

Aamir Is A Very Powerful Man: Chetan Bhagat

BY SUBHASH K. JHA

Aamir Khan is a “very powerful person” but the truth has to prevail, says author Chetan Bhagat, asking people to compare for themselves his book “Five Point Someone” and the film “3 Idiots”.

You must be very upset by the latest proceedings?

You’re a writer. You should know how it feels to have credit taken away from you. And it’s not something only I’m saying. The book is there. The film is there. They’ve tried to take away from my contribution. My name is at the very end of the credit titles after the junior artists and still photographers. From the time they started making the film, they’ve been stressing that their product is different. It’s like a systematic effort (to underplay my contribution). If you read the book and see the film, you’ll see the similarities.

So would you say “3 Idiots” is an adaptation of your novel?

“3 Idiots” is a total adaptation of book. Some things are direct lifts, others indirect adaptations.

Aamir thinks you are trying to take away credit from the film’s writer Abhijat Joshi?

But then he says he hasn’t read the book. There’s no denying Abhijat has done the screenplay. What Abhijat has done with my book can only be known if you’ve read it. If Aamir is so concerned about Abhijat not getting the publicity, he should let Abhijat talk. I very much respect Aamir. He’s the reason I thought the project would have a lot of integrity. I know for a fact he was told not to read my book because they told him it’d affect his understanding of his story. I was told it was a different script.

How would Aamir’s perception have been affected if he read the book?

I don’t know. I’m on a firm footing with the facts. See the film, read the book and judge for yourself. The whole plot-structure narrative, even dialogues about matar-paneer and Maruti 800 cars are from my novel. The novel was set in the 1990s. Aaj

Maruti 800 kaun bolega? I mention 42 exams and 16 broken bones in my book. They have kept the same numbers in the film. Kareena’s brother committing suicide on the railway tracks... so many other things in the film, it’s all there in my novel.

Vidhu Vinod Chopra and Aamir have accused you of trying to make mileage out of their movie?

If I didn’t take up the issue properly, I wouldn’t have been able to live with myself. If someone else goes and collects the award for best story at the awards functions, how will I feel? Only once I met Aamir. When I landed at Bangalore where they were shooting “3 Idiots”, they said, ‘Don’t come we’ve too many visitors’. They prevented me from going on the set. When the other film “Hello” based on my novel “One Night At The Call Centre” came did I say one word against the treatment? I was credited properly for that. I haven’t been credited for “3 Idiots”.

Have you become embittered towards Bollywood?

You could make up any contract. But is there any contract that stops people from being petty? My novel “Three Mistakes Of My Life” is being directed by Abhishek Kapoor.

There’s a lot of interest in adapting my latest novel “2 States: The Story Of My Life”. I don’t think there would be any problem with future project. With “3 Idiots” I know I’m in the right. I’m just telling people to see the film and read my book. I know Aamir is a very powerful person. But finally the truth has to prevail, no? I’m no great artist, but there has to be fair play. I’m being accused of trying to get mileage. Ten lakh copies of the book have been sold. The book has been read by one crore readers. Wouldn’t they know the truth?

What do you intend to do?

The makers of “3 Idiots” are busy with their victory tours all over the country. They’re naturally being asked about the similarities between my book and the film. Sorry, I spoilt their celebrations. The truth had to be told. I’ve been told by them, ‘You’re just a writer. You don’t realize how big we are.’

Chetan Is Hungry For Publicity: Aamir

Aamir Khan recently denied claims that the film “3 Idiots” was 70 percent based on Bhagat’s bestseller “Five Point Someone”.

“Three months earlier he (Bhagat) was saying something else and now he is saying something else as the movie is a huge hit now.”

“While we were shooting at IIM Bangalore, Chetan had come to meet us. So when I told him that I haven’t read your book, he replied that there was no need to do so as I have read the script and it is different from the book,” the actor said.

“Now he is telling everyone that our movie is 70 percent on the book. It all shows that we are being used, you (media) are being used. This clearly



shows that he is hungry for publicity,” Aamir said.

He added that Bhagat was trying to take away credit from Abhijat Joshi, the writer of the film. “Did you know about the writer before the movie was released?” he asked.

“Abhijat and Raju (director Rajkumar Hirani) have worked on this script for three years. Chetan is a big writer but Abhijat was the other guy who was working on the script. Full credit is given to him and he is not their (producers or directors) brother. But he deserved it,” Aamir said.

“Chetan is taking away credit from these people who deserve it. Let’s not encourage someone who is hungry for publicity.”

Now Shah Rukh Khan Joins Twitter



After Karan Johar, Priyanka Chopra and Preity Zinta, now Bollywood Superstar Shah Rukh Khan has joined social networking site Twitter.

“Being extremely shy, I never thought I would be here (on Twitter). But my friend Karan Johar insisted that I should learn to share my life,” Shah Rukh posted on his Twitter page.

“Thanks everyone, this is really sweet...didn’t expect such a warm welcome. Love to you all,” he added.

The superstar was hardly seen on big screen in 2009 except in “Billu”, and explaining the reason behind his absence, he wrote: “Injury has kept me away from making more films. Will work my back off to be around more... the shoulder feels strong and so do I.”

In February last year, Shah Rukh underwent an arthroscopic surgery for acute pain in his left shoulder at the Breach Candy hospital in south Mumbai.

He is now gearing up for the release of his much-talked about film “My Name Is Khan” which also stars Kajol. Releasing Feb 12, the film’s story revolves around Rizwan Khan (Shah Rukh) who suffers from Asperger syndrome, a form of autism. Rizwan falls in love with a single mother Mandira (Kajol) who lives in San Francisco. Rizwan is detained by authorities at Los Angeles International Airport, mistaking his disability for “suspicious” behaviour.

Right now Shah Rukh is enjoying his holiday with wife and children.

“Kids and life calling...watching Tim Burton’s ‘9’ (animated fantasy film directed by Shane Acker) with them...last holiday...so up late...catch up later...,” he wrote in his latest posting.

It’s Tough To Play A Simple Girl: Priyanka



She is smart, glamorous and one of the most sought after actresses in Bollywood, but Priyanka Chopra says it was difficult for her to portray a simple, beautiful girl in forthcoming film “Pyaar Impossible” and still try to hold the interest of audiences.

“When you do characters like one in ‘Aitraaz’, ‘Fashion’ or ‘Kaminey’, there are certain peripheries. For example, Sweetie in ‘Kaminey’ won’t be able to speak English or she won’t wear jeans and top. They are also difficult, but the boundaries help. When I am playing a simple beautiful looking girl, how do I get your interest?” Priyanka said.

“Heroines ought to look beautiful, it’s their work. We look pretty, we wear great clothes but that’s our job. But how do I make you feel for her? That’s why these films are more difficult,” Priyanka, who has teamed up with Uday Chopra in the film, told IANS. Written and produced by Uday, “Pyaar Impossible” is a romantic tale about a beauty and a geek. Directed by Jugal Hansraj, it shows how fate brings Uday and Priyanka come together and love blooms amidst all odds.

Talking about her character in “Pyaar Impossible”, Priyanka said: “I play Alisha who works in a software company. She has always been a popular girl, fun loving and one who loves life. But at a young age she has to take a lot of responsibilities and she finds it difficult to manage and her life becomes chaotic,” said Priyanka.

“When I was offered the film, I was shooting for ‘Kaminey’. So I told them I will take some time to decide. It took me around three months to read the script, but when I read it, I felt I was reading a romantic book or a breezy novel and I immediately called Uday and gave my consent,” she added.

Aamir And I Make Fantastic Pair: Kareena



She is overwhelmed by the response to “3 Idiots” and has no regrets about the size of her role in the hit comedy drama. Kareena Kapoor says she is happy to work with Aamir Khan and pleased by the compliments she has received for their pairing.

“Everyone in one voice thinks we look good together. I think Aamir and I make a fantastic pair. I’d love to do another film with him immediately, this time I don’t want share him with other pivotal characters,” Kareena told IANS. Reacting to the opinion that she hardly has anything to do in ‘3 Idiots’, Kareena said: “Who says I’ve nothing to do? I’m very much part of the main drama. Would the story move forward if you remove my character?”

“Everywhere I go, I am swamped by compliments for the role.

The length of the role didn’t matter. I’m just glad to be part of a historic happening,” she said.

“When Rajkumar Hirani and Aamir asked me to be part of their film, I jumped at it. I knew the film would be special because of Raju and Aamir, and I was right. As far as our cinema is concerned, Aamir is god.”

In fact, talks are on with two leading filmmakers including Mani Ratnam who is apparently set to revive his Aamir-Kareena project “Lajjo”. A.R. Rahman and Gulzar have even recorded the songs.

Looking back on last year Kareena feels happy by the response to her performances in “Kurbaan” and “3 Idiots”. “Both films are very precious to me. ‘Kurbaan’ was intense, ‘3 Idiots’ was more fun. In 2009, I did films with all the Khans.... Salman, Aamir and Shah Rukh - I had a song with him in ‘Billu’ - and of course Saif.”

This time Kareena managed to ring in New Year with her family.

“I’ve been running around frantically promoting my film. And then I was ailing for a week. I decided I had to be well for the festive season. Christmas was a very, very special occasion for my mom and sister. But we never get to be together for the occasion. “This time I was adamant. I made sure I took time off from work so all us girls could spend time together. My mom and I were here in Delhi to spend time with my sister and niece.