Po Che! (2013). It was based on Chetan Bhagat's novel The 3 Mistakes Of My Life... Set against the backdrop of the Gujarat riots, the film was a critical and commercial success**

**S**howbiz survives on dreams, and dreamers. On men and women who come to the city with nothing but a burning desire to shine on the big screen. Not all realise their dreams. But the ones who do, inspire a thousand more. Sushant Singh Rajput was one such person, who came to Mumbai and gave more than his 100 per cent to reach the top. But after achieving the unattainable, there remained a void. That perhaps explains the emotional anguish he was reportedly going through in the last few months of his life.

Sushant was born in Patna to Krishna Kumar Singh, a government employee and Usha Singh on January 21, 1986. He had four elder sisters. One of his sisters, Mitu Singh, is a state-level cricketer. Being the youngest he was much pampered. The family reportedly moved to Delhi after his mother's death in 2002. He studied both in Patna and in

Delhi. He was a studious child and was, in fact, a national Olympiad winner in Physics. He studied engineering at the Delhi College of Engineering but didn't complete the course. During college, he joined Shiamak Davar's dance class and found his calling as a performer. He was considered one of the best students of Shiamak and was a background dancer in one of the Filmfare Awards. He had reminisced about the experience in a Filmfare interview, "I remember watching Hrithik Roshan rehearse. He would execute these perfect steps for 10 minutes and then turn back and ask us if he was doing alright. It was a kind of a high that he had looked at you and was asking your opinion. Another high was watching Shah Rukh Khan perform at close quarters."

Theatre beckoned and he joined Barry John's classes in Delhi. Doing plays gave him a high. He loved enacting different personalities in front of the audience, leading different

lives. He joined Nadira Babbar's troupe Ekjute when he came to Mumbai and loved doing theatre in the city as well. He broke into the ad-circuit and began doing commercials. Soon, he was getting TV offers. His first stint came with Balaji's *Kis Desh Mein Hai Meraa Dil*. His popularity in the show, won him a lead role in Balaji's *Pavitra Rishta* in 2009. The show became a gamechanger of sorts. Ankita Lokhande's and his popularity knew no bounds. The two leads of the show were said to be in a relationship from 2010 onwards. It kept strong even when he left the show in 2011 to pursue a career in films. Their break-up was reported by the papers in 2016. This is what he said about his break-up in one of his interviews to *Filmfare*, "Everything you know changes one morning... two people who are close sometimes grow apart. It's sad but there's nothing you can do about it..." He was later linked to Kriti Sanon and was currently said to be dating Rhea Chakraborty.

**H**e also participated in the dance reality show *Zara Nachke Dikha 2* in 2010. He was extremely close to his mother, who had passed away in 2002. His team dedicated their performance to his mother in the Mother's Day Special show. He also appeared in another dance reality show, *Jhalak Dikhhlaa Jaa 4*.

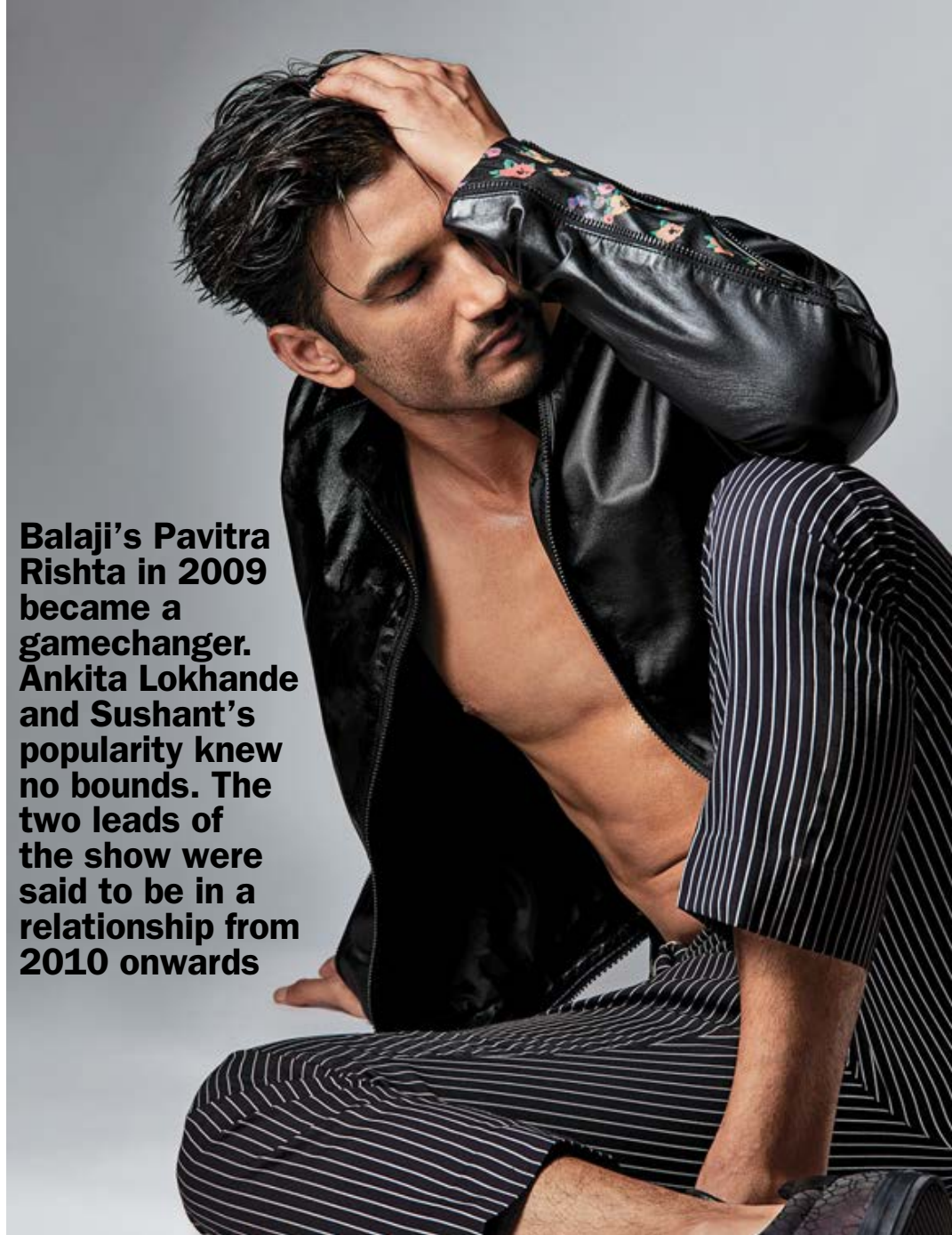
His film career began with Abhishek Kapoor directed *Kai Po Che!* (2013). The film was based on the Chetan Bhagat novel

*The 3 Mistakes Of My Life*. It had Sushant play a cricket crazy youngster, who along with his friends, played by Amit Sadh and Rajkumar Rao, opens a sports goods shop and a cricket academy. He goes on to mentor a young Muslim cricketer. The film was set against the backdrop of the Gujarat riots and proved to be a critical and commercial

success. *Shuddh Desi Romance*, which came the same year, had Sushant in a different avatar. He played a young commitment-phobic man caught between two lovers, played by Parineeti Chopra and Vaani Kapoor. His natural ease in front of the camera was noted by the audience. He got a chance to work with Rajkumar Hirani in his next, *PK*

(2014), where he played a young Pakistani national in love with Indian culture. The role, though short, won him notice by the critics. Dibakar Banerjee's wartime thriller, *Detective Byomkesh Bakshi!* (2015), had him play one of India's well-loved fictional detectives. It was a period film praised for its detailing. Sushant rued the fact that the

**Balaji's *Pavitra Rishta* in 2009 became a gamechanger. Ankita Lokhande and Sushant's popularity knew no bounds. The two leads of the show were said to be in a relationship from 2010 onwards**





# Sushant was a diehard fan of Mahendra Singh Dhoni. He was delighted to get a chance to play one of the greatest cricketing captains in the world in Neeraj Pandey's M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story



1 With Rhea Chakraborty

2 With M.S. Dhoni and his daughter Ziva

3 With Sara Ali Khan and Abhishek Kapoor

4 With Shekhar Kapur

5 With Ankita Lokhande

6 With Kriti Sanon



audience didn't take to it. "Byomkesh deserved to be seen by a much bigger audience. It was way ahead of its time. But I guess the audience has been conditioned into seeing a certain kind of film."

The biggest fillip to his film career came with the Mahendra Singh Dhoni biopic, M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story (2016), directed by Neeraj Pandey. Sushant was a diehard fan of Dhoni and was delighted to get a chance to play one of the greatest cricketing captains in the world. Sushant was coached by former wicket-keeper and batsman Kiran More both in the art of keeping stumps and batting. He watched around 500 hours of footage on MS Dhoni to get the mannerisms right. He grew close to Dhoni over the making of the film. It was a commercial and critical success. Sushant was praised not only for his physical transformation but for his effortless portrayal of Dhoni.

He was reportedly going to star in Shekhar Kapur's

Paani and spent some 10 months preparing for it. Though nothing came of it, he did find a friend in Kapur and chalked off the experience as a huge learning module.

Chanda Mama Door Ke, a science-fiction film where he was supposed to play an astronaut too never got made. As did the musical Takadum, which was supposed to be directed by Homi Adajania and co-star the late Irrfan Khan.

What got him excited was Dinesh Vijan's reincarnation thriller Raabta, co-starring Kriti Sanon. The big-budget film however bombed. He appeared next in Abhishek Kapoor's Kedarnath (2018), set against the backdrop of the Uttarakhand floods. Here, he played a Muslim porter in love with a Hindu girl, played by Sara Ali Khan. The film didn't meet with the kind of success that was projected, though Sushant's acting did come for praise. Drive (2019), produced by Dharma Productions and Tarun Mansukhani, went straight

to Netflix. Abhishek Chaubey's Sonchiriya (2019), a period dacoit film, was a poetic journey into the hearts and minds of the baaghis - as dacoits are called in Chambal. Though it won a lot of awards and Sushant was lavishly praised for his intense portrayal, the film didn't work at the box-office. Thankfully, his Chhichhore (2019), directed by Nitesh Tiwari and starring Shraddha Kapoor, released the same year was a commercial success. He

played a concerned dad as well as a carefree collegian. The Fault In Our Stars remake titled Dil Bechara, directed by close friend Mukesh Chhabra, was supposed to release in May 2020. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the film will have an OTT release now.

Sushant was an entrepreneur too. In 2018, he launched Innsaei Ventures, an endeavour which hoped to maximise the potential of technological innovations for a wider set of the populace. He was signed by NITI Aayog, a think-tank belonging to the government of India, to promote the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP). The actor was said to be suffering from depression for some months and was reportedly getting treated for it. He allegedly died by suicide on June 14, 2020 leaving his fans heartbroken. ■



# BEST OF THE BEST

**DEVESH SHARMA** LOOKS  
BACK AT SOME REMARKABLE  
PERFORMANCES OF THE LATE  
**SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT**

PHOTOGRAPH: SURESH NATARAJAN



**Sushant Singh Rajput was an actor to look out for. His dedication and sincerity were appealing. Kai Po Che underlined the fact that TV face or not, he could hit the ball out of the park when it came to believable performances. A cricket fan himself, he went on to play one of India's best cricket captains, MS Dhoni, on the big screen. His last performance in Chhichhore saw him playing a concerned father, troubled with the fact that his son had tried to commit suicide due to exam pressure. The news of his untimely demise, on 14 June, has come as a shock to us all. In his remembrance, we present a list of some of the best films of his career, tragically cut short by his death.**

**DIRECTOR: Abhishek Kapoor**

**CAST: Sushant Singh Rajput, Rajkumar Rao, Amit Sadh and Amrita Puri**

Ishaan (Sushant Singh Rajput), Govind (Rajkumar Rao) and Omi (Amit Sadh) are friends who, like all young people, want to do something different. Ishaan is a talented cricketer and hence the trio decide to open a cricket coaching academy plus a sports shop. The seed money is provided by Omi's uncle, who is a political henchman in a Hindu right-wing party. They discover a talented Muslim youngster, who has all the trappings of a cricket star. Ishaan becomes obsessed with mentoring him. Govind is only interested in expanding his business. While Omi gets embroiled in the political schemes of his uncle. Whether their friendship stands the test of time forms the crux of the story. Sushant Singh's character, Ishaan, is the catalyst in the film. SSR brings in sensitivity as well as sincerity in the portrayal and made you root for his Ishaan.



**KAI PO CHE! (2013)**



**DIRECTOR: Maneesh Sharma**

**CAST: Sushant Singh Rajput, Parineeti Chopra, Vaani Kapoor and Rishi Kapoor**

Raghu (Sushant Singh Rajput), who's not sure about settling down, is about to get married to Tara (Vaani Kapoor). He abruptly leaves her at the altar and falls for English teacher Gayatri (Parineeti Chopra). She attends weddings as a baraati for subsidiary income. They both are commitment-phobic and yet live happily as a couple without getting married. Things change when Raghu's path crosses with Tara again. He falls in love with her as well. The film portrays a true picture of a confused generation, who has yet to understand the intricacies of love and commitment. They're game for hook-ups and balk at marriage. Sushant plays a clueless youngster with natural ease and won a lot of admirers for his performance.



**DIRECTOR: Rajkumar Hirani**

**CAST: Aamir Khan, Anushka Sharma, Boman Irani and Sushant Singh Rajput**

PK is a unique never-before-seen film to have come out of Indian cinema. It stars Aamir Khan as an alien called PK, who gets stranded on earth. He ends up being fascinated by everything around him. PK takes a keen interest in Indian customs and religions. His observations make people confront absurdities that lie within our common beliefs and practices. Anushka Sharma, who plays a journalist called Jagat Janani, is shown to be in love with the like-minded Pakistani national played by Sushant Singh Rajput. Jagat Janani helps PK come into the limelight. She helps him find his remote so he can contact people from his planet and get back home. SSR didn't have much to do in the film. But he floors you with the natural ease with which he portrays his character - that of someone obsessed with Indian films and culture despite being a Pakistani.

**PK  
(2014)**



**DETECTIVE  
BYOMKESH  
BAKSHY!  
(2014)**

**DIRECTOR: Dibakar Banerjee**

**CAST: Sushant Singh Rajput, Anand Tiwari and Swastika Mukherjee**

Based on the fictional detective Byomkesh Bakshi, created by Bengali writer Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay, Detective Byomkesh Bakshi! is a blast indeed. Set in Kolkata during the WWII era, it pits Byomkesh against an evil genius, out to destroy the world. The art direction is excellent and the costume department too outdid itself. Sushant submerges himself in his character and gives a credible performance as Byomkesh. Strangely, the film didn't do well as expected at the box-office despite everything going for it.

**MS DHONI:  
THE UNTOLD  
STORY  
(2016)**



**DIRECTOR: Neeraj Pandey**

**CAST: Sushant Singh Rajput, Disha Patani, Kiara Advani and Anupam Kher**

This one is surely the pinnacle of Sushant's career. MS Dhoni is one of our most successful cricketers. He's known for his prowess with the bat and also admired for his lightning fast wicket-keeping abilities. He's the only captain in the history of cricket to win all ICC trophies. His biopic, M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story, chronicles his life and cricketing career up to the Indian team's win at the 2011 Cricket World Cup. Former wicketkeeper Kiran More coached Sushant, for 13 months, in both wicket-keeping and batting before the filming began. Sushant does a brilliant job of being Dhoni - both physically and in spirit. It became difficult to separate one from the other.







**KEDARNATH  
(2018)**

**DIRECTOR:** Abhishek Kapoor

**CAST:** Sushant Singh Rajput, Sara Ali Khan and Nitish Bharadwaj

Kedarnath is a slow burner, where love germinates over many a ride up and down a mountain. Mukku (Sara Ali Khan) is the younger daughter of a priest, who also runs a shop and a guest house and needs a pithoo – porter – to cart her up and down. Mansoor (Sushant Singh Rajput) happens to be a Muslim but has faith in Lord Shiva. It's thanks to the Shiv temple at Kedarnath that he's able to earn his livelihood. He's an affable man prone to giving discounts to his clients and posing for selfies with them. Their common love for cricket leads to a chance meeting. A smitten Mukku later hires him for the whole month. She bares her heart to him and he amusedly listens. Gradually, they fall in love. But there are complications. Mukku is betrothed to someone else. She's emotionally blackmailed into marrying the guy but nature intervenes before the marriage is consummated. A huge flood, coupled with cloudburst envelopes the valley. Mukku and her father take refuge in the temple, which is the only structure left standing. Mansoor comes to their rescue. Their love and faith get tested again. Sushant's chemistry with Sara works in the film's favour. He acquired the body language of a porter beautifully.



**SONCHIRIYA  
(2019)**

**DIRECTOR:** Abhishek Chaubey

**CAST:** Sushant Singh Rajput, Bhumi Pednekar, Manoj Bajpayee, Ranvir Shorey and Ashutosh Rana

Sonchiriya offers a potent blend of dacoit drama, karmic lessons and caste politics with some realistic action thrown in for good measure. Set in the '70s during the Emergency era, Sonchiriya is a story based in Chambal, which has long been the favourite playing field of directors wanting to channel their inner Sergio Leone and whip up a curry Western. Maan Singh (Manoj Bajpayee), is the leader of a merry band of dacoits, only they call themselves baaghi (rebel). Their rebellion exists at an existential level, as more often than not they are men running away from



**CHHICHHORE  
(2019)**

**DIRECTOR:** Nitesh Tiwari

**CAST:** Sushant Singh Rajput, Shraddha Kapoor, Varun Sharma, Tahir Raj Bhasin & Naveen Polishetty

It's a campus romcom at one level but tackles student suicide on the other. Anirudh (Sushant) and Maya (Shraddha Kapoor) are a divorced couple. They're traumatised when their young son Raghav tries to commit suicide. Anirudh believes that narrating stories from his college days might help his son recover. During college he'd formed life-long friendships with Sexa (Varun Sharma), Derek (Tahir Raj Bhasin), Acid (Naveen Polishetty), Mummy (Tushar Pandey), Bevda (Saharsh Kumar Shukla) and others. Sushant plays a caring dad in his older avatar and a happy-go-lucky student in his younger avatar. He won plaudits for both.

themselves. Lakhna (Sushant Singh Rajput) and Vakil (Ranvir Shorey) are his trusted lieutenants. Virender Gujjar (Ashutosh Rana), a policeman has a personal vendetta against them and has vowed to kill them. Their lives take a turn when they help a woman (Bhumi Pednekar), who stumbles into Chambal carrying a sick girl. Nothing is what it seems as the narrative goes back and forth in time. It was a huge gamble for Sushant to play a dacoit in this period film. The film won lots of critical acclaim and awards. ■

# ...AND THE WORDS ECHO!

AS A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE **SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT**, FILMFARE REPLAYS HIS QUOTES FROM EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

Like a shooting star he dashed into the orbit of the earth stunning all with his brilliance. Sushant Singh Rajput was not confined to or defined by his identity as an actor. His life spread beyond the 70mm and celebrated the mystery of life. His 'bucket list' had 50 dreams lined-up, which included dabbling with Quantum Physics, visiting the Moon, learning to fly a plane, train for Iron Man Triathlon, play tennis with a champ, space training at NASA and even discussing policies with the PM of India... He devoured the philosophy of Sartre and Nietzsche, wove tears into poems, strummed the guitar, was ambidextrous and could mirror write as well – a feat Leonardo da Vinci was known to possess. Perhaps, unconservant with the guile of glamour, he cut short his star trek to move onto a better world. As we mourn his demise, we rerun his quotes from his Filmfare interviews...

.....| NOVEMBER 18, 2015 |.....

“SOME SAID WOW!  
SOME SAID WHAT!  
WHEN WE PUT  
OURSELVES IN THIS  
SITUATION WHERE WE  
CAN GENERATE THIS  
KIND OF POLARISED  
FEELING, WE EVOLVE  
AS ARTISTES.”

“If you draw the line  
between what people  
want and what you want  
to do, then nothing can  
stop you.”

“As we grow we  
start confusing  
things. I call  
it analysis  
by paralysis.  
We analyse  
too much  
and paralyse  
ourselves.  
We worry too  
much about the  
fate of the film.”

“I've also learnt  
that one should  
not dwell in the  
past or in the  
future. The now is  
what matters.”

“We crib about the  
discrimination we faced  
under the British rule. But  
we Indians are the biggest  
hypocrites in the world. The  
discrimination we show  
towards our fellow Indians  
is something else.”

“He (Mahendra  
Singh Dhoni) likes  
winning; it doesn't  
mean that he's  
obsessed with it.  
Even if he has a  
match two days  
down the line, he'll  
be at ease chatting  
with you. He lives in  
the now. And more  
than being a good  
cricketer he's a good  
human being.”

“THE FIRST  
TIME I DID THEATRE  
WAS IN COLLEGE.  
I REALISED  
HOW POWERFUL  
THIS FORM OF  
COMMUNICATION  
COULD BE. AT 18,  
I COULD MAKE A  
CROWD OF 500  
STRANGERS LAUGH  
AND CRY. THAT  
WAS A LIBERATING  
FEELING. BUT  
STILL, I CANNOT  
COMMUNICATE  
WITH PEOPLE I'M  
NOT COMFORTABLE  
WITH.”





“WE ARE  
CONDITIONED  
ABOUT CONCEPTS  
OF RIGHT AND  
WRONG. ACTUALLY,  
THERE’S NOTHING  
RIGHT OR WRONG.  
OUR DEFINITION OF  
MORALITY HAS BEEN  
CREATED OVER THE  
YEARS TO CREATE A  
BALANCE IN SOCIETY.  
WE BELIEVE WHAT  
WE WANT TO BELIEVE  
ABOUT OURSELVES  
AND OTHERS.”

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROHAN SHRESTHA

“

“TODAY, EVEN THOUGH I LOVE MY PENTHOUSE, MY RANGE ROVER, I CHERISH THOSE DAYS WHEN I LIVED WITH SIX GUYS EATING KHICHDI EVERYDAY.”

“I love failure. It might sound unreal but I enjoy it. I crave it. But if there is one thing that I don't want is to be mediocre.”

“From performing as a background dancer at the Filmfare Awards to featuring on the cover... who said dreams don't come true?”

“I don't think much about the future because I don't live there.”

“I'd try to be damn excited about living, setting goals and having fun. It would be addictive and seductive but without meaning.”

“I have reached a neutral space in my life where I neither go ecstatic with joy nor depressed with sadness. I don't go through those extreme states.”

“THE LOSS OF MY MOTHER... (IN 2002) NO MATTER WHAT I DO OR ACHIEVE... THIS SENSE OF LOSS WILL NEVER GO AWAY. IT TAUGHT ME NOT TO GET ATTACHED TO MATERIAL ACHIEVEMENTS.”

OCTOBER 19, 2016

“My thoughts tend to run away from me. I realised quite early that by the time I articulate my thoughts into words, I'm onto another thought. And what comes out isn't what I thought of exactly.”

“I DON'T NEED TO PROVE ANYTHING TO OTHERS. NOR DO I WANT TO HAVE THE BIGGEST BANK BALANCE IN SHOWBIZ. WHAT I WANT TO KEEP ON DOING IS TO FOLLOW MY PASSION. I WANT EVERYONE TO BE RICH AND SUCCESSFUL TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE BEYOND THAT.”

“I want to freewheel, to fly without a compass, not to prove a point to anyone else but for my own fulfilment.”

“We're reaching out to the aspirations of millions of dreamers, telling them that no matter what your social status in life is, no matter where you come from, all you need is to believe in your dreams day in and day out. And somehow, miraculously, they'll all come true.”

“FOR ME THE OPPOSITE OF HAPPINESS ISN'T SADNESS BUT BOREDOM. IF YOU'RE EXCITED ABOUT DOING SOMETHING THEN YOU'RE HAPPY.”

“There's this prejudice that TV actors are way saturated. That kind of affected my choices and set me towards films, towards roles, which weren't totally mainstream.”





“Love is the most illogical thing in the whole f\*^\*^% world. Falling in love is something for which you may want to find a reason, it's because of this, it's because of that. But nothing makes sense. Either you're in love or you're not in love. And it can happen for no apparent reason. It's the most illogical thing, yet it's the most real. You realise it only after you've fallen in love.”

“If I'm with people, I enjoy it. But if I'm alone I also enjoy that. I'm not lonely. There's no vacuum in my life. I do share things with my sisters. My elder sister is like my mother.”

“Any kind of positive feedback, validation and acknowledgement is always good. So if I get an award, I'll naturally feel good. But at the same time you have to understand that it's as true as it's not. For instance, I may not be thinking of chocolates. But if you offer them, I'll take it saying thank you because I love chocolates. But if you don't do that, I'll probably not miss having a chocolate.”

“I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CONFIDENT ABOUT MY WORK. BUT NOW WHEN I SOUND CONFIDENT IT COMES ACROSS AS ARROGANCE.”

“Looking back, when we were kids, we would always finish our tiffin in like five minutes because we wanted to play through the rest of the recess. That's what I want to do. I want to finish doing everyday stuff and rush back to the shooting floor. It has to be as exciting for me as playtime. Otherwise where's the fun?”

OCTOBER 19, 2016

“Shekhar Kapur's Paani took 10 months of my life. I was totally dedicated towards the project. I'd have extensive discussions about the film, about the role with Shekhar. I was internalising his vision. It didn't take off is another matter but that doesn't mean I was sitting idle. And I know that nothing goes waste. I count it as learning experience. He has an extraordinary sense of cinema so interacting with him was like doing a four-year acting course at Lee Strasberg.”

“Everything you know changes one morning; that two people who are close sometimes grow apart. It's sad but there's nothing you can do about it.”



# FAREWELL BASU CHATTERJEE

VETERAN FILMMAKER **BASU CHATTERJEE** PASSES AWAY

(10 January 1930 - 4 June 2020)

**F**ilmmaker Basu Chatterjee, best known for films like *Chhoti Si Baat*, *Rajnigandha*, *Baaton Baaton Mein*, *Swami*, *Ek Ruka Hua Faisla* and *Chameli Ki Shaadi* passed away on June 4, 2020 in Mumbai, following age-related ailments. He was 90 years old.

Basuda was born on January 10, 1930, in Ajmer. He started his career as an illustrator in a reputed newspaper before turning to films. He assisted his namesake Basu Bhattacharya in *Teesri Kasam* (1966), starring Raj Kapoor and Waheeda Rehman. His first film as director was *Sara Akash* (1969), based on the eponymous novel *Sara Akash* by Rajendra Yadav. The film, starring Rakesh Pandey, Madhu Chakravarty and Jalal Agha was about the incompatibility between a married couple. Apparently, it was shot at Rajendra Yadav's own house in Agra. Cinematographer K K Mahajan won the National Film Award for Best Cinematography for his black-and-white camera work in the film. The film set the tone for



Basu Chatterjee

Basuda's future films, as most of his offerings revolved around the lives of common people and their problems.

In fact, most of his films revolved around marriage. *Piya Ka Ghar* (1972), starring Jaya Bhaduri and Anil Dhawan, was

based on Raja Thakur's Marathi film *Mumbaicha Jawai*. It talked about space crunch and the lack of privacy in Mumbai experienced through the eyes of a young couple. *Swami* (1977), starring Shabana Azmi, Girish Karnad and Vikram,

was a more serious film revolving around a woman, who pines for her lover even as she's married off to someone else. *Priyatama* (1977), starring Jeetendra, Neetu Singh, Rakesh Roshan and Utpal Dutt was about how reality kills romance



**Basuda's films revolved around the lives of common people. Even in his rom-coms the milieu was middle-class. *Rajnigandha* (1974) was based on a short story by Mannu Bhandari, starring Amol Palekar, Vidya Sinha and Dinesh Thakur. It was about a woman's dilemma in picking a life partner**



Rajnigandha



On the set of Ratandeep with Hema Malini

in a marriage. *Khatta Meeta* (1978) was about a middle-aged widower (Ashok Kumar) marrying another middle-aged widow (Pearl Padamsee). Both have children from their former marriages and the youngsters find it hard to adjust to each other.

He made pure rom-coms as well but here too his milieu was middle-class. *Rajnigandha* (1974), based on a short story by Mannu Bhandari, starring Amol Palekar, Vidya Sinha and Dinesh Thakur, was about a woman's dilemma in picking a life partner. *Chitchor* (1976), starring Amol Palekar, Zarina Wahab and Vijayendra Ghatge, was a romantic comedy involving mistaken identities.

*Chhoti Si Baat* (1976), starring Amol Palekar, Asrani, Ashok Kumar and Vidya Sinha, had Palekar playing a man with low self-confidence. He then hires a life coach to teach him how to propose to a girl. *Baton Baton Mein* (1979) had a Christian setting and was all about the courtship between Amol Palekar and Tina Munim, assisted by her uncle, played by David. *Man Pasand* (1980), starring Dev Anand, Tina Munim, Girish Karnad and Mehmood, was based on George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. *Shaukeen* (1982) was perhaps his boldest comedy. Starring Ashok Kumar, Utpal Dutt, A.K. Hangal, Rati Agnihotri and Mithun Chakraborty, it was about

the misadventures of three old men, who want to have a good time in Goa. *Chameli Ki Shaadi* (1986), starring Anil Kapoor and Amrita Singh, was about an ex-wrestler trying to marry a rather feisty girl. Caste politics played the villain of the piece.

**B**asuda touched upon thrillers as well. *Tumhare Liye* (1978), starring Sanjeev Kumar, Vidya Sinha and Neelam Mehra, was about reincarnation. *Ratandeep* (1979), starring Girish Karnad and Hema Malini, had Karnad masquerading as the dead husband of Malini in a bid to loot her riches. *Chakravyuha* (1978), starring Rajesh Khanna, Vinod Mehra, and Neetu Singh, was a James Bond kind of an espionage whodunnit. *Sheesha* (1986) was a thriller around rape starring Mithun Chakraborty, Moon Moon Sen and Mallika Sarabhai.

There was a serious streak to his filmmaking as well. *Manzil* (1979), starring Amitabh Bachchan and Moushumi Chatterjee, was based on the hit Bengali film *Akash Kusum* (1965). It had Amitabh pretending to

be a rich man in order to impress Moushumi. *Jeena Yahan* (1979), starring Shabana Azmi, Amol Palekar and Zarina Wahab, was a film about women empowerment. *Ek Ruka Hua Faisla* (1986) was a gritty courtroom drama based on the American hit *12 Angry Men* (1957). *Kamla Ki Maut* (1989), starring Pankaj Kapur, Supriya Pathak and Roopa Ganguly, was a hard-hitting drama about the suicide of an unmarried pregnant girl. It forces her neighbours to re-examine their own lives.

Basuda had the knack of casting big stars in small-budget films. He worked with Mithun Chakraborty in *Shaukeen*, with Vinod Mehra in *Us Paar*, Jeetendra and Neetu Singh in *Priyatama*, Dev Anand and Tina Munim in *Man Pasand*, Rajesh Khanna and Neetu Singh in *Chakravyuha* and Dharmendra and Hema Malini in *Dillagi* and Amitabh Bachchan in *Manzil*. He directed the TV Series *Byomkesh Bakshi* and *Rajani* for Doordarshan, both of which were hugely successful. He's survived by his daughter Rupali Guha, who's also a film director. ■

# GOD *of* SMALL FILMS

DEVESH SHARMA RECOMMENDS THE BEST FILMS OF THE LATE **BASU CHATTERJEE**



**B**asu Chatterjee, who passed away on June 4, 2020, was a prolific filmmaker. He was a versatile director, able to do justice to many genres, though his forte was romantic

comedies. He made films, which depicted the life of common people. Their problems, their heartaches, their victories and small joys were the heroes in his stories. Though he didn't shy from working

with commercial stars - having worked with Dharmendra, Hema Malini and even Amitabh Bachchan - actors like Amol Palekar, Vidya Sinha and Shabana Azmi were seen more in his films. He was one of the

pioneers of the middle-of-the-road cinema between the '70s -'80s. Along with Hrishikesh Mukherjee, he had a large hand in making the genre popular. Presenting a list of some of his best films down the years...





## PIYA KA GHAR (1972)

**CAST:** Jaya Bhaduri, Anil Dhawan and Agha

The film was a remake of the hit Marathi movie Mumbaicha Jawai (1970). It spotlights how congested homes in Mumbai deny privacy to married couples, which can sometimes dent a marriage. Malti (Jaya) is a good-natured girl living in a village. Her marriage is fixed with Ram (Anil Dhawan). Initially, Malti is all excited with the thought of living in a big city with her husband. But her happiness is shattered when she finds she has to share space with his parents, brothers, sister-in-law and uncles, all crammed together in a two-room tenement in a chawl. The young couple has to sleep in the kitchen. A disillusioned Malti wants to go back to her father's house. Eventually, she realises the worth of her caring in-laws. The hit song, Yeh jeevan hai sung by Kishore Kumar, sums up the bitter-sweet nuances of life.

## CHITCHOR (1976)

**CAST:** Amol Palekar, Zarina Wahab and Vijayendra Ghatge

It was a romantic comedy involving mistaken identities. Geeta's (Zarina Wahab) elder sister Meera writes to her family about an eligible bachelor Sunil (Vijayendra Ghatage), an engineer, who's set to visit the village for construction work. Pitamber Chaudhri (A.K. Hangal) and his wife (Dina Pathak) are happy with the news. When overseer Vinod (Amol Palekar) lands up in the village, he's mistaken for Sunil. The parents take a liking to him and so does Geeta. He even starts teaching her music. They fall in love. But Sunil's arrival changes

all equations as he too starts liking her.

The film was shot in the picturesque locales of Mahabaleshwar and Panchgani. It had lovely music by Ravindra Jain, comprising songs like Jab deep jale aana, Gori tera gaon bada pyara and Tu jo mere sur mein. It was later remade by Rajshri as Main Prem Ki Deewani Hoon.



**RAJNIGANDHA WAS BASED ON A SHORT STORY, YAH! SACH HAI, BY NOTED WRITER MANNU BHANDARI... DEVOID OF MELODRAMA, IT BROUGHT THE LIVES OF THREE ORDINARY, MIDDLE-CLASS PEOPLE IN SHARP FOCUS**



## RAJNIGANDHA (1974)

**CAST:** Vidya Sinha, Amol Palekar and Dinesh Thakur  
Rajnigandha was based on a short story, Yahi Sach Hai, by noted writer Mannu Bhandari. It catapulted Vidya Sinha to instant fame. Refreshingly different from the arm-

candy heroines of that era, she plays a city girl, caught between two suitors. She takes a while to make up her mind about whom to marry. Devoid of melodrama, it brought the lives of three ordinary, middle-class people in sharp focus. Vidya's plaited hair and simple sarees had an earthy appeal.

The film, which also marked the debut of Amol Palekar, had two wonderful Salil Chowdhary compositions - Rajnigandha phool tumhare sung by Lata Mangeshkar and Kai baar yunhi dekha hai sung by Mukesh. The latter won Mukesh the National Award for Best Playback Singer.

## CHHOTI SI BAAT (1976)

**Cast:** Amol Palekar, Asrani, Ashok Kumar and Vidya Sinha

The film had Amol Palekar playing a man low in self-confidence. He hires a life coach to teach him how to approach a girl. Palekar plays a mousy introvert in the film while Vidya plays a woman waiting for him to make the first move. Again, the middle-class milieu of the film helped it make a home in the hearts of the masses. The film boasted of great music by Salil Chowdhury. Fans of Hindi film music got a taste of South maestro Yesudas' genius in his duet with Asha Bhosle, Jaaneman jaaneman tere do nayan. Incidentally, it was filmed on Dharmendra and Hema Malini.





### SWAMI (1977)

**CAST:** Shabana Azmi, Vikram, Girish Karnad and Utpal Dutt

The film was adapted from Sarat Chandra's novel of the same name. Saudamini 'Mini' (Shabana Azmi) has grown up idolising her liberal uncle (Utpal Dutt). Like him, she loves to read Western literature, likes Western philosophers and is an atheist at heart. The neighbourhood boy Naren (Vikram) is smitten by her beauty and intellect. Sadly, he takes a long time to make his intentions clear. Mini gets married off to a wealthy trader Ghanshyam (Girish Karnad). He's the epitome of patience. In her

mind, she has become a prisoner in her husband's house and wants to break free. But it's only when she takes the actual step does she realise her foolishness. She begins to appreciate her husband's strength of character. The last scene, where he asks her to return home, completes her transformation from a rebellious girl to a dignified wife.

The film belonged to Shabana Azmi. Her quicksilver expressions carried the day. The film had great music by Rajesh Roshan with songs like Ka karoon sajni, Pal bhar mein and Yaadon mein woh.

### KHATTA MEETHA (1978)

**CAST:** Ashok Kumar, Rakesh Roshan, Bindiya Goswami, Pearl Padamsee, Deven Verma, Preeti Ganguly and Pradeep Kumar

It was loosely based on the 1968 American movie Yours, Mine and Ours. The story revolved around a middle-aged widower, (Ashok Kumar) marrying another middle-aged widow (Pearl Padamsee). Both have children from their former marriages. The youngsters find it hard to adjust to each other. There are several spats between them with the parents trying to patch up things and keep the family united. Nargis' son Feroze (Rakesh Roshan) falls in love with Zarine (Bindiya



Goswami), a daughter of a rich businessman (Pradeep Kumar). The businessman tries to harass the family, which then comes together as one and the matter is solved. The film ends with everyone learning to live in harmony. Thoda hai thode ki zaroorat hai sums up the film's theme of living and loving.

**KHATTA MEETHA WAS LOOSELY BASED ON THE 1968 AMERICAN MOVIE YOURS, MINE AND OURS... THE SONG THODA HAI THODE KI ZAROORAT HAI SUMS UP THE FILM'S THEME OF LIVING AND LOVING**



### BATON BATON MEIN (1979)

**CAST:** Amol Palekar, Tina Munim, Pearl Padamsee and David

The film had a Christian setting. It traced the courtship of Amol Palekar and Tina Munim, assisted by Uncle Tom (David). Rosie Perreira (Pearl Padamsee) is a widow living with her violinist son, Shabi (Ranjit Chowdhry) and daughter Nancy (Tina Munim). She wants her daughter to get married soon. Nancy and her uncle meet Tony Braganza (Amol Palekar) daily in the Bandra local train. Tony and Nancy soon start seeing each other. But Tony is unduly shy and that irks Rosie. She starts looking for a match elsewhere. However, timely intervention by Tom sets things right. The film had some lovely songs like Suniye kahiye kahiye suniye, Na bole tum na maine kuch kaha and Uthe sabke kadam tuned by Rajesh Roshan.





## APNE PARAYE (1980)

**CAST:** Shabana Azmi, Amol Palekar, Girish Karnad and Utpal Dutt

The film is based on Sarat Chandra's novel Nishkriti. Utpal Dutt, a senior advocate based in Kolkata, dotes on his younger cousin, Chander (Amol Palekar). Chander is a bit of a slacker and is only interested in music. His wife, Sheela (Shabana Azmi), runs the household with authority. The advocate's wife Siddheswari (Ashalata) is fond of them both. One day, Utpal Dutt's younger brother, Haish (Girish Karnad), lands up with his wife Naintara (Bharti Achrekar). Naintara's gets jealous of Sheela's hold on the household and plots against her. She gets Sheela and Chander thrown out of the house. Harish files a suit against them. Suddenly, life is on a downward spiral for them. It's only on the intervention of the elder brother that things get back on track. The rivalries of a joint family are amply brought out in the film.

## SHAUKEEN (1982)

**CAST:** Ashok Kumar, Utpal Dutt, A.K. Hangal, Mithun Chakraborty & Rati Agnihotri

The film is loosely based on the American comedy Boys' Night Out (1962). Om Prakash Chaudhary (Ashok Kumar), Jagdishbhai (Utpal Dutt) and Inder Sen (A K Hangal) are three men in their 60s, who love cigarettes, wine and women. While they secretly indulge in the first two vices, the third eludes them. They plan a getaway



trip where they hope to get lucky with women. The driver Ravi (Mithun Chakraborty) takes them to Goa as he wants to meet his girlfriend Anita (Rati Agnihotri) residing there. Anita is easygoing and bohemian. All three get bitten by her charms. They

plan to get lucky with her but the encounters end in fiascos. Of course, being men, they don't admit to it and spice up the narratives. In the end, they feel guilty about not behaving like gentlemen. They redeem themselves by uniting Ravi and Anita. They also help Ravi tide over his financial difficulties. Though a sex comedy, never once does the film cross the bounds of decency. Ashok Kumar, Utpal Dutt and AK Hangal were superb as lecherous old men.

**SHAUKEEN IS BASED ON THE AMERICAN COMEDY BOYS' NIGHT OUT. ASHOK KUMAR, UTPAL DUTT AND A K HANGAL PLAY OLD MEN, WHO LOVE WINE AND WOMEN... THOUGH A SEX COMEDY, NEVER ONCE DOES THE FILM CROSS THE BOUNDS OF DECENCY**



## CHAMELI KI SHAADI (1986)

**CAST:** Anil Kapoor, Amrita Singh, Amjad Khan, Pankaj Kapur and Om Prakash

The film takes a stand against casteism. It also has a feminist heroine, a novelty in those days. Charandas (Anil Kapoor),

is under the influence of Mastram Pahalwan (Om Prakash) and wants to dedicate his life to being a wrestler. All his vows of celibacy go for a toss when he spies Chameli (Amrita Singh), the daughter of the local coal trader Kallumal (Pankaj Kapur).

The duo falls in love and decides to get married. Their parents are against the match as they belong to different castes. They take the help of advocate Harish (Amjad Khan) to resolve the dilemma. He advises them to elope and get married. He later convinces both the girl's father and the boy's brother how the alliance could be politically beneficial to them.

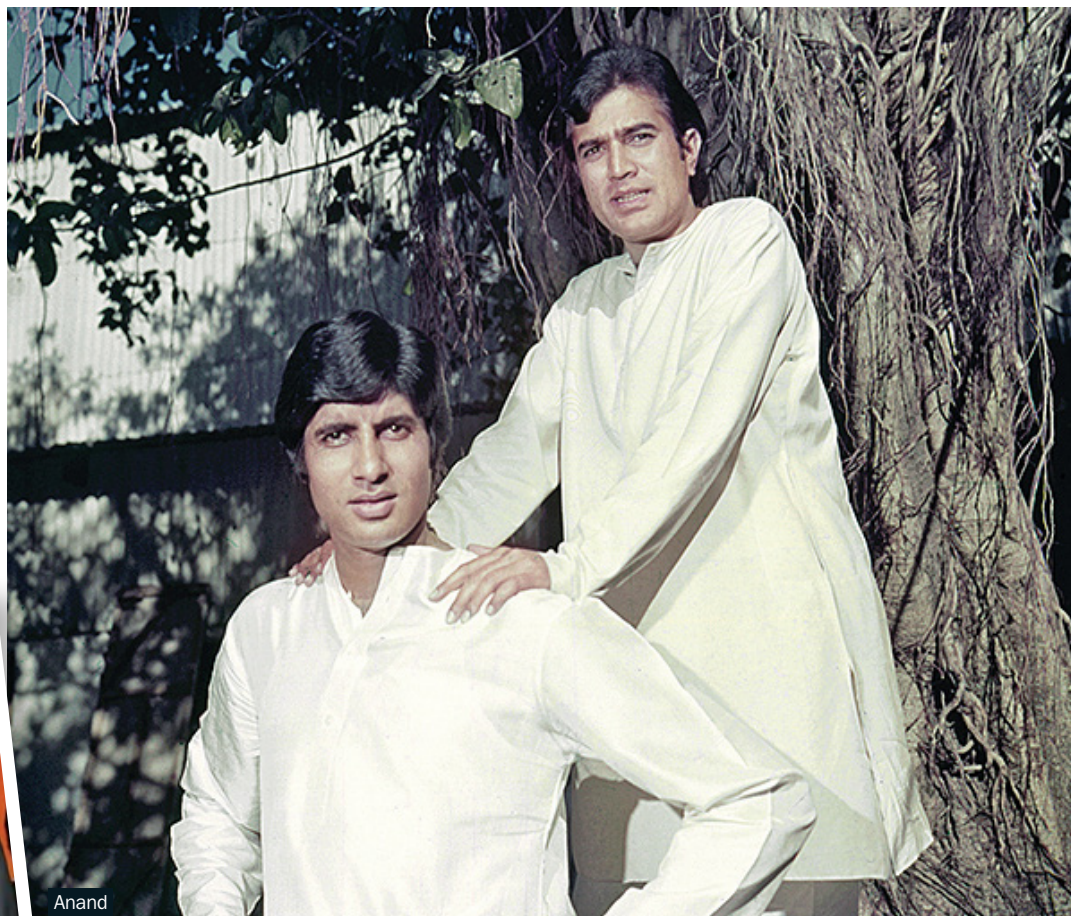
Amrita Singh is pure gold as an overgrown schoolgirl, who has failed class eight four times. She bashes up her relatives like a freestyle wrestler when she overhears their plans of bumping off her boyfriend. Anil Kapoor lets her take centre-stage and is good as an ex-pahalwan. Amjad Khan gets the best lines as the street-smart lawyer, who plays upon the weaknesses of people for his advantage. ■

# Aaye tum yaad mujhe...

**DEVESH SHARMA PROFILES**  
**LYRICIST YOGESH, WHO PASSED AWAY RECENTLY**

**(March 19, 1943 - May 29, 2020)**

**H**e had been writing poetry ever since he was in school. If the class happened to be punished, the teacher would only let them off the hook if Yogesh Gaur agreed to recite one of his poems. The young boy had no idea back then that he would become a lyricist one day. After his father passed away, Yogesh left Lucknow to try his luck in Mumbai. He landed here with his childhood friend Satyaprakash Tiwari,



Anand



The late lyricist Yogesh

Sattu in short. They rented a room in a chawl for Rs 11, a big sum those days, and set about finding work. Yogesh's cousin, Vrajendra Gaur, was a celebrated writer in Mumbai

then. Yogesh hoped his cousin would set him up somewhere. But that wasn't to be. Thankfully, Sattu got a job. As promised, he supported Yogesh till he found his feet.

After knocking on every door, Yogesh finally

found his calling when he started penning down his thoughts in a diary. Those took the shape of poems. Yogesh realised he could try to be a lyricist. Composer Robin Banerjee, who used to work mainly in action films, taught him how to set words





## YOGESH'S HIT SONGS

**Kahin door jab din**

– ANAND

**Rajnigandha phool tumhare**

– RAJNIGANDHA

**Na jaane kyun**

– CHHOTI SI BAAT

**Aaye tum yaad mujhe**

– MILI

**Tere bin kaise din**

– PRIYATAMA

**Rimjhim gire saawan**

– MANZIL

**Kahan tak yeh mann ko**

– BAATON BAATON MEIN

to music. He gave him a break in the film Sakhi Robin (1962). The song was Tum jo aao, sung by Manna Dey and Suman Kalyanpur.

The song got him noticed. But Yogesh was slotted as a 'B' movie lyricist. He wrote for action films starring Dara Singh and Randhawa, which were targeted at the mass audience. His films had exotic titles like Tarzan And Delilah and Flying Circus. These may not have won him recognition. But they did help him survive in Mumbai. Also, he had this knack of writing a song from the female perspective. So he was saddled with songs describing the hero's manly attributes. It's said, he didn't have a record player back then. Hence,

he used to visit composer Salil Chowdhary's house to listen to the tracks. Slowly, an association developed, which resulted in him getting to write two songs in Anand (1971). The film was of great importance to him because the other lyricist was Gulzar. The film was being directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee and starred superstar Rajesh Khanna. He was apprehensive at first but Salilda backed him up. He wrote two gems for the film – Kahin door jab din dhal jaaye, sung by Mukesh and Zindagi

*Rimjhim gire saawan from Manzil was picturised on Amitabh Bachchan and Moushumi Chatterjee amidst the real rain in Mumbai. The appeal of this Yogesh-R.D. Burman number hasn't faded away even today*

kaisi yeh paheli haye, sung by Manna Dey. The songs became extremely popular. Then came Annadata (1972), where Salilda made him write the whole album. It had the philosophical Nain hamaare saanjh sakaare sung by Mukesh on one hand and the frothy Guzar jaaye din sung by Kishore Kumar. Nis din nis din and Raaton ke saaye ghane were both sung by Lata Mangeshkar.

Salil Chowdhary asked him to write for Basu Chatterjee's Rajnigandha (1974) as well. Yogesh wrote the pensive Kai baar yun hi dekha hai, which won a National Award for Mukesh but no awards came Yogesh's way. The title song Rajnigandha phool tumhare, sung by Lata, too was admired. He worked with the illustrious SD Burman in Mili (1975). While it had the lively Maine kaha phoolon se, sung by Lata, it also had the seeped in sadness Badi sooni sooni and Aaye tum yaad mujhe sung by Kishore Kumar. Chhoti Si Baat (1976) was another Basuda-Salil Chowdhury film, for which Yogesh wrote

gems like Na jane kyun, sung by Lata and the Yesudas-Asha Bhosle duet Jaaneman jaaneman.

Yogesh then on became a regular in Basuda's films. Priyatama (1977) had the happy Koi roko na deewane ko, composed by Rajesh Roshan and the sad Tere bin kaise din. For Baton Baton Mein (1979), composed by Rajesh Roshan, he wrote the poignant Kahan tak yeh mann ko among other songs. In Manzil (1979), he wrote the evergreen ode to Mumbai rains, Rimjhim gire saawan. The song had two versions, one sung by Kishore Kumar and the other by Lata. Picturised on Amitabh Bachchan and Moushumi Chatterjee amidst real rain, the appeal of this Yogesh-R.D. Burman number hasn't faded till date.

Sadly, even after writing memorable songs, the unassuming Yogesh never got his due. His last film was Angrezi Mein Kehte Hain (2018), where he wrote two songs. His health was fast deteriorating. During his last days, he was cared for by Satyendra Tripathi, who had sung Piya mose rooth gaye from Angrezi..., Yogesh's last film song. ■

# GOODBYE WAJID

**DEVESH SHARMA** PROFILES  
**WAJID KHAN** OF SAJID-WAJID FAME,  
WHO PASSED AWAY RECENTLY

**(1973 - 2020)**

**W**ajid Khan belonged to the Kirana Gharana. His father Sharafat Ali Khan was a tabla maestro. While his elder brother, Sajid, is an ace tabla player like their father. Wajid learnt to play Hindustani classical on guitar. The duo used to jam on their favourite instruments, while composing tunes. Sajid-Wajid's first film as composers was the Salman Khan starrer *Pyaar Kiya To Darna Kya* (1988). Salman Khan gave a break to two music composers in the film. One was Himesh Reshammiya, who composed the title song. The others were brothers Sajid-Wajid, who composed an intricate qawwali *Teri jawaani badi mast mast hai*. It was sung by Iqbal Sabri, Afzal Sabri and Anupama Deshpande. Earthy, and rooted in folk tradition, it became the calling card for the musical duo. Making massy, melody-based music became their mantra for life. The main music composers of the film were Jatin-Lalit.

Life is a circle, as they say. Years later, Lalit Pandit was the guest composer for *Dabangg* (2010), while Sajid-Wajid were the main composers.



TIMESCONTENT





## Sajid-Wajid's name would forever be linked to Salman Khan. Their most fruitful partnership was with the actor. They composed music for several films starring Salman, including the Dabangg series

Wajid was initially inclined to be a singer. Sonu Nigam's hit non-film album *Deewana* (1999), which was composed by Sajid-Wajid, was also supposed to be Wajid's launchpad as a singer. But Wajid was an unknown entity then, while Sonu was a household name. Naturally, Sonu got precedence. The songs of the album, *Deewana*

tera, Ab mujhe raat din and Iss kadar pyaar hai are still popular. One can only guess the heights Wajid would have touched as a singer if things had worked out.

In 2001, they composed another non-film album *Khoya Khoya Chand*, featuring Alka Yagnik and Babul Supriyo. In 2005, they came out with *Tera Intezar*, featuring Indian

### WAJID KHAN'S HIT SONGS AS A SINGER

**Soni de nakhre**  
(PARTNER 2008)

**Love me**  
(WANTED 2009)

**Tere bina lagta nahi**  
(KAL KISSNE DEKHA 2009)

**No problem**  
(NO PROBLEM 2010)

**Humka peeni hai**  
(DABANGG 2010)

**Right now**  
(HOUSEFULL 2 2012)

**Mukhtasar**  
(TERI MERI KAHAANI 2012)

**Fevicol se**  
(DABANGG 2)

Idol star Rahul Vaidya.

As a singer, Wajid Khan began his career with *Partner* in 2008, singing tracks like *Soni de nakhre* and *Do you wanna partner*. He has sung popular tracks like *Hud hud dabangg*, *Jalwa*, *Fevicol se* among others. Sajid-Wajid had also composed IPL 4 theme song *Dhoom Dhoom Dhoom Dhadaka* with Wajid singing the title track. They were mentors on the reality shows like *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Singing Superstar*, *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* 2012 and composed the title track for *Bigg Boss 4* and *Bigg Boss 6*.


RD Burman is linked to Rajesh Khanna. Likewise, Sajid-Wajid's name would forever be linked to Salman Khan. Their most fruitful partnership was with the actor. They composed music for several films starring Salman Khan, like *Tumko Na Bhool Paayenge* (2002), *Tere Naam* (2003), *Garv* (2004), *Mujhse Shaadi*

*Karogi* (2004), *Shaadi Karke Phas Gaya Yaar* (2006), *Partner* (2007), *Hello* (2008), *God Tussi Great Ho* (2008), *Wanted* (2009), *Main Aur Mrs Khanna*, (2009), *Veer* (2010), *Dabangg* (2010), *No Problem* (2010). Mashallah was their only song in *Ek Tha Tiger* (2012). They often mentioned that Salman had a great ear for music and took the final call when it came to picking tunes. They reiterated that his suggestions worked for other music directors too.

Their non-Salman hits included films such as *Kya Yehi Pyaar Hai* (2002), *Gunaah* (2002), *Chori Chori* (2003), *Kal Kissne Dekha* (2009), *Chashme Buddoor* (2013), *Main Tera Hero* (2014), *Heropanti* (2014) and *Freaky Ali* (2016). The craze for multi-composer albums ate into their repertoire. But battling the odds, they continued to bet on melody. *Dagabaaaz re* (Dabangg 2), *Sureli ankhiyon wale* (Veer), *Tere mast mast do nain* (Dabangg) and *Anarkali disco chali* in *Housefull 2*, are examples of what they were able to achieve despite the constraints.

Wajid passed away on June 1. Sajid shared a statement on Instagram that read, "Our dearest Wajid passed away at the age of 47 due to a cardiac arrest... He had a successful kidney transplant last year and he was undergoing treatment for a throat infection." He's survived by his wife Maryam and two children, a son and a daughter. ■



A full-page photograph of Sonam Kapoor Ahuja. She is sitting on a red brick ledge, leaning against a white wall with black window frames. She is wearing a long-sleeved, knee-length dress with a bold red and black geometric pattern. She is smiling and looking towards the camera, with her right hand resting on her head. She is also wearing black high-heeled sandals with multiple straps and black circular ornaments.

# Eat play love

**SONAM KAPOOR AHUJA** COUNTS HER BLESSINGS DURING THE LOCKDOWN - ONE OF THEM BEING HUSBAND ANAND AHUJA. AN EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH **JITESH PILLAAI**

PHOTOGRAPHS: HOUSE OF PIXELS



## Her style shenanigans find huge cheerleaders at home and beyond.

As an actor, she's in sync with her sensibilities – Raanjhanaa, Neerja, PadMan, Veere Di Wedding, Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa... scale her spectrum. As a wife, she's enjoying the universe that's hers for keeps. While as a woman hers is an ongoing conversation with the self. Sonam Kapoor Ahuja is a celebration – of every phase, every curve. Whether it's whipping up Sindhi cuisine for her family in lockdown or jogging in her sun-kissed garden in Delhi, it's all about gratitude for Sonam. The girl born with the silver spoon also has a heart of gold, which beats for those not in the same 'boat' as hers. Excerpts...

### WHAT'S YOUR ROUTINE DURING THE LOCKDOWN?

I follow the same routine every day because it keeps me sane. My husband wakes up at 5:30 am. I wake up between 6:30 – 8 am. I have jeera pani and two glasses of hot water with lemon. Then I make coffee for myself. I walk on the treadmill or around the house like a crazy person for 40 minutes. It makes me feel good. Then I do some suryanamaskars. The fact that I have the space to do that is amazing. Then I go to the kitchen and begin cooking for the family.

### WHAT ALL HAVE YOU BEEN COOKING?

Regular khana. Like today I made Sindhi

turai, spinach and chawal khichadi. My mother and mother-in-law both didn't cook because they didn't have to. The only reason I know cooking is because I went to boarding school. My Nani (maternal grandma) was a good cook. I wanted to be like her. You tend to want to do things your mother didn't do. Thank God! Otherwise we'd be eating bread and butter every day because our chef doesn't stay with us. One of our staff, who lives with us, helps me with the cooking.

### WHAT DO YOU COOK BEST?

Unfortunately, I can only cook vegetarian food. I cook Sindhi food the best

because my Nani did that. Sindhi kadi, aloo tuk and also South Indian curry... since I love South Indian food.

### DO YOU LIKE LONDON OR PREFER LIVING IN INDIA?

Honestly, I like India, be it Mumbai or Delhi. I like Delhi because I've shot most of my films here. I like London because of the freedom I enjoy there. It's difficult for me to step outside for a walk in Delhi.

### WHAT'S YOUR AVERAGE DAY IN LONDON LIKE?

In the morning, I walk to the gym and walk back home. Then I visit the office, do some work and come back. We order in all the time. London is



With husband Anand Ahuja

a lot like Mumbai in that sense.


### SO YOU DON'T COOK IN LONDON?

I prepare dinner sometimes - mostly salads. To call for food from outside every day is a pain. In India we have the privilege of staff and house help. But in London it's not like that. So if it wasn't for these two years of training in London or my stay in a boarding school, I'd have been a mess during quarantine.

### WHAT ARE THE OTHER REALISATIONS THAT QUARANTINE HAS BROUGHT ABOUT?

You realise how privileged you are, how good a life you lead as compared to others. I've only been grateful this whole time as opposed to being frustrated stuck at home. Everyone's going through this. We're all in the same storm but in different boats. I'm grateful that I'm in a boat that's comfortable, nice

**“YOU REALISE HOW PRIVILEGED YOU ARE, HOW GOOD A LIFE YOU LEAD AS COMPARED TO OTHERS. I’VE ONLY BEEN GRATEFUL THIS WHOLE TIME. EVERYONE’S GOING THROUGH THIS. WE’RE ALL IN THE SAME STORM BUT IN DIFFERENT BOATS. I’M GRATEFUL THAT I’M IN A BOAT THAT’S COMFORTABLE, NICE AND WARM”**



**“THE ONLY REASON  
I HAVE SUCH A HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIP WITH  
ANAND IS BECAUSE  
I CAME TO TERMS  
WITH WHO I WAS  
BEFORE I MET HIM.  
I REALISED THAT  
A MAN OR MY WORK  
CAN'T COMPLETE ME.  
I HAVE TO BE COMPLETE  
WITHIN MYSELF”**



and warm and we have enough food for ourselves. I count my blessings every day.

**MANY ARE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PANDEMIC INCLUDING THOSE IN THE FILM INDUSTRY.**

Everyone goes through different levels of anxiety. I'll be the wrong person to give advice because I come from a place of privilege. I can't even begin to understand what so many are going through. I don't have to put a roof over my head or bring food on the table. So I cannot answer that question without sounding condescending.

Yes, I am anxious for my friends. A lot of them are entrepreneurs, who might have to shut down their

businesses or reduce the scale and let go of people. I'm anxious for my husband, my father-in-law and brother-in-law because they run a corporation, which is human resource heavy.

I'm not anxious for their business but for the people who work with them. They're like family to them. I'm anxious for journalists and media persons, who're my friends. I'm anxious for all my near and dear ones. I'm not anxious for myself as I'm in a different boat. I wish we were all in the same boat.

**YOU ONCE SAID THAT ANAND AHUJA CAN ONLY SEE THINGS IN BLACK OR WHITE, NOT IN SHADES OF GREY. DOES THAT IDEALISM STILL HOLD TRUE FOR HIM?**

Yes. His is a huge responsibility

because so many people's jobs are on the line... it requires someone with great moral fibre to realise that. I'm not saying this because Anand's my husband but because of the person he is. I call him Gautam Buddha. I tell him if you hadn't met me, you would have left everything and gone off to the forest. He's extremely idealistic. (Laughs) I'm like one of those apsaras pulling the sadhu out of his tapasya! I'm lucky to have married such a good human being. He's so black and white that to an extent it's annoying. Like we cannot do this and we cannot cut the queue... and things like that.

**ON YOUR RETURN FROM LONDON, YOU DIDN'T JUMP THE QUEUE BUT STOOD PATIENTLY AT THE**

**DELHI AIRPORT...**

I wouldn't do that. My husband too would never do that. He said if they ask us to be in quarantine, we will go through that. I said, 'Yeah I'm okay with it'. We agree on the same things. That's why I married him. Otherwise, I'd have married some movie star, who'd want to take a private plane up and down.

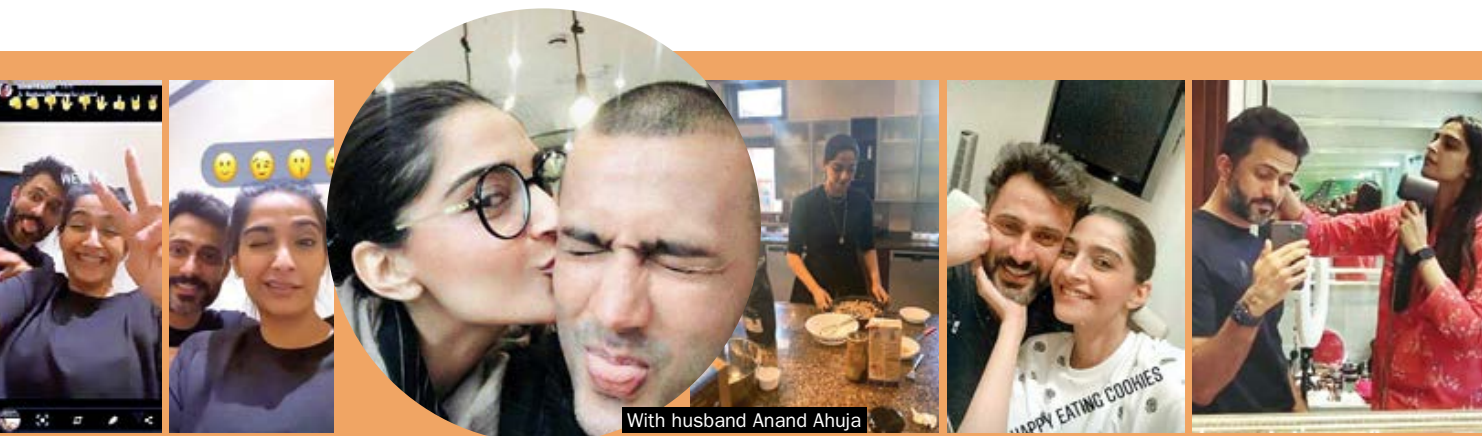
**WHAT WAS THE MOMENT, WHICH PROMPTED YOU TO MARRY ANAND?**

He loved me even though I was nuts. He knows exactly who I am. I say whatever comes to my mind with no filter. He saw the person in me and not some glamorous heroine. He saw me as Sonam, someone who's extremely naïve and moohfat (frank). And also,

someone least competitive and ambitious. He said I cannot understand that being in the film industry you're not ambitious. I was like being ambitious is not a bad thing. But I'm not ambitious to be No. 1. I'm more ambitious to do good work and work with the right people. When you work in the film industry your world becomes small. I didn't want that to happen. I've had the same friends in the industry from the beginning. I've had the same friends through ups and downs. Not fair-weather friends.

**HAS MARRIAGE SET TO REST THE ANXIETIES YOU HAD ABOUT YOURSELF?**

I put out a post a few days ago saying the only reason I met Anand and have had such a healthy relationship



**“I CALL HIM GAUTAM BUDDHA. I TELL ANAND IF YOU HADN'T MET ME, YOU WOULD HAVE LEFT EVERYTHING AND GONE OFF TO THE FOREST. HE'S EXTREMELY IDEALISTIC. I'M LIKE ONE OF THOSE APSARAS PULLING THE SADHU OUT OF HIS TAPASYA. I'M LUCKY TO HAVE MARRIED SUCH A GOOD HUMAN BEING”**



**“ I’M THE MOST BORING HUMAN BEING YOU’LL EVER MEET. I’VE NOT HAD WILD AFFAIRS NOR AM I ONE OF THOSE HEROINES, WHO’S HAVING PILLS WITH HER WINE. I DON’T EVEN DRINK. I’M SO BORING. I’M ROLLING AROUND WITH MY BOOK AND NOT WITH ANY MAN IN BED ”**



with him is because I came to terms with who I was before I met him. I realised that a man or my work can't complete me. I have to be complete within myself. I'm the only one, who can complete me. As soon as I figured that I met Anand.

#### HOW LONG DID YOU TWO DATE?

We knew each other for two and a half years. We dated for two years. In May, we'll complete two years of marriage. So it's almost four and a half years of knowing each other.

#### DO YOU FEEL DOMESTICATED NOW?

I don't believe I'll ever feel domesticated.

having pills with her wine. I don't even drink. I'm so boring. (Laughs) I'm rolling around with my book and not with any man in bed.

#### WHAT HAVE YOU DISCOVERED ABOUT YOUR PARENTS AFTER YOUR MARRIAGE?

That they have the healthiest and the best marriage ever. (Laughs) And that my dad is so scared of my mother. That fear comes from love and respect.

#### HOW DO YOU HANDLE ONLINE

sit there and write dirt about you even if it's not true - without research and thought. That's such a sad existence and a sad life. I don't feel bad for myself anymore. I feel bad for them because it's bad karma for them. They'll be going to hell for sure. Secondly, their whole existence depends on trolling someone. They're being paid for that job. So I can't take it personally.

#### WHAT ARE YOU WATCHING ONLINE

In fact, they're shown to be the nicest, kindest and coolest people in the show. They're exactly how my friends are. I've cried watching it. I'm not watching anything intense because this is not the time to watch negative, intense or dramatic content. I'm watching fun stuff.

#### THE MASAKALI 2.0 REMIX WAS A HIT TOO. YOUR MEMORY OF THE ORIGINAL...

When I was shooting in Chandni

the song Masakali made me famous. I remember, once we were shooting for Aisha (2010) near Humayun Tomb. Abhay Deol and I were shooting a scene near a golawala. There was no one around. After the shot, when I turned back, I saw a sea of people had gathered. That was my first brush with hysteria. People were shouting, 'Masakali!' So the journey from Delhi-6 to Aisha was about being a nobody to a somebody.

#### A RETRO FAVOURITE SONG...

Lag jaa gale (Woh Kaun Thi? 1964) is my favourite. And that's the one thing that we all want to do. Hug people, right? I'm not sureeli at all. I'm the most besura



Neerja

Delhi- 6



With family

**“ANYONE AND EVERYONE IS GETTING SLAMMED ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR NO FAULT OF THEIRS. THERE ARE ACTUALLY PROFESSIONALS, WHO SIT THERE AND WRITE DIRT ABOUT YOU. THAT’S SUCH A SAD EXISTENCE. IT’S BAD KARMA FOR THEM. THEY’LL BE GOING TO HELL FOR SURE ”**

#### BUT YOU WERE NEVER A WILD CHILD.

What wild! The only thing I do is speak too much. Otherwise, I'm the most boring human being you'll ever meet. I've not had wild affairs nor am I one of those heroines, who's

#### TROLLING FOR YOUR PERFORMANCES OR VIEWS?

It's not only me. Anyone and everyone is getting slammed on social media for no fault of theirs. There are actually professionals, who

#### THESE DAYS?

I've been watching Michael Jordan's documentary The Last Dance. I'm also watching Queer Eye. It's insane, I love it because it's positive. It's not the stereotype of gay men being bitchy.

Chowk for Delhi 6 (2009), I could go to the Parathewali Gali and have chaat. Sawariyaa (2007) hadn't made me world famous. But after Delhi-6 released, even though the film didn't do so well,

person ever. I'm not like Alia (Bhatt), Parineeti Chopra or Priyanka Chopra, who sing well. Even Shraddha (Kapoor) sings well because it's in her genes... Anyway, I love the beautiful song. ■

# The dance of life

**MADHURI DIXIT-NENE RETRACES HER STEPS TO RECALL HER ICONIC DANCES AND MORE... WITH JITESH PILLAAI**

★★★★

*Rhythm is her hallmark. In every phase of her career and life, Madhuri Dixit-Nene has waltzed to her own beat. She's just celebrated her 53rd birthday. And just like her dazzling smile, her charisma is timeless. Her talent is in perpetual pursuit of newer platforms of expression. The lockdown, in fact, has helped her tap new reserves.*

*Organised by her academy, Dance With Madhuri (DWM), she recently hosted an online dance festival to help people beat the blues and learn new dance forms. She cut her first single Candle, where she sings of hope and happiness. The virtual auditions of her dance show, Dance Deewane, have kicked off from home... For Madhuri Dixit-Nene the show never stops. Excerpts from an intimate conversation with the diva...*



*Madhuri Dixit-Nene shares snapshots of her time at home during the lockdown*

## **WHAT'S YOUR ROUTINE DURING LOCKDOWN?**

Initially, it was hard to get into a routine. You try to understand the new situation from every angle. The harm the virus has caused, the economy being flattened, lives disrupted... Kids have also got onto virtual learning. It's not a bad thing but the kids (referring to sons Arin and Ryan) suddenly have

to plan everything for themselves. But I'm proud of them. Initially, it was hard for me too. We don't know how long it will go on. So I started my riyaz. I practise singing with my mother in the evening. We're trying to keep ourselves occupied doing something constructive. On the brighter side, you have more time with your family now.





“  
*There's immense discipline  
in the industry today. Today  
there's no waiting for anyone.  
You shoot, you finish your work  
and you leave. That's great.  
But earlier there was a kind of  
spontaneity. We'd be sitting on  
the set with make-up while the  
dialogue was being written*  
”

Earlier, one often complained about not being able to do so many things. (Smiles) After a long time, I read a book - Born A Crime (by Trevor Noah).

#### YOU HAVE A TALENT FOR SINGING AS WELL...

I won't say I'm a professional singer. But I do sing. It's because of my mother. She used to sing classical music. She did her masters in vocal Hindustani classical music. She'd urge me to learn from her. But for me, kathak was the ultimate thing. I'd sing with her sometimes. I enjoyed being on stage in school. Being a convent, I'd sing English songs. Of course, I love Hindi music. Actually, I love all kinds of music.

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MOTHER OF TWO TEENAGE BOYS?

When you have teenagers at home, it's a different world altogether. They're also going through so many changes. In their bodies, in their thinking, everything... so it's a challenge as a parent. But I'm enjoying it. I want to be as close to them as possible. Another year and the older one (Arin) will be in college. I want to spend as much time as I can with them. Right now, they're busy with

**“My kids are a mix bag. In temperament, outlook and behaviour, the older one, Arin, is more like my husband Ram. He's gregarious. Arin's interests lie in drama, math, physics... The younger one, Ryan, loves music. He's more like me. He's quieter. Whereas, Arin is a mini Ram”**



Madhuri cut the single titled Candle during lockdown

Arin, Dr Sriram Nene, Ryan and Madhuri



school work. They spend time with friends on Skype and Zoom. They play games online.

#### HOW MUCH ARE THEY LIKE RAM AND YOU?

They are a mix bag. In temperament, outlook and behaviour, the older one is more like Ram. But Arin's interests also lie in drama, music, math, physics... The younger one (Ryan) loves music. But he's also interested in science, engineering and math. He's more like me. He's quieter. Ram is gregarious. Arin is outgoing and gregarious too. Arin is a mini Ram. If you see photographs of Ram at 17, the similarity with Arin is uncanny.

#### YOUR DANCES HAVE BEEN ICONIC. WHEN WAS THE FIRST TIME YOU DID A COMPLICATED DANCE?

Dancing for the camera is different from the way you would normally dance. Initially, while I'd be engrossed in my dance, they'd ask me to stop if I went beyond 'the mark'. Even if you go a little to the other side, you're not in frame. It would irritate me.

During Tezaab (1988), Sarojji (Khan) told me, "Tum toh Indian dancing karti ho. This is a Bollywood-kind of dance. You'll have to rehearse." I agreed. I wanted to get my steps right. So that when I'm performing, I only have to concentrate on my expressions not where the mark is. Tezaab was a lesson in Bollywood dance. I had to change so many expressions in seconds. It was fun. Jackie Shroff

once told me, "In the Ek do teen song you're like a squirrel moving from one expression to another."

#### A SEQUENCE WHERE YOU HAD TO GIVE THE MAXIMUM TAKES?

We (Sanjay Dutt and Madhuri) gave maximum takes with the chair for Tamma tamma (Thanedar 1990), choreographed by Sarojji. We did like 40 retakes. Even if one of us made a slight mistake, we had to do it again. Finally, we did an entire shot perfectly. In the end the cap had to fall on my foot and stay there. But it fell and rolled off. So we had to do it all over again.

#### HOW MANY DAYS WOULD IT TAKE TO

#### CHOREOGRAPH A NORMAL SONG?

It would depend on what kind of song it was. If it was a simple song like Palki mein hoke savar chali re (Khalnayak 1993), it would be done in two-three days. If it was an elaborate song like Ek do teen, Choli ke peeche (Khalnayak), or Dola re (Devdas 2002), then it would take around 12 days. These had so many dancers, the frames had to be perfect, the sets were huge. Ashok Mehta was doing the photography for Choli ke peeche. The way he lit up everything was magical. There were so many props on the set. One day, Subhashji (Ghai, director) exclaimed,





“  
*For Maar dala (Devdas) we used  
to shoot from 6.30 pm to 6.30 am...  
Hothon pe aisi baat (Jewel Thief)  
was the inspiration behind Dola re  
dola. Sarojji (Khan) and Sanjay  
Leela Bhansali did a fab job. Even  
Kaahe chhed chhed mohe...from  
the same film is wonderful*  
”



**“Humko aaj kal hai intezaar (Sailaab) was an alhad (innocent) song. Sarojji said, ‘Let your hair remain loose. Just tie the pallu around your waist. That way you’ll look like a girl waiting for love.’ The mogras thrown in the air, the hair flying looked beautiful”**

“Main dekhoon kahan se. I can’t even see my hero and heroine!”

#### **ANY OTHER MEMORY?**

There was another sweet song Tere bin nahin guzre din in Anjaam (1994). I try to seduce a wheelchair-bound Shah Rukh (Khan). Sarojji wanted to do the song in one take. Three-four cameras were placed in different angles. I had to remember, which camera was where in keeping

with whether I’d to give a profile shot or a long shot. We rehearsed for it. Thankfully, it got okayed in one take. Shah Rukh, being on the wheelchair, had just to watch me. I guess, he must have been on tenterhooks wanting us to finish the shot soon. (Laughs) Imagine, when you’re dancing in the moment, and someone is just watching you, fearing kahin ye mistake na kar de!

#### **TELL US ABOUT THE KAY SERA SERA DANCE IN PUKAR...**

When I was told that Prabhudheva would be choreographing it, I was a bit scared for the first time in my life. I told him you have a different style and I have a different one. He said don’t worry and that he’d take small shots. We rehearsed for the song. Next day, when we started shooting, he began dancing at a stretch. I reminded him about the chhota chhota takes.

He said, “Ma’am you can do it.” He pushed me to do it. He has so much rhythm, a sense of timing and also humour in his dance. It was fun. I had a great time working on that song.

#### **AND HUMKO AAJKAAL HAI INTEZAAR FROM SAILAAB...**

It just took around three-four days to shoot it. When we first heard the song, Sarojji and I realised that the main lead was just singing a

line. The chorus was singing the entire song. Sarojji said yeh kaisa gana hai. But she said that we had a great opportunity with it. She said, “Let the girls sing but you express each line with your facial expressions.” I came on the set thinking it was a koli dance. My hair was tied in a bun. We even took a shot. But Sarojji was not happy. She felt something was amiss. It was an alhad (innocent) song about a young girl





**“When I was told that Prabhudheva would be choreographing Kay Sera Sera (Pukar), I was a little scared... He said, ‘Ma’am you can do it’. He pushed me to do it. He has so much rhythm, a sense of timing and also humour in his dance. It was fun”**

waiting for love. She said, “Untie the bun. Let your hair remain loose. Don’t drape the pallu over your shoulders. Just tie it around your waist. That way you’ll look like a young girl waiting for love.” The cameraman was also inspired by the song. The way he has taken the shot, the angles... the mogras thrown in the air, the hair flying, it all looked beautiful.

#### **IT’S SAID MAAR DAALA FOR DEVDAS WAS SHOT THROUGH THE NIGHT...**

Yes, we used to shoot from 6.30 pm to 6.30 am. The set was all lit up in Filmcity. The words Maar dala were said in four different ways. We played with the expressions... happy and sad. Hothon pe aisi baat (Jewel Thief) was the inspiration behind Dola re dola. It was shot in long shots. Sarojji and Sanjay Leela Bhansali did a fab job. Even Kaahe chhed chhed mohe... from the same film is wonderfully shot.

#### **A DANCE NUMBER WHICH EXCEEDED YOUR EXPECTATIONS...**

Chane ke khet mein from Anjaam (1994)

was a cute song. At first Rahulji (Rawail) had a different song to be picturised. Sarojji and I didn’t find any fun in the song. Rahulji had a strict image. But we went up to him and said the song wasn’t good enough. He asked the music directors to work out something else. That’s how Chane ke khet mein came about. We had liked the song then. But I didn’t know it would grow to be so popular. People perform it in reality shows even today.

#### **WHAT DO YOU MISS ABOUT THE ‘90S AS COMPARED TO TODAY?**

There’s immense discipline today. Today there’s no waiting for anyone. You come, you shoot, you finish your work and leave. That’s great. But earlier there was a kind of spontaneity. We’d be sitting on the set with make-up while the dialogue was being written on the other side. When we’d ask for it, we were told, “Two minutes, we’re just completing it.” Ek spontaneity thi usmein. Today everything

**Achchaji main haari – Kala Pani (1958)**

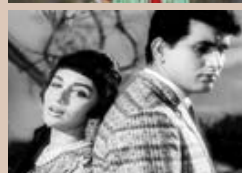
**Jab pyaar kiya toh darna kya – Mughal-E-Azam (1960)**

**Lag jaa gale ke phir – Woh Kaun Thi? (1964)**

**Aaja aaja main hun pyar tera – Teesri Manzil (1966)**

**Inhi logon ne – Pakeezah (1972)**

**Thare rahiyo – Pakeezah (1972)**



**MADHURI’S DREAM SONGS**

is planned and calculated. Earlier a project was just ruled by passion. But every era has its ups and downs, pros and cons. There would be continuity jerks. The shooting would halt for some reason. Then after a year or so, it would suddenly resume. In between the jewellery would be misplaced. Then we’d wear something similar. So you enter a room wearing a different pair of earrings and leave the room with something else. But all that was forgiven. People just loved cinema.

#### **AS A JUDGE IN DANCE REALITY SHOWS, HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN CONTESTANTS DANCE ON YOUR NUMBERS?**

I go with the emotions behind it. Either they love me or the song or they love the choreography, that’s why they are doing it. It makes me happy to inspire someone. There’s so much talent in the remote corners of India. These platforms give them a chance to showcase the talent. Some of them are self-taught. They have gone on YouTube and websites and picked up dance. That justifies why I am online to teach dance. It will enable people to perform, work and earn money. ■

“I’ve been such a lazy lump of protoplasm during this lockdown. Samajh mein nahin aata hai ki thak kar sona hai yaa so kar thakna hai... **I feel redundant. I wonder if I’ll be able to work after the lockdown. I’ve become used to just lazing around**”





# “I’ve been an absolute pain to Tahira”

**AYUSHMANN KHURRANA** SHATTERS ALL MYTHS ABOUT HIMSELF

IN AN INTIMATE CHAT WITH **JITESH PILLAI**

**H**e’s truly an ‘outsider’. Someone who’s part of showbiz and yet not of it. Someone who’s as familiar with the dazzle as with the dust. In his eight-year career, Ayushmann Khurrana has acquired a lifetime of learning. Thanks to both success and failure, pleasure and pain, which have kept him engaged

simultaneously. Being a consummate artiste – he sees the poetry in it all. In the seduction of stardom and the reality beyond it. An avid believer in the Buddhist philosophy, it helps him find equilibrium in a world of extremes. Understanding the mind and the method of the monk, who’s at home with the movies...

## **WHAT ARE YOU DOING DURING THE LOCKDOWN?**

I’ve been such a lazy lump of protoplasm during this lockdown. (Laughs) Forgive the biology. Actually, I was a student of biology. Samajh mein nahin aata hai ki thak kar sona hai yaa so kar thakna hai. So I’m confused. I sleep for seven and half hours during the night. The afternoon siesta is for an hour and a half. That makes it around 9 to 10 hours of sleep. I feel redundant. I wonder if I’ll be able to work after the lockdown. I’ve become used to just lazing around.



“After Vicky Donor, I turned obnoxious with my family... When your first film becomes super successful you start believing you’re invincible. **You gain this false sense of confidence that whatever you touch, will turn into gold. Mera dimaag kharab ho gaya tha**”

With wife Tahira Kashyap

I surface around 4.30 pm. I feel energetic after that. Before that I'm cranky. (Smiles) I may even strike someone with something.

#### **AREN'T YOU COOKING ANYTHING LIKE THE OTHERS?**

Khana khane se fursat milti hi nahi. I can't cook. When I first came to Mumbai, I'd brought my cook along. I was living in a 1BHK flat. My cook used to share it with me. I can live without a girlfriend or wife. But I can't live without a cook.

#### **ARE YOU BEING A PAIN TO YOUR WIFE TAHIRA (KASHYAP)?**

I've been an absolute pain to Tahira. She wonders



With brother  
Aparshakti Khurana

what I'm doing. The last time we spent so much time together must have been 10 years back. She considers me as her third child. She's always known me as a lazy guy, who tries not to be lazy.

#### **WHAT HAVE YOU DISCOVERED ABOUT YOUR KIDS? ARE YOU A GOOD FATHER?**

I try to be a good father to my kids (son Virajveer and daughter Varushka). I can still do better. I've discovered that they're truly my kids because they're terrible in mathematics. I go crazy explaining math to my son. He's good with the piano and art. He's an artiste.



“I'm my own person. I like to do my own things. I'm like let me live my life. I don't bother you. You don't bother me... **Generally, this doesn't happen when you have a family. Thoda mushkil hai mere saath**”

#### **NOW THAT YOU HAVE THE TIME DO YOU REVISIT YOUR FILMS?**

Two things can happen while watching your own films. Either you get self-obsessed or you become over-critical. I have both these tendencies. So I don't watch my films. I watch my films in the edit and probably once with the cast and crew. I remember watching Dum Laga Ke Haisha with the audience. It was overwhelming because the film was so special. It was a kind of comeback for me. After that I decided not to watch my films with the audience in the theatre. I came from Chandigarh with huge aspirations of

becoming an actor. I've bought tickets in black to watch films. Cut to when you watch yourself on a 70mm screen. It becomes too overwhelming.

#### **DID YOU IMAGINE THAT YOU WOULD BECOME SO SUCCESSFUL?**

We all dream about it. I imagined it too. I won't deny it. But what you dream about doesn't turn into reality always. I'm fortunate to find success. I'm full of gratitude.

#### **DID YOU BECOME OBNOXIOUS AFTER TASTING SUCCESS?**

After Vicky Donor, I turned obnoxious probably with my family. Maybe, because

I was going through a low phase with Tahira after Vicky Donor. When your first film becomes super successful you start believing you're invincible. You gain this false sense of confidence that whatever you touch, will turn into gold. Mera dimaag kharab ho gaya tha. Then I went through a learning curve after some flops.

#### **HOW EASY OR DIFFICULT A PERSON ARE YOU TO LIVE WITH?**

(Smiles) You'll have to ask Tahira about that. I'm my own person. I like to do my own things. I'm like let me live my life. Don't hinder it. If I'm reading a book in a corner of my house – let me





With family



In singing mode

“As a star, you’re pampered... So you feel empty when you’re on a foreign trip on your own... Being anonymous and having to stand in a queue, without a security guard makes you realise there’s something beyond your stardom... **You may be somebody in a certain sphere. But when you step out of that, you’re a nobody**”

## AYUSHMANN KHURRANA'S

### POEM AGYAAT (UNKNOWN)

Agyaat se sawaal ka  
Agyaat sa jawab hai,  
Agyaat si meri neend mein  
Agyaat sa ikk khwaab hai,  
Agyaat se mahasagar  
mein agyaat sa hi aab hai,  
Meri haisiyat kuchh  
bhi nahin,  
Koi agyaat hi  
lajawaab hai.

be. I don't bother you. You don't bother me. That's my way of thinking. Generally, this doesn't happen when you have a family. I try to be responsible. Thoda mushkil hai mere saath.

### IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT YOURSELF?

Lot of things. I'm imperfect. I should be less lazy and more involved with the people around me. There's this perception that I'm super ambitious because I do three films a year. But that's not true. In reality, I'm extremely lazy and laidback.

### ARE YOU A GOOD BROTHER TO APARSHAKTI KHURANA?

He's a better sibling than me for sure. He's more responsible, more loving. He's a people's person.

He can forge and nurture relationships. He's the best brother in the world and also the best husband. In fact, he's the best human being I know.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE AND NOT LIKE ABOUT STARDOM?

As a star, you're pampered. There are 10 people around you, who take care of everything in your life. You feel empty when you're on a foreign trip on your

own, where no one knows you. There is no spot boy or manager to take care of your ticketing or talk to the person at the reception. It's difficult to get out of the glamour world and make yourself ready for the real world.

### DO YOU GET TO KNOW YOURSELF BETTER WHEN YOU TRAVEL?

Of course! I went to Bahamas for New Year. We were staying at a great seven-star property. Being anonymous and having to stand in a queue, without a security guard, spot boy and manager to take care of you, makes you realise that there's something beyond your stardom. You're shown the truth. You may be somebody in a certain sphere. But when you step out of that, you're a nobody. That reality check is not easy.

### HAS YOUR SLANT TOWARDS BUDDHISM HELPED YOU STAY REAL?

Buddhism has been a life-altering experience. It's been miraculous. I started the practice of reciting chants before the release of Meri Pyaari Bindu (2017). I chant for at least 40 minutes a day. Though the film didn't do well I remained self-assured. By nature, I get confused easily. But this practice has given me clarity about what

I want in life. Also, the goal of this practice is peace, something we need in this day and age.

### GULABO SITABO HAS RELEASED ON THE OTT PLATFORM. HOW DO YOU VIEW THIS DETOUR?

Entertainment is a luxury item, not a basic necessity. Now, in times of job cuts, people will think twice before spending 1000 bucks at a multiplex. People will try to save now. The economy has taken a huge dip. But at the same time art will survive. You need art to maintain sanity. You need to consume entertainment. People have grown used to watching films on the OTT platforms. They may think twice before going to the theatres now.

I guess concerts or even the big Punjabi weddings will not happen soon. It will be difficult to get married in the first place. Now people won't match horoscopes. They'll get corona tests done of prospective couples. Life will turn that crazy. Having said that, the fun of watching cinema in the theatres is exciting. Whenever that happens, say after six months or whenever, it will be a huge celebration for cinema. We're going through a tough time. But we will survive. ■



(Shakeel Badayuni 1916-1970)



# LOVE IS ALL THERE IS

WHILE HIS CONTEMPORARIES WROTE ABOUT REBELLION, **SHAKEEL BADAYUNI** CHOSE TO WRITE ABOUT ROMANCE, WRITES **FARHANA FAROOK**

*“Mujhe fakhr hai meri shayri  
Meri zindagi se judaa nahi.”  
Shakeel Badayuni*

He belonged to neo-India; a nation just woken to freedom. In that mood of revolutionary ideas and progressive poetry, Shakeel Badayuni stayed true to his romantic predilection. He preferred being a crusader of love than a cheerleader of rebellion. Along with maestro Naushad, he went on to celebrate romance in all its sensual and lyrical glory.

He's also remembered for being an advocate of the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb, the womb of secularism. Shakeel, Naushad and Mohammed Rafi came together to create the iconic bhajan Hari Om... man tadpat Hari darshan ko aaj for Baiju Bawra based on raag malkauns. Story goes that Naushad asked his team to attend the recording only after ablutions as a bhajan was to be recorded... such was the sanctity of their art. Mughal-E-Azam remains another monumental collaboration where their

songs captured the delirium and the disenchantment of love against the backdrop of palace intrigue.

Shakeel's the only lyricist to have won three consecutive Filmfare Awards (1960, 1961, 1962) under composers Ravi and Hemant Kumar. His paeans to a woman's celestial beauty in Chaudvin ka chaand, won him the Black Lady and Waheeda Rehman an epithet forever. He won the Filmfare trophy twice again for the deferential Husnwale tera jawab nahin and the melancholic Kahin deep jale kahin dil. While his lyrics for films thrived on corporal metaphors, outside it, his poetry was marked by the intricacies of love and life. No wonder it found patronage in renowned ghazal exponents. Begum Akhtar's rendition of his ghazal, Mere humnafas mere humnawa, has exalted Shakeel into the gallery of the greats...

## STAR POET

Shakeel Badayuni was born in 1916 in Badaun in Uttar Pradesh, known for its ethos steeped in Sufism and poetry. Hailing from a literary family, his father was keen he master Arabic, Urdu, Persian and Hindi. Shakeel's early inspiration was his relative Zia-ul-Qasiri Badayuni, a religious poet. Young Shakeel attended Aligarh University in the 1930s. There he



Mughal-E-Azam

**THE ICONIC PYAR KIYA TOH DARNA KYA, THE BHAJAN MOHE PANGHAT PE, THE QAWWALI TERI MEHFIL MEIN KISMET, THE SPIRITUAL BEKAS PE KARAM KIIYE AND THE CLASSICAL SHUBH DIN AAYO SUNG BY BADE GHULAM ALI KHAN... MUGHAL-E-AZAM REMAINS NAUSHAD AND SHAKEEL BADAYUNI'S MASTERPIECE**



Sanghursh



Dil Diya Dard Liya

## SHAKEEL BADAYUNI'S FILMFARE AWARDS



### CHAUDHVIN KA CHAND HO

CHAUDHVIN KA CHAND (1961)

The first line, Chaudhvin ka chand ho ya aftab ho, came from Ravi to which Shakeel's retort was... Jo bhi ho tum khuda ki qasam lajawab ho! Between the two Waheeda Rehman's beauty was immortalised forever.



### HUSNWALE TERA

GHARANA (1961)

SS Vasan's family drama starred Asha Parekh and Rajendra Kumar. Vasan is said to have watched the song whenever he felt restless, given its dream-like soothing quality.



### KAHIN DEEP JALE

BEES SAAL BAAD (1962)

Lata Mangeshkar won her second Filmfare Award for Best Playback (Female) for the haunting solo. The song became her comeback as she recorded it after a long bout of sinusitis and asthma.

came in contact with poets Neeraj and Jigar Muradabadi. The latter had a strong influence on Shakeel's poetic sensibilities.

Given his flair for verse, Shakeel made a name for himself in mehfil and mushairas. Romance being his forte, he grew popular. After a short stint of working with the government's supply department in Delhi, Shakeel found his reckoning as a poet in Bombay in 1944.

### NAUSHAD & SHAKEEL

Shakeel first met maestro Naushad at

a mushaira in 1946. There Naushad asked Shakeel to express his skill in a couplet. "Hum dard ka afsana duniya ko suna denge / Har dil mein mohabbat ki ek aag lagaa denge," replied Shakeel. This interaction paved the way for a musical odyssey between the two, which spread across two decades and 22 films. Interestingly, Shakeel could sing and Naushad wrote poetry, which explains the symbiosis between the two musical soulmates. Shakeel's lyrics for Kardar's Dard (1947) for



Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam

Naushad were hits especially Uma Devi's (Tun Tun) Afsana likh rahi hun. Their memorable songs include those in films like Dulari (1949), Babul (1950), Deedar (1951), Baiju Bawra (1952), Amar (1954), Mother India (1957), Mughal-

e-Azam (1960), Kohinoor (1960) Gunga Jumna (1961), Mere Mehboob (1963), Leader (1964) and Dil Diya Dard Liya (1966).

Shakeel's fluency with language made him switch dialects with ease. The utterly romantic Suhani raat dhal chuki from Dulari, or the mounting strains of Mere mehboob from Mere Mehboob, Naushad

and Shakeel excelled in celebrating the lyricism of love. He could weave pain as poignantly. Na milta gham to barbadi ke afsane kahan jate in Amar, urged Sahir Ludhianvi to compliment Shakeel as the best ghazal writer in Hindi cinema.

On the behest of Naushad, filmmaker Vijay Bhatt signed Shakeel to write the lyrics for Baiju

**THE PLAYFUL PIYA AISE JIYA MEIN, THE BESEECHING NA JAO SAIYAN AND THE HAUNTING CHALE AAO FROM SAHIB BIBI AUR GHULAM ARE A MASTERCLASS IN SITUATIONAL WRITING. THE FILM OWES AS MUCH TO MEENA KUMARI'S POIGNANT ACT AS TO SHAKEEL'S LYRICS THAT SPELT OUT HER TURMOIL**





Mother India

**SHAKEEL PROVED TO BE LUCKY FOR RAVI, AS THE COMPOSER GOT HIS BIG BREAK WITH GURU DUTT WITH CHAUDVIN KA CHAND. WHILE SHAKEEL GOT THE FILMFARE AWARD FOR BEST LYRICS FOR CHAUDVIN KA CHAND, RAVI GOT HIS FIRST FILMFARE AWARD FOR BEST MUSIC FOR GHARANA LATER**

Bawra, based on the legendary musician. Man tarpat Hari darshan ko aaj sung by Mohammed Rafi, Ustad Amir Khan and DV Paluskar's Aaj gawat man mero (raag desh) and the evergreen Tu ganga ki mauj (raag bhairavi), sung by Rafi... established Shakeel's prowess over Hindi as well. Naushad and Shakeel created some songs in the Khari Boli dialect as well. Holi aaye re kanhai (Mother India), Mohe panghat pe (Mughal-E-Azam) or Dhoondo dhoondo re saajana (Gunga Jumna) were folk songs adapted

to suit the situation. In Gunga Jumna, he used Bhojpuri words in Nain lad jai hain toh manwa ma to reflect the setting of the film.

The album of Mughal-E-Azam was a bouquet of ragas and romance. The iconic Pyar kiya to darna kya in Mughal-E-Azam was based on the homegrown folk song Pyaar kiya hai, kya chori ki hai. The bhajan Mohe panghat pe, the qawwali Teri mehfil mein kismet aazma ke, the spiritual Bekas pe karam kijiye and the classical Prem jogan ban

ke and Shubb din aayo sung by Bade Ghulam Ali Khan... proved Shakeel's competence in writing in all genres. Mughal-E-Azam remains the duo's masterpiece.

In the late '60s, Shakeel was rendered indisposed by tuberculosis. He was admitted to a sanatorium. In a bid to buoy his sagging spirits and finances, Naushad got him three projects, Ram Aur Shyam (1967), Aadmi (1968) and Sunghursh (1968). It's said Shakeel was paid 10 times more than his normal fees for these. The

★  
**YEH ZINDAGI KE MELE**  
- Mela (1948)

★  
**BACHPAN KE DIN**  
- Deedar (1951)

★  
**HUE HAM JINKE LIYE BARBAD**  
- Deedar (1951)

★  
**INSAAF KA MANDIR HAI YEH**  
- Amar (1954)

★  
**MOHABBAT KI RAHON MEIN**  
- Uran Khatola (1955)

★  
**DUNIYE MEIN HUM AAYEIN HAI**  
- Mother India (1957)

★  
**DO SITARON KA ZAMEEN**  
- Kohinoor (1960)

★  
**APNI AZAADI KO HUM**  
- Leader (1964)

★  
**GUZARE HAIN AAJ ISHQ MEIN**  
- Dil Diya Dard Liya (1966)

★  
**MERE PAIRON MEIN GHUNGROO**  
- Sunghursh (1968)



Baiju Bawra



Kohinoor

maestro almost never worked with any other lyricist till Shakeel's death in 1970.

## SHAKEEL AND OTHERS

Shakeel also teamed up with composer Ravi for 15 films including Gharana (1961), Hungat, Grahasti, Nartkai (all in 1963), Phool Aur Patthar and Do Badan (both in 1966). Shakeel proved to be lucky for Ravi, as the composer got his big break with Guru Dutt (Chaudvin Ka Chand in 1960). Ravi got his first Filmfare Award for Best Music for Gharana, while Shakeel got it for Best Lyrics for Chaudvin Ka Chand. Their other popular songs include Mori chham chham baj



Amar



Mela



Mere Mehboob

**THE POETRY AND PAIN IN SHAKEEL'S GHAZALS MADE THEM POPULAR. BEGUM AKHTAR, AT EVERY CONCERT OR RADIO AND TV SHOW, SANG HIS GHAZALS. THESE INCLUDED THE ICONIC MERE HAMNAFAS, MERE HAMNAWA AND AYE MOHABBAT TERE ANJAM PE RONA AAYA**

payaliya (Ghunghat), Zindagi ke safar mein (Nartaki) and Lo aa gayi unki yaad (Do Badan). The latter earned the Filmfare Award for Shakeel yet again. His song Wo aurat hai jo insano ki from Ghar Grihasthi is revered for the dignity it accords to a woman.

Shakeel was also associated with Hemant Kumar during Bees Saal Baad (1962). They created beautiful songs like the Filmfare Award-winning Kahin deep jale kahin dil and Sapne suhane ladakpan ke. The pair reached its peak with Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam (1962). The playful Piya aise jiya mein, the beseeching Na jao saiyen and

the haunting Chale aao from Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam are a masterclass in situational writing. The film owes as much to Meena Kumari's poignant act as to Shakeel's lyrics that spelt out her turmoil.

Some of Shakeel's films with S.D. Burman include Kaisa Kahoona and Benazir (both in 1964). With C. Ramachandra he wrote the lyrics for Zindagi Aur Maut (1965) and Wahan Ke Log (1967). While he collaborated with Roshan on Badaag (1965) and Noorjahan (1967). He also came together with Naushad's ex-assistant, Ghulam Mohammed. But Ghulam never got his due and so

Shakeel's work with him remained underrated. Their songs include Yeh duniya hai (Shair 1949) and Shikayat kya karoon (Kundan 1955). His repertoire earned him the title of Geetkar-E-Azam from the Government Of India.

## GHAZAL KING

Unlike his peers, Shakeel had little interest in political ideology. He didn't align with progressive poets like Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Majrooh Sultanpuri, Kaifi Azmi, Sardar Jafri and others. Doyen Jigar Moradabadi described Shakeel as 'Shair-e-fitrar' or an instinctive poet as his poetry was not a play of words but an extension of

his personality. The poetry and pain in his ghazals made them popular with exponents of the art form such as Begum Akhtar and Talat Mehmood. Begum Akhtar, at every concert and TV show, sang his ghazals. These included the iconic Mere hamnafas, mere hamnawa and Aye mohabbat tere anjam pe rona aaya. Talat's favourites remained Hangama-e-gham and Gham-e-ashiqi se keh do.

Shakeel's non-film poetry collections include Rangeeniyen, Ranaaiyan and Shabistan. He also published a collection of devotional poetry called Naghma-e-Firdous. Though his poetry reflected love and estrangement, there was a fun-loving side to the poet. Shakeel enjoyed playing badminton, going for picnics and hunting trips and flying kites with

friends Naushad, Rafi and Johny Walker. Dilip Kumar and writer Wajahat Mirza were also amongst his close friends.

## THE FAREWELL

Shakeel Badayuni succumbed to diabetes complications at the age of 53, on April 20, 1970, leaving behind his wife, two sons and two daughters. His daughter Najma, passed away soon after his demise, while still in college. His friends formed a trust called Yaad-e-Shakeel after his death, which became a source of support for his family.

Today, his lyrics continue to play on retro channels, defying the vocabulary of the times. And in a non-descript lane of Badaun, a family-maintained library under his name... stands as a quiet reminder of the poet who walked this way but once... ■



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reader's reviews, box-office, celebrity column & more

## INSTA LIKE

### Medley of moments

Check out what your favourites are upto on Instagram...



@deepikapadukone: To the greatest off-screen hero I could have ever had! Thank You for showing us that being a true champion is not only about one's professional achievements, but also about being a good human being!

Happy 65th Birthday, Pappa!

We love you! ❤️ #pappa #padukone

*Deepika Padukone wishes her hero - dad Prakash Padukone on his birthday.*



@varundvn: 🎂  
happybdy

*Niece Niara is the apple of Varun Dhawan's eyes. A cute moment with the b'day girl.*



@neetu54

"Wish me luck as you wave me goodbye Cheerio, here I go on my way With a cheer, not a tear, in your eye Give me a smile, I can keep for a while In my heart while I'm away ❤️"

*Neetu Kapoor posts the sentimental song remembering Rishi Kapoor.*



@priyankachoprajonas

A cherrv lip and sunshine..❤️...maybe even a earring...I'm feeling adventurous

*Looking beautiful needs no reason or season. Priyanka Chopra is a thing of beauty and a joy forever. 😊*



@saraalikhan

19th May 2016 🎓🎉

👁️💙📖 Sometimes this feels like a minute ago, and sometimes it feels like another lifetime 📅👥📷

*Sara Ali Khan posts her graduation picture from Columbia University.*

Readers send in their feedback pg 66

Shatrughan Sinha's racy rejoinders pg 68



# IN THE MAIL

READERS WRITE AND BITE BACK... WITH LOVE AND AFFECTION

**1st Prize**  
**₹1500**

## → GOODBYE LEGENDS

The Filmfare e-issue, which covered the life and times of the late Rishi Kapoor and Irrfan Khan, is a collector's issue. It was heart-warming to go through their movie milestones and memories shared by their colleagues. Both passed away within a span of 24 hours. Irrfan Khan died on 29 April and Rishi Kapoor passed away on the 30 April. Both were suffering from cancer. Both went abroad for treatment. Both had seemingly recovered. Both began shooting. Irrfan finished *Angeez Medium* that co-starred Radhika Madan while Rishi was working on *Sharmaji Namkeen*, directed by Hitesh Bhatia. Both left abruptly leaving behind devastated fans.

Momin Khan, Mahim



Krishna Raj Kapoor

## ↑ TOUGH TIMES

Krishna Raj Kapoor, wife of Raj Kapoor, breathed her last on October 1, 2018, just three days after son Rishi Kapoor left for the US for his cancer treatment. Rishi, who

had left on September 29, couldn't return for his mother's last rites. Raj Kapoor's daughter, Ritu Nanda, succumbed to cancer on January 14, 2020. Her husband, industrialist Rajan Nanda, had passed away on August 6, 2019. Rishi Kapoor passed away a few months after his sister Ritu – on April 30. Hoping the Kapoors leave the sad phase behind.

Zainab Seth, Pune

## → GENEROUS IRRFAN

Irrfan Khan always kept a low-profile. A month after his demise, his neighbour and close friend from Jaipur, reportedly revealed that Irrfan was raising funds

to help people in the fight against coronavirus. His only condition was that nobody should know about his contribution. A global star, Irrfan remained a humanist at heart.

Asha Diwekar, Indore



Late Rishi Kapoor with Ranbir Kapoor

**2nd Prize**  
**₹1000**

## → CANDID RISHI

The late Rishi Kapoor was not known to mince words. In a past Filmfare interview he candidly decoded his relationship with son Ranbir Kapoor. "We're not friends. There is a glass wall between us. We can see each other but we can't reach out... I can't be on backslapping terms with my son. We have a drink together sometimes, sort out our issues. But he definitely has *aankhon ki sharam*, *baap ki sharam*," he said with stark simplicity.

Vivek Raheja, Goa

## ← BOBBY TRUTHS

Story goes that when Raj Kapoor was planning *Bobby* (1973), he had the debacle of *Mera Naam Joker* (1970) behind him. He's known to have asked son Rishi (Kapoor) whether he'd care to work with a 'flop filmmaker' and an 'extremely demanding director'. Dimple Kapadia, daughter of businessman Chunnibhai Kapadia, was zeroed in for the female lead. Raj Kapoor, they said, saw a reflection of Nargis in Dimple's demeanour. Rest is history.

Ramola Pais, Delhi



Bobby

## ↓ SUPERHERO SONU

Sonu Sood has received massive praise for his efforts in helping migrant workers reach their home states during the coronavirus lockdown. The actor has been personally sending off



Sonu Sood

thousands of migrants to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. He's even arranged meal kits and sanitisers for the travellers. He reportedly said, "I've pledged to not stop until the last migrant reaches home." In fact, a man, who united with his family tweeted, "The one who helps another meet his mother is a God. Sonu Sood, I believe you're no less than a God."

Viraj Singh, Lucknow



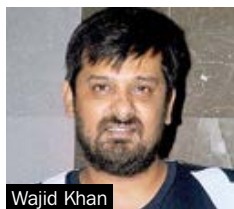


Anushka Sharma

## ↑ POWER GIRL ANUSHKA

As the producer of the breakout show *Paatal Lok*, it's just the beginning for Anushka Sharma on the OTT platform. The show, starring Jaideep Ahlawat, Abhishek Banerjee, Neeraj Kabi, Gul Panag, Ishwak Singh and Swastika Mukherjee has won praise for exploring caste, religion and politics in India. In the past she produced the road thriller *NH10*, the horror film *Pari* and the ghost comedy *Phillaury*. Her upcoming film is *Bulbbul* with Netflix. Anushka perhaps believes in the adage no risk, no gain.

Deepti Vyas, Mumbai



Wajid Khan

## ↑ WAJID WILL BE MISSED

Musician Wajid Khan, of Sajid-Wajid fame, passed away at the age of 42 on May 31. He was two years younger to his music partner and brother Sajid Khan. Their father was tabla player Ustad Sharafat Ali Khan. Their first Bollywood project was Salman Khan's *Pyaar*

*Kiya To Darna Kya* in 1998. Sajid-Wajid gave music to several Salman Khan films. These included *Hello Brother*, *Partner*, *Hello*, *Wanted*, *Veer*, *Tere Naam* and *Ek Tha Tiger*. Their most popular association with Salman was the *Dabangg* franchise. *Dabangg 3* was Sajid-Wajid's last work together. They recently composed Salman's *Bhai Bhai* single. Wajid Khan was also a singer. He sang hits like *Do you wanna partner*, *Soni de nakhre*, *Hud Hud Dabangg* and *Fevicol se*.

Tanveer Ahmed, Bandra

## → PHIR MILENGE

Salman Khan may have given many masala blockbusters. But there's one lesser-known film of his that lies forgotten in the archives of time. Revathy's *Phir Mileenge* (2004), apparently based on the Tom Hanks-Denzel Washington starrer *Philadelphia*, showed Salman at his sensitive best. Tamanna (Shilpa Shetty) is the creative

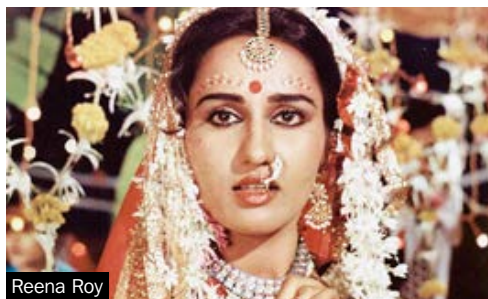
head of an ad agency. She meets Rohit (Salman Khan) at an outdoor meeting organised by her alma mater. Old friendships are rekindled. The two get intimate. Soon, Tamanna discovers she's HIV positive, while Rohit succumbs to AIDS. Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy and Bhavatha Raja composed gems like *Kuch pal* and *Jeene ke ishaare*.

Jolan Mathias, Mumbai

## → ZINDAGI KAISI HAI PAHELI...

The late Yogesh Gaur worked with realistic directors like Hrishikesh Mukherjee and Basu Chatterjee between the '70s -'80s. His earthy lyrics suited the themes of their films. He famous songs include *Kahin door jab din dhal jaaye* (Anand), *Zindagi kaisi hai paheli* (Anand), *Rimjhim gire saawan* (Manzil Manzil), *Rajnigandha phool tumhare* (Rajnigandha), *Aaye tum yaad mujhe* (Mili) and *Na bole tum* (Baaton Baaton Mein). Yogesh died in Mumbai on May 29. He will be missed.

Prema Joshi, Mumbai



Reena Roy

## ↑ REENA ROY - A RARE STAR

Reena Roy began her career in the '70s with B.R. Ishara's *Zaroorat*. *Jaise Ko Taisa* is considered as the turning point of her career. Reena's rain dance on the film song *Ab ke saawan mein jee dare* became her identity. In the cult film *Nagin*, where she played a serpent, her sensuality was at play. J.Om Prakash's *Aasha* was the biggest hit of the year. Her *Sheesha ho ya dil ho* number remains popular even today.

Anwar Patel, Surat

## Just one Point



Nutan

Noted Marathi author/journalist Lalita Tamhane, who wrote the book on the legendary Nutan titled *Nutan - Asen Mee.. Nasen Mee* and *Smita Patil*, titled *Smita*, *Smit Ani Mi*, passed away in June.

Maansi Pednekar, Dadar

Sajid-Wajid won the Filmfare Award for Best Music for *Dabangg* (2011). *Tere mast mast do nain* was a chartbuster.

Rohan Sippy, Delhi

The Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences (Oscars) remembered Irrfan Khan and tweeted, "A mainstay of Bollywood cinema and incredible talent in films like *Slumdog Millionaire*, *Life Of Pi* and *The Namesake*, Irrfan Khan left his imprint on global cinema..."

Rahila Seth, Agra

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PHOTOGRAPH: MEETESH TANEJA

# Shatrughan Sinha's Rapid fire



Legends: Rishi Kapoor and Irrfan Khan

A Japanese proverb says, "If two people constantly agree with each other, one of them is useless. But if two people constantly disagree with each other, then both of them are useless." Judging by these criteria, how will you grade our present-day politicians?

Tulika Nabar, Mumbai

Well, whatever the proverb be, politicians generally agree to disagree and seem to be totally confused.

Salma Hayek has launched a campaign to combat increasing violence against women during the lockdown. What are your views on it?

Nisha Gupta, Gurugram

Kudos to her for this great initiative, which was much

needed. Women need to be made more aware of their rights. More hotline numbers should be made available for their safety and easy reach.

What according to you has been the biggest impact of COVID-19?

Jaideep Sarkar, Kolkata

COVID-19 itself! Besides the most talked about and feared expressions of negativity that we have been hearing these days.

In this lockdown of COVID-19 'immunity' is needed to make oneself strong and 'humanity' is needed to make every citizen strong. Your comments.

Atul Tankha, Ratlam

One must not take COVID-19 lightly or for granted. Those who do must be warned about their stupidity.

No relationship is all sunshine but two people can share an umbrella

and survive the storm together. Your comments?

Abhijit Ghosh, West Bengal

Sharing is indeed caring. Wish the rest of the world would follow this. I appreciate your thought.

What has Nature tried to teach us in the form of coronavirus?

Dibyasha Mishra, Bhubaneswar

Don't mess with it and don't take Nature for granted. Look at the damage we've already done to the earth. It's high time we put things in order.

Most of us do not even know how to stand in a queue. How will physical distancing be maintained after lockdown is over?

Nisha Gupta, Gurugram

Well, to begin with, we should take inspiration from nations such as Japan, who began wearing masks in public and maintaining social distancing some years ago - much before the coronavirus pandemic. That was because of the

The death of great actors like Rishi Kapoor and Irrfan Khan brought us to tears. What could be the reason?

Vibha, via email

Because both, the late Rishi Kapoor and Irrfan Khan were loved by all. What else could be the reason?





**Superman:** Sonu Sood

rising pollution. Such a practice has become a habit there. It should become a habit with us as well. We need to stay positive and continue to lead our lives taking every available precaution.

#### What's your take on the plight of migrant labour?

**Jaideep Sarkar, Kolkata**

Their plight has been tragic and heart-breaking. With due respect, the highest court of the land issued a verdict in favour of the migrants by the time they had already reached

their villages. On foot, bicycle and other means. So the Supreme Court's observation/judgement can be respectfully titled as, 'Badi der kar di meherbaan aate aate'. However, I must admit that every human being has a social responsibility towards migrants. Some of them have fulfilled that and some of them are continuing to do so. Like our own Sonu Sood – a fine human being and a real hero. Besides him, of course, national icon Amitabh Bachchan, Shah

### 1st Prize

**The attitude towards 'negative' and 'positive' has changed in this present scenario of COVID-19 lockdown. Your comments please.**

**Atul Tankha, Ratlam**

Yes, you're right. It has given us a time to reflect on both the negative and the positive aspects of the pandemic. With an attitude of gratitude, I hope that all the COVID warriors – doctors, policemen, nurses, technicians, municipal authorities and workers and everyone, who made our lives easier during these days of turmoil, stay safe and coronavirus free. The frontline warriors are the people, who're at most risk.

### 2nd Prize

**Don't you think the coronavirus has made nations redefine their health policies? In India at least that's never been a priority.**

**Ashish Verma, Bhawarna**

In India health was never a priority. But now people are redefining health policies. Better late than never. Right now everything is in confusion but hopefully, it'll clear soon.

Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and many other known and unknown COVID warriors have done their bit. Down South too, superstars like Rajinikanth, Chiranjeevi, Khushboo and many others have been doing their bit. A big salute to them for their good work.

The best way to adjust to this new life is to handle with care and deal with the circumstances dealt by Nature patiently. I'm sure with modern methods to fight it, we'll surely come out with some solution.

#### What's the future of Bollywood if the coronavirus continues for one year?

**Syed Nisar Mehdi, Hyderabad**

(Feature co-ordinated by **DEVESH SHARMA**)

Please note: The column doesn't reflect Shatrughan Sinha's political or personal views. His answers are given in jest and humour.

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**YOUR QUESTIONS WILL BE FORWARDED TO:** Shatrughan Sinha, who insists his answers do not reflect his political and social views.

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# MIND MATTERS



Genius filmmaker Guru Dutt

**T**o be or not to be?" Shakespeare asked this question so many centuries ago. We still haven't come up with an answer. What makes people draw boundaries as to how much they can take? What makes them believe this much and no more? What propels them to take their own lives? Our minds are strange things indeed. Some can slumber blissfully even after committing the most hideous crimes. While some contemplate suicide for something as trivial as failing an exam.

I remember reading various accounts of the legendary Guru Dutt's demise. We would never know whether it was by choice or chance. If it was

suicide, as some sections alleged, then what compelled a cinematic genius, seemingly at the top of his game, to take such a drastic step?

Celebrity deaths always stir strong emotions, they being idols. There was a huge outpouring of grief when Guru Dutt died. The whole industry mourned as one. Recently, one saw how saddened everyone was when Irrfan Khan and then Rishi Kapoor passed away. However, the anger rampant after Sushant Singh Rajput's untimely death is something else. Never have we witnessed such mass angst before. His passing away seems like a personal blow.

One thing his death has done is to get us

talking about mental health. While it's true that depression is indeed a silent killer, pop psychology isn't going to help us. What's needed is acceptance about it being as much a disease as diabetes or heart trouble. People visit specialists for consultation when it comes to these ailments. Likewise, we need to reach out to experts when it comes to mental health as well and take proper medication. The taboo and the fear associated with approaching a mental health counsellor needs to go away. And it's not just celebrities, who're at risk here. Everyone is. So let's treat depression before it eats us.

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