ALL NEW
February, 2021
A Times Of India Publication

FILMFARE

www.filmfare.com
FILMS | FASHION | LIFESTYLE

SALMAN GETS A WHOPPING 230 CRS

RANA DAGGUBATI SLAYS!

DEEPIKA turns villain for Dhoom 4?

SHRUTI HAASAN in a sexy avatar

SUPER POWER

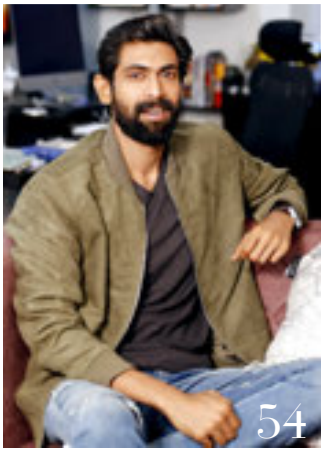
GLOBAL ICON PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS

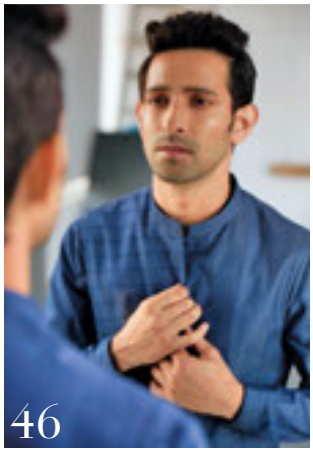
SUFISCORE
PRESENTS
RELEASING ON
\SUFISCORE
Bole Naina
SILENCES SPEAK
SOUL WRITTEN AND NARRATED BY
GULZAR SAHAB
RHYTHM OF LIFE BY
USTAD ZAKIR HUSSAIN
BROUGHT TO LIFE BY
PRATIBHA SINGH BAGHEL
MUSIC COMPOSED & PRODUCED BY HEART
DEEPAK PANDIT
MUSIC VIDEOS DIRECTED BY
RAVI JADHAV

contents

Volume 70 # February 2021 / ISSN NUMBER 0971-7277

PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW ECCLES





Editor's Choice

04 Priyanka Chopra Jonas is a true global icon
72 OTT has come to stay

Masala fix

08 Varun Dhawan-Natasha Dalal get married, Anushka Sharma-Virat Kohli become parents, Deepika Padukone to be the villain in *Dhoom 4* and more grist from the rumour mill

Preview

14 Shreya Chaudhary is buoyed by the success of *Bandish Bandits*
20 Mallika Dua wants more meaty roles

Fashion & lifestyle

24 Fashion and style secrets of the stars, decoded

Exclusives

30 Exclusive Cover Story: Priyanka Chopra Jonas looks back on 2020 as she looks forward to global domination
40 Shruti Haasan caught in a bohemian photoplay
46 Vikrant Massey is in a happy space
50 Divya Dutta is hungry for more
54 Rana Daggubati talks about new ventures
58 Featuring stars who use social media for a good cause
62 Remembering Vijay Anand

Your say

68 Readers send in their rants
70 Shatrughan Sinha's wacky witticisms

Letter from the Editor

The marvellous Mrs Jonas

Recently, an old photo of the 17 year old Priyanka Chopra Jonas appeared on the internet. She looked like a young gazelle, smiling shyly in front of the camera. She looked like a million bucks even then. Looking at the photo, one feels one's watching someone standing on the cusp of greatness. She's like a coiled spring, waiting to unleash her potential to the world. Even she wouldn't have dreamt of the dizzy heights she would climb to, that she's still gaining.

The White Tiger recently got released on OTT. She doesn't have a central role in it. But the makers were so impressed by her talent that they tweaked her character around. Making it a different entity from what it was in the source material, Aravind Adiga's novel of the same name. Her Pinky is in effect the conscience keeper of the film. Its moral compass. You want to get to know more about her. And you feel her absence when she's no longer there in the film.

Cut to her role in *Bajirao Mastani.* The film is called *Bajirao Mastani.* There's no place for Kashibai in the film. She was the first wife of the *peshwa.* A mere footnote in history, in myth. But Priyanka's performance brought the hurt, the betrayal felt by Kashibai to the forefront. It made her angst relatable. She was a woman wronged and the audience sympathised with that. Ranveer Kapoor and Deepika Padukone may have won the applause but she won the sympathy. She made the masses remember Kashibai. It was no mean feat indeed.

I consider her role in *Barfi!* as one of her finest efforts till day. Playing Jhilmil, who is autistic, would have been extremely difficult, as the actress had no parallel to draw upon. In 2012, she was the reigning queen of the marquee and yet chose to do a role which went against the grain. She didn't have much dialogue and relied on her eyes, her expressions, to get her point across. She gave the film a gravitas. You got lost in the romance between Jhilmil and Barfi as it was something you had never seen before. The film wasn't focussed on her but she still made it her own.

Currently, she's doing what no Indian actor has done before — getting star billing in commercial Hollywood films. It's not that Indian actors haven't shone in the international arena. Names like Om Puri, Irrfan Khan or Saeed Jaffrey, to name a few, have made India proud before. But they were mostly known in the art film circles. Priyanka has gone beyond that and has staked claim to being a truly international star. Movies and series are being written with her in mind. She's a part of the cult classic *Matrix* franchise now. You don't need a better proof of her Hollywood street cred.

Priyanka's on the cover of our current issue. Turn the pages to know more about the *desi* material girl and feast on her latest images...

For more on tinseltown's news and updates
find me on Twitter @jiteshpillaai

Time to be AGE-LESS

with

JETT Plasma Lift

Non-Invasive Skin Treatment to **Reduce Wrinkles**

at ₹1,999* plus taxes

Book your appointment now!
Call: +91 7998360000, +91 7304963990

FEMINA FLAUNT™ STUDIO SALON

NEW DAY NEW YOU

*T&C APPLY

VELKAR RESIDENCY, LINKING ROAD, KHAR (W), MUMBAI 52. A1 & A2 OPTIONZ, NAHAR AMRIT SHAKTI, POWAI, MUMBAI 72. PRABHAT ROAD, LANE NO.15, YASHASWI HOUSE, PUNE 04.

www.feminaflaunt.com | Follow us on @feminaflauntsalon

FILMFARE

Chief Executive Officer	Deepak Lamba
Chief Community Officer & Editor	Jitesh Pillaai
Executive Editor	Anuradha Choudhary
Managing Editor	Devesh Sharma
Senior Assistant Editor & Digital Editor	Rahul Gangwani
Senior Assistant Editor	Raghuvendra Singh
Deputy Production Manager	Ashwini S Pote
Design Director	Sujitha Pai
Associate Art Director	Nikesh Gopale
AVP - Marketing & Digital Revenue	Priyadarshi Banerjee
Chief Marketing Manager	Manvi Sehgal
Senior Manager Marketing	Sabina Gomes
Chief Financial Officer	S.Subramaniam
Head-Human Resources	Meghna Puthawala
Vice President Content Studio	Vidyut Patra
Head-Experiential Marketing	Aakash Mishra
Publisher	Joji Varghese

Worldwide Media Pvt. Ltd.

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 Pillaai

Filmfare takes no responsibility for unsolicited photographs or material
ALL PHOTOGRAPHS, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ARE USED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

THE NATIONAL/REGIONAL EDITION OF FILMFARE IS NOT FOR SALE OUTSIDE INDIA

DISCLAIMER FOR PROTECTION OF PRIVACY AND INFORMATION
Any information received by us through responses by Users/ Subscribers to the Short Messaging Services (SMS) Key Codes or such other subscription service of ours will be used in whole or part, in our publications (other than contact information), for our research, individual marketing, strategic client analysis and for other internal purposes and all copyrights in such information will vest with us. Your contact information shall not be sold, traded, rented or in any way divulged to anythird party unless we are legally bound to do the same.

WORLDWIDE MEDIA SUBSCRIPTIONS

MANAGER MARKETING
Asha Kulkarni
asha.kulkarni@wwm.co.in

SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER
Sakshi Kate
sakshi.kate@timesgroup.com

TO SUBSCRIBE
Online: **mags.timesgroup.com**
Mail: **subscriptions.wwm@wwm.co.in**

BRAND SOLUTIONS

BUSINESS DIRECTOR
Sunil Wuthoo

WEST

VICE PRESIDENT & BUSINESS HEAD-FEMINA SALON & SPA
Gautam Chopra
gautam.chopra@wwm.co.in

MUMBAI
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT
Reena C Dave
reena.dave@wwm.co.in
Leena Bhandari
leena.bhandari@wwm.co.in
Sriram Krishnan
sriram.krishnan@wwm.co.in

PUNE
MANAGER
Aditi Shrivastava
aditi.shrivastava@wwm.co.in

AHMEDABAD
Kamal Rajput
kamal.Rajput@wwm.co.in

NORTH

VICE PRESIDENT & SALES HEAD - LONG FORM CONTENT
Anjali Rathor
anjali.rathor@wwm.co.in

DELHI NCR
Sachin Saxena
sachin.saxena@wwm.co.in

JAIPUR
Pushpesh Sood
pushpesh.sood@wwm.co.in

SOUTH

VP-SOUTH & BUSINESS HEAD-FEMINA TAMIL
Pravin Menon
pravin.menon@wwm.co.in

CHENNAI
ON Rajesh
on.rajesh@wwm.co.in

HYDERABAD
Sen Thomas
sen.thomas@wwm.co.in

EAST

KOLKATA
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT
Alka Kakar
alka.kakar@wwm.co.in

a bird's-eye view of show town's happenings

masala fix

BON VOYAGE!

Childhood sweethearts Natasha Dalal and Varun Dhawan finally embarked on the next stage of their relationship after yeears of courtship. They had planned an exotic wedding in Vietnam last year but COVID-19 played spoilsport. So they decided to go for a small wedding ceremony instead. The couple got married at a private ceremony in Alibaug, with only immediate family and close family friends in attendance.

Shahid Kapoor walks out of *Yoddha* pg 08

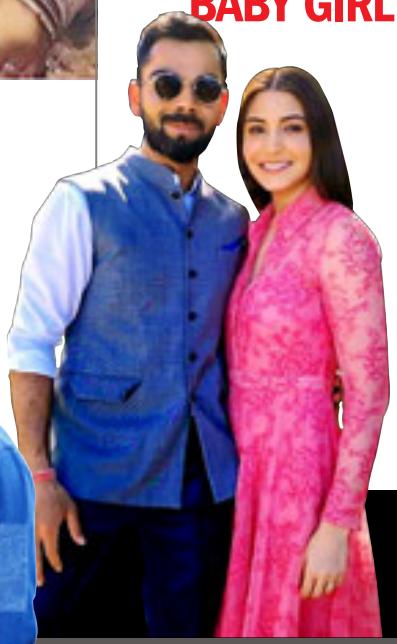
Deepika Padukone and Hrithik Roshan cast together in *Fighter*? pg 10

PHOTOGRAPH: YOGEN SHAH

SALMAN KHAN SELLS *RADHE: YOUR MOST WANTED BHAI* FOR RS 230 CRORES

ACCORDING TO A REPORT ON AN ONLINE PORTAL, SALMAN KHAN **HAS SOLD THE SATELLITE, THEATRICAL, DIGITAL AND MUSIC RIGHTS OF *RADHE: YOUR MOST WANTED BHAI* TO ZEE STUDIOS FOR RS 230 CRORES. A SOURCE SAID, "IT'S A REASONABLE DEAL THAT HAS LED TO A TABLE PROFIT FOR SALMAN. ZEE, TOO, DOESN'T HAVE MUCH RISK INVOLVED GIVEN THAT SALMAN'S FILMS COMMAND A GREAT RETURN VALUE IN TERMS OF DIGITAL AND SATELLITE VIEWING SIDE BY SIDE MUSIC STREAMING ON VARIOUS PLATFORMS." MEANWHILE, WE HEAR THAT *RADHE* WILL GET A THEATRICAL RELEASE AFTER ALL DURING EID. THAT'S GOOD NEWS FOR THEATRE OWNERS WHO'RE LOOKING AT A BIG RELEASE TO BAIL THEM OUT OF DIRE STRAITS.**

ANUSHKA SHARMA AND VIRAT KOHLI WELCOME A BABY GIRL



Anushka Sharma and **Virat Kohli** are loved by millions worldwide and any news regarding them flares up like wildfire on the internet. The year 2020 had a pall of gloom hanging on it. The news that Virushka were expecting their first child came as a ray of sunshine that lifted our mood a bit. Virat even took paternity leave away from the crucial Australian test series to be with Anushka during the delivery. The couple wanted a bit of privacy when the moment came and requested the press to show restraint. They became proud parents to a baby girl on January 11. An ecstatic Virat broke the news on social media. He wrote, "We are thrilled to share with you that we have been blessed with a baby girl this afternoon. We thank you all for your love, prayers and good wishes. Anushka and the baby are both healthy and we are feeling beyond blessed to start this new chapter of our lives. We hope that you can respect our privacy at this time. Love, Virat." We congratulate Virat and Anushka for the same.

VARUN DHAWAN AND NATASHA DALAL TIE THE KNOT

It's been almost two years since the first wave of rumours around **Varun Dhawan** and **Natasha Dalal's** wedding started. Last year, the rumour was that they'd get married in October 2020 but the pandemic played spoilsport. Though the wedding got postponed, speculations didn't die out as pictures of Natasha celebrating *Karwachauth* with Varun's mother surfaced on the internet. Varun Dhawan and Natasha Dalal finally tied the knot on January 24 in a private ceremony at Alibaug. They both look gorgeous together. While Varun wore a **Manish Malhotra** creation, Natasha was draped in her own label. Right from the decor to the intimate celebrations, it all looked absolutely splendid. There was a no-phone policy at the ceremony. Varun broke the news through his Instagram account by sharing a photo of the ceremony. Its caption read -- Life long love just became official -- and just like that sent his fans into throes of celebbration.

SHAHID KAPOOR WALKS OUT OF DHARMA'S *YODDHA*

Shahid Kapoor had just wrapped up working for *Jersey* and was all set to start work on his next titled *Yoddha,* which is helmed by **Shashank Khaitan** and backed by **Karan Johar.** However, according to latest reports, he has walked out of the project due to creative differences. Shahid Kapoor reportedly was not happy with the script. According to sources, his inputs and his attitude was taken as arrogant behaviour by the team. "Shahid and the team were having a lot of creative differences over the script. Many feel that Shahid has become extremely brash and arrogant after the success of *Kabir Singh*. He is currently very picky about what he wants to do. Plus, he had not signed on the dotted line, which is also why KJo could not make the official announcement about the same. It's almost certain that he's no longer doing the film. Now it needs to be seen if Karan and Shashank get back to convincing him and adhere to his demands," said a source to an online portal. *Yoddha* was going to see **Disha Patani** opposite Shahid Kapoor. We hear that Shahid will now focus on his web series directed by **Raj Nidimoru** and **Krishna DK.** The series will be a trilogy and will also star **Vijay Sethupathi.** It will be shot in Mumbai and Goa.

RAVISH KAPOOR

innovative invitations

Luxury in each detail!

New Delhi Showroom: +91 98113 00000 ▪ Mumbai Showroom: +91 98198 00000

www.ravishkapoor.com

DEEPIKA PADUKONE ALL SET TO PLAY VILLAIN IN *DHOOM 4?*

YRF plans to launch some of their biggest films in the coming years, But if there is one film that has always been the talk of the town, it's the *Dhoom* franchise. The film which is known for its stylish chase sequences and exotic locations has always surprised us, when it comes to casting the antagonist. It started off with **John Abraham** in the first instalment, **Hrithik Roshan** in the second and **Aamir Khan** in the third. Now, we hear that YRF has decided to up the ante by introducing a female villain. Yes, you heard that right. We hear that **Deepika Padukone** is in talks to star in *Dhoom 4.* She will play the antagonist this time. Deepika Padukone is keen for this one but has to get her dates sorted before she signs on the dotted line. Meanwhile, Deepika has teamed up with YRF for *Pathan* which reunites her with **Shah Rukh Khan**. She also has **Shakun Batra's** next co-starring **Siddhant Chaturvedi** and **Ananya Panday.**

HRITHIK ROSHAN AND DEEPIKA PADUKONE TO STAR TOGETHER IN *FIGHTER*

Director **Siddharth Anand** made everyone's wish come true (even Deepika Padukone's) when he cast two of the most talented and the hottest looking stars -- **Hrithik Roshan** and **Deepika Padukone,** together for his upcoming film *Fighter.* Ever since the announcement was made on January 10, there's been a buzz in the industry. According to the reports, the makers are planning to make this film with a Rs 250 crores budget. Now that makes it one of the costliest films in Hindi cinema. After the success of *War,* people certainly have high expectations from Anand. And looks like he won't disappoint. Hrithik and Siddharth have worked together in *Bang Bang* and *War,* this is their third film together. If sources are to be believed, Hrithik will even have a cameo in Siddharth Anand's *Pathan* which stars **Shah Rukh Khan** and Deepika Padukone.

KATRINA KAIF AND VIJAY SETHUPATHI TO SHOOT FOR SRIRAM RAGHAVAN'S NEXT IN APRIL

WE WERE THE FIRST TO REVEAL THAT KATRINA KAIF **HAS BEEN SIGNED ON AS THE HEROINE FOR** SRIRAM RAGHAVAN'S **NEXT WHICH STARS** VIJAY SETHUPATHI. **THE FILM WILL MARK THE HINDI DEBUT OF THE SOUTH SUPERSTAR. KATRINA KAIF AND VIJAY SETHUPATHI WILL START SHOOTING FOR THE FILM IN APRIL. KATRINA WANTED TO EXPLORE A NEW CHARACTER AND HENCE SHE GAVE HER INSTANT NOD TO THE FILM. THE DIRECTOR HAS PUT HIS** ARUN KHETRAPAL **BIOPIC TITLED *EKKIS* ON HOLD AS OF NOW AND WILL CONCENTRATE ON THIS FIRST.**

Are Vijay Sethupathi and Aamir Khan having an ego tussle?

According to sources, Tamil superstar **Vijay Sethupathi** was all set to make his debut in **Aamir Khan's** *Laal Singh Chaddha.* But looks like things have gone sour between him and Aamir. It's rumoured that Aamir Khan was disappointed when he learnt that Vijay had put on some extra kilos. He needed a certain body type for the role in *Laal Singh Chaddha* but the South superstar didn't keep his physique in check and that irked Aamir Khan. Soon there were reports that Aamir Khan had walked out of the Hindi remake of *Vikram Vedha.* The reason reportedly was that he didn't want to reprise a role played by Sethupathi in the original. Well, we hope things work out between the two supremely talented actors. And we get to see them together onscreen soon.

Ajay Devgn and Sidharth Malhotra cast together in *Thank God*

Ajay Devgn, Sidharth Malhotra and **Rakul Preet** have been cast in *Thank God* by director **Indra Kumar.** The three actors took to their Twitter accounts and shared the excitement to announce their new film. Ajay Devgn tweeted saying, "Happy to announce my next film, #ThankGod - a slice of life comedy starring @SidMalhotra, @Rakulpreet & me. Directed by @Indra_kumar_9, the film is set to go on floors from 21st January 2021. Stay tuned!' Rakul too shared a similar tweet and Sidharth Malhotra began his tweet expressing his feeling by saying that he was 'stoked' to share screen space for the first time with Ajay Devgn. Let's see how the Indra Kumar brand of comedy works for the trio.

THE TIMES GROUP

Looking for *Safe* bets?

Franchise Opportunity

with The Times of India Group

- *Partnership with Global Brands*
- *Comprehensive Training Program*
- *Collaboration with well-known Experts*
- *Best-in-Class Consumer Experience*
- *Backed by The Times of India Group*
- *Comprehensive Marketing Support*

FEMINA
FLAUNT™
STUDIO SALON

NEW DAY NEW YOU

The Times Group invites Business Partners with 'vision' & 'capability-to-scale' for an exciting franchising opportunity of its marquee lifestyle brand Femina FLAUNT Studio Salon

FOR ENQUIRY: +91 7304963991 | franchisee@feminaflaunt.com

SANDEEP REDDY VANGA ANNOUNCES *ANIMAL* WITH RANBIR KAPOOR

On New Year, **Sandeep Reddy Vanga** announced his next big film titled *Animal.* The *Kabir Singh* director teams up with **Ranbir Kapoor, Parineeti Chopra** and **Anil Kapoor** this time for a new intense drama. The first look and the audio of Ranbir Kapoor got everyone excited. Now we hear that the project needs two leading heroines and while Parineeti's name has already been announced, the second heroine is said to be *Bulbbul* fame **Tripti Dimri.** Our sources reveal that Tripti Dimri has auditioned for the role and the makers are impressed with her and have decided to sign her on. "Some big and popular names had auditioned for this role. **Sara Ali Khan** had also auditioned for the movie but the makers were quite impressed with Tripti's work and audition tape. They thought she would bring a freshness to the character and a young appeal," says our source. It'll be fun to watch these actors work together for the first time.

SHAHID KAPOOR STARRER *JERSEY* TO HAVE A THEATRICAL RELEASE THIS DIWALI

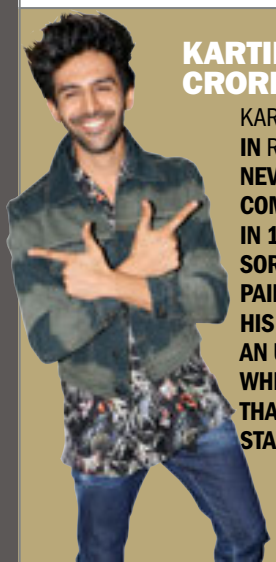
Traditonally, the best of the banners have always competed to get their films released during Diwali as the period is said to be most auspicious. But the ongoing pandemic has sent all release plans haywire. The vaccination drive is currently on but that offers no guarantee that the audience will return to the theatres any time soon. Producers are loathe to taking risks. But looks like the makers of *Jersey* like playing on the front foot and have planned a Diwali release for their film. The film's star, **Shahid Kapoor,** announced the good news on social media. He tweeted saying, 'JERSEY releasing in theatres this DIWALI 5th November 2021. The triumph of the human spirit. A journey I am so very proud of. This ones for the TEAM ....' Now that's surely an exciting piece of news for viewers. Shahid Kapoor's last release was *Kabir Singh* and since then his fans have been waiting for his next. Let's hope the film sets new records at the box office, just like *Kabir Singh.*

SARA ALI KHAN OPPOSITE VICKY KAUSHAL IN *THE IMMORTAL ASHWATTHAMA*

The Immortal Ashwatthama is said to be a sci-fi superhero flick, infused with Hindu mythology about Ashwatthama. While **Vicky Kaushal** plays the lead, we hear from our sources that the makers have finally zeroed in on their leading heroine. Reportedly, **Sara Ali Khan** has bagged the prestigious role. The actress will be seen opposite the actor for the first time and this will also be her first sci-fi film. Sara Ali Khan who's four films old has proved to be the perfect commercial heroine, who has talent and the required masala needed for films. The film is directed by *Uri* fame **Aditya Dhar** and produced by **Ronnie Screwvala.** Vicky Kaushal has been preparing hard for the role and has even bulked-up for the film.

BONEY KAPOOR TO PLAY RANBIR KAPOOR'S FATHER IN LUV RANJAN'S NEXT

While his younger brother **Anil Kapoor** has rocked at the movies for long, looks like producer **Boney Kapoor** is now all set to make his acting debut too. When **Luv Ranjan** and his team was writing the character of **Ranbir Kapoor's** father for their next film, they had Boney Kapoor in mind as reference. Soon Luv Ranjan decided that Boney Kapoor would be the perfect for the role and offered it to him. The producer was in two minds and decided to ask his son **Arjun Kapoor** for advice. Arjun persuaded his dad and said he should surely go ahead. The producer then gave his nod and will begin shooting for the same in Delhi. The romcom stars Ranbir Kapoor and **Shraddha Kapoor.** The film will be shot in Paris too once the team gets the required permissions.



KARTIK AARYAN PAID RS 20 CRORES FOR 10 DAYS WORK

KARTIK AARYAN **WILL BE NEXT SEEN IN** RAM MADHVANI'S ***DHAMAKA*** **IN A NEVER-SEEN-BEFORE AVATAR. KARTIK COMPLETED THE SHOOT FOR THIS FILM IN 10 DAYS, WHICH IS A RECORD OF SORTS. BUT WHAT'S MORE, HE WAS PAID A WHOPPING RS 20 CRORE FOR HIS ROLE IN THE FILM. NOW THAT'S AN UNHEARD OF AMOUNT FOR A FILM WHICH WAS WRAPPED UP IN LESS THAN TWO WEEKS. THE FILM ALSO STARS** MRUNAL THAKUR.

preview

movies on the block, set-talk, talent-buzz, hotties to watch out for

LIVING HIS STORY

DEVANSH DOSHI

X FACTOR: IN IT FOR THE LONG HAUL

Devansh Doshi started out as an actor at the impressionable age of 10. As he grew up, he enjoyed the process of acting and decided to dedicate his life to honing his craft. A valedictorian, Devansh would daydream about acting while he studied marketing in college. He then went on to act in the ads of several big brands like Nokia, Domino's, HP, Cadbury, Maggi, TVS etc. He has also been a part of several Disney shows like *Vicky And Vetaal, Oye Jassi* and more. His biggest claim to fame so far is *Evening Shadows* (2018), directed by Sridhar Rangayan which has won 24 awards across the globe. Devansh also owns the production house, Afterglow Films that has two originals currently running on Hotstar. He claims to live by the motto, "Living for stories and stories for a living."

Actors Shreya Chaudhary and Mallika Dua reveal their hopes and desires *pg 14*

BANDIT BELLE

Shreya Chaudhry** lets down her guard in a tell-all interview with **Vedanshi Pathak

Shreya Chaudhry, who is in the news because of the success of her OTT series *Bandish Bandits*, made her Bollywood debut with *Dear Maya* (2017), where her co-stars were Madiha Imam and Manisha Koirala. The film had her playing a young girl who writes letters to a lonely old lady.

Shreya has fond memories of the film and says she learnt much from Manisha Koirala. She is a diehard boxing enthusiast and is also into MMA training. That explains her well-toned body. And she loves driving big bikes. Like her character Tamanna Sharma from *Bandish Bandits,* she owns a Bullet and goes on long rides during her free time. She could certainly relate to that part of her character in the series.

Shreya became an actor because of her elder brother Karan, who is now settled in the US and whom she loves to death. Younger siblings often idolise the elder and such was the case with Shreya too. Her brother had an outgoing personality and was always winning elocution and debate competitions in school. The actress, who was something of an introvert back then, was

"I THINK IT WAS LIFE-CHANGING WHEN MY PARENTS TOLD ME NOT TO DO ENGINEERING JUST BECAUSE I WAS GOOD AT MATH, BUT TO PURSUE SOMETHING I COULD SEE MYSELF DOING FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE"

Worldwide Media

DOWNLOAD YOUR FAVOURITE MAGAZINES FOR FREE!

Stay Indoors. Stay Safe.

worldwidemedia.in

FEMINA FILMFARE GRAZIA HOME & DESIGN TRENDS GoodHomes INDIA

With Ritwik Bhowmik in *Bandish Bandits*

"THE BEST MEMORY I HAVE WITH NASEER SIR WAS WHEN RITWIK (BHOWMIK) AND I GOT TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH HIM AND DID AN ACTING WORKSHOP WITH HIM. THAT WAS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY"

inspired by him to take part in such competitions herself. After being scared initially, she found she rather liked facing a sea of people and putting her points across to them. She opened up on stage and then there was no turning back. She was good academically and taking part in extra-curricular activities resulted in her being named the head girl of her school. "The seed for performing was sown early on in my life," she muses. She recalls having an unusual answer as a child when someone asked her what she would become when she grew up. She chuckles, "When someone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, they expected 'doctor' or 'lawyer' to be my answer but I used to tell them I wanted to be a mirror because I wanted everyone to look at me."

Born to a Maharashtrian mother and Rajput father, Shreya reveals that her family is her biggest support system and it is they who watch her work even before she does. "They are also the ones who give me wings to fly while keeping me grounded. I always ask my family to watch my work before I do. As I'm aware that they'll not hesitate to discuss the minus points as well." While she was growing up, her father would organise movie nights on Friday and Saturday where apart from the Bollywood staple, the family was treated to Iranian,Korean, European, Hollywood and South cinema as well. That introduced her to different kinds of cinemas at a young age. She got an opportunity to work in an advertisement while still in college.

Today she's an established name in the ad circuit. She has even done an ad with Ranbir Kapoor and other Bollywood biggies. Her parents were taken aback at first when she announced her decision to pursue modelling and acting. "When they realised how much I truly wanted to pursue it, they supported me completely. I think it was life changing when my parents told me not to do engineering just because I was good at math, but to pursue something I could see myself doing for the rest of my life, or I would be at a desk job unhappy with my choice."

After making her mark as a model, she was itching to be an actor and the opportunity came her way when Imtiaz Ali signed her for a short film, *The Other Way.* Imtiaz was impressed by her acting skills and told her to give it a serious shot. As luck would have it, she bumped into Anand Tiwari, the director of *Bandish Bandits,* during an ad call and he called her for an audition for a music-based show that he was making for Amazon. She passed the audition with flying colours and the rest, as they say, is history.

Shreya played the role of a singer in *Bandish Bandits* and had to undergo a lot of preparation to get the character right. "Luckily Anand Tiwari and producer Amritpal Bindra organised workshops before the shoot. So be it training in music and performing with singer and coach Akshit Parikh and choreographer Vijay Ganguly, interacting with composers Shankar Ehsaan Loy, visiting a music studio, listening to a scratch for the first time, understanding the mere basics of what goes into composing a song, everything came in handy."

She got an opportunity to work with Naseeruddin Shah in the show and learnt a lot from the veteran. "The best memory I have with Naseer sir was when Ritwik (Bhowmik) and I got to spend some time with him post the shoot and do an acting workshop with him. That was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and one of my fondest memories."

Here's wishing this *bindaas* babe the very best for the future. ■

Golden *girl*

PRATIBHA SINGH BAGHEL IS A SINGER, PERFORMER, ACTOR AND MORE...HERE'S A BRIEF PROFILE OF THE MULTI-TALENTED PERSONALITY, WHO IS COMING UP WITH SUFISCORE'S FIRST ALBUM *BOLE NAINA, SILENCES SPEAK*

“HER LOVE FOR *GHAZALS* ALSO PUSHED HER TOWARDS BAGGING A ROLE IN THE EPIC MUSICAL *MUGAL-E-AZAM*. PRATIBHA JOINED THE TEAM BACK IN 2016 AND REMAINS AN INTEGRAL PART TO DATE”

AWARDS AND MORE

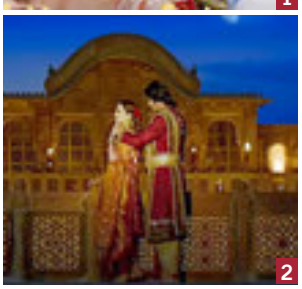
Pratibha Singh Baghel managed to bag the Lata Mangeshkar Alankaran Award in 2008 and also has the National Classical Vocal Award at a very young age. However, she first rose to fame after an appearance in the music reality show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* in 2009. One glimpse at the sheer talent that was on display and it was evident that Pratibha Singh Baghel was destined for greatness. Hailing from a small town named Rewa in Madhya Pradesh, Pratibha managed to gain popularity among music lovers across the nation thanks to her soulful and magical voice. The young star managed to make it to the final of the competition and there was no looking back ever since.

BOLLYWOOD SOJOURN

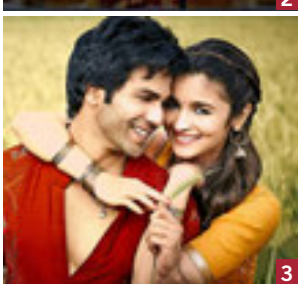
Soon after her successful run in the reality show, offers began rolling in for the singing sensation. Pratibha made her debut with *Jheeni re jheeni* song in the film *Issaq* (2013). The offers came pouring in after that and she worked in films like *Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhaniya* (2014), *Zid* (2014), *Luckhnowi Ishq* (2015), *Bollywood Diaries* (2016), *Shorgul* (2016). Her recent tracks in films like *Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi* (2019), *Saand Ki Aankh* (2019), and the hit web series *Bandish Bandits* (2020) have made her a household name among Bollywood fans. In fact, such was the impact of her voice in the Kangana Ranaut starrer that she officially earned the title of “Voice of Manikarnika”.

BOLLYWOOD PLAYBACK

1



2



3

1. *Baazaar*
2. *Manikarnika*
3. *Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhaniya*

LIVEWIRE PERFORMER

Apart from singing for films, Pratibha also is extremely passionate about performing live for her fans. So far, the singer has performed in over 30 countries across the world including the United Kingdom, Switzerland, UAE, Singapore, Germany and Canada, and many more. Pratibha has often mentioned that she finds the energy of the audience infectious and how amazing it feels watching so many people cheer for you. Over the years, Pratibha proved she was not just talented but also versatile as she flawlessly pulled off singing in languages such as Tamil, Gujarati, Marathi, and Punjabi. While Pratibha has a strong love for singing in different genres and languages, *ghazal* is the closest one to her heart.

CALL OF THE STAGE

Her love for *ghazals* also pushed her towards bagging a role in the epic musical *Mugal-E-Azam.* Pratibha joined the team back in 2016 and remains an integral part to date. And if one extravagant musical drama wasn’t enough, she also played the lead role in music maestros Salim – Sulieman’s adaptation of *Umrao Jaan Ada.* The one of a kind experience was the first-

ever theatrical play with live singing and music on stage. In her interviews, she has stated that live singing on stage has zero margin of errors and one can't have a retake. One mistake and you lose the interest of the audience.

PERSONAL GLIMPSES

Pratibha's relationship with music began at the tender age of three. The singer grew up idolizing the likes of Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, and Hariharan while she looks up to Shreya Goshal and Sunidhi Chauhan from the current lot of singers. Prathibha's father who always had her back and pushed her to pursue her passion as she eventually made it into a full-fledged career. In fact, not just her father but Pratibha's entire family holds a deep passion for music. While it is only Pratibha and her uncle who pursue music professionally, the rest of them are equally passionate about it. A nurturing and motivating environment is essential for the growth of an artiste and Pratibha is a fine example of the same. So far, she has worked with established names like Shankar Mahadevan, Sonu Nigam, Himesh Reshammiya and has impressed them with her repertoire.

BOLE NAINA ALBUM

Pratibha is all set to return with another treat for her fans. The singer is gearing up for the launch of Sufiscore's first album *Bole Naina, Silences speak.* What makes this so special is that she will be collaborating with some of the biggest names in the history of Indian music. The album has been penned by the legendary Gulzar and as you would expect it translates to poetry at its finest. The master percussionist and Grammy awardee, Ustad Zakir Hussain brings his own flair to the tracks. He truly brings the words to life with the perfect melody. The heart of this epic collaboration is Deepak Pandit with his composition and vision. While the composer has maintained the feel of a classic album, the inclusion of modern recording techniques really takes things up a notch.

1. Gulzar
2. Deepak Pandit
3. Zakir Hussain

> **"THE ALBUM *BOLE NAINA* IS PENNED BY GULZAR AND COMPOSED BY DEEPAK PANDIT"**

Through *Bole Naina,* we will witness Pratibha's magic on-screen once again as apart from lending her soulful voice for the track, the singer also plays the lead in the music video. While Pratibha has given a glimpse of her acting prowess over the years through musicals, we cannot wait to watch what she has in store this time around. The video has been directed by Ravi Jadhav. The National Award winning film director has added a cinematic opulence to the entire album, bringing the audio into a grand visual experience that reflects the quality and standard set by the musical legends. This is the first Indian Album launching in the most advanced Dolby Atmos music format. Sufiscore, the channel and record label that has gained widespread popularity in a span of few months, has produced this album. Sufiscore has collaborated with the Budapest Symphony Orchestra for *Bole Naina, Silences speak* which is a first of it's kind for an Indian music album

Sufiscore is committed to bringing South Asian music to music lovers all over the globe. Their huge repertoire includes music maestros as well as upcoming talent. With subscription to their channel, one can experience the true magic of all the songs in the album.

Bole Naina, Silences speak truly seems to be the perfect amalgamation of experience and youth. We're sure that this exciting combination will produce something that will be remembered by music lovers for years to come. ■

SERIOUSLY FUNNY

Mallika Dua talks about her brush with comedy in this candid chat with Vedanshi Pathak

Daughter of veteran journalist Vinod Dua and Padmavati Dua, a doctor, Mallika comes from a family that is as distant from the world of entertainment as the sun is from the earth. She never actively thought of being a comedian. It happened by chance. She used to perform on stage while in college and most of it used to be comedy. She feels comedy is more effective when done on stage in front of a live audience, "It's more difficult to do a serious play and convince the audience. It can go really wrong and look very tacky but a bunch of us, who were studying abroad would meet every summer and put up these really funny plays. We would take plays from all over the world and adapt them and I would act in them. That is when comedy really started."

After passing out of the Modern School, Barakhamba, she went to Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania to do her graduation in theatre performance. She says she never actually thought of taking up comedy as a full-fledged profession because the idea of a comedian in Bollywood movies meant playing stock characters day in and day out. "It was only after Russell Peters or Sasha Baron Cohen came that we realised that you can be a protagonist in your own right and still be funny and be in charge of what you are doing and not just support the main cast."

> "IT WAS ONLY AFTER RUSSELL PETERS OR SASHA BARON COHEN CAME THAT WE REALISED THAT YOU CAN BE A PROTAGONIST IN YOUR OWN RIGHT AND STILL BE FUNNY AND BE IN CHARGE OF WHAT YOU ARE DOING"

She got tagged as a comedienne when the digital space opened big for performers and her skits on social media got noticed. She mentions her father has a great sense of humour that has rubbed

With Kiara Advani

#VirtualAutoShowcase

VIRTUAL AUTO SHOWCASE 2020

co-powered by ŠKODA

A Times Group Initiative

REVVIN' UP FOR GROWTH

> THE **VIRTUAL AUTO SHOWCASE - A TIMES GROUP INITIATIVE** - BROUGHT TOGETHER THE WHO'S WHO OF THE INDUSTRY

Like all other sectors, the **Indian automotive sector** too took a big hit when the lockdown was announced and the protocols for handling the pandemic were being implemented.

But in retrospect, COVID was a catalyst for change that seems to have redefined how the sector does business for the better. The industry took the time to come up with response strategies that could bring about some form of normalcy to our automotive experience, but respond they did, with the pandemic forcing automotive manufactures to look at the entire automotive experience in a new light.

The Virtual Auto Showcase 2020 brought this to the fore, aligning industry experts, thought leaders, and automobile enthusiasts at **India's first ever digital automotive show.** With an eclectic mix of keynote presentations, panel discussions and fire-side chat; this event delved into how sustainable growth can be achieved for the automobile sector, with a diverse array of speakers on show offering up much food for thought.

Besides all the high-octane discussions, there were also contests and performances on offer, and brands took centerstage in exclusive display areas, where they could interact with consumers and offer exclusive deals and discounts.

2020 has been a crazy rollercoaster ride for industry and society alike, but **The Virtual Auto Showcase 2020** represented a new paradigm of dialogue and deliberations. Digital represents an opportunity and a challenge, and if the show's reception is anything to go by, the industry and consumer are ready to rise to the occasion and grab the opportunity ahead of us.

Co-Powered by ŠKODA

Silver Partner

Associate Partners

RENAULT | Mahindra electric | aprilia | AUTOASSIST | GREAVES | micelio | LPS BOSSARD | Joy e-bike

Magazine Partner

evo

Brought to you by

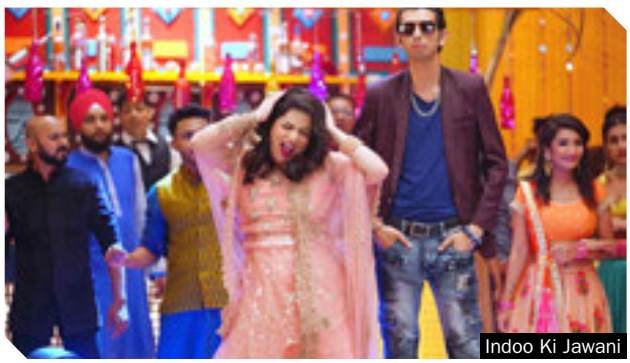
UNWIRED

off on both her sister Bakul and her. After graduating in 2012, she started working as a copywriter in 2013 and did it for three years. She was writing ad campaigns, jingles, spots and doing theatre side by side. "It's only in 2016 when the first video came out that I started getting offers. So, I did another video with TVF (The Viral Fever) and somehow I started making videos on Instagram because I really enjoyed the filters.

"I THINK MENTAL HEALTH CAN BE A VERY DELICATE THING WHEN YOU ARE BRINGING IT OUT OF YOURSELF TO BE FUNNY FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS. I THINK THERE COMES A TIME WHEN YOU HAVE TO TREAT IT WITH DISCIPLINE AND TREAT IT LIKE A JOB"

It was like a bunch of us created the industry and grew along with it," she comments. As an audience, we laugh and move on but for a comedian, comedy is serious business. Mallika reiterates the fact that comedy comes from tragedy. "Even as you're watching the simple slipping on a banana thing, which is classic comedy, you are laughing at someone else's tragedy," she asserts. Being a freelancer can be quite stressful. On one hand, you're waiting for the phone to ring and on the other, you can be shitting yourself silly under the work pressure. Jealousy or insecurity too kicks you hard sometimes in the gut when you feel your contemporaries are doing much better than you. "I think mental health can be a very delicate thing when you are bringing it out of yourself to be funny for the sake of others. I think there comes a time when you have to treat it with discipline and treat it like a job. I have learnt to make that distinction now," says she.

She has appeared in films like *Hindi Medium* (2017), *Namaste England* (2018), *Zero* (2018) and now *Indoo Ki Jawani* has hit the screens. *Indoo Ki Jawani* happened to her after she met Monisha Advani and Madhu Bhojwani, of Emmay Entertainment. She's all praise for the dynamic duo for making a space for themselves in the entertainment world in such a short time. "I find them very amazing, powerful and go-getting. They built an empire for themselves. When they called I knew it would be worth my while. When they narrated, I just kept laughing. What I loved about my character is that Sonal has her own personality and is not a sidekick. She is full of *gyaan* and sass."



Indoo Ki Jawani

The other thing she liked about the film was that it showed a 'sisterhood' between her and Kiara Advani. Mallika says Bollywood has been showcasing brotherhood since ages and it's time they gave sisterhood a chance. She and Kiara became pals on the sets. "My relation with Kiara was super chill just like Indoo's and Sonal's. We hit it off instantly and she is a very comfortable person to work with. We knew the equation we had and even though we were not Indoo and Sonal in real life, every line in the film kind of hit home," she points out.

The year 2020 has been the annus horribilis thanks to the global coronavirus. Mallika reveals that one thing she has learnt in 2020 is to not plan. "I haven't planned anything else and if something 2020 has taught us, it is to not attach yourself to plans and expectations. I'm glad that I got to spend the entire year with family even though it came at such a great cost to the planet."

Her wishlist for 2021 includes the complete eradication of COVID-19. Also, she wants more and more companies to adopt a work-from-home routine for their employees. And she also wants the internet to be a kinder place. "I think in 2020 we saw that opportunism doesn't escape anything. We saw vultures and opportunists preying on death, on protests. I think the internet and news media were at peak toxicity. I would like to see that change." We can't help but agree. ■

F&B
fashion and beauty

They are hot, they are cool.
Meet our trend makers and breakers

COUTURE SHOCK

SONAM KAPOOR IN STEPHANE ROLLAND

WHERE: FOR *AK VS AK* PROMOTIONS
THE X FACTOR: LOOSE SILHOUETTE COUTURE

Sonam Kapoor's penchant for dramatic silhouettes is well known to everyone who has followed her journey into fashion over the years. Making yet another bold and beautiful appearance, Sonam looked ravishing in Stephane Rolland haute couture she wore for promotions. She paired the marigold gown with a black tied belt clench around the waist and the ornamentation around the neck really elevated this simple yet stylish piece. The smokey eye with blood red lips and the wispy hair, all worked wonders to make this look strike a home run.

Small is big *pg 24*
Monotone Magic *pg 27*
Cut above the rest *pg28*

COMPILED BY: ANALITA SETH
PHOTOGRAPHS: YOGEN SHAH

SMALL IS BIG

Mini bags aren't for everyone

If you're looking to carrying a handbag that can hold everything from your lipstick to your spare pair of heels, then this trend might not be your cup of tea. Mini bags aren't meant for functionality, they are a minimalist trend which only works as an accessory for your outfit. We also believe that the addition of pockets in women's outfits may have given this trend a push because now you don't need a duffle bag to tote your essentials around.

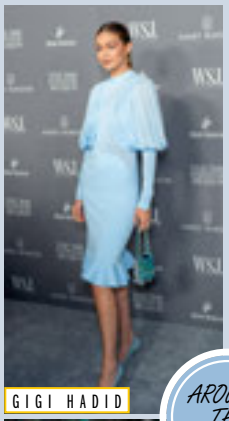
LOCAL SPOTTINGS

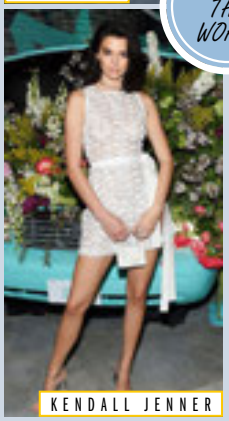
VAANI KAPOOR

NUSHRRATT BHARUCCHA

KIARA ADVANI

AROUND THE WORLD


GIGI HADID


KENDALL JENNER

KIM KARDASHIAN

Lizzo carrying the Jaquemus micro bag sent out a wave of memes on the internet. It was the first time a bag so tiny had made it to the red carpet and turned out to be a revolutionary moment for luxury bags.

PRIYANKA CHOPRA

LIZZO

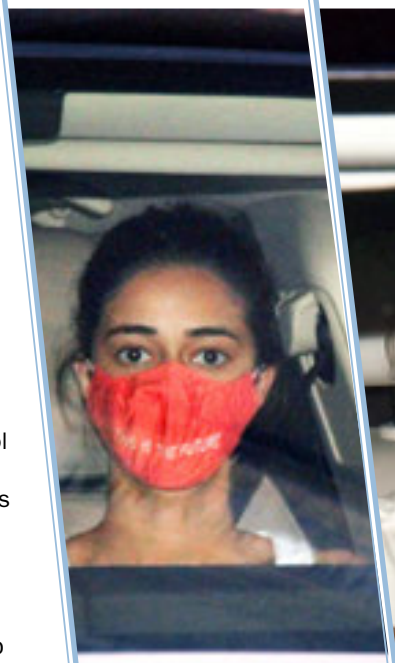
RIHANNA

Matching your hat to your shoe to your bag, or your necklace to your earrings, has a tendency to look dated. Mixing up your accessories adds interest to an outfit, and can make you look much more modern and polished
-Stacy London

MASKED MESSAGE

Customising the newest accessory one slogan at a time

Remember when you would wear a cool slogan t-shirt and convey a message every time you walked out? With masks fast becoming a mandate, we now have a bolder and more in-your-face way of doing it. What started as a necessity has now transformed itself into a fashion accessory. The first step towards customisation of face masks was matching it with your outfit and now we are putting slogans on them that are quite witty. So look into the eyes, read the mask and move along, mate.



ANANYA PANDAY

SONAKSHI SINHA

MASK FORCE

Etsy

pleasures

Pinko

Pinko

Etsy

Etsy

Etsy

DEEPIKA PADUKONE & RANVEER SINGH

LET THE EYES DO THE TALKING

With masks becoming a mandate, eye-makeup is rising again. Here are six cool tricks you can use to accentuate your eyes

SONAM KAPOOR AHUJA

BHUMI PEDNEKAR

JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ

SHRADDHA KAPOOR

SOHA ALI KHAN

NORA FATEHI

Brow Buddy
With the lips not drawing attention anymore, your brows need that extra filling. Keep a brow pencil handy to avoid any mismatch in your eyes and brows. Unfilled eyebrows can pull down all the effort you've put in doing your eye make-up. So brow up, ladies.

Colourful liners
If you're feeling particularly playful, a coloured liner is a perfect way to commemorate it. You can opt for a colour totally contrasting to your outfit to add that pop on your face and draw more attention to the eyes.

Shimmer lid
There's nothing holding you back from using some shimmer on your eyes anymore. So drop the scepticism from the days when the options were a bold lip or eyes. Sweep some glitter on eyelids next time you step out.

Semi lined
The biggest trick of trade with eye make-up is to smudge your eyeliner to avoid sharp lines. Another tip for people who love to line their lid is to only go halfway. It gives a nice effect and a cool way to avoid creases on your eyes.

Lash extensions
These come in several volumes and you can pick according to how heavy you want your lashes. There are single stands you can add or go for a stick-on lashes over your real ones. They make your eyes look bigger and help them pop.

Small wing
While a big Amy Whinehouse wing is a classic, it does not always go with every occasion and outfit. So tone it down a bit with a small stroke of your liner to extend your lid just a little bit.

"Treat your makeup like jewelry for the face. Play with colors, shapes, structure — it can transform you."
– François Nars

MONOTONE MAGIC

Indian wear is no more a game of contrasting shades

Whenever one thinks of an Indian attire, the instant visual in one's head is bright colours and clingy embellishments. But with celebrities opting for *salwar kameez* for daily wear, it's gradually taking a more minimalistic approach. Monotones and pastels are becoming a favourite and actors are picking the loose silhouette over body-hugging cuts. The long *kurta* with flared pyjamas is the biggest trend on the block.

KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN

ALIA BHATT

NEHA DHUPIA

KIARA ADVANI

DESI GIRL VIBES

TARA SUTARIA

SARA ALI KHAN

MALAVIKA MOHANAN

ANUSHKA SHARMA

TIPS:

IF YOU WANT TO ELEVATE THIS MONOTONE OUTFIT, HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Pick colourful *jootis* to finish the look.

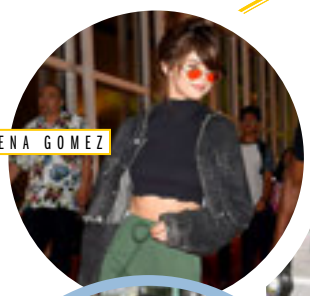
- Pair it with heavy earrings or a metal watch.

- Pick a contrasting bag to add a pop of colour.

Our traditional attire has taken hundreds of years, generations of fashion designers, and tens of thousands of iterations to make a mark on the world. And you should be proud of it!

HOLLYWOOD STREET STYLE

JHANVI KAPOOR



SELENA GOMEZ

SOPHIE TURNER

HAILEY BALDWIN

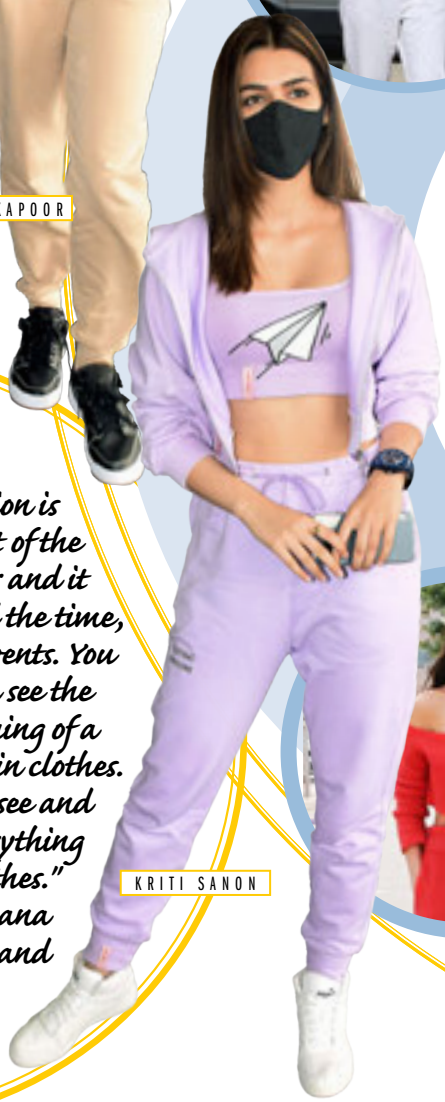
KOURTNEY KARDASHIAN

JENNIFER LOPEZ

CUT ABOVE THE REST

Sweatsuits now have a new address and it's on 'cutting' street

Take one of the comfiest outfits that exist and add a bit of pizazz to. Crop sweatshirts are the new thing. We've seen the Jenners, the Kardashian and the Hadids strutting in crop sweatsuits around New York and now this bug has bitten the Bollywood divas. Pyjamas and sweats have taken over the streets of B-town and we can't be more excited to see this trend evolve with time. Let the sweatshirts move to the front of your wardrobe then.



KRITI SANON

"Fashion is the part of the daily air and it changes all the time, with all events. You can even see the approaching of a revolution in clothes. You can see and feel everything in clothes."
—Diana Vreeland

BELLA HADID

LILY COLLINS

EMILY RATAJKOWSKI

GIGI HADID

exclusives

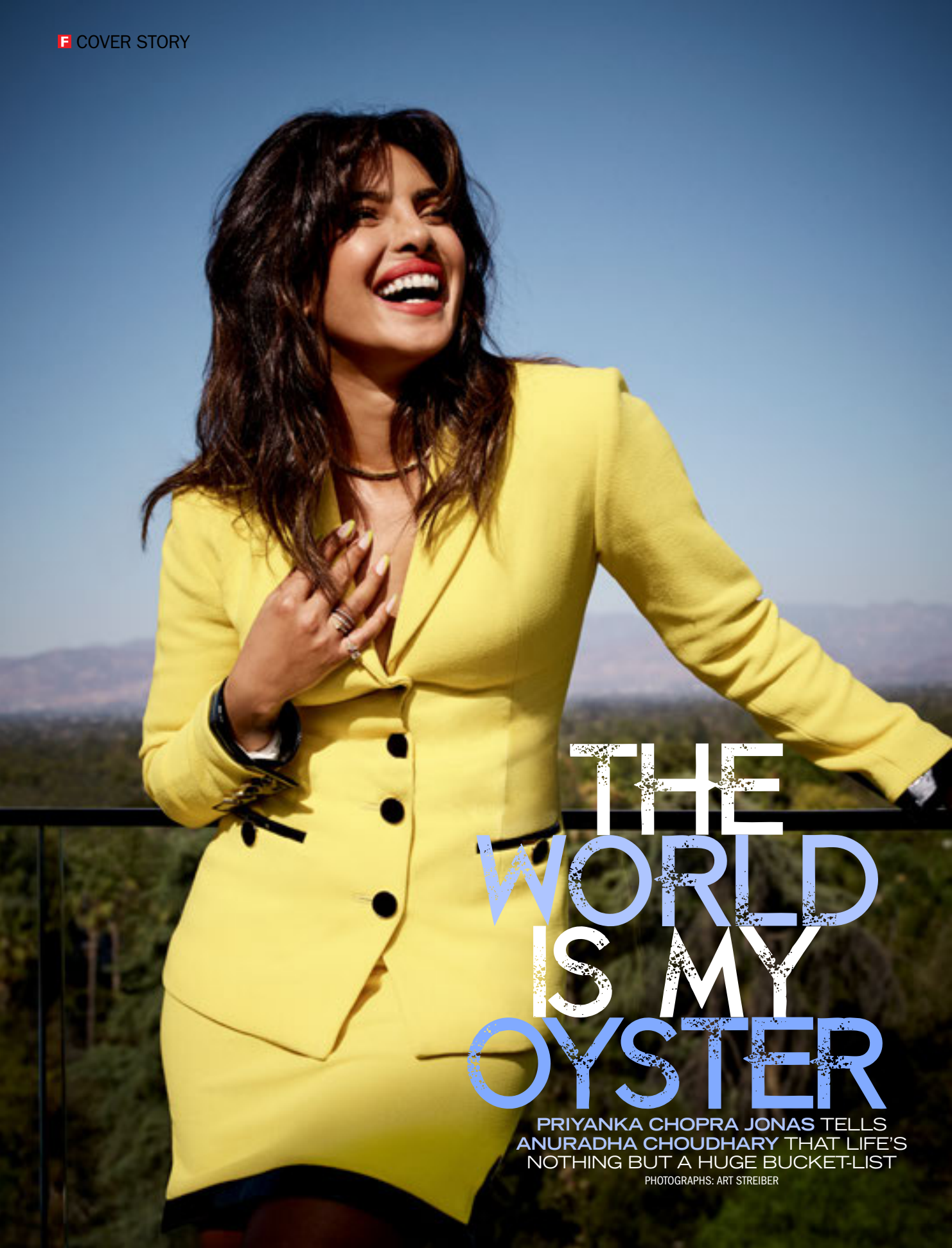
what's on their mind?

LIFE'S A GIFT

I was blessed to have the comfort of a home, food to eat, surrounded by people who I love and the opportunity to continue to work. We were safe and healthy and that for me was most important. I count my blessings every day

Priyanka Chopra Jonas talks about learning to be grateful and positive while living under the strain of the COVID-19 pandemic and lots more...

PHOTOGRAPH: ART STREIBER



THE WORLD IS MY OYSTER

PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS TELLS ANURADHA CHOUDHARY THAT LIFE'S NOTHING BUT A HUGE BUCKET-LIST

PHOTOGRAPHS: ART STREIBER

EVERY TIME YOU THINK YOU'RE GETTING TO KNOW WHAT SHE'S LIKE, PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS SURPRISES YOU BY HER CHOICES...

WHILE THE WORLD WAS WHILING AWAY ITS TIME WATCHING SHOWS ON OTT PLATFORM, BAKING BANANA BREAD AND DEVOURING NEW CUISINES

DURING THE LOCKDOWN, PRIYANKA WAS HARD AT WORK WRITING HER MEMOIR, *UNFINISHED*.

The book, which also comes in the audiobook format, recorded in her own voice, gives us a glimpse of Priyanka's formative years, her winning Miss India and Miss World beauty pageants... the challenges she faced while carving a niche for herself both in India and Hollywood. It's aptly named *Unfinished* because when it comes to Priyanka Chopra, there are no full stops indeed.

From juggling an acting career for 20 years, turning producer, starring in a Hollywood drama series, being appointed as UNICEF's Goodwill Ambassador, marrying singer Nick Jonas to making a name for herself in Hollywood, Priyanka surely has come a long, long way. Yes, she has broken all kinds of ceilings without and has shown us how it's done without breaking sweat. More power to her! If her social media posts are anything to go by, she's living the good life. Inspiring millions in turn to dream...She has launched a thousand brands, inspired a million dreams. Despite all the accolades, her head is firmly on her shoulders. She remains as amenable as ever... no airs and always ready with a smile to welcome you...

The actress is in the news again. Her movie *The White Tiger* has just been released on OTT. She may not be driving the movie but she's driving many conversations about the film... working in the OTT space and her memoir and of course the lockdown and her living in London for a while, shooting new assignments...

We talk about anything and everything under the sun...read on...

HOW WOULD YOU LOOK BACK AT LAST YEAR?
With a lot of gratitude. I was blessed to have the comfort of a home, food to eat, surrounded by people who I love and the opportunity to continue to work. We were safe and healthy and that for me was most important. I count my blessings every day.

WHAT HAS THE PANDEMIC TAUGHT YOU?
Basically, being in this quarantine made me realise that some of the stresses we put on ourselves in our normal lives may or may not be important.

BEING IN THIS QUARANTINE MADE ME REALISE THAT SOME OF THE STRESSES WE PUT ON OURSELVES IN OUR NORMAL LIVES MAY OR MAY NOT BE IMPORTANT.

IT'S GOOD TO TAKE A BREATHER, TAKE STOCK OF YOUR LIFE, AND TELL YOUR LOVED ONES YOU LOVE THEM

It's good to take a breather, take stock of your life, and tell your loved ones you love them. The one thing that kept me calm was constantly reminding myself how lucky and blessed I am.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOURSELF DURING THE LOCKDOWN?
A lot… given that I wrote most of my memoir *Unfinished* in that time. But more than anything else, for someone who was always on the go, doing 100 things at one go, I learnt that I could completely slow it down and still be ok. I found things to do, learnt how to pace myself and I think I came out of that experience calmer and more at ease.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY HAS BEEN THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE LOCKDOWN FOR YOU?
Getting to spend so much quality time with my husband, which was the biggest highlight because, given our hectic individual schedules, we don't get such extended time together. Also, writing the book, adopting our new puppy, Panda and

IRONICALLY, I NAMED THIS MEMOIR YEARS BEFORE I STARTED WRITING IT. I HAVE A LONG AND EVER-GROWING LIST OF THINGS I WANT TO DO, BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY. SO, IN THAT, I AM VERY MUCH #UNFINISHED

just spending time with the family and the doggies.

UNFINISHED WILL HIT THE STANDS SOON, WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO WRITE IT?

The journey of *Unfinished* started about two years ago as I was nearing the milestone of being in the entertainment business for 20 years…. basically 20 in 2020. I am at a place in my life where I can look back and introspect and I thought it was a good time as any to pen down this journey I've been on. I hope to give readers an insight into my journey in my own words… it's sort of the 'in-between interviews' version of my life… the public version vs. my real story. It reveals a vulnerable side of me that only I can explain…. Sort of like a 'curtain's down' look at my life in my words.

WHY DID YOU CALL IT _UNFINISHED_? WAS THERE ANY OTHER TITLE YOU'D THOUGHT OF?

Ironically, I named this memoir years before I started writing it. I have a long and ever-growing list of things I want to do, both personally and professionally. So, in that, I am very much #Unfinished. But the funny thing about writing a memoir is that it forces you to look at things differently, reconciling so many things you thought you had put to bed. In doing so I've realised

that being 'unfinished' has deeper meaning for me and has in fact been one of the most common threads of my life.

YOU'RE ALSO SUPPOSED TO BE WORKING ON THE AUDIOBOOK OF *UNFINISHED.* WHAT'S IT LIKE TO DUB SOMETHING YOU'VE WRITTEN?

Yes, I have already completed the recording. I did this in London, during the most recent lockdown (seems to be a common thread with my book) and so I did this alone, in a makeshift studio set up in my home. So, it was just me basically doing this alone with no one else around. It just added to the overall experience…. Which was surreal to say the least. It almost felt like I was narrating my story to a close friend… it was intimate and personal. It also made the whole prospect of the upcoming release so real.

LOVE IS LOVE AND ROMCOMS ESSENTIALLY DRIVE THE SAME EMOTIONS. THERE ARE NOT TOO MANY DIFFERENCES (BETWEEN HOLLYWOOD AND INDIAN ROM COMS) APART FROM LANGUAGE AND MAYBE THE SONG SEQUENCES AND POSSIBLY THE DEGREE OF DRAMATISATION

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT *TEXT FOR YOU,* THE MOVIE YOU WERE SHOOTING OR IN LONDON.

Text For You is a romantic drama directed by Jim Strouse. The story revolves around a woman who, to ease the pain after tragically losing her fiancé, starts to send romantic texts to his old cell. It turns out, the phone number

has been reassigned to a man across town suffering from similar heartbreak. The two meet and feel an undeniable connection but can't seem to leave the past behind. I'm excited to have worked with Sam Heughan, Celine Dion, Russell Tovey, Sofia Barclay and an incredible collection of actors in this film.

YOU WERE FORCED TO STAY BACK IN LONDON AFTER YOUR SHOOT, HOW DID YOU SPEND THOSE DAYS?

Actually, I was always meant to be there…. it was not forced at all. I will be spending a year in London to complete two projects. I just finished shooting *Text For You* and will shortly begin filming *Citadel,* Amazon Studios' new global series from directors Anthony and Joe Russo (Russo brothers) alongside Richard Madden.

GETTING TO SPEND SO MUCH QUALITY TIME WITH MY HUSBAND, WHICH WAS THE BIGGEST HIGHLIGHT BECAUSE GIVEN OUR HECTIC INDIVIDUAL SCHEDULES, WE DON'T GET SUCH EXTENDED TIME TOGETHER

HOW DIFFERENT IS A HOLLYWOOD ROMANTIC FILM WITH A BOLLYWOOD ONE?

Love is love and romcoms essentially drive the same emotions. There are not too many differences apart from language and maybe the song sequences and possibly the degree of dramatisation… you know how we love the drama.

YOU'VE BEEN DOING THE PROMOTIONS DIGITALLY DURING THE PANDEMIC. HOW'S THE EXPERIENCE BEEN LIKE?

It's not completely new in some ways… because I've been working in different continents and time zones for many years, I have done a number of promotions digitally in the past. But this is completely different… not meeting / interacting with people or doing on-ground events is very surreal. I'm someone who loved doing promotions because it gave me the opportunity to interact with so many people, especially fans… I miss that a lot though I completely understand and support the need to stay home as much as possible and practice social distancing right now.

THE JOURNEY OF *UNFINISHED* STARTED ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO AS I WAS NEARING THE MILESTONE OF BEING IN THE ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESS FOR **20** YEARS...

BASICALLY **20** IN **2020**. I AM AT A PLACE IN MY LIFE WHERE I CAN LOOK BACK

AND INTROSPECT AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD TIME AS ANY TO PEN DOWN THIS JOURNEY I'VE BEEN ON

HOW DO YOU THINK THE BUSINESS OF MOVIES HAS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC?

There has obviously been a clear impact… from shoots being called off, to many releases moving from theatres to streaming platforms, the industry has had a tough year. We also have to remember that the lockdowns and restrictions caused the loss of livelihood for many people within the industry… technicians, support crew, actors, dancers etc. It's been especially hard on them. And we can't forget the plight of theatres as well, which

THE WHITE TIGER IS NOT PINKY MADAM'S (MY CHARACTER IN THE FILM) STORY. YET SHE IS INTRINSICALLY LINKED TO HOW THE STORY UNFOLDS. DIRECTOR RAMIN BAHRANI HAS DEVELOPED AND EXPANDED THE ROLE OF PINKY MORE THAN WHAT WE READ OF HER IN THE BOOK

were one of the last businesses to open. But there was a positive side… it made us all think more out of the box, explore new ideas and platforms and find new ways for the creativity to shine.

TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER IN *THE WHITE TIGER* WHICH RECENTLY GOT RELEASED ON OTT?

The White Tiger is not Pinky Madam's (my character in the film) story. Yet she is intrinsically linked to how the story unfolds. Director Ramin Bahrani has developed and expanded the role of Pinky more than what we read of her in the book. She is born to a hardworking, middle-class family of immigrants in the US and has a tough life. Marrying the affluent Ashok (Rajkummar Rao) and moving to India (for a short time, she thinks) isn't what she imagines it to be. Pinky is woke, but she's woke as long as it's convenient for her.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO SIGN THE FILM? HOW WAS IT WORKING ON THE FILM?

When I first read the book, I thought it was hard-hitting and provocative and sarcastic and funny and dark at the same time and I remember it being such a page-turner. So when I heard that it was being adapted for a film, I chased after it. I met with Ramin in cities across the world and auditioned for it multiple times. I wanted to be an executive producer so I could put support behind It. It was an incredible experience shooting this film and working with such talents like Ramin, Raj (Rajkummar Rao) and Adarsh (Gourav) not to mention the other stellar cast members who brought the finer nuances out in every scene. Working with Ramin was an experience unlike any I've had before. His style is more supportive of actors… he builds your self-confidence and gives you space… so much so that he never says action or cut… he just says "when you're ready"… it's incredible.

WHAT WAS THE TOUGHEST PART ABOUT PLAYING YOUR CHARACTER IN *THE WHITE TIGER?*

To fully give into being this American *desi…* one who was born and brought up there. My

reality is so different from hers. Also, her lens of the world is myopic in a sense and very different from mine and so I had to switch off that side of me when playing Pinky.

DO YOU MISS WORKING IN BOLLYWOOD? DO YOU PLAN TO SIGN A BOLLYWOOD FILM ANYTIME SOON?

Yes, I do… very much. I'm currently discussing some great projects and hopefully, I will announce something soon.

WOULD YOU BE OPEN TO WORKING ON THE OTT PLATFORM?

I already am… I already have multiple projects underway for the same. OTT is the future of entertainment and we have to catch up with the world in creating the right kind of content for these platforms. *The White Tiger* just released on Netflix, *Citadel* is being made for Amazon Prime and I have multiple projects being discussed for my Production House, Purple Pebble Pictures with various OTT platforms across the world.

ANY HINDI FILM OR WEB SERIES YOU WISH YOU HAD DONE.

Delhi Crime… but honestly my friend Shefali Shah is just amazing in it.

AT THIS STAGE IN LIFE, WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST HEART'S DESIRE?

Just that everyone I love is safe, happy and healthy.

ONE THING THAT YOU HOPE HAPPENS FOR YOU IN 2021.

That I am able to shoot again and finish and launch all the amazing things I've been working on. Basically, for us to move forward after so many months of standing still. ■

OTT IS THE FUTURE OF ENTERTAINMENT AND WE HAVE TO CATCH UP WITH THE WORLD IN CREATING THE RIGHT KIND OF CONTENT FOR THESE PLATFORMS. *THE WHITE TIGER* JUST RELEASED ON NETFLIX, *CITADEL* IS BEING MADE FOR AMAZON PRIME...

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!

66TH FILMFARE AWARDS 2021

Vote for the Best Film | Best Director
Best Actor in A Leading Role (Male)
Best Actor in A Leading Role (Female)
and many more...

To vote, log on to
awards.filmfare.com

VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITES TODAY!

VOTING ENDS ON FEBRUARY 25, 2021

Let your body be a painting
Let your body be a poem

BOHEMIAN *rhapsody*

***Shruti Haasan** displays her inner desires in this wild and spirited photoplay*

Photographs: Eshaan Giri | Stylist: Amritha Ram
Hair: Chinni | Make-up: Arthi Selvarajan
Outfit: Kartikeya | Shoes: Christian Louboutin

Let your heart be an
untended garden

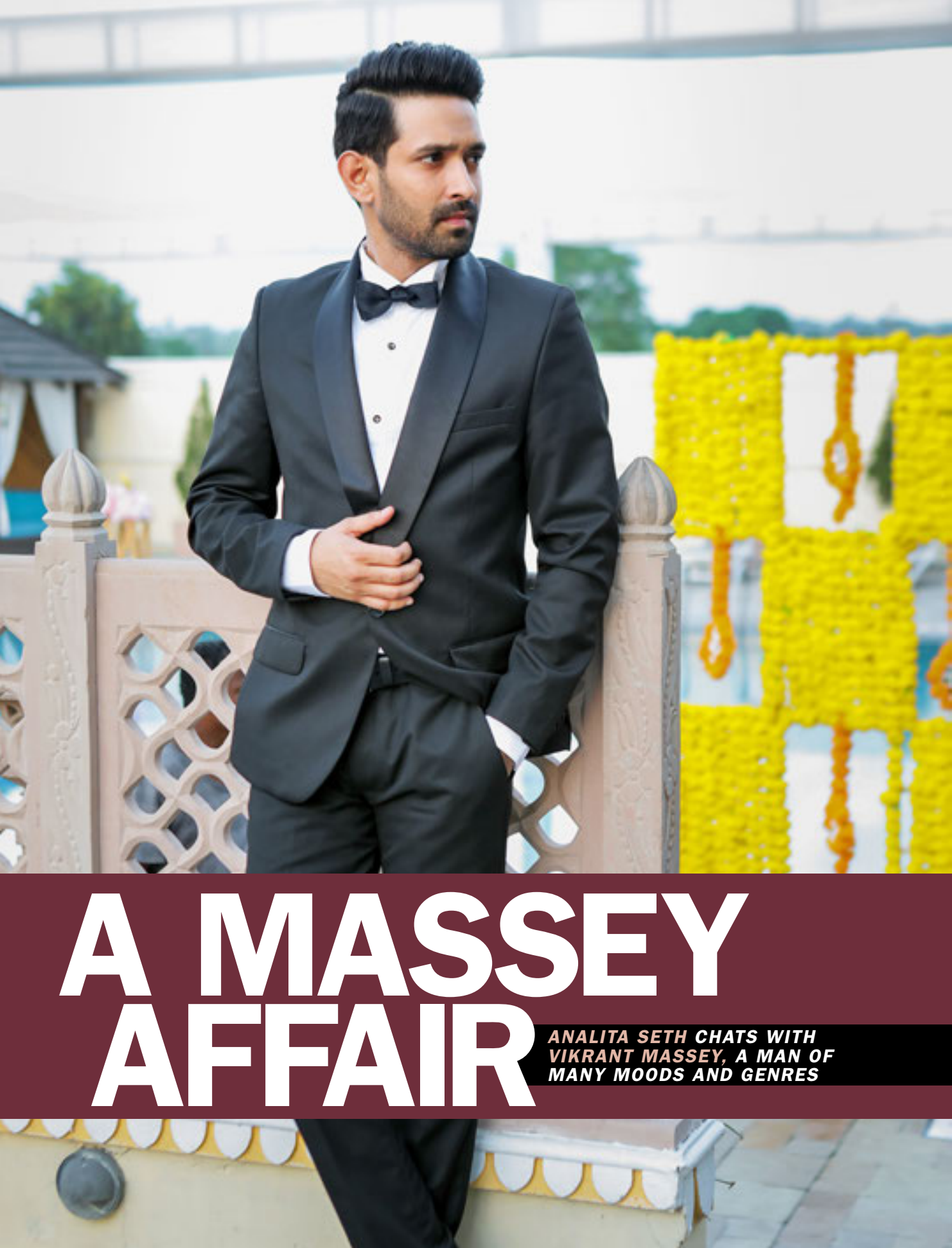
Don't clip the wings of desire Let them flutter wildly

Outfit: Chola The Label

Be as you are
don't change a
comma of your story

Shoes: Papa Don't Preach by Shubhika

Between heart and
mind choose heart.
Always...



A MASSEY AFFAIR

***ANALITA SETH** CHATS WITH **VIKRANT MASSEY,** A MAN OF MANY MOODS AND GENRES*

After being a part of primetime television, Vikrant Massey started a gradual ascent at the movies. From doing small roles in films like *Lootera* and *Dil Dhadakne Do*, he slowly graduated to playing complex characters and impressed us with the shelled up Shutu in *A Death In The Gunj,* the hopeful Amol in *Chhapaak,* the morally bankrupt Pradeep in *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare* and the bright and shiny Sunny in *Ginny Weds Sunny,* his first commercial venture. Despite his art cinema credentials, Vikrant has the ability to walk onto any set and make every role his own. He may not be a hunk but has been called the thinking woman's sex symbol. We caught up with the actor who is slowly earning the sobriquet of Mr Dependable with each of his releases...

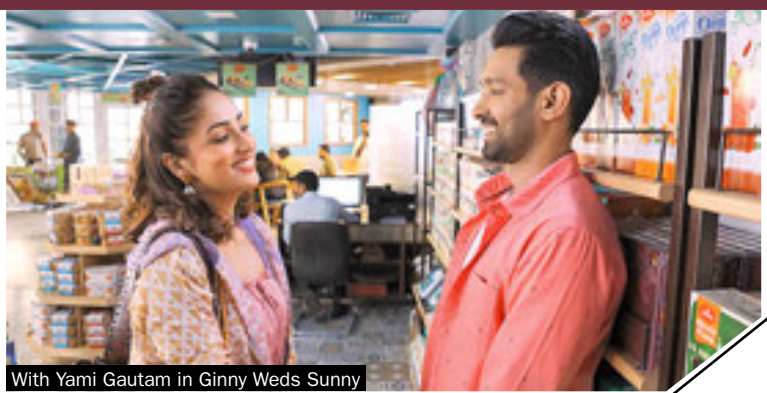
"ALANKRITA SHRIVASTAVA, AS A DIRECTOR, IS ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE I TRUST BLINDLY. I'D GO SHOOT FOR HER EVEN WITHOUT READING MY PART. AS MUCH AS SHE'S OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS, SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE WANTS FROM HER ACTORS. HALF YOUR JOB IS TAKEN CARE OF WHEN YOU'RE WORKING WITH SOMEONE LIKE HER"

YOUR LAST VENTURE, *GINNY WEDS SUNNY* WAS AN OUTRIGHT COMMERCIAL FILM, WHICH IS A RELATIVELY NEW GENRE FOR YOU. WHAT MADE YOU PICK THE FILM?

Yes, it's fairly new for the audience to see me acting like a typical hero. It was a conscious decision on my part. As an actor, you want to tap into the diet of the massy audience at least once in your life. It felt like the right time because I've already done a lot of intense stuff. I needed a breather from that. I thoroughly enjoyed working with Yami Gautam. The entire cast and crew were like a family because we were together for nearly two months. A strong sense of camaraderie existed on the sets. I think it also reflected in the feedback we got for the film. It's a nice and happy film, especially in times like these when our minds have turned negative.

DID YOU EVER FEEL OUT OF PLACE WHILE SHOOTING FOR *GINNY WEDS SUNNY?*

I was looking for something spontaneous and this came along. But yes, now that I think about it, I did miss my staple diet which is drama and alternate cinema. I'm really looking forward to starting filming again and getting back into my space with *Haseen Dilruba.*


With Yami Gautam in Ginny Weds Sunny

HOW WAS IT DANCING IN A FILM? YOU'VE NEVER DONE IT AT THIS SCALE BEFORE.

I used to dance professionally on stage but had never done it in front of the camera before. I was blessed with a great team. The choreographer was so supportive, as was Yami, who shook a leg with me. Dancing has always been a very close part of my life. So I just went out there to enjoy myself. I will always cherish the days I spent dancing in front of the camera.

IT'S SURPRISING THAT YOU SHOULD GO TOWARDS MASALA ENTERTAINER WHEN THERE'S A SHIFT HAPPENING TOWARDS CONTENT-DRIVEN CINEMA? WHAT WAS THE TRANSITION LIKE AND WHAT DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THIS SHIFT?

It's actually great because there's an entire ecosystem that has fought for it for years. Because of the advent of the streaming platforms, this dawned upon us in a rush. We got exposed to international content and our content too got exposed internationally, all in one go. It's a level-playing field for everyone. I will also concede to the fact that in India the single-screen theatres cater to a different audience altogether. But yes, the shift is prominent. As for me, it was a conscious decision to try this and tick that box. I also wanted to experiment and it felt like the right time. There is now

VIKRANT'S FAVOURITE OTT SHOWS

around us grabbed everyone's attention. It was exactly the case with me. But after that, it was full of introspection and filled with gratitude. I've understood the fragility of life. Though I had four releases this year, I did miss out on meeting people. But no complaints.

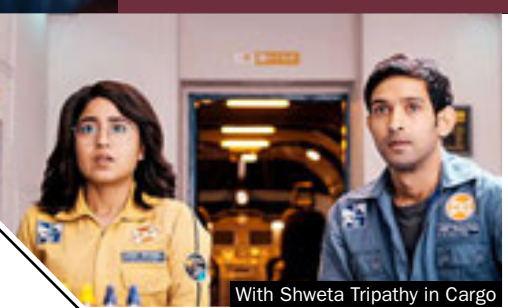
CHHAPAAK, CARGO, DOLLY KITTY AUR CHAMAKTE SITARE AND GINNY WEDS SUNNY... WHICH WAS YOUR FAVOURITE TO WORK ON AND HOW WAS THE TRANSITION FROM ONE TO THE OTHER?

I have always been someone who represents realism and alternate cinema. It's something I enjoy because I love drama and talking about interpersonal relationships. So I would say *Chhapaak* was very special for me this year and so was *Cargo.* A lot depends on what the film is trying to say. It is not always about what you are doing or how important your part is. That has never been my case. So *Chhapaak* was socially relevant. I was proud to be associated with that film.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THESE FILMS?

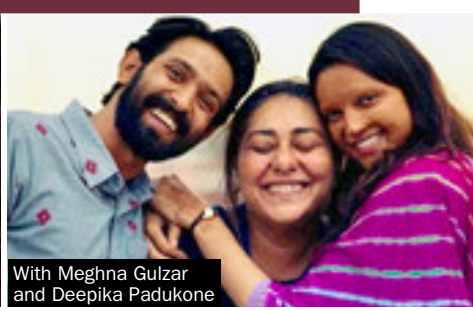
You learn a lot from the people who work with. Especially when you spend not a few days, but months together. There are days you get vulnerable in front of each other. There are bonds and relationships you build over time. So it would be hard to pick one thing because there's so much to each one of them. But if I were to pick one, then I'd say I've learnt a lot from Deepika Padukone, while working with her in *Chhapaak.* Her poise, grace and calm are something I admire a lot. Her conduct, especially at workplaces is admirable. It's so endearing and inspiring to see

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SOMEONE WHO REPRESENTS REALISM AND ALTERNATE CINEMA. IT'S SOMETHING I ENJOY BECAUSE I LOVE DRAMA AND TALKING ABOUT INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. SO I WOULD SAY *CHHAPAAK* WAS SPECIAL FOR ME THIS YEAR AND SO WAS *CARGO*"



With Shweta Tripathy in Cargo

Mirzapur



With Meghna Gulzar and Deepika Padukone

a sense of realism in everything we do and I've always said, cinema and society are interrelated and intertwined. So it's a great time for creative people to go out and tell stories.

WITH FOUR RELEASES IN 2020, YOU WERE LUCKY THAN MOST. HOW DID THE YEAR GO FOR YOU?

It's been like it's been for everyone else, besides the work aspect. Things have been how they've been for most people. The last six to seven months have been challenging for all of us. I've missed shooting and being on a film set. Luckily, I did get the opportunity to be on sets during an ad film. It's also been a period of introspection in a lot of ways. The initial few months of the lockdown and the things that happened

someone of her stature being so diligent with her work and her temperament.

KONKONA SEN SHARMA THE ACTOR OR DIRECTOR, WHO DO YOU PREFER?

I'd choose Konkona the director any day. I'm one of the millions fans she has. I want to see her on the screen as well. But the time I spent with her during *A Death In The Gunj,* where she navigated me as Shutu, will always be special for me. She will always be one of the most gifted directors I've worked with. She is very sensitive as a person and that's a special quality. The times that we are living in, in terms of all the negativity around, it's a rarity and a blessing to be around someone who has her heart in the right place. I've learnt so many things from her. I look up to her in so many ways and would choose her as a director at the drop of a hat.

HOW WAS IT WORKING WITH ALANKRITA SRIVASTAVA AGAIN IN *DOLLY KITTY AUR WOH CHAMAKTE SITARE* AFTER *LIPSTICK UNDER MY BURKHA?*

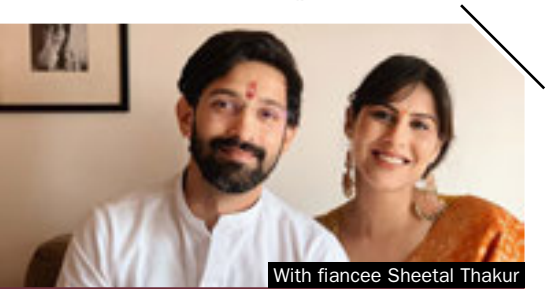
The names we are mentioning here are all supremely talented and independent women. They have strong heads over their shoulders. Alankrita, as a director, is one of those people I trust blindly. I'd go shoot for her even without reading my part. As much as she's open to suggestions, she knows what she wants from her actors. Half your job is taken care of when you're working with someone like her. On a lighter note, her obsession with roses has increased with time. From *Lipstick…* up until *Dolly Kitty…* you'll always find a reference of a red rose somewhere. Our style of storytelling or the things we want to say are pretty much alike.

STREAMING PLATFORMS BECAME THE SOLE SOURCE OF ENTERTAINMENT DURING THE PANDEMIC. WHERE DO YOU SEE THIS GOING IN THE FUTURE, ONCE THINGS GET BACK TO NORMAL?

I've always felt that streaming platforms and movie theatres, or any other entertainment platform, all of these can co-exist. A lot of questions have been asked about which one will outdo the other. I think the two mediums can peacefully coexist like they did before the lockdown. The larger purpose is to tell stories.

HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF WORKING IN *HASEEN DILRUBA?*

It's been great working with Taapsee Pannu and director Vinil Mathew, and producer Aanand L. Rai. Unfortunately, it'll always be the one thing that'll come to my mind when I talk about this film, we were about to finish the film when the lockdown happened. It's a special film and a special part that I am playing. I can't wait for it to come out. It's written by Kanika Dhillon and you know, it's been beautiful on the set. Taapsee has been a great co-actor. ■



With fiancee Sheetal Thakur

"I'VE LEARNT A LOT FROM DEEPIKA PADUKONE WHILE WORKING WITH HER IN *CHHAPAAK*. HER POISE, GRACE AND CALM ARE SOMETHING WHICH I ADMIRE. HER CONDUCT, ESPECIALLY AT WORKPLACES IS ADMIRABLE"

In character

AKASH NIHALANI MEETS UP WITH THE TALENTED **DIVYA DUTTA** AND COMES AWAY IMPRESSED

There's something about Divya Dutta. She may not have made it as a leading lady in Hindi cinema but no one can deny that she's a powerhouse of talent. She's the sort who'll sparkle even in a two-minute role. She'll engross you with her histrionics on the screen. Incidentally, Divya was launched as a heroine in 1994 with *Ishq Mein Jeena Ishq Mein Marna*. When her career as a lead actress didn't take off, she started playing character roles in Hindi films. She then turned her attention to Punjabi films. And what she couldn't do in Hindi cinema, she achieved up North. She became a leading lady and her pairing with Gurdas Maan got much acclaim. After making a mark in films and TV, Dutta is now

"NITIN KAKKAR'S APPROACH WAS SO DIFFERENT. HE TOLD ME TO LAY ASIDE EVERYTHING I WAS KNOWN FOR AND JUST BE THE CHARACTER. IT MADE ME NERVOUS AS AN ACTOR BECAUSE IT WAS LIKE LEARNING AND UNLEARNING AGAIN"

shining on OTT. She recently won the Best Actor In A Supporting Role In A Drama Series (Female) for her role in *Special OPS.*

OTT seems to be the future of entertainment and has levelled the playing field for performers like her, so to speak. She admits that these indeed are exciting times for an actor, she points out that twenty years ago, TV was touted as the future as it was booming. And maintains there's an audience for every kind of product. "Once theatres open up, we will have an audience for OTT as well as theatres and for television too. I'm sure that all three will boom. Yes, right now because of the lack of people going to theatres, everything is on OTT. But I think they both will co-exist. It will be a good marriage," she states. Ask her whether the acting process is different when it comes to OTT and she says that's not the case at all. She didn't feel the difference as she's always worked in a 'different' brand of cinema. "It's different for the makers as you're making six hours worth of content instead of your usual two hours. As an actor, you get a lot more freedom, you can express what you want to in a more distinctive way," she explains.

"I'M GREEDY AND HUNGRY AS AN ACTOR AND THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING. NOW IS THE TIME I'M GETTING THE KIND OF ROLES THAT I WANT TO BITE MY TEETH INTO. I HAVE SUCH A WIDE VARIETY OF ROLES COMING BY. SO, I'M JUST ENJOYING THAT"

Her last release *Ram Singh Charlie*, released over OTT, was raved for both its content and for the acting. Divya says it was a special film as the director Nitin Kakkar didn't go for commercial viability but believed in telling a story. "Kumud Mishra fit the central role brilliantly. In fact, they thought I was the glamorous face of the film," she giggles. "Nitin's approach was so different. He told me to lay aside everything

"ONCE THEATRES OPEN UP, WE WILL HAVE AN AUDIENCE FOR OTT AS WELL AS THEATRES AND TELEVISION TOO. I'M SURE THAT ALL THREE WILL BOOM. YES, RIGHT NOW BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF PEOPLE GOING TO THEATRES, EVERYTHING IS ON OTT. BUT, I THINK THEY BOTH WILL BE ABLE TO CO-EXIST. IT WILL BE A GOOD MARRIAGE"

Sheer Qorma

I was known for and just be the character. It made me nervous as an actor because it was like learning and unlearning again." She enjoyed the whole process of making the film and was gratified that the audience took to it.

Divya says the film industry is known to put a stamp on the actors and hence if you're serious about your craft it's important not to get slotted. She personally feels she'd get bored doing the same thing over and over again. "When *Delhi 6* came out, I started getting all these sensuous roles. After *Bhaag Milkha Bhaag*, I started getting 'sister' kind of roles and with *Badlapur* it was back to serious roles. So, yes, I did make an effort to say no to the things I've done before and took on things that I hadn't. However, if the script is really interesting and the director is good, then even if the role is similar to something that I've done before then I try and tweak it… give it a different colour," she reveals.

Strangely, despite her credentials, she doesn't call herself a method actor and maintains her method ends at the script level. She reads the script with the eye of the lay viewer. If she can't relate to the script as a viewer, then mostly she says no to a role. And if she can relate to the script and to her character then she tries to find out what's pushing the buttons of that particular character. "And, once all that is done, my look is set, I know my dynamics with the actors…I just let the magic of the set take over me. I just wear the shoes of the role and feel what it must feel like. So, if you call that a method then yes, but for me, it's just flowing with it," she asserts.

She had a passion for acting since she was four. She used to dance like Amitabh Bachchan and used to round up kids from the neighbourhood and enact Bachchan's scenes. She grew up idolising the thespian and credits him for planting the seed of acting in her. "I come from a family of doctors and was expected to follow suit. I was good academically so it was all planned out. But maybe doing all those Bachchan impressions as a kid planted the seed of acting in me. Perhaps the universe wanted me to be an actor," she gushes. She got a chance to act with her idol in *Baghban* (2003), where she played his daughter-in-law. "My dream of working with Bachchan *saab* came true not once but five times. But, yes it was surreal. It was something that I'd daydreamed about and it came true," she reflects. Among the actresses, she idolises Meena Kumari and says she'd love to act in the Tragedy Queen's biopic if given a chance. "I think her life was intriguing. I love her voice, I love her poetry, I love her acting. I think she's done some really great films and I would like to portray her if a film were to be made. My second pick would be

Ram Singh Charlie

> "I THINK MEENA KUMARI'S LIFE WAS VERY INTRIGUING. I LOVE HER VOICE, I LOVE HER POETRY, I LOVE HER ACTING. I THINK SHE'S DONE SOME REALLY GREAT FILMS AND I WOULD LIKE TO PORTRAY HER IF A FILM WAS TO BE MADE. MY SECOND PICK WOULD BE AMRITA PRITAM. I'M REALLY ATTRACTED TO HER POETRY"

Amrita Pritam. I'm really attracted to her poetry."

Ask her to pick a turning point in her career and she says every film is a turning point. She points out *Delhi 6* got her the awards and made people take notice of her. *Irada* (2017) for which she won the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress, was another milestone, as it reiterated her faith in character roles. Having proved her versatility ten times over, is there something that she still yearns to do? Ask Divya that and she answers in the affirmative. "I'm greedy and hungry as an actor and this is just the beginning. Now is the time I'm getting the kind of roles that I want to bite my teeth into. I have such a wide variety of roles coming by. So, I'm just enjoying that," she points out. She played a non-binary character in *Sheer Qorma,* an upcoming Indian Hindi LGBT romance short film written and directed by Faraz Arif Ansari. She plays Swara Bhaskar's lover in the film, which also stars Shabana Azmi. Divya is excited about the project as it's something she's never attempted before. "I trust my gut and upon reading the script I felt I had to do the film. It stars two strong women besides me and talks about a lot of relevant issues. I went into a space I've never been before and hence it was definitely challenging," she gushes.

After the success of her first book, *Me And Ma,* which was dedicated to her mother, Divya is in the process of writing another one. "I'll be launching the Hindi version of *Me And Ma* soon. The one that I'm writing now is my journey in movies. I cannot really divulge much but it is going to be about me as an actor."

Given her chequered life, it will be an exciting book to read indeed. ■

IORN MAN

RANA DAGGUBATI *CHATS WITH* ***AKASH NIHALANI*** *ABOUT HIS NEW BEGINNINGS*

Rana Daggubati is a gentle giant who strides the world of both the South and Hindi cinema with equal ease. Usually, South stars wait to get themselves established before taking the plunge in Hindi films but Rana was just a film old when he did *Dum Maaro Dum* in 2011. The move spoke volumes about his supreme confidence and also hinted at his penchant for taking risks. This desire to do something different made him accept the role of the antagonist Bhallaladeva in the *Baahubali* franchise. He devoted almost three years to the project but the risk paid off as he became established as a pan-Indian star. He broke a million hearts when he married his long-time sweetheart Miheeka Bajaj, in August last year. The threat of the coronavirus pandemic was very much in the air back then but the macho hero thinks this brave move further strengthened their ties. He has taken risk again by launching his own channel called SouthBay on YouTube. The channel promises to cater to the youth by targeting trending topics and trending celebs, both from North and South. Rana talks to *Filmfare* about his marriage, his upcoming films and his passion project in a candid interview. Excerpts...

With wife Miheeka Bajaj

YOU WERE THE FIRST STAR TO HAVE A LOCKDOWN WEDDING. WHAT WERE THE CHANGES THAT YOU HAD TO MAKE TO YOUR WEDDING PLANS GIVEN THE SITUATION?

In fact, I felt it was the best time to get married. Obviously, there were a lot of people who I couldn't invite but the whole thing felt extremely personal and nice. I wouldn't have wanted it in any other way.

HOW DID YOUR PARENTS REACT WHEN YOU TOLD THEM YOU WANTED TO GET MARRIED DURING THE PANDEMIC?

They were extremely happy. The fact that I was getting married alone was enough motivation for them.

AND HOW IS MARRIED LIFE TREATING YOU SO FAR?

It's great. You get a feeling of being balanced, settled. The bond you share is a great source of calm as well as energy. It's fun, I'm definitely enjoying myself.

NAME A HOBBY WHICH YOU PICKED UP DURING THE LOCKDOWN THAT YOU WILL CONTINUE IN THE FUTURE.

Making short content that is irreverent and nonsensical… it'll be funny and it'll be deep when it has to be. I'll keep at it consistently. That's the idea.

> **"I felt it was the best time to get married. I mean obviously, there were a lot of people who I couldn't invite but the whole thing felt extremely personal and nice. I wouldn't have wanted it in any other way"**

YOU'VE LAUNCHED YOUR VERY OWN YOUTUBE CHANNEL SOUTHBAY. WHAT CAN THE FANS

EXPECT TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?
SouthBay was formed as a collaboration between mainstream and indie creators to make pop culture content in multi-languages. It will be filled with everything young people in age and spirit will want. The idea behind this is to curate content that is cultural. I think the internet has offered so much to creators that curation has become a bit of a burden. There is a large OTT world, Youtube… that is catering to people in different formats. The idea behind SouthBay was to go premium and into a space where everyone is. So far, we've told stories through movies, we've told stories on the OTT platform and I felt this was the next step. I feel we've all been lucky to grow with so much exposure and learn things from different parts of the world in terms of technology, lifestyle etc. So, the idea is to curate millennial news, information, gaming… curate everything that's happening in the digital universe.

SO, YOUR CHANNEL INTENDS TO SHED LIGHT ON ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT'S TRENDING?
Not trending in particular. But, everything that has been part of subculture so far in India. It can be gaming, it can be music like independent artistes and DJs… all of them have been a part of the Indian subculture for quite a while and it was about time that we had a mainstream version too. Take the animation industry for example. We've had the animation industry for several years. However, it was always limited to the children's space and was never experimented within the adult world. So, I thought why not take these people and make something mainstream and create content for us to consume. It's hard to do that with a feature film but I think with SouthBay it'll be easier to create such content.

WHAT MADE YOU INVEST IN SUCH A PROPERTY?
I've been watching a lot of content as a viewer. Apart from MTV back in the broadcast era, I've not really come across anything that has empowered the generation with content and culture. I also think that this lockdown came as a big help as I could sit down and gather my thoughts and figure out what was missing and fix it.

YOUR GUEST LIST CONSISTS OF PEOPLE COMING FROM DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE AS OPPOSED TO A FILM BACKGROUND **THAT ONE** WOULD EXPECT
Well, that's my universe literally

Dum Maaro Dum

Haathi Mere Saathi

The Ghazi Attack

Virataparvam

"One thing that the pandemic has done is that it has ensured that our headspace is a little expanded when it comes to the content we watch. I feel once when things go back to normal, the scale of everything will be humongous"

where pop culture icons meet reality in the quirkiest manner ...from Bhuvan Bam, Ram Gopal Verma, Karan Johar, Kangana Ranaut to Raja Kumari. It's a full mix bag with real and fictional people and like I said, it's because I want to introduce this culture and they're a big part of it.

YOU'VE OFTEN SPOKEN ABOUT OTT BEING ON THE RISE. IN THE CURRENT SITUATION, OTT PLATFORMS ARE THE ONLY VIABLE OPTION FOR FILMMAKERS TO GET THEIR CONTENT OUT THERE. DO YOU SEE THINGS GOING BACK TO HOW THEY WERE ONCE NORMALCY ENSUES?

One thing that the pandemic has done is that it has ensured that our headspace is a little expanded when it comes to the content we watch. I feel once when things go back to normal, the scale of everything will be humongous. A lot has changed in these months for example several have adapted to the lifestyle of working from home. So, for them, cinema will be an outlet from their routine lives. I think we'll get a better understanding of this as we move ahead in time. I'm sure there will be films made to enjoy on the big screen, there will be stuff made for OTT, for digital short content, gif format. And across all these portals, we'll witness a rise in the content making and content consumption. That's what I see happening when things get back to normal.

> **"SouthBay formed really as a collaboration between mainstream and indie creators to make pop culture content in multi-languages, It will be filled with everything the young people in age and spirit will want"**

THE INTERNET IS A GREAT PLACE TO BE BUT IT CAN ALSO BE A SOURCE OF A LOT OF NEGATIVITY. WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF DEALING WITH IT?

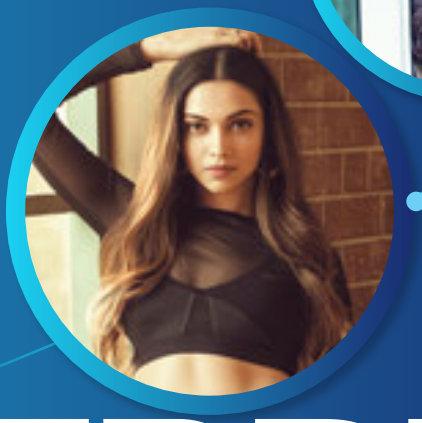
I think it doesn't affect me as much now. Yes, in the beginning, I reacted to a lot of things but once you reach a following of this size, the majority expects you to do the right thing. They follow you and subscribe to your lifestyle. Invariably, it's your choice. They follow you because you are you. If you go back to listening to how you're supposed to be then you lose your own identity. I've always been clear in my head that this is what I do and this is a part of my job.

YOU'VE TASTED SUCCESS IN REGIONAL CINEMA AS WELL AS MAINSTREAM BOLLYWOOD MOVIES. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO WORK OUTSIDE YOUR SAFE ZONE?

Ever since I was growing up, I was a guy who was interested in films and the types of stories that we see in films. For me, it didn't matter what language it was. If you look at my first two films. The first one was *Leader* (2010). It was a political drama set in Andhra Pradesh. Since it was a regional political film, it mainly dealt with Andhra politics. It obviously was a regional Telugu story. The second story that I heard and wanted to be part of was *Dum Maaro Dum* (2011). That was a film set in Goa and revolved around drugs and crime in the place. So, that would work in the national language as well. It need not be any regional film. So, for me, it's the story that decides if a film needs to be multilingual or a regional language.

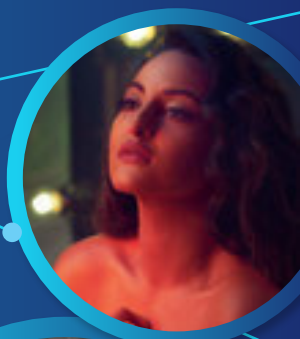
TELL US ABOUT YOUR PROCESS OF CHOOSING A PROJECT

It's the stories that motivate me to take that leap. Each industry offers such a different cultural film experience. I've been working for 10 years now and fortunately, I'm in a position where I have the liberty to choose the film, I want to be a part of. For example, I have an upcoming film called *Haathi Mere Saathi.* I was approached for it right after *Baahubali* by Eros. This is directed by Tamil director Prabhu Solomon. The idea of the film was to showcase a bond between an elephant and a man. Since it works on a larger scale, this is now a Hindi feature film as well. The other film that I'm doing right now is called *Virataparvam.* This was a story that came to me while I was shooting for *Haathi Mere Saathi.* It is a film set in the '90s in the Naxal bank which is Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and those regions. Now, since this film was based on a regional setup, we shot the film in Telugu only. It'll be dubbed in other languages too, of course, as is the norm nowadays. We didn't shoot it in Hindi as it didn't have a Hindi resonance. ■

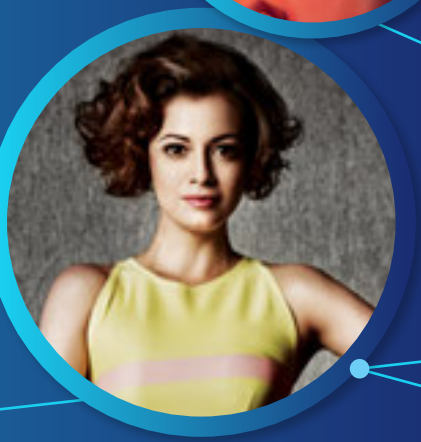


CAUSE CELEBRE

AKASH NIHALANI CHECKS OUT HOW OUR STARS ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE



Thanks to the rise of social media, it is easier than ever before for Bollywood stars to connect with their fans. Everyone with a smartphone is using some form of social media. Interestingly, it's slowly taking the place of traditional media as a reliable and a convenient way to get real news. Our stars have recognised it as a marketing tool to increase their popularity. While social media has emerged as the numero uno platform to promote their films and events, some stars are recognising it as a tool to spread goodness. They have used it to promote social causes, to talk about pertinent issues cropping up in the society, and have even boosted positivity in these dark times. We certainly need to tap the power of social media for altruistic reasons. We celebrate the charitable spirit of the denizens of tinsel town by making a list of Good Samaritans who have used social media for the greater good.



PRIYANKA CHOPRA

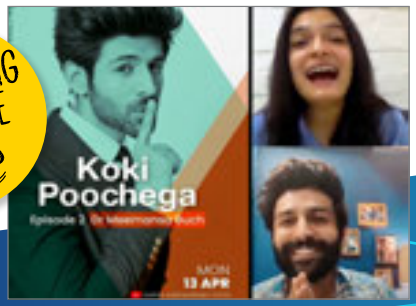
PROMOTING SMALL BUSINESSES

The COVID-19 pandemic is something that has caused devastation across the world. While the financial slowdown is common across every country, small business owners, in particular, have been severely affected. They simply don't have the financial wherewithal to battle through tough times like these. Keeping their condition in mind, global superstar Priyanka Chopra decided to do her bit in order to help them. The actress announced that she'd be using her social media page to promote women founded small businesses each week from India as well as the United States, that are battling the wrath of the pandemic. The actress made the announcement by sharing a video on her account along with a statement that read, "We all know that people around the world have been incredibly affected by this pandemic, and that includes small business owners. My heart really breaks to see these businesses shutting down or letting go of loyal, hardworking employees. So, I really want to highlight some female-founded businesses that we can all support, and hopefully help them get back on their feet" So far, Priyanka has given shoutouts to a variety of businesses ranging from fashion labels to rural handicrafts companies.

KARTIK AARYAN

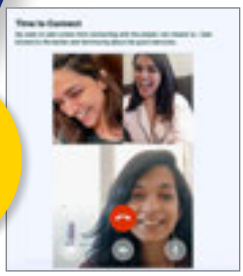
During the pandemic, one actor who was constantly focussing on the positive side of things was Kartik Aaryan. His social media account was filled with several hilarious memes and even a coronavirus rap which brought a smile to people's faces. Apart from this, he came up with a new series for his Youtube channel - *Koki Poochega.* In the series, Kartik got chatting with the real-life heroes of COVID-19 of our country including doctors, policemen, social workers and people who'd fought and survived the fatal virus. Through this the actor not only showed that he was genuinely interested in learning more about the country's battle against COVID-19 but also increased awareness among the common folk about coronavirus thanks to his massive popularity. The actor also managed to add a dash of humour, which he's known for, to set the conversation rolling.

SERENADING REAL-LIFE HEROES



DEEPIKA PADUKONE

FIGHTING DEPRESSION



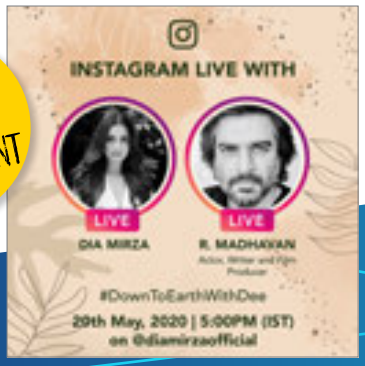
Deepika Padukone is one of the actresses who has had the courage to openly talk about her fight with depression. The condition of being depressed is often looked upon as someone who's just 'constantly sad' but the issue is much larger than that. Our lack of empathy towards those going through mental issues forces them to go further into a cocoon and possibly never ever open up about their condition. Deepika, who has fought this battle herself, through her social media page has tried to encourage people to speak up about their feelings. On her Instagram page, Deepika Padukone created a separate section named 'Guides' which basically is a compilation made from a series of posts from her own account. Through this, Deepika encourages those suffering from poor mental health to take up activities like meditation and exercise, connect with loved ones and embrace their own uniqueness.

Deepika also started the hashtag "#NotAshamed" to prevent people, who are suffering from depression, from feeling low about themselves.

DIA MIRZA

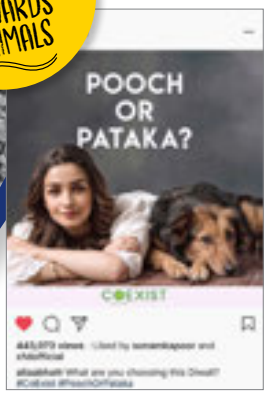
Dia Mirza has been the face of several pivotal environmental campaigns across India and is one who has always voiced her opinion regarding the need to take a stand for the environment. Her work saw her being appointed as the UN Environment's Goodwill Ambassador for India. During the lockdown, Dia started her very own web series titled *Down To Earth With Dee*. In her first episode, she chatted with her *Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein* co-star R. Madhavan. In the following episodes, Dia not only spoke to her Bollywood contemporaries who shared her love for the environment but also played hosts to environmentalists such as Pradeep Sangwan (Founder of Healing Himalayas foundation) and Vivek Menon (Founder and CEO of Wildlife Trust of India).

CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



SPREADING EMPATHY TOWARDS ANIMALS

ALIA BHATT

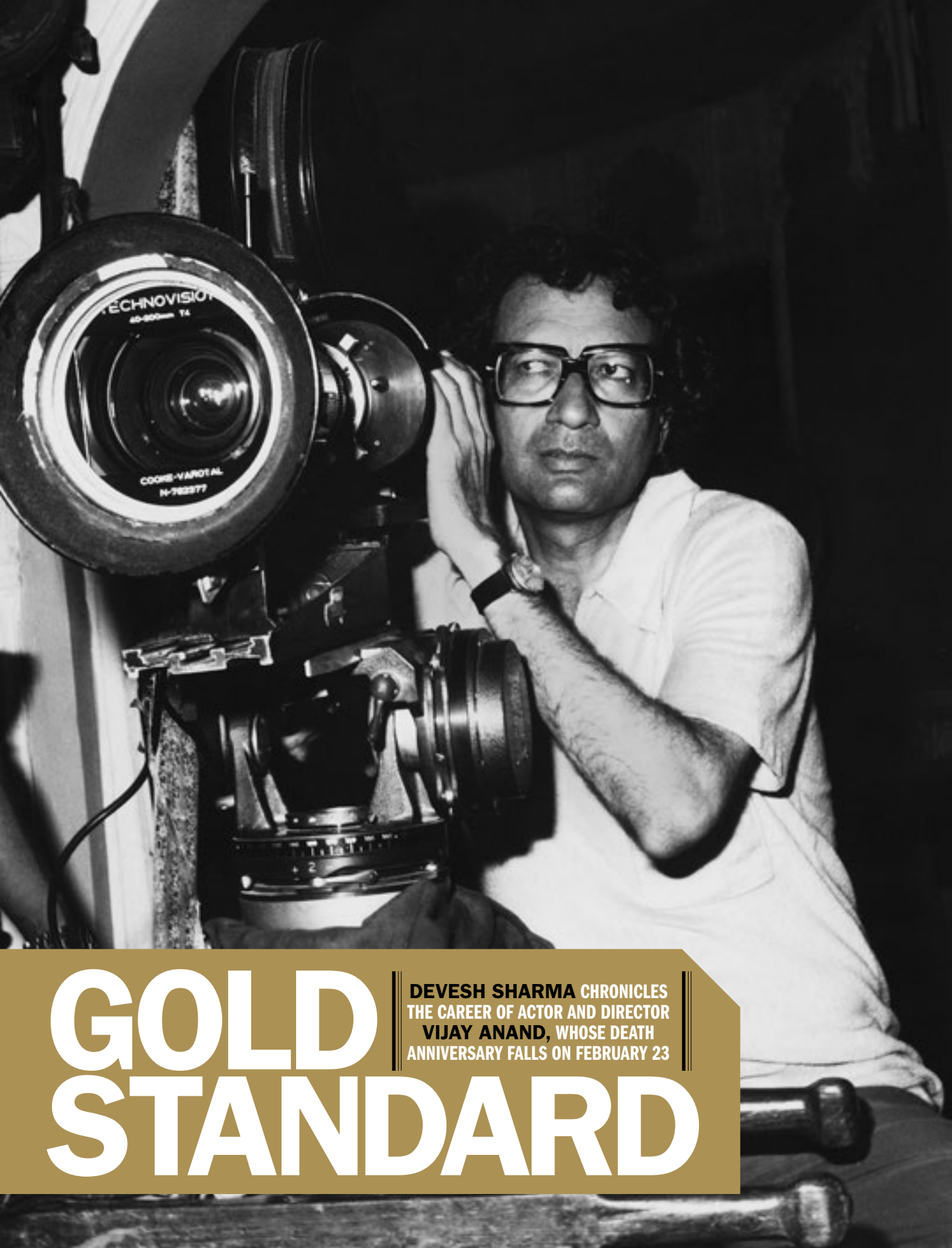


Alia Bhatt is one of the most loved actresses in the country. This love is not only for the brilliance she delivers on screen but also for her kind-hearted nature. The actress shares deep compassion for animals and even started her own social media page 'Co-exist' which highlights the efforts being made towards the welfare of animals and the environment. Every pet owner must be familiar with the horror that a festival like Diwali brings upon their little friends at home. The noise pollution, especially in metropolitan cities, is off the charts and this severely affects the sensitive hearing of pets. Keeping the situation in mind, Alia Bhatt shared a video in which she kickstarted the #PoochOverPataka campaign. If the hashtag didn't make it evident enough, the campaign was an attempt to get people to choose pooch i.e their pet animals at home (dogs, cats) over firecrackers. Through the video, Alia encouraged others to share a selfie with their pooch (pet animal) to display their support for the cause. Alia's popularity on social media paired with the kind thought behind the campaign made it an instant hit. The hashtag saw a flurry of pictures and videos where people pledged to pick their pooch over *pataka.*

SONAKSHI SINHA

Social media was our source for news, entertainment and during the lockdown, it became pretty much the only way to stay connected with the world. However, this also led to the spread of negativity on online. In fact, Sonakshi Sinha was so fed up with trolls that she ended up quitting Twitter. She then decided to do much more than just delete her account. The actress launched a campaign named '*Ab Bas*' with an aim to putting an end to cyberbullying. The actress teamed up with Pratap Dighavkar- Special IGP Maharashtra Police and started the campaign which was backed by the organisation Mission Josh. The campaign focused on how trolls target others, especially women, without the fear of any consequences. During the campaign, Sonakshi Sinha took part in several online discussions with women who're greatly reputed in their respective fields. The campaign set an example for trolls online when they managed to arrest 27-year-old Shashikant Jadhav from Aurangabad. Sonakshi confirmed the same with a statement that read, "I am immensely grateful to cybercrime branch Mumbai for taking prompt action and being so supportive. I took this step to report the culprits so that even others gather the courage to do the same. *Ab Bas,* we will not watch and allow online abuse to happen to us or others. I am extremely glad to be part of a campaign like this to help as many people as I can, who have been subjected to online harassment."

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT CYBERBULLYING



GOLD STANDARD

DEVESH SHARMA CHRONICLES THE CAREER OF ACTOR AND DIRECTOR **VIJAY ANAND,** WHOSE DEATH ANNIVERSARY FALLS ON FEBRUARY 23

HIS BEST FILM AS AN ACTOR IS SAID TO BE *KORA KAGAZ* (1974). THE FILM, DIRECTED BY ANIL GANGULY, WAS BASED ON THE 1963 BENGALI FILM *SAAT PAKE BANDHA* DIRECTED BY AJOY KAR, AND STARRED SUCHITRA SEN AND SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE

❶ Waheeda Rehman and Dev Anand in *Guide*

❷ Dev Anand in a double role in *Hum Dono*

❸ Dev Anand and Vyjayanthimala in *Jewel Thief*

❹ Dev Anand and Hema Malini in *Johny Mera Naam*

❺ Vijay Anand and Waheeda Rehman

Vijay Anand was born on January 22, 1934 in Gurdaspur, Punjab and was the youngest of the three Anand brothers. His elder brothers were director Chetan Anand and actor Dev Anand. Though Vijay, affectionately known as Goldie, some say because of his curly hair, is known today as a director, he actually started his career as an actor in 1955 in a family drama called *Joru Ka Bhai* (1955), directed by brother Chetan. He didn't pursue acting, however, preferring to be behind the camera for most part. His best film as an actor is said to be *Kora Kagaz* (1974). The film, directed by Anil Ganguly, was based on the 1963 Bengali film *Saat Pake Bandha* directed by Ajoy Kar, and starred Suchitra Sen and Soumitra Chatterjee. He played a college professor who marries a much younger girl (Jaya Bhaduri), from a wealthy family. The girl's mother doesn't like the fact that their son-in-law isn't affluent like them and her constant interference creates acrimony between the couple. In *Tere Mere Sapne* (1971), a film starring Dev Anand and Mumtaz, he played a doctor who is drunk all the time. Though he's a drunkard, he acts as the conscience keeper of the protagonist and was well-liked for his small but significant role. He also directed the film. It's said to be his most serious film till date as it revolved around the real-life profession of doctors forgetting the Hippocratic Oath and blindly pursuing lucre. It reportedly changed the fortunes of Mumtaz, whose acting as a stoic wife was much admired in the film. People started taking her seriously as an actor after this. In *Main Tulsi Tere Aangan Ki* (1978), he played a debauched landlord who marries another, much younger woman (Asha Parekh) and brings turmoil into the life of his wife (Nutan). In 1994, he appeared as detective Sam D'Silva in the hit TV series *Tehkikaat*. The serial became quite popular and his chemistry with Saurabh Shukla, who played Gopichand, his partner, was much admired.

When it came to filmmaking, Vijay, like his brothers, too was influenced by the neo-noir Hollywood films. That was very much evident in his directorial debut *Nau Do Gyarah* (1957), where a truck driver (Dev Anand) and a runaway bride (Kalpana Kartik) fall in love, leading to many misadventures. His next directorial venture *Kala Bazar*

❶ Vijay Anand with Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand and Guru Dutt

❷ Dev Anand and Mumtaz in *Tere Mere Sapne*

❸ With Shammi Kapoor and Asha Parekh while shooting *Teesri Manzil*

❹ Dev Anand and Nanda in *Hum Dono*

***TERE MERE SAPNE* IS SAID TO BE HIS MOST SERIOUS FILM TILL DATE AS IT REVOLVED AROUND THE REAL-LIFE PROFESSION OF DOCTORS FORGETTING THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH AND BLINDLY PURSUING LUCRE. IT REPORTEDLY CHANGED THE FORTUNES OF MUMTAZ**

BEST SONGS FROM VIJAY ANAND FILMS

HUM HAIN RAAHI PYAR KE
Film: Nau Do Gyarah (1957)
Singer: Kishore Kumar
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Majrooh Sultanpuri

KHOYA KHOYA CHAND
Film: Kala Bazar (1960)
Singer: Mohammed Rafi
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Shailendra

DIL KA BHANWAR KARE PUKAR
Film: Tere Ghar Ke Samne (1963)
Singer: Mohammed Rafi
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Hasrat Jaipuri

AAJ PHIR JEENE KI TAMANNA HAI
Film: Guide (1965)
Singer: Lata Mangeshkar
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Shailendra

(1960) had all the three brothers acting together for the first time. Dev Anand played a black marketeer who starts off by selling film tickets in black but is later reformed through love. It's said that Vijay's childhood memories of seeing movie tickets of Dev Anand's films being sold in black gave him the idea for this film. The film used footage of the premiere of the film *Mother India* (1957) to great advantage and with actors like Dilip Kumar, Nargis, Geeta Dutt, Guru Dutt, Raaj Kumar and Rajendra Kumar being featured in it. It became one of the talking points of the film.

His next film was *Tere Ghar Ke Saamne* (1963), a romantic comedy. It's said Goldie liked Nutan as an actress, who was said to have the perfect photogenic face. He shot one of the best songs of the actress, *Dil ka bhanwar kare pukar* in the film. The song was said to be shot on the spiral staircase of Qutub Minar and is a marvel of song picturisation. Nutan and Dev Anand climb up the tower as friends but come down as lovers, the whole courtship being played out amidst the journey.

Indeed, shooting songs aesthetically and using them as extensions of the narrative became something of a trademark for Vijay Anand. In the *Tere mere sapne* song from *Guide* (1965), for instance, the morning sun becomes a metaphor for the new-found love between Raju and Rosie. The light Goldie wanted was available only for 15 minutes per day early morning so he timed it to perfection and shot for those 15 minutes each day till he was satisfied. The song *Hothon mein aisi baat* from *Jewel Thief* (1967) was shot at the royal palace of Gangtok, Sikkim and showed the heroine in a dilemma as she has learnt a fateful secret. The fast-moving song looked almost like an uncut take. *Pal bhar ke liye koi hame pyar kar le* from *Johny Mera Naam* (1970) was filmed on a set representing a house with multiple doors and windows. You can see Dev Anand in a continuous motion serenading Hema Malni from various nooks and crannies.

BEST SONGS FROM VIJAY ANAND FILMS

GAATA RAHE MERA DIL
Film: Guide (1965)
Singers: Kishore Kumar, Lata Mangeshkar
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Shailendra

O HASEENA ZULFONWALI
Film: Teesri Manzil (1966)
Singers: Mohammed Rafi, Asha Bhosle
Composer: RD Burman
Lyricist: Majrooh Sultanpuri

RAAT AKELI HAI
Film: Jewel Thief (1967)
Singers: Asha Bhosle
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Majrooh Sultanpuri

YEH DIL NA HOTA BECHARA
Film: Jewel Thief (1967)
Singers: Kishore Kumar
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Majrooh Sultanpuri

AE MAINE KASAM LI
Film: Tere Mere Sapne (1971)
Singers: Lata Mangeshkar, Kishore Kumar
Composer: SD Burman
Lyricist: Neeraj

VAADA TO NIBHAY
Film: Johny Mera Naam (1970)
Singers: Asha Bhosle, Kishore Kumar
Composer: Kalyanji-Anandji
Lyricist: Indeevar

PAL PAL DIL KE PAAS
Film: Blackmail (1973)
Singer: Kishore Kumar
Composer: Kalyanji-Anandji
Lyricist: Rajendra Krishan

VIJAY ANAND GAVE *GUIDE* THE POETRY AND THE PATHOS OF A GURU DUTT FILM AND THE GRANDEUR OF A RAJ KAPOOR FILM. AND ITS SONGS ARE SOMETHING SANJAY LEELA BHANSALI IS STILL EMULATING. TODAY, IT'S CONSIDERED A CLASSIC AND GETS TAUGHT IN FILM SCHOOLS

❶With Prem Nath and Sunil Dutt

❷With Dharmendra, Zeenat Aman, Rekha and Amitabh Bachchan on the sets of *Ram Balram*

Pal pal dil ke paas from *Blackmail* (1973) was designed like a daydream. The heroine, Raakhee, reads the letters written to her by the hero, Dharmendra, and imagines he's there alongside her. It rates as being one of the most romantically picturised songs ever. In *Akela gaya tha main* (*Rajput,* 1982), the daydream motif is again utilised, this time on Rajesh Khanna, who is shown riding a horse and thinking about Hema Malini. The film may have flopped but the beauty of the song hasn't diminished. Composers Laxmikant-Pyarelal too cleverly incorporated the tick-tock sound made by the hooves of the horse into the soundtrack.

He was said to have a finely-tuned ear for music, as can be seen in his various associations with music directors like SD Burman, RD Burman, Jaidev, Laxmikant-Pyarelal and lyricists Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri. It's said that his songs often felt like dialogue between the hero and the heroine.

Guide, his most famous film, is said to have come to him through accident. The film is based on the 1958 novel *The Guide,* by R. K. Narayan, and was conceived as an international project between Dev Anand and writer Pearl S Buck, who brought in American director Tad Danielewski to direct her version of the film. Dev Anand brought in his elder brother Chetan Anand to helm his version, which would have extensive songs and dances. It's said the American team didn't gel well with the Indian team. Then, Chetan wanted to make the war drama *Haqeeqat* (1964). Hence, he exited the project and Goldie was asked to helm it. The director gave it the poetry and the pathos of a Guru Dutt film and the grandeur of a Raj Kapoor film. And its songs are something Sanjay Leela Bhansali is still emulating. Today, it's considered a classic and gets taught in film schools. Incidentally, it's said that Narayan himself didn't like both the Indian and the American adaptations and wittily described *Guide* as being misguided. By the by, Vijay was one of the protagonists of *Haqeeqat.* The

❶ Vijay Anand and Dev Anand on the *mahurat* of *Jaana Na Dil Se Door*

❷ With wife Sushma

❸ Wife Sushma and son Vaibhav

GOLDIE WAS SAID TO HAVE A FINELY-TUNED EAR FOR MUSIC, AS CAN BE SEEN IN HIS VARIOUS ASSOCIATIONS WITH MUSIC DIRECTORS LIKE SD BURMAN, RD BURMAN, JAIDEV, LAXMIKANT-PYARELAL AND LYRICISTS SHAILENDRA AND HASRAT JAIPURI

film opened with a long panoramic shot of him driving a jeep through rugged mountains. People often said Vijay Anand excelled because he only worked with Navketan films, Dev Anand's banner. Perhaps to prove them wrong, he chose to direct *Teesri Manzil* (1966), which was produced by Nasir Hussain and starred Shammi Kapoor and Asha Parekh. The noir elements were again evident in the film as it chronicled the exploits of the hero wrongly accused of the murder of her sister by the heroine. It had some evergreen tunes composed by RD Burman, was shot on picturesque locales and showcased crackling chemistry between the two leads. It proved to be a blockbuster hit and silenced his critics once for all. It's a pity the team couldn't come together again.

It's said he also directed *Hum Dono* (1961), though the film's credits say Amarjeet. Even Dev Anand, who played the double role of two army guys, had said so in his interviews. It has one of the finest songs ever filmed on Dev Anand -- *Main zindagi ka saath nibhata chala gaya*. The song has all the landmarks of Vijay Anand's wizardry. Over the course of the song, one gets to know the mindscape of the protagonist. Jaidev's music and Sahir Ludhianvi's lyrics were the soul of the film. The *bhajan*, *Allah tero naam*, sung by Lata Mangeshkar, is revered even today. The highlight of the film were the confrontation scenes between Major Manohar Lal Verma and Captain Anand. Shot way before computer graphics came into the picture, they nevertheless successfully gave an illusion that we're watching two characters, despite a single actor enacting them.

Some credit Vijay Anand as being one of the most prolific of commercial Hindi film directors. Well, come to think of it, *Nau Do Gyrah* was a road movie, *Kala Bazar* was neo-realist cinema, *Tere Ghar Ke Saamne* a romcom, *Guide* a book adaptation, *Teesri Manzil* a murder mystery, *Jewel Thief* was noir, *Johny Mera Naam* employed the lost-and-found formula, while *Hum Dono* explored how war and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) changed the human psyche. He was way ahead of his times in doing so.

Vijay Anand reportedly lost interest in direction after three conecutive films , *Blackmail* (1973), *Chhupa Rustam* (1973) and *Bullet* (1976) didn't perform well at the box office. To overcome the depression, perhaps, he became a disciple of godman Rajneesh and was said to belong to Rajneesh's inner circle. He married his niece Sushma Kohli in 1978, when he was making *Ram Balram* (1980). This move led to a huge scandal within the conservative Punjabi community. Subsequent films like *Rajput (*1982), *Hum Rahe Na Hum* (1984) and *Main Tere Liye* (1988), too flopped. His last film was *Jaana Na Dil Se Door* (2001), which didn't get released.

He died on February 23, 2004 due to a heart attack and was aged 70 at the time of his death. ■

your say

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

INSTA LIKE

Winning vignettes

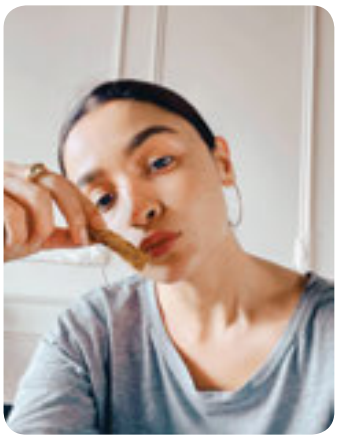
Check out the best Instagram posts of the past fortnight

@varundvn: Life long love just became official ❤️

Loads of speculations and lots of love later, Varun Dhawan finally took the wedding vows with his dulhaniya Natasha Dalal in Alibaug and we couldn't be happier for this couple.

@priyankachopra: What's my secret to doing late night talk show appearances in the US while living in London you ask? 🐑🚗

Beauty sleep, anyone? Priyanka Chopra Jonas' secret siestas are the key to her looking fresh and radiant.



@aliaabhatt: nothing a french fry can't fix 💪

French fries possess mood-altering magic and Alia Bhatt agrees.

@karanjohar: When he faced the camera for me for the first time I developed an immediately protective feeling of love and care for him..: almost assuming the role of a parent.... that feeling today came alive in abundance as I saw him walk with his loved one around the holy fire of trust and commitment... my boy is all grown up and ready for this beautiful phase in his life... ❤️❤️

His 'student' just graduated to new phase of life and Karan Johar couldn't be happier.

@saraalikhan95: When Sister Sara fears post binge bloat 🍩🍪🍰🍨 Brother Iggy says 'at least fatty will float' 🍩🍫🍰🍨 Now that rhyme made sense so I can gloat 🍪🍪🍪 And to reward myself I will consume this entire boat 🍰🍪🍰🍰🍰

These nonsensical rhymes by Sara Ali Khan that will make you enjoy that cheat meal with zero guilt.

Readers send in their feedback *pg 68*

Shatrughan Sinha's racy rejoinders *pg 70*

IN THE MAIL

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

1st Prize ₹1500

↓ OTT FEVER

The OTT platform has become significantly popular over the last few years. Now it also has many big names of Bollywood on board. I was glad to see *Filmfare* start the OTT awards to appreciate the great work these artistes are doing.

Ramesh Singh, Patna

VARUN WEDS NATASHA

Varun Dhawan and Natasha Dalal prove that true love exists even in times like these. In an industry where we see relationships change every week, it's indeed great to see how Varun and Natasha have stuck by each other through all these years. Congratulations to the newly weds.

Loveleen Arora, New Delhi

Married and happy: Varun Dhawan and Natasha Dalal

NEW SCREEN PAIR

A new on-screen pair is something that always gets the audience excited. I enjoyed watching Sanjana Sanghi in *Dil Bechara* and I'm sure that she and Aditya Roy Kapur will provide the audience with some good chemistry in their next project *OM: The Battle Within*.

Satish Nigam, Asansol

2st Prize ₹1000

KHAN DOST

I read in *Filmfare* (December) that we might see the three big Khans of Bollywood – Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Aamir Khan reunite on the big screen for Aamir's *Laal Singh Chaddha*. Now this is awesome news because watching the three together is probably every Bollywood fan's dream.

Anam Shaikh, Aurangabad

→ NEW YEAR DONE RIGHT

It was so lovely to see Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, Neetu Kapoor joined by Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone for New Years' celebrations. The year 2020 was tough for everyone so it was great to see them bring in the New Year together.

Lalit Joshi, Bhimtal

Powerful performer: Saif Ali Khan

SAIF SHINES AGAIN

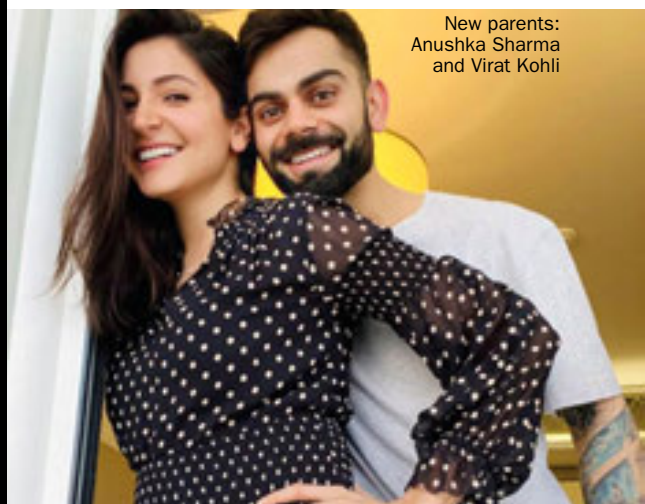
I recently watched Ali Abbas Zaffar's web series *Tandav* and was blown away by Saif's performance. The actor has been upping his game recently and I'm glad he's been bold with his choices of projects.

Rohan Iyer, Bangalore

VIRAT AND ANUSHKA BLESSED WITH A BABY

Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma is without a doubt one of the most loved couples in the country. Their immense following thanks to their excellence in their respective professions has made them the nation's sweethearts. Now, as they embark upon a new chapter in life with their baby girl, I wish them all the happiness.

Seema Saini, Meerut


New parents: Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli

Ravishing: Kareena Kapoor Khan

HRITHIK ROSHAN GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

I've always been a huge Hrithik Roshan fan so when I came across the news of the possibility of a Hollywood project for the actor, it got me excited. I think he has what it takes to be a global superstar and hope that he can recreate some of his magic on the international scale as well.

Prateeksha Nadkarni, Pune

KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN'S PREGNANCY BIBLE

Kareena Kapoor Khan is nothing short of an inspiration for every woman out there. The actress has always done what she feels like. The actress continued to work during her pregnancy and reinforced the belief that pregnancy shouldn't hinder a woman's career. So when I came across your article about Kareena launching her book on pregnancy, it really got me curious. I can't wait to read it.

Monami Ghosh, Kolkata

NEWSMAKERS 2020

The *Newsmakers* article I read in *Filmfare* (January) issue just reminded me of the chaos that ruled 2020. The constant blame game on social media and mindless trolling is something I hope we've left behind in the last year.

Amit Gujjar, Bangalore

FASHION GAME ON POINT

After I saw the Filmfare OTT Awards, I was left seriously impressed by some of the outfits that the stars turned up in for the event. Although I enjoyed watching them all experiment with new styles, Mouni Roy and Jennifer Winget were the best dressed ladies for me that night.

Ayesha Ansari, Lucknow

COOLIE NO. 2

I recently watched David Dhawan's *Coolie No.1* remake online. Although Varun Dhawan and Sara Ali Khan are no match for Govinda and Karisma Kapoor, they did put in a good effort which people must appreciate.

Naman Ahuja, Jaipur

NO OTT RELEASE FOR *BRAHMASTRA?*

I recently read in *Filmfare* (December) that Karan Johar was not too keen on releasing *Brahmastra* on OTT. Personally, I feel that it's the right decision as a film of such a large scale would be best enjoyed on the big screen. Let's hope we don't have to wait too long for it.

Uma Rastogi, Jabalpur

Two to tango: Varun Dhawan and Sara Ali Khan

THE TRUE KING

In the last issue of *Filmfare* (January), I came across an article which explained how SRK had come to the rescue of our frontline workers yet again by donating PPE kits. He truly is a man with a golden heart.

Aarti Patel, Gandhinagar

Class act: Jaideep Ahlawat

JAIDEEP AHLAWAT'S BIG MOMENT

I have been following Jaideep's work since a while now and I feel he's finally getting the recognition he deserves. The fact that he's now a recipient of the coveted Black Lady speaks volumes about his talent.

Ramesh Iyengar, Chennai

Just one Point

Unique: Anupam Kher

Anupam Kher is one of the most versatile actors in the industry. Thanks to his interview in your last issue (January), I was able to see a different side of the actor.
Karan Dixit, Pune

Your interview with Sunny Leone (January) was a fun read and gave a good insight into her life as a mother.
Devanshi Kaul, Mathura

I came across an article on *Filmfare's* website which featured a list of stars appreciating our Indian cricket team's historic achievement on social media. Our boys surely deserved every bit of the praise.
Sylvester Kumar, Darjeeling

I want to thank the *Filmfare* team for always creating some of the best content for Bollywood fans. There's a reason why I'm a fan of *Filmfare.*
Rajesh Kulkarni, Sangli

The news of Ranbir signing Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal* has got me excited for the actor.
Narendra Kumar, Ludhiana

Post your reviews to

Send us your views, opinions and suggestions to:
Email: filmfare.gallery@wwm.co.in **Fax:** 022 - 22731585
Mail: Reviews, Filmfare, The Times of India Bldg., 4th floor, D N Road, Mumbai 400 001, INDIA
(Please mention your full name and address)

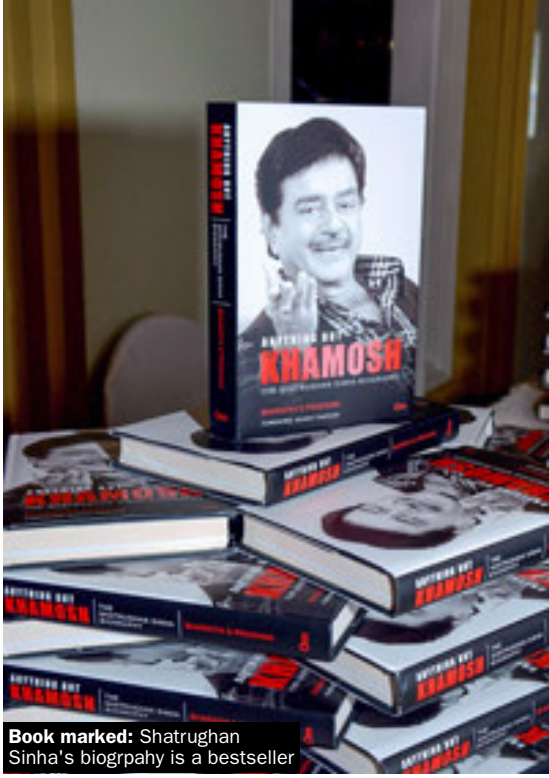
or

SMS: FI PAA <space> <your review> <your name> to **53636**

Terms & conditions: Any letter addressed to Filmfare will be the property of Filmfare and all copyrights for the same shall be vested with us. Filmfare reserves the right to use such letter/material/jokes for any purpose including commercial in the magazine or otherwise.

PHOTOGRAPH: MEETESH TANEJA

Shatrughan Sinha's Rapid fire



Book marked: Shatrughan Sinha's biogrpahy is a bestseller

What is the best gift you have received from your wife and what's the best gift you have given her?

Rajesh K Ranga, New Delhi

The best gift she's given me are our wonderful children and a beautiful home. And my return gift is safety, security, prosperity and maintaining my personal loyalty -- being a one woman man always.

What are some fun and interesting alternatives, India could use to settle its differences with its neighbouring countries?

Abhishek Sharma, Kolkata

I think sports and entertainment could be interesting alternatives. But I'm willing to go along with the government guidelines on foreign policy on this subject.

In the present scenario if the farmers revolt for non-production of grains, what will happen to crores of people in India?

Syed Mubbesher Mehdi

The government should look into and resolve the issue as soon as possible and give relief to our proud farmers, the sooner the better.

Amidst coronavirus lockdown, Chinese incursions, massive unemployment and farmers' protests how do you rate the year 2020?

R Ramakrishnan, on email

2020 was a difficult year for the entire world. Thank God it's behind us. Let's all hope, wish and pray that 2021 turns things around for all of us and pours health, wealth, success, peace and prosperity into the life of every citizen.

Does intelligent life exist beyond earth?

Rachuri Sai Ram, on email

I think they are intelligent enough to stay away from us. Don't you think so?

What's your best-kept secret ?

Seema Sabharwal, Chandigarh

Any best-kept secret would only remain so if it's not shared with anyone. So why do you expect me to share it with you, that too on a public platform? All my secrets are best-kept secrets...

What is your mantra for a tension-free life?

Dr C Janardan Singh, Hyderabad

Meditation and yoga, besides humour, happiness and family ties.

Why do witches wear white saris?

Bharat T Kajaria, Mumbai

I haven't seen a witch personally so wouldn't be able to reply to that. Perhaps their costumes are sponsored by a detergent manufacturer? I think our filmmakers, storytellers should make them wear colourful clothes to break

---

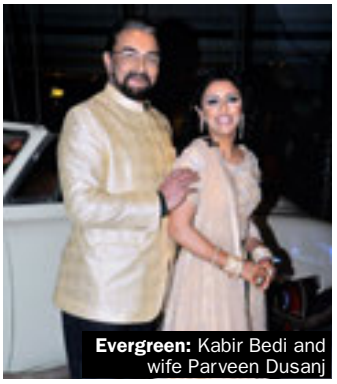
Do you think age really matters in a relationship

Amit Jain, New Delhi

Ask our friend, the evergreen Kabir Bedi or the ever youthful Milind Soman and even the President of France this question. Age does matter where it matters the most but apart from that it doesn't matter. If the couple has love, caring, understanding aplenty and remains on the same page on major issues, age doesn't matter at all.

Smiles galore: The Sinhas are a happy family

Age no bar: Milind Soman with wife Ankita Konwar



Evergreen: Kabir Bedi and wife Parveen Dusanj

1st Prize

A lot of people are becoming or proclaiming themselves to be spiritual gurus, life coach, motivational speaker etc and they also have mass followers. How and when will this trend change?

Riki Mishra, via email

Any power they have has been granted by us. The day we learn we don't need any intermediaries when it comes to talking to God, that power will go away. What's needed is self-awareness within us. And sharing our experiences with others may hasten the process.

2nd Prize

Why are today's young generation interested in live-in relationships, not in marriage?

Syed Nisar Mehdi, Hyderabad

So they have the option to practice the art of loving, living, believing and if not, leaving -- before making the final commitment.

the monotony and change the myth. What say?

How do we welcome the covid vaccine for the welfare of mankind?

Amit Jain, New Delhi

With an attitude of gratitude. Our scientists have toiled day and night to bring about this boon. There are many controversies surrounding the vaccine but despite that I'd say it's a step in the right direction.

How should we interpret the meaning of this pandemic - punishment by God for our berserk behaviour? A lesson to reinfuse the real human being in us? Or telling us that science and modernisation aside, God is still the supreme authority?

Rajneesh Batra, New Delhi

God was, is and will always remain the ultimate authority. This wrath is of our own making as we have been abusing nature since aeons and this is the result. We don't care for any other life form and have gone too arrogant. Perhaps this is a lesson in humility. Or maybe it's punishment indeed. Take it as you deem fit.

It's often said men are from Mars and women are from Venus. Do you agree?

Amit Jain, New Delhi

Men may be from Mars but it's not yet established where women are from. They may be from Venus, from Jupiter or from some other galaxy altogether.

Which was the most favourite book that you read in 2020?

Ravi Kotwani, Mumbai

Thanks to the lockdown, I could finally get to read the most talked about biography written by respected film journalist Bharathi Pradhan. It's the biography of the one and only Shatrughan Sinha called *Anything But Khamosh*. I heartily recommend it as it avidly showcases the passion, struggle, romance, patriotism, survivor instinct, and love of cinema of the actor, orator, politician and family man called Shatrughan Sinha. It's a bestseller written in a frank and candid manner. Go for it.

(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.

Win!
CASH PRIZES

1st prize ₹3000

2nd prize ₹2000

Send Your Question to

Readers may send in their questions to:
Email: filmfare.askme@wwm.co.in **Fax:** 022-22731585
Mail: Sawaal Jawaab, Filmfare, The Times of India Bldg, 4th floor, D N Road, Mumbai 400 001, INDIA
(Please mention your full name, contact number and address)

or

SMS: FI <space> SJ <space> <your question> <your name> to **53636**

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

Terms & Conditions Apply
- Winner will bear all applicable taxes
- Original products may differ from the one shown in the picture & will be as per supplier's/manufacturer's terms & conditions
- The magazine will not be responsible for the product.

OTT IS A GAMECHANGER

Karan Johar is known to be the biggest advocate of blockbuster cinema. Each of his announcements are planned months in advance. And are publicised accordingly worldwide. So he really pulled a rabbit out of his hat when his OTT show *Fabulous Lives Of Bollywood Wives* erupted on our screens. The Bollywood wives in question were Maheep Kapoor, Bhavana Panday, Neelam Kothari Soni and Seema Khan. Wives of Sanjay Kapoor, Chunky Pandey, Sameer Soni and Sohail Khan respectively. The masses had never heard of such content before and took to it because of its novelty. The point is that no one expected Karan Johar to jump on the OTT bandwagon and produce a reality show of all things. But he went ahead and did it because he can still read the market.

Shah Rukh Khan may not have appeared on an OTT show as an actor but his production company, Red Chillies, has been exploring this new platform for a while now. They have a partnership of sorts with Netflix and so far have produced a hard-hitting actioner called *Bard of Blood,* featuring Emraan Hashmi, a horror series, *Betaal,* featuring Vineet Kumar Singh and Aahana Kumra and the film *Class of '83* starring Bobby Deol. There are several more projects said to be in the pipeline.

The Family Man

Bard Of Blood

Class Of '83

After the success of *The Family Man,* acclaimed directors Raj and DK have turned their hands on producing another actioner. Tentatively titled *Sunny,* the series features the likes of Shahid Kapoor, Raashi Khanna and Vijay Sethupathy. Amazon Prime reportedly paid Akshay Kumar 90 crores to be part of their web series called *The End*, which is said to be a futuristic saga. Sanjay Leela Bhansali is said to be making a period drama on the lives of courtesans called *Heera Mandi.* It's said the series will reunite him with music director Ismail Darbar. There are also reports that Sonakshi Sinha, Huma Qureshi, Nimrat Kaur, Sayani Gupta and Manisha Koirala will be part of the series.

Going by all these reports, it won't be wrong to say that the Bollywood biggies are taking OTT seriously and are more than ready to make the next big transition. They have realised that the viewers have now become habituated to watching quality content right from the comfort of their homes, or even on their phones. Star system serves the purpose of driving the masses to the theatres but with the public staying away from cinema halls so far because of the pandemic, it's always better to have a plan B in place. One thing is for sure. The quality of content will definitely improve as a woke audience will no longer take kindly to formulaic set pieces. Exciting times ahead it seems...

jitesh.pillaai@wwm.co.in
Twitter: @jiteshpillaai