

I Know How The Media Functions: Amitabh

Amitabh Bachchan, who plays a media baron in forthcoming film "Rann", says he was among the pioneers of satellite television in the West long before it came to India and has a fair idea how a channel runs.

"I was one of the pioneers of satellite television in the United Kingdom and New York. We ran Asian television there. We were actually the first ones who did that many, many, many years ago before satellite television came here. So, yes, I know how it works and how it functions," Bachchan told IANS in an interview here.

"But now, of course, it has become a huge industry. It's a very intricate process, a very difficult task and extremely competitive. I have been to some of the (news) studios and I have seen how they function - (it's) a massive task," he added.

Bachchan had endorsed one of the first satellite Asian TV channels in Britain in the early 1990s-TVAsia before it was taken over by ZEE Network.

The megastar clarifies that "Rann", which releases Jan 29, is pro-media and not at all about media bashing as has been reported.

"It's a little premature for the media to think like this, but you know 'Rann' is a very pro-media film. In the film what I do as part of the media (industry) is nothing dishonourable. I (have been) put across as a very honourable person and whatever I do is very pro-media."

Directed by Ram Gopal Varma, "Rann" is about business and consciousness in electronic media and the moot point of the film is what edges the other.

"Whether business wins over consciousness or otherwise, that would always depend upon the owner of the channel and that's the crux of the story. It's a battle between business and consciousness.

"Does Mr. Vijay Harshvardhan Malik (played

by Amitabh in the film), who is a symbol of purity and integrity, succumb to things like 'I don't care about business, I want to keep my consciousness' or 'to hell with conscience, I will have to save my business'; that's what the story will be," said Amitabh.

The actor also said that he didn't borrow any mannerisms from media personalities like Prannoy Roy or Rajdeep Sardesai.

"I don't try imitating any particular action of anybody. I try to be myself," said Amitabh, but added Ram Gopal Varma might have taken inspiration from the two while creating a character.

"These are elements which we see every day. Yes, when we are making a film on electronic media, it is very difficult to ignore them (Prannoy or Rajdeep) or not be inspired by them."

While Amitabh appreciates the positive impact of the media, he maintains that it is not flawless.

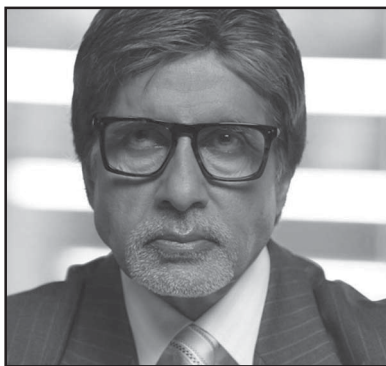
"Media is a very powerful medium. It's the voice of the nation. It informs and also forms opinion. It has the power to be able to influence you in

forming a decision. It has a power to change governments... Now, when one entity has so many powers, are there any drawbacks? Are there any loopholes there? Do people use them or misuse them? These are some of the issues that the film deals with," he said.

The actor, who recently criticised the paid news syndrome in an interview, said the media is not solely responsible for such practice where the source of information is kept under wraps.

"Somebody has to bring the concept. You are the medium and they have to publish it or broadcast it. It is your decision whether you want to do it or not. One doesn't mind provided there is a disclosure. Disclose what you are doing, then it is fine. If it is made transparent, I don't see any harm. Let everybody have some kind of transparency."

INTERVIEW



I Don't Get Good Movies: Arshad Warsi

Noida: (IANS) His role as 'Circuit' in "Munnabhai M.B.B.S" fetched Arshad Warsi accolades, but not good movie offers. The actor rues that he has been typecast and doesn't get offers that could do justice to his acting skills.

"'Mujhe aacche role milte nahi hai' (I don't get good roles)," Warsi confessed at a press conference here Thursday at the Big Cinemas. "All the movies that I am being offered, 99 percent of them are bad scripts. That leaves me with one percent chance of getting a good movie," he added.

The actor will be seen as a small time thief Babban in "Ishqiya". Directed by Abhishek

Chaubhey and produced by Vishal Bharadwaj, the film is set in a small town in Uttar Pradesh and also stars Naseeruddin Shah and Vidya Balan.

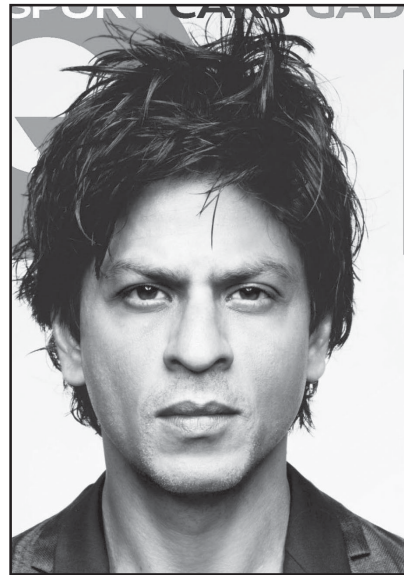
Arshad jokingly said that no other actor in the industry would have done the role better than him. He also pointed out that the character he is playing in the movie is a far cry from the way he is in his personal life.

"There is a huge difference between Babban and me. In real life, I am very quiet and boring, unlike him who is very rustic and lively."

"Despite this, I didn't have any difficulty in portraying this character. Thanks to the director who was clear about this character and I did my homework accordingly."



I've A Strange Attachment To Socks: SRK



Thanks to his irrepressible sense of humor, Shah Rukh Khan comes across as an easy going person. But in real life the Bollywood star is little different and one of the things he is extremely finicky about is his socks.

"I have a strange attachment to socks. They should feel right. I could be missing a flight, but if my socks are wrong, I have to take them off... I won't wear nylon socks with sneakers. The only time I get disturbed during shooting is over my socks. I hate brown socks and different-colored socks," said Shah Rukh said in an interview to the GQ magazine.

The interview will be published in the February issue of the lifestyle magazine. In the interview, the 44-year-old also talked about his loneliness.

"I can come across as a user, manipulator, disinterested, weird, reclusive, strange, arrogant from the outside. But the people involved know the truth...there are days I feel lonely on the inside. I guess that's the way I am."

"I've never gotten into relationships because I'm scared to. I have a shield. I've lost my parents, so now I don't like to lose relationships. I have to admit that at 44 I am socially and emotionally inept," said Shah Rukh.

The actor will be seen in his forthcoming film "My Name is Khan", which is releasing Feb 12.

Directed by Karan Johar, the film features Shah Rukh as an unconventional hero Rizvan Khan, who embarks on a journey across America to win back the love of his life, played by Kajol. It shows how, along the way, his personality touches the lives of many and inspires a nation.

Preity Zinta Jumps Off Toilet Wall



New Delhi: (IANS) Bollywood actress Preity Zinta pulled off a stunt by jumping off the wall of a toilet at the Delhi airport after she got stuck inside for more than 10 minutes.

"Spent 10 minutes stuck in the toilet at the airport...Finally had to climb the wall and jump over... People were calling out my name," Preity posted on her Twitter page Tuesday.

The 34-year-old says she felt she would die in there, but managed to escape.

"Thought I was going to die as I am claustrophobic. Pulled a muscle in my arm..." she added.

She says her tomboy attitude helped her come out of the toilet.

"Being a tomboy when I was younger definitely helped. Trying to climb a wall is never easy. Phew! Happy to go home now," she said.

I'll Never Be Able To Wear A Bikini: Zarine



Faunting one's body in a bikini is no more taboo in Hindi films, but new entrant Zarine Khan, who debuted with "Veer", says she would never be able to don a two-piece costume on screen.

In "Veer", the Mumbai girl was covered from head to toe throughout the film. But is she ready to play a chic urban girl and wear contemporary costumes in her future movies?

"I am more than willing to do so. What I am sure about though is that I would never be able to wear a bikini. That's because I am constantly thinking that I am fat, I am fat, I am fat. Till the time this voice reverberates inside my head, I will always be apprehensive," Zarine told IANS.

"I'm very conscious about my weight. In fact, during my school and college days, I used to weigh as much as 100 kilos. It's only now that I weigh a lot lesser. I want to play all kinds of roles and get into the kind of attire that a Hindi film heroine is required to wear.

"However, before that I will have to get rid of all the excess weight that I currently have on me. It's just a few more pounds to go and after that it should all be well," said Zarine.

Zarine, who plays princess Yashodhara in "Veer" that has Salman in the lead role, understands that if she wants to be in the business of showbiz, she will need a good figure.

"Whatever role that I consent to play, it has to be done with dedication. However, I'm a new entrant and there are so many established actresses who are taking the size zero route. Obviously, I can't beat them due to my body structure, but I wish to get into shape to the best of my ability," she said.

Narrating her journey of weighty issues, Zarine said: "It was only after I started doing modelling that my weight went down by 40-45 kilos from an original 100. I have a tendency to lose and put on weight. This is why while working on 'Veer', I was so happy. For a change no one was asking me to lose weight."

In "Veer" she was not required to look skinny; therefore she could even pile on chocolates.

"Why just chocolates? I also got to eat other junk stuff which I had to earlier sacrifice. Any actress would have thought 1,000 times before eating the kind of things that I got on a platter on the sets of 'Veer'. Having said that, I had to be reasonably conscious about not becoming 100 kilos again. I was regular with my workouts to maintain a curvaceous body."