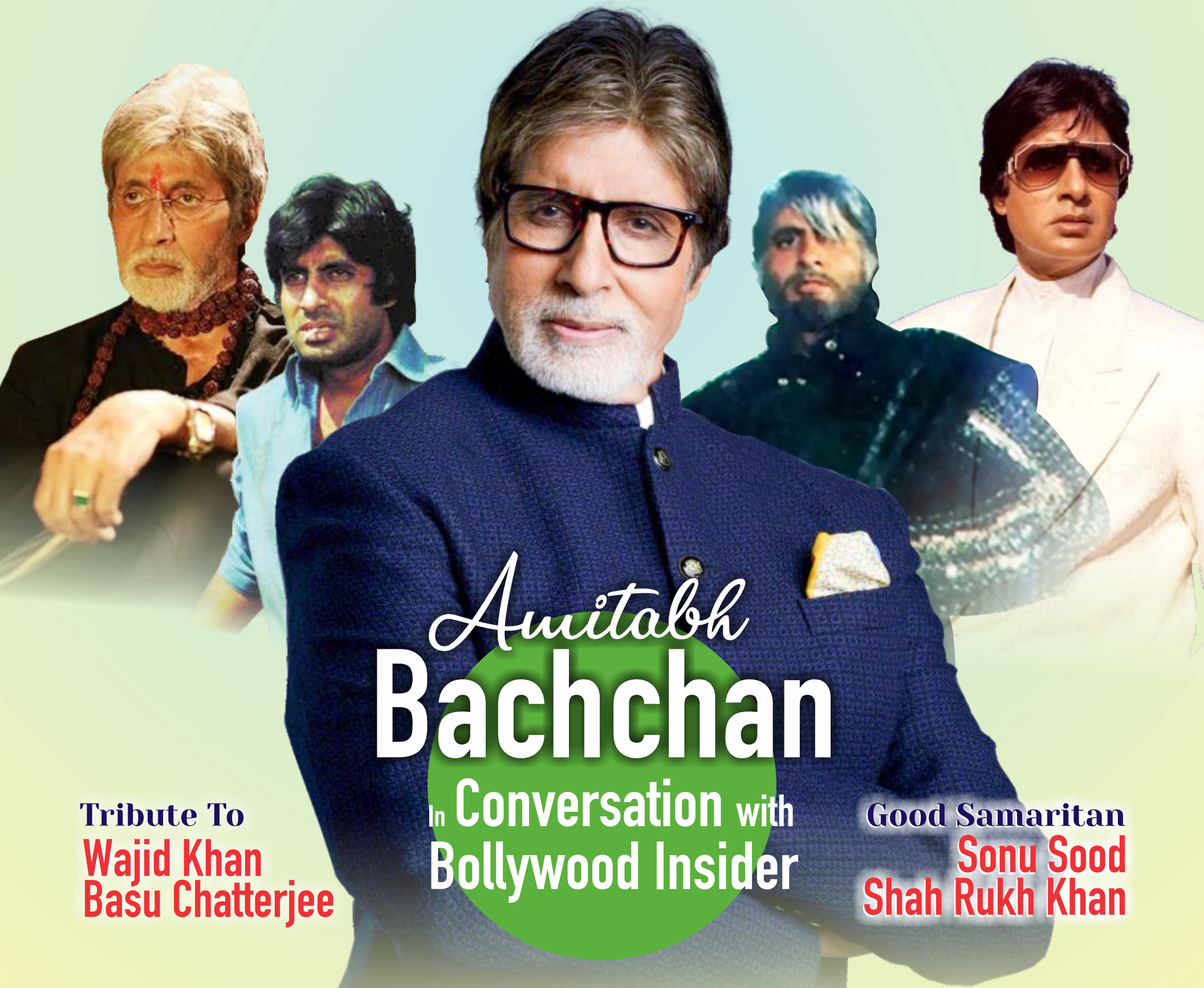


BOLLYWOOD INSIDER

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Amitabh Bachchan

In Conversation with
Bollywood Insider

Tribute To
Wajid Khan
Basu Chatterjee

Good Samaritan
Sonu Sood
Shah Rukh Khan

Singing
Sensation!
Madhuri Dixit

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Bollywood Stars Go Back in Time

By Dhaval Roy

Everyone loves a bit of nostalgia, especially when it involves their favorite stars. While B-Towners usually like to go into flashback mode, giving fans a glimpse of their younger days, some of them went to a time way back. They uploaded their kiddie images with adorable captions, which would make anyone go 'Aww!' Here are some of the best ones.

Alia's beautiful boys

While most actors were busy posting their own images from the past, Alia Bhatt did something adorable. The *Raazi* actress uploaded a pic of her boyfriend, Ranbir Kapoor with his father Rishi Kapoor soon after the latter passed away. She had a simple caption, "Beautiful boys," to go with it. Just two words, but loaded with emotions! A sweet way to pay homage.



When Amir didn't offer Deepika food



Deepika Padukone had a major flashback photo to upload. This goes back to the New Year's Day of 2000 when Dippy visited Amir Khan with her fam. In the caption, she jokes that she was hungry, as usual, and AK was eating curd rice. He didn't offer her any and she didn't ask either. Plain and simple. DP wrote, "I was 13 & awkward. I still am."

Sonam's been a Batgirl!

Who would have guessed that fashionista Sonam K Ahuja was once a nerd? She confessed to being one as a kid with a throwback pic to the time she put on a DIY Batman costume, with a cape and socks featuring the superhero. And no, it wasn't a fancy-dress competition! It was for her brother Harshvardhan Kapoor's birthday party, which her dad Anil Kapoor reminded in a comment. Joining her in the fun was the other Kapoor girl, Rhea. Sonam said jumping and dancing around with her sis is still her favorite thing to do. Well, girls just wanna have fun!



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Sanjay remembers senior Dutt

Sanjay Dutt had a special message on his father's death anniversary on May 25, which he gave through a video. The short clip featured a series of photos of the duo from the time Sanju was a tot to when he became a successful actor. The footage ended with a note, 'Love you dad, always. Miss you.' It's been 15 years since the actor passed away. Sanjay captioned the pic, "With you by my side, I knew that I don't need to worry about anything. Thank you for always having my back. Miss you today and everyday Dad."





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Salman leads tributes for his go-to music director



Terrible news. The one thing I will always remember is Wajid bhai's laugh. Always smiling

Wajid Bhai you were the nicest, nicest nicest man! Always smiling. Always singing. All heart.



Shocked at the passing of Wajid Khan .. a bright smiling talent passes away .. duas, prayers and in condolence.

Jaydip Sengupta

This lockdown is proving to be a bane for Bollywood, with the film fraternity busier mourning the dead than celebrating life. Barely a month had passed following the back-to-back demise of two of the country's finest actors, when the industry was once again shaken to the core by the untimely passing away of the younger half of music director duo Sajid-Wajid due to a kidney infection at 42, leaving one wondering what more is in store for Bollywood fans in this wretched year.

For those still scratching their heads as to who the pair in question is, it is obvious they are not Salman Khan fans, for if they were, they would know that this once-dynamic music director duo were inseparable from *Dabangg* Khan, composing music for almost all his movies. The brothers started their musical journey in 1998 with *Pyar Kiya to Darna Kya* and since then, have set the tune for Salman's movies from *Tere Naam*, *Partner*, *Wanted*, *Ek Tha Tiger* to all the *Dabangg* installments till date.

It was back in 1977 that Wajid Khan was born into a family of artistes, his father Ustad Sharafat Ali Khan being a tabla player in R. D. Burman's group of musicians. His elder brother Sajid accompanied him through 22 years of successful compositions, churning out hits like *Soni de nakhde* (*Partner*, 2007), *Jalwa* (*Wanted*, 2009), *Hud hud dabangg* (*Dabangg*, 2010), *Mashallah* (*Ek Tha Tiger*, 2012), *Aa re pritam pyare* (*Rowdy Rathore*, 2012) among several others.

While composing music for Salman's movies may seem like a sure-fire path to stardom, especially given that it fetched them Filmfare, Star Screen and Zee Cine awards, in some ways, it may even have limited their universal appeal. This, despite the fact that while on the one hand they could compose melodies like *Dagabaaz re* (*Dabangg 2*), *Sureeli ankhiyon wale* (*Veer*) and *Tere mast mast do nain* (*Dabangg*), they could also dish out popular item numbers like *Fevicol se* (*Dabangg 2*).

From being brothers to becoming hit composers to judges on the musical talent show *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, their separation has been heart-rending to say the least. A devastated Sajid shared a video on their *Instagram* profile where Wajid can be seen sitting on a hospital bed and playing tunes on an application. Sharing the video, Sajid wrote, "Duniya chut gayi, sab kuch chuta, na tune kabhi music chodda, na music tujhe kabhi chodega. My brother is a legend and legends don't die. I will always love you. Mere khushi mein, meri duaon mein, mere naam mein tu hamesha rahega."

The film fraternity joined in the chorus of tributes, led of course by Salman. "Wajid Vil always love, respect, remember n miss u as a person n ur talent, Love u n may your beautiful soul rest in peace ..." he tweeted. Incidentally,

Wajid had always spoken of Salman as his other elder brother. "The kind of songs we gave him, he selected all of them from *Lagan lagi* of *Tere Naam*, (songs for) *Partner*, *Mujhse Shaadi Karogi*, even *Tere mast mast do nain*. One man selecting all these songs can't be a fluke," he had once said.

Known as one of the most humble artistes in Bollywood, Wajid's untimely loss understandably touched a chord among the industry elites. Amitabh Bachchan was among the first to tweet. "Shocked at the passing of Wajid Khan .. a bright smiling talent passes away .. duas, prayers and in condolence."

Oscar-winning music director A.R. Rahman took to *Instagram*, captioning a photo of himself with the composer duo, "Gone too soon #RIPWajidKhan #innaillahiwaainnaalilirajoon."

Priyanka Chopra wrote on *Twitter*, "Terrible news. The one thing I will always remember is Wajid bhai's laugh. Always smiling. Gone too soon. My condolences to his family and everyone grieving. Rest in peace my friend. You are in my thoughts and prayers."

Priyanka's cousin, actor Parineeti Chopra perfectly summed up the film fraternity's emotions with her tweet, "Wajid Bhai you were the nicest, nicest nicest man! Always smiling. Always singing. All heart. Every music session with him was memorable. You will truly be missed Wajid Bhai."



Bollywood mourns Basu Chatterjee



By Jaydip Sengupta

For those seeking an escape from Bollywood's larger-than-life movies and protagonists, Basu Chatterjee came as a breath of fresh air. He did not let the morbid realities of life cloud his films, as many chose to with their rigid brand of parallel cinema. He made middle-of-the-road, simple, humorous and yet such relatable movies that viewers found most refreshing. Understandably, when he passed away quietly at the age of 93 with age-related ailments, Bollywood mourned.

Basu da, as the director and screenplay writer was known to his associates, lived as quietly. No shouting from the rooftops announcing himself, just going about his craft in the only way he knew. His understated charm worked like magic as he brought out the best in his actors and gave us gems like *Chhoti Si Baat*, *Chitchor*, *Rajnigandha*, *Khatta Meetha*, *Baton Baton Mein*, *Shaukeen* and *Chameli Ki Shaadi*.

His go-to actor was Amol Palekar, who featured in eight of his movies and perfectly fitted the role of an endearing middle-class hero. No one portrayed the common man seeking life's simple pleasures better than Palekar. "Basu da's films had simple stories told in an unassuming manner. Yet, they were so interesting, you simply loved them. His films are still relevant because he talked about common men, ordinary people," the veteran actor told *PTI* following the death of his favorite director.

This type of "Basu Chatterjee guy", Palekar added, was the kind he would pick from his everyday life. "The characters were so real. When you watch a Basu film, you feel 'Oh, I know this boy!' or 'Yes, this is exactly what my problem was yaar.' To touch that core, Basu da did it so effortlessly and beautifully."

Chatterjee worked with all the top stars of that era including Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra, Hema Malini, Rajesh Khanna, Mithun Chakraborty, Jeetendra, Neetu Singh, Dev Anand, Moushumi Chatterjee and Tina Munim, with varying degrees of success.

Bachchan, who worked with him in *Manzil*, recalled their brief association. "Prayers and Condolences on the passing of Basu Chatterjee .. a quiet,

soft spoken gentle human .. his films reflected the lives of middle India .. did 'MANZIL' with him .. a sad loss .. in these climes often remembered for rim jhim gire saawan."

While *Manzil* did not perform well at the Box Office despite receiving critical acclaim, some of Chatterjee's more successful films did feature stars at the top of their game. *Us Paar* (Vinod Khanna and Moushumi Chatterjee, 1974), *Priyatama* (Jeetendra, Neetu Singh, Rakesh Roshan, 1977), *Man Pasand* (Dev Anand and Tina Munim, 1980), *Shaukeen* (Rati Agnihotri and Mithun Chakraborty, 1982); all did fairly well commercially.

Interestingly, his most acclaimed film, in terms of awards, is none of the above-mentioned ones. *Swami*, his 1977 romance drama featuring Shabana Azmi and Girish Karnad, scooped up 3 Filmfare Awards, for Best Director, Best Actress and Best Story.

Shabana, who also worked with him in *Apne Paraye* and *Jeena Yahan*, tweeted, "Deeply saddened to hear about Basu Chatterjee's passing away. A prolific filmmaker, he was the pioneer of what came to be regarded as middle of the road cinema. I was fortunate to have done three lovely films with him *Swami*, *Apne Paraye* and *Jeena Yahan*. All lifelike characters. RIP."

The popular director's last commercial success came with *Chameli Ki Shaadi* (1986) starring Anil Kapoor and Amrita Singh. Kapoor was understandably moved. "A director who was always ahead of his time.. Basu Chatterjee will be truly missed. He was an effortless genius and an amazing human being. May he rest in peace," he tweeted.

Chatterjee did not restrict himself to the big screen, giving us cult classics like *Byomkesh Bakshi* and *Rajani* on the small screen which ensured that his craft reached a much wider audience. Little wonder then that even PM Narendra Modi joined the growing list of mourners. "Sad to hear of the demise of Shri Basu Chatterjee. His works are brilliant and sensitive. It touched people's hearts and represented the simple and complex emotions, as well as struggles of people. Condolences to his family and innumerable fans. *Om Shanti*," he tweeted.

AMITABH BACHCHAN

Free and Frank Conversation with Bollywood Insider

Shubarna Mukherji Shu

What more can you write about a man that has not already been written, one who has seamlessly entertained generations of fans with his inimitable emoting skills, influenced fellow actors to follow in his footsteps and inspired successive generations of his ilk to try and emulate him on screen?

At 77, when most prefer to walk into the sunset contented, the man who towers over the rest in Bollywood's pantheon of actors, continues to surprise and deliver. Ever since he began his trailblazing journey 50 years ago with *Saat Hindustani*, Amitabh Bachchan has overcome disappointments – he had 12 consecutive flops before hitting pay dirt

with *Zanjeer* and a debilitating injury on the sets of *Coolie* that almost ended his career, to show time and again that he is a master at his craft even at this age.

His off-screen setbacks - right from political misadventure to production blues - have also failed to slow him down and the result is a septuagenarian moving with the times, from single screen to multiplexes to now Over-The-Top platforms. His much-awaited upcoming release, *Gulabo Sitabo* is set to be shown on the digital platform and Big B, to Shubarna Mukherji Shu of Bollywood Insider, reveals what keeps him going even in adversity.

I think what this generation needs, rather desperately, is the instituting of discipline; I would really like the readers of Bollywood Insider to incorporate that.

- **From single screen theatres to multiplex, from television back to films and of course, now going digital. How does it feel to be the only actor who has transitioned so successfully?**

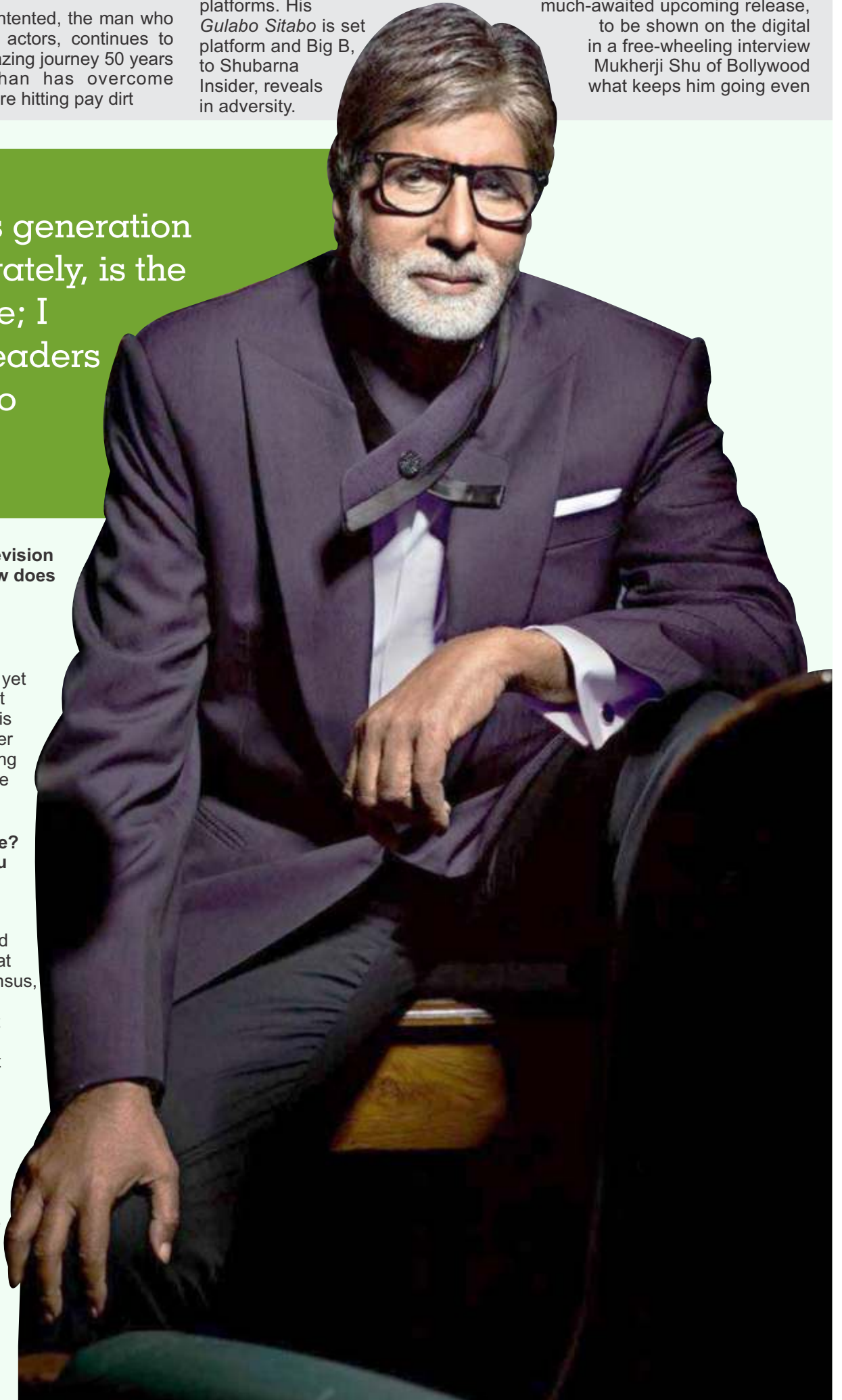
At this age and point in my career, to be able to get an opportunity to work in projects that are so diverse and yet garnering acclaim is a wonder. Which medium, doesn't really come into my sense of priorities! My admiration is for the audiences, it is them actually who are tiding over these mediums. For me, I am getting to work with young talent and that is awesome. May that continue and give me the value of their presence.

- **When the times change, does the craft also change? Is there any change that's so conspicuous that you have noticed?**

My work is completely dependent on my director. The concept, the attitude and the character are all designed by the maker. It is his creative process. We discuss that over several meetings and when we arrive at a consensus, we go on the floor. Filmmaking is teamwork. If there is something that we all agree upon, then we introduce it or remove it. For me, each film is different, each experience is different. Of course, there is change, but when you are in the flow with it, it is not conspicuous, unlike your assumption.

- **What happens when you see your earlier works; do you see how much your craft has changed?**

Like I said, each day for an actor, I would imagine, creates a change. We see, we observe, we participate in different projects and they all give us a lead into how the craft can be improved. It is a learning for me, at least. To answer your query, I am not certain what I see when I look at my earlier works. There are many memories that come to my mind when I happen to see some of my old works, so I cannot be too analytical cinematically anymore.



■ **What was your experience working with Ayushmann Khurrana?**

Ayushmann Khurrana is an exceptional talent, one that I have always admired and it has been a privilege working with him. Any opportunity to work with a good talent is a learning experience for me. These actors today are so fresh, they work like oxygen! It is always good to be in their midst, for they bring a freshness to the scenes, and that is most commendable.

■ **Earlier film shoots went on for months together, today some are finished within a few weeks. Is this pace fun or dizzying?**

I enjoy the pace. Finishing a project in a month reflects great planning, administration and execution. It merely adds to the professional outlook that we should be acknowledging. It also gives, me at least, an opportunity of getting on to another project - projects that at this stage are difficult to come my way...

■ **Many actors today insist on making some kind of social statement through their films. You too have done the same in many of your films. Now are there any pet projects you would like to showcase in your films?**

I do not deliberately go out seeking or looking for a film that shall address a particular social issue, but when a maker comes along with one, I am interested in it. There are many prominent social problems that need to be addressed, and if there is a story that can be interestingly designed to include the issue, it is most welcome.

■ **Being an entertainment medium, it's unjust to expect every film to take a moral or social stand but the impact films have on audiences cannot be disputed. Which films have left an impression on you, as a viewer, over the past few years?**

No, it is not unjust to expect films to take up moral and social problems. Each and every film made in this country has addressed a moral and social issue. Because each film delivers poetic justice within three hours-a justice that you and I shall never achieve in one life or several lives. Poetic justice in three hours means that some injustice has been corrected. And the injustice always shall reflect a social or moral wrong. The strength of cinema in this country is yes, the quotient of entertainment, but it is the deliverance of poetic justice, the victory of good over evil, that has given it such prominence.

■ **For someone with your social influence if there is one thing you can tell our readers, a message or a stand you would like to share, what would it be and why?**

I think what this generation needs, rather desperately, is the instituting of discipline; I would really like the readers of *Bollywood Insider* to incorporate that.

■ **Many confused *Gulabo Sitabo* with Shoojit Sircar's *Shoebite* (yet another film featuring you). Can you tell us what's the stat on that film?**

The film is now with the production house and for reasons best known to them, not being released. A pity, because it is a rather nice film, which needs to be seen. Many people involved in it have put in tremendous hard work. It would be grave injustice to them, if it does not see the light of the cinema screens.

■ **For someone who has been in the industry for many decades, a word of advice for those who get disheartened about bad press and detractors?**

Listen to each one of them and make an effort to beat them!

■ **Often, we have had films based on books hitting the marquee...are there any books you would have liked to turn into movies?**

Yes... but I cannot reveal the name due to confidential non-disclosure documentation!

■ **With a house filled with celebrated members, a far more intrusive media than the times when Shweta and Abhishek were kids, as a grandparent, it must be difficult to keep Navya Naveli, Agastya and Aaradhya away from the limelight. Is there a conscious effort to let them enjoy their privacy and pace or is it better to just accept the changing times and cope?**

One of the tenets of media and journalism is 'intrusion'. They are the Fourth Estate in a recognised and pertinent democracy - the largest in the world! Their presence is eventual and a given! It is beyond debate. It is their job!

The West has designed regulations for the exposure of celebrity children, and they follow it most diligently. Individuals who wish to keep media or a stalker, or just any objectionable character in public at a distance, have the liberty to go to court and get a ruling in their favour. I believe the distance is 150 yards. This legal facility is not available in India! With communication technology at its vibrant best, it shall be impossible to keep such moments free of the 'intrusion' you talk of. It is an eventuality. Accept it and move on. However, I must say that when you and I shall desire complete privacy, there is no way we cannot or will not be able to enjoy or execute it...

■ **That is so well said. If you want it, you can have it! Talking about things you have shared, I cannot help but remember the beautiful letter you shared post *Pink*... What's your one advice to the girls of India?**

Women are 50% the strength of a nation, rapidly increasing in its percentage. Respect, dignity and the freedom of their expression needs to be valued.

■ **Seeing your photographs with a neck-brace, days when you are in pain, discomforted, how do you find the enthusiasm and drive to give your job your best?**

So long as I am not a pain in the neck for someone else, I am fine with that. If a commitment has been made, I shall make every effort to honour it. If there are circumstances beyond my control, I shall excuse myself, or withdraw!



BIG-SCREEN RELEASES

LOOK FOR SMALL-SCREEN RETURNS

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Deepali Singh

The show must go on! After more than two months of a Bollywood drought in theatres, the movies are back, albeit on the small screen. The lockdown, which has robbed theatre-goers of the pleasure of watching cinema on the big screen, is proving to be a boon for Over The Top (OTT) platforms. With theatres showing no signs of opening and the looming uncertainty of the audience thronging to cinema halls, the filmmakers are turning to digital platforms.

The next few months will see a number of movies released directly on the online platforms such as *Netflix*, *Amazon Prime Video*, *Disney + Hotstar* and *Zee5* among many others. While there are many films that are officially confirmed, quite a few are on the negotiation table. Either way, it's a win-win situation for the audience. So, get into your comfy pyjamas and bring out the popcorn!



Gulabo Sitabo

What happens when you bring the invincible star of the past 50 years with a highly acclaimed actor from a different generation together on screen? Fireworks for sure in the Amitabh Bachchan and Ayushmann Khurrana starrer *Gulabo Sitabo*. And if you have seen the trailer of the Shoojit Sircar-directorial that sees Big B as a cantankerous old landlord and the *Article 15* actor as his sly tenant, we're sure you can't wait to watch this comedy-drama.

Laxmmi Bomb

Ever since Akshay Kumar revealed his look from his film *Laxmmi Bomb*, his fans have been waiting to see him perform in a never-seen-before avatar. Dressed in a red sari with his hair tied back, red *bindi* and kohl-rimmed eyes, the superstar gave us the chills with his dramatic look. The Hindi remake of the 2011 Tamil film *Muni 2: Kanchana* will see Akshay get possessed by the ghost of a transgender. Also starring Kiara Advani, we hear the film has been sold off to a digital platform for a whopping amount. Well, anything to see Akki on-screen again!

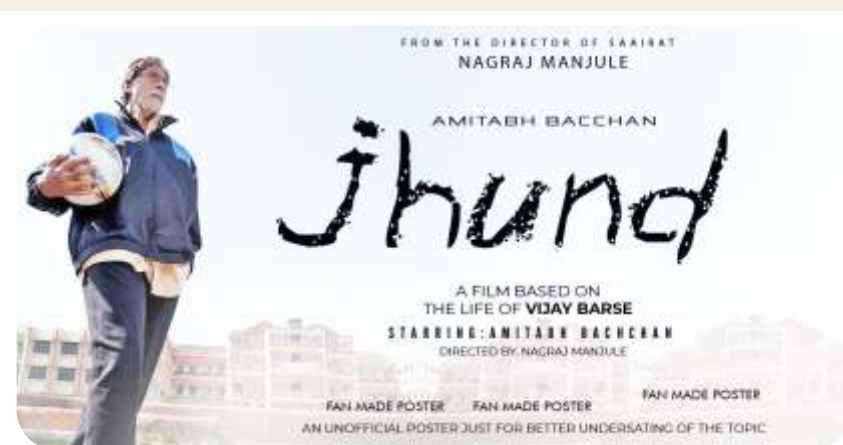


Shakuntala Devi

Who better to play a human computer on screen than Vidya Balan? The versatile actress is all set to get into the shoes of *Shakuntala Devi* in a biopic based on the famous mathematician's life. "She was truly someone who embraced her individuality, had a strong feminist voice and braved many a naysayer to reach the pinnacle of success. But what truly fascinates me is that you wouldn't normally associate a fun person with Math...and she completely turns that perception on its head", Vidya says.

Jhund

Maverick director Nagraj Manjule is the man behind *Sairat*, one of the most acclaimed Marathi films of all time. So, when someone like him gets behind the camera, you know the project is worth the wait. Even more so, when the man in front of the camera is Amitabh Bachchan. Big B's character is based on the life of Vijay Barse, the founder of NGO Slum Soccer in this biographical sports drama. The *Sairat* lead cast – Akash Thosar and Rinku Rajguru – lend him company in this movie that was supposed to release last year, but kept getting delayed for various reasons.





Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl

Janhvi Kapoor's upcoming film, also starring Pankaj Tripathi and Angad Bedi in prominent roles, was slated for a March 2020 release, but the Coronavirus pandemic had other plans. It's an important role, not to mention a huge responsibility for the young actress, considering she is playing Gunjan Saxena, the first Indian Air Force woman officer who went to war. Get ready to cheer for woman empowerment!

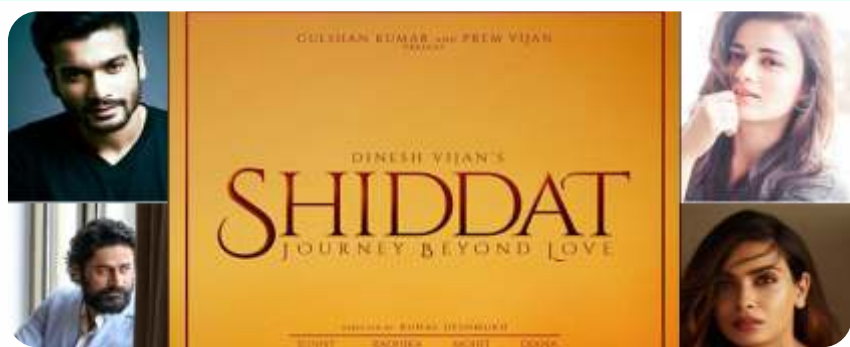
Shershaah

Considering Sidharth Malhotra is yet to wow the audience with his performances; *Shershaah*, where he plays the role of Kargil war martyr Captain Vikram Batra, is a much-anticipated project for him. And watching himself helm this big role on the big screen would have been an even greater thrill. Prior to the lockdown, the film was slated for a July 3 release, 4 days before the Param Vir Chakra awardee's death anniversary. However, it looks like the actor will have to contend himself with watching the film on a digital platform.



Ludo

Life In a... Metro revolved around relationships, but Anurag Basu's much-awaited next directorial, *Ludo*, is not a sequel to the 2007 anthology film. Starring Abhishek Bachchan, Rajkumar Rao, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Aditya Roy Kapur and Sanya Malhotra, *Ludo* has a bit of crime and dark humour thrown in for good measure as well. The massive failure of *Jagga Jasoos*, Anurag's last film, has certainly not dampened his enthusiasm for making movies.



Shiddat

Headlined by Sunny Kaushal, Radhika Madan, Diana Penty and Mohit Raina, the Kunal Deshmukh-directorial is about two couples and their romantic tracks. Shot across London, Paris and Punjab, the lavish production by Dinesh Vijan is a passion project for the filmmaker.



Indoo Ki Jawani

Post the success of *Kabir Singh*, it was but natural that filmmakers would queue up to sign Kiara Advani, the gorgeous actress who played the timid Preety in the Shahid Kapoor-starrer. *Indoo Ki Jawani*, a coming-of-age comedy where she plays a feisty girl from Lucknow, seems just the right project for the actress to shine on her own. Kiara has called her character in the film 'endearing, lovable and quirky'. Let's see what the young girl brings to the table with this one!

Khaali Peeli

Looks like Shahid Kapoor's baby brother will have to wait for some more time to watch himself on the big screen. Ishaan Khatter's next film post *Dhadak*, that sees him playing a 'street-smart guy' opposite 'item girl' Ananya Panday, is all set to be screened on a digital platform. Boy meets girl on a stormy night in this action-romance drama, which is expected to be an edgy rollercoaster ride. Will the young, reel life couple be able to deliver the goods?



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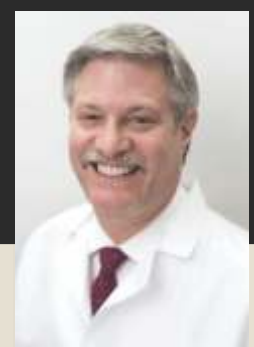
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Life A Daring Adventure For ARVINDER BAHAL

After exploring planet Earth, Bahal now headed to Space

A

By Dhaval Roy

adventurer Arvinder Bahal, who feeds tiger cubs, walks fearlessly with leopard and has travelled to 187 countries, besides the North Pole and the South Pole, is soon headed to Space. For him, life is either a daring adventure or nothing, the inspirational Helen Keller adage which he considers the gospel truth.

If not for the outbreak of the pandemic, Arvinder would have actually been in India for a parachute jump from above Mount Everest before heading to Norway for a trek.

“ At the North Pole, Arvinder Singh Bahal entered the invigorating waters of the Northern Ocean, an act of indubitable courage, absurd heroism and incomparable foolishness, making him an honorary life member of the Arctic Polar Plunge Club

EXPEDITION LEADER

From being almost trampled over by a ginormous gorilla to risking being killed by a squatter and coming very close to a wild elephant, the adventurer's escapades are aplenty. This Boston-based maverick business-man, who is seemingly consumed by wanderlust, shares nuggets from his travel treasure trove and his nonchalance about these close calls make it a compelling story of a star of real life that Bollywood Insider chose to include alongside stars of reel life like Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, and others.

Space odyssey next

Normally, you'd ask an explorer to name the countries they have visited, but in Arvinder's case, it's easier to ask where he hasn't been yet; that's because there are only six countries he hasn't explored so far. "One of them is East Timor in Asia, which is a new country; Suriname in South America, Angola in Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Niger," he says. Of these, he has Angola on his list for a visit next year. Covering these countries is not where the buck stops for Arvinder. Once done seeking thrill on Earth, it will be lift-off time for him! No exaggeration. "I'm booked as a voyager on Virgin Galactic to go to outer space. There are 500 people signed up and I'm the only Indian-American," he states.

The polar experience

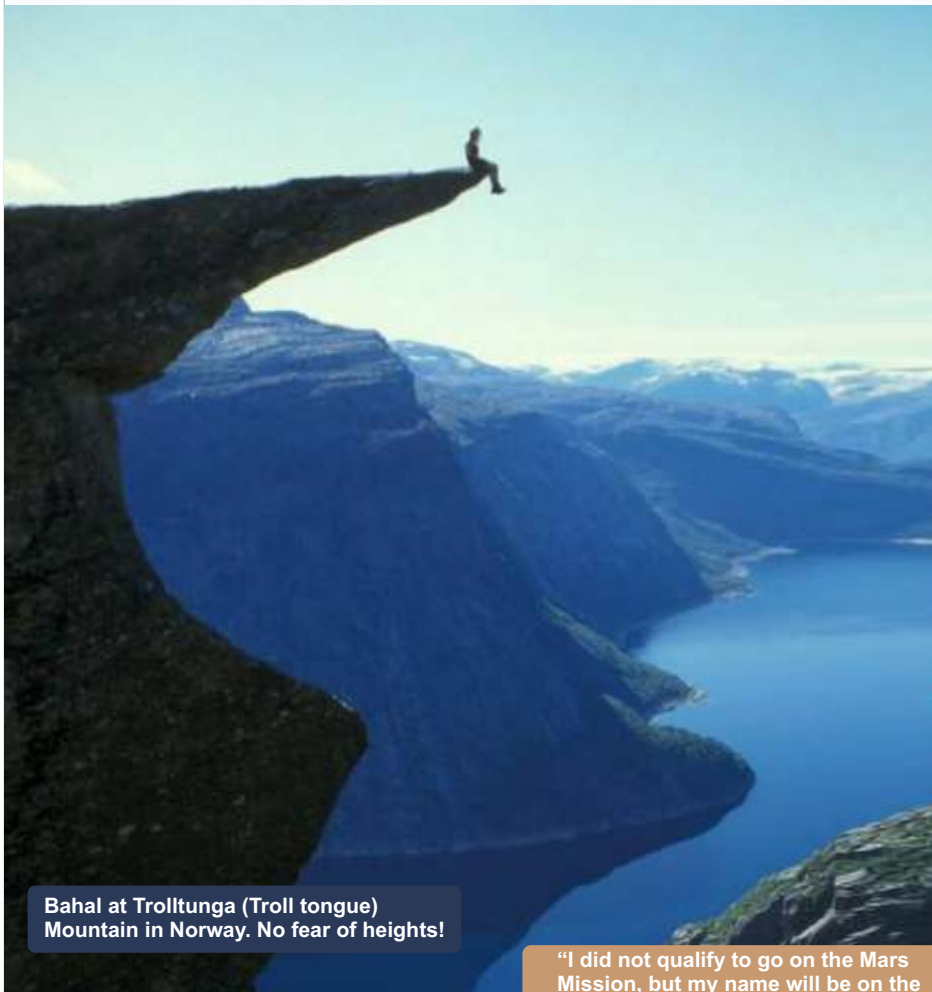
Not just for the space trip, the septuagenarian has been the only Indian-American in the North Pole in 2009. And for the New Year's event in 2019, he went to the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station where scientists spear a ceremonial pole through the snow to mark the new geographical location of the South Pole. Apart from the scientists, he was among a handful of people to witness the marking.



From Russia to North Pole on the nuclear-powered ship, the world's largest, most powerful and sophisticated icebreaker ever constructed.

How the travel bug bit him

Born in Agra, India, in 1945, Arvinder was set to be commissioned from the National Defense Academy (NDA) after he completed schooling from Jalandhar, Punjab. However, a skull fracture, suffered during an accident while playing Polo, left him deaf in the right ear and thwarted his plans. From thereon, he worked as the Systems Manager for a tea plantation in Darjeeling and soon moved to Taiwan for business. Whilst there, once a month, he would go on a week-long around-the-world tour on PanAm, Boston-New York-London-India-Hong Kong-Korea-Taiwan. "That's how I got hooked on to travel. I soon became a member of the TCC (Travelers' Century Club), which was a list of people who had traveled to 100 countries or more. Some members would tell us that they had been to all 193 countries and I decided to make that my goal," he reveals.



Bahal at Trolltunga (Troll tongue) Mountain in Norway. No fear of heights!

"I did not qualify to go on the Mars Mission, but my name will be on the disk that will be left on Mars."



Feeding a Tiger cub

Traveler not a tourist

Arvinder's latest adventure took him to Yemen's Socotra Island early this year in February. However, at 2 o'clock one morning, he was suddenly evacuated due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and because the borders were closing down. However, neither this experience nor the postponed trip to Mount Everest has disappointed him. "When you travel a lot, you learn to go with the flow and take disappointments in your stride. A



Crossing the Drake Passage in Paradise Bay on the Antarctic Peninsula.

traveler doesn't get upset, a tourist does," he says matter-of-factly and points out, "There have been so many experiences like missed planes or reaching a country and finding out there's absolutely nothing to see or do there. You get used to such things."

Misadventures galore

Speaking of things going wrong, the scariest experience for Arvinder was in Rwanda while tracking gorillas. When he spotted a family and started clicking the oldest gorilla, he was unmindful of the fact that the animal was racing in his direction! "The gorilla was just six feet away from me when the ranger pulled me back because it had raised its hand and could have broken my jaw!" he chuckles.

A country that he has sworn never to return to is Nigeria. "I saw a guy snatching a lady's purse and I don't know why, but I clicked his picture. My driver told me that the guy was a squatter and he could have followed our car and killed me," he says. Paris is also off his list because of the locals' snooty demeanor.

Arvinder was in Saudi Arabia about three years ago when planes would drop bombs on Yemen. He and his co-travelers had to stop in the desert for a couple of hours for the planes to strike and return before they could carry on ahead.

A satisfied sojourner

After all the experiences Arvinder has had, there's nothing on his bucket list left to achieve. "I'm a satisfied man. Even if I died today, I'd have no regrets," emphasizes the licensed pilot whose adventures include flying over the Skeleton Coast National Park, Namibia. The satisfaction comes from a gamut of experiences that include drinking local beer with laborers in Darjeeling to dining with Emperors and Prime Ministers of countries. "At times, I have been more satisfied with a meal that cost me \$3 as opposed to eating a fancy \$100 dish. I measure the success of a person by what he has seen and where he has been," he states.

Is he a Bollywood buff? "In my younger days in India, I used to like Dev Anand who was like Gregory Peck. I also loved watching Sharmila Tagore. My all-time favorite Bollywood movie is *Mughal-E-Azam*," he reveals.

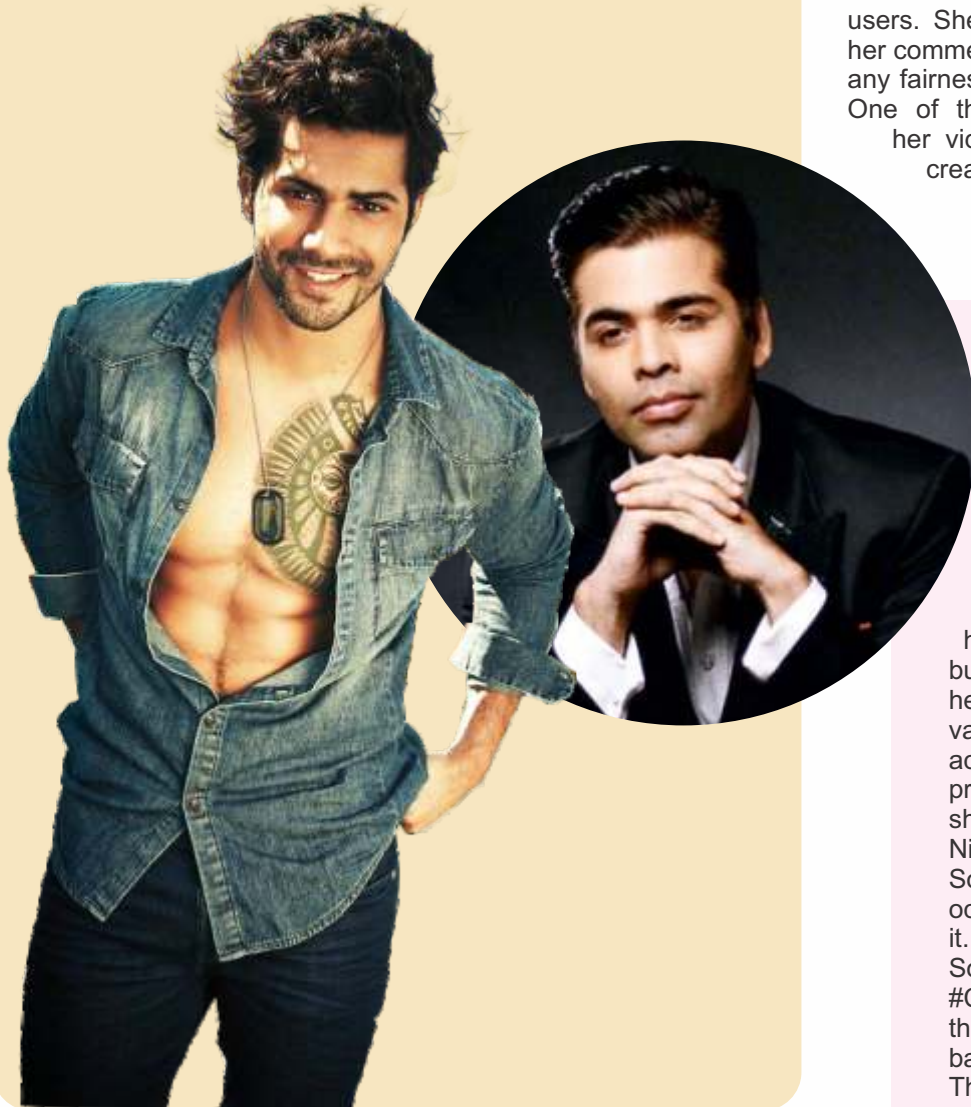
So, how has travel changed Arvinder as a person? "Oh, before I became a traveler, I was a know-all, but after, I'm a know-nothing!" he signs off.



With Astronaut Tim Peake and Sir Richard Branson, discussing his upcoming space odyssey.

Varun Dhawan says NO to Karan Johar!

After collaborating for films like *Student of the year*, *Humpty Sharma ki Dulhania* and *Badrinath ki Dulhaniya*, the *Badlapur* star has said no to the ambitious period drama *Ranbhoomi*. The film is being produced by Karan Johar and directed by Shashank Khaitan. It is reported that Varun has become very selective in his film choices after the failure of *Street Dancer 3D*. He also rejected *Mr. Lele* produced under the Dharma banner. Sources indicate that Varun rejected the project due to "too much comedy in one year"



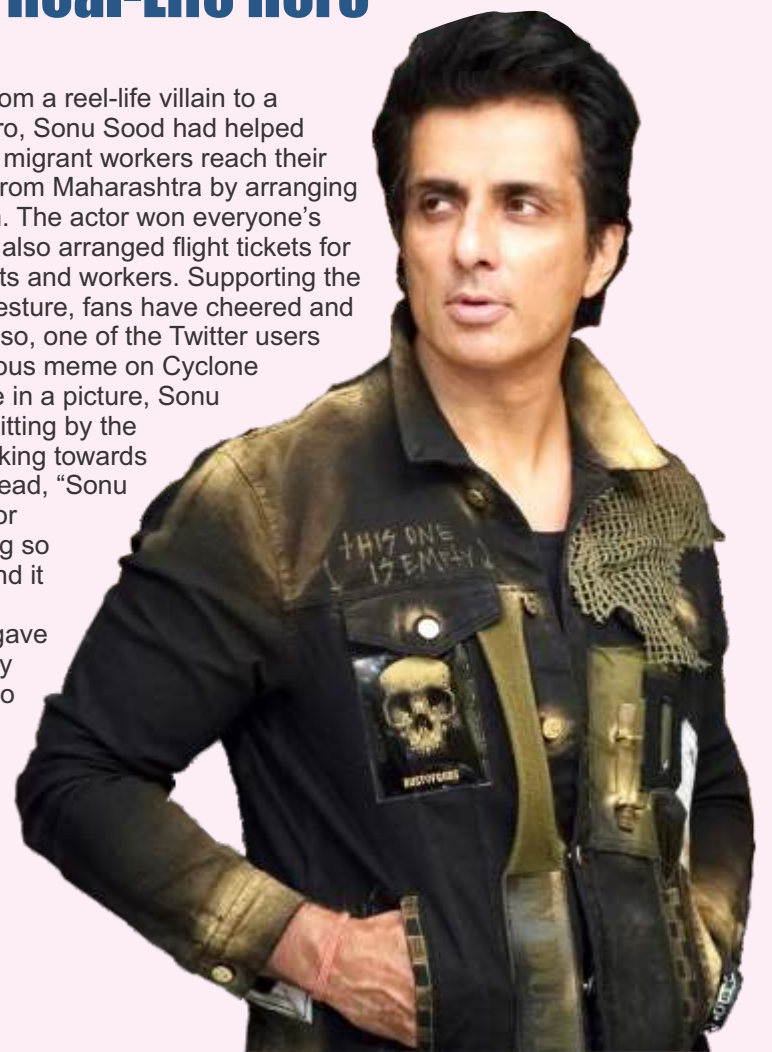
Priyanka Chopra gets Trolled

PeeCee seems to be caught in the web of hatred from netizens, who exposed her lie of never endorsing any fairness brand by uploading an old video of her advertising a fairness cream. People have been calling her a hypocrite. On George Floyd's death, the actress raised her voice on racism and that caught the attention of social media users. She got badly trolled for her comment on never endorsing any fairness brand in her career. One of the netizens uploaded her video clip of a fairness cream ad titled captioned, "How can she be so blatantly hypocrite (sic)?"



Sonu Sood: Reel-life Villain to Real-Life Hero

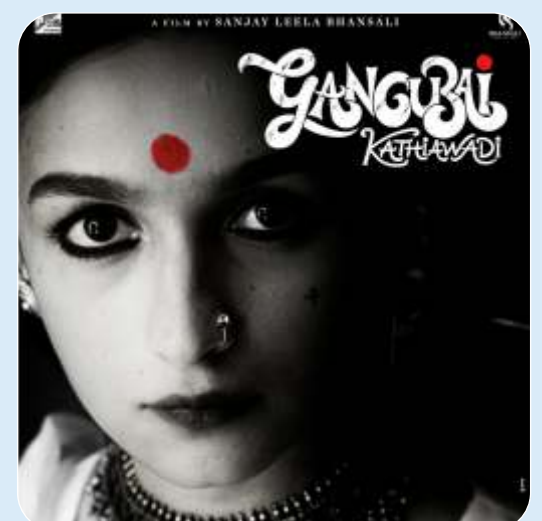
Turning from a reel-life villain to a real-life hero, Sonu Sood had helped hundreds of migrant workers reach their home towns from Maharashtra by arranging buses for them. The actor won everyone's heart when he also arranged flight tickets for various students and workers. Supporting the actor's good gesture, fans have cheered and praised him. Also, one of the Twitter users shared a hilarious meme on Cyclone Nisarga, where in a picture, Sonu Sood is seen sitting by the ocean side looking towards it. The meme read, "Sonu Sood waiting for #CycloneNisarga so that he can send it back home." The actor too gave a hilarious reply hilariously, "Isko bhi chhod kar aata hoon (Let me drop it home too)," with a laughter emoji.



Shooting all set to resume for Alia Bhatt starrer *Gangubai Kathiawadi*



Sanjay Leela Bhansali has decided to resume shooting for his projects that had been left unfinished due to COVID-19 outbreak. The director will restart shooting for *Gangubai Kathiawadi*, starring Alia Bhatt, by June end. Earlier, the filmmaker was looking to demolish the sets, but later on, decided against it. As per reports, the set is very much standing tall and would need a little repair work before the cast resumes shooting. Makers are in the process of acquiring the required permission to resume work.



Please Behave Like Animals: Sonakshi

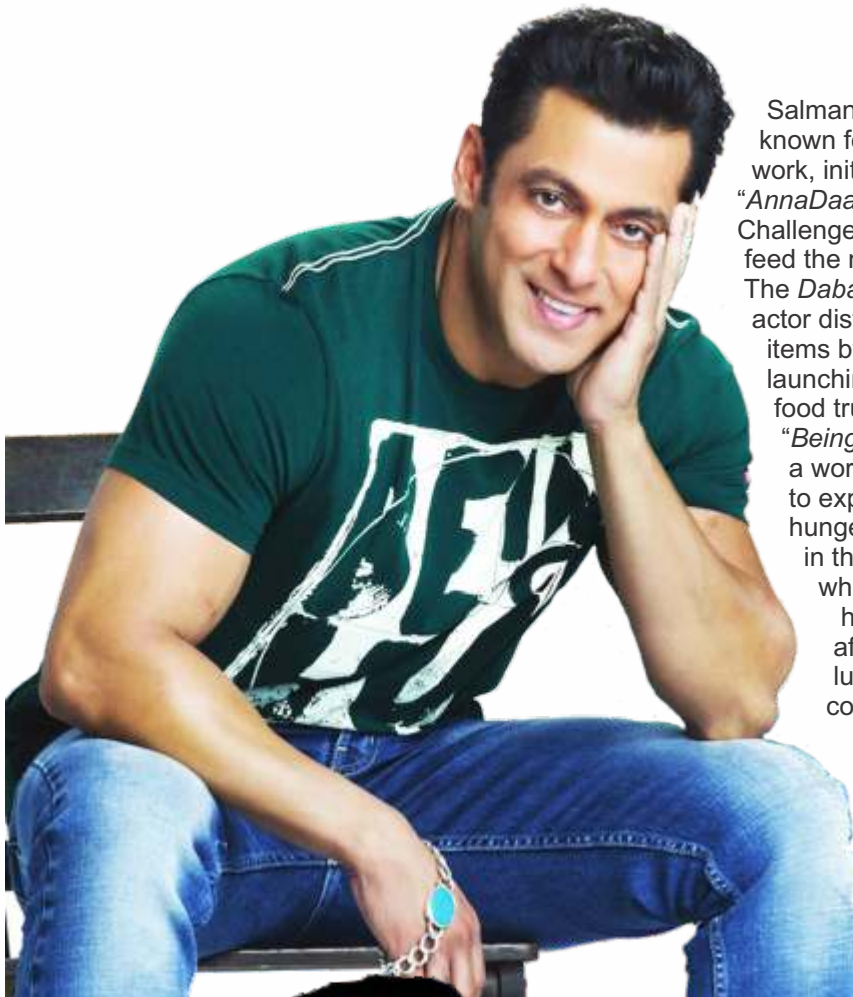
Angry over the brutal death of a pregnant elephant in Kerala, Sonakshi Sinha said that animals are far better than humans as they do not behave this badly. She tweeted, "Why do people relate behaving badly to 'behaving like an animal?' Please behave like animals. Because animals don't kill for fun, or for their entertainment or because they're just sick in the brain. Humans do."



Kartik Aaryan wants to marry a girl like Deepika!

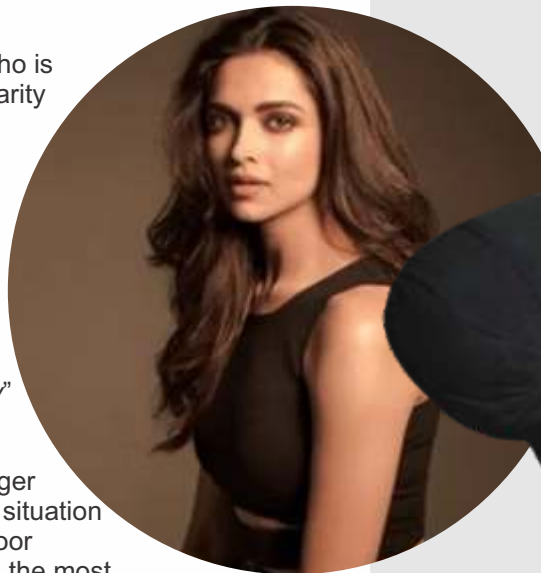
One of the more charming and successful newcomers in Bollywood, Kartik Aaryan, spilled the beans on what kind of a girl he wants as life partner. The *Love Aaj Kal* star said that he is bowled over by the personality of Deepika Padukone. Kartik, in a live chatting session with fans, revealed his choice of life partner, and said, "Someone like Deepika Padukone. One who shows off her husband proudly."

Salman's "AnnaDaan Challenge" wins hearts



Salman Khan, who is known for his charity work, initiated the "AnnaDaan Challenge" to feed the needy. The *Dabangg* actor distributed items by launching his food truck, "Being Haangry" a word created to express hunger and anger in the current situation where the poor

have been the most affected. Jacqueline Fernandez, Iulia Vantur and other co-stars also contributed their bit in this humanitarian effort. Earlier too, the *Radhe* star had given financial aid to 25,000 daily wage workers and then he stepped up to contribute money to 7,000 workers and 90 visually challenged workers of the film industry.



Boney Kapoor & Karan Johar's staff members test positive for COVID-19

Director Boney Kapoor's three domestic helps were found to be affected with the novel coronavirus. Initially, a 23-year-old staff member tested positive and later, two more staff members were diagnosed with COVID-19 symptoms.

Karan Johar's domestic help too got affected with the deadly virus. He took to social media to reveal that two of his staff had tested positive. He also stated that the BMC was immediately informed about this. He further wrote, "The rest of us in the family and staff are all safe and display no symptoms. We have all taken the swab test this morning and tested negative, but will remain in self-isolation for the next 14 days for the safety of everyone around us."



VIDYA BALAN

Her trials and tribulations in Bollywood



Half of them come to me telling me, this will definitely get you the national award. It is such a turn-off. I don't want to align myself with a film for an ulterior motive.

By Shubarna Mukherji Shu

In this day and age when actresses don't think twice before going under the knife to tuck a flab here, or another there – Vidya Balan has led a handful of actresses who insist on always being themselves. Her success has thus been far removed from anything other actresses have achieved and *Shakuntala Devi* is all set to reassure us that talent sells more than a hot body.

Today's actresses are more of *Instagram* influencers than actual acting talents, their looks more important than their craft; so, when someone like Vidya Balan has a film release, you know it will be different, content-heavy and definitely worth every penny you put in that movie ticket. Given her film, coming on an OTT platform, will save your buck, it automatically becomes much more enriching for the regular movie-goer. But do you think it is easy to stick to your principles, embrace who you are – especially on such a public platform? Vidya Balan will tell you – NO, IT IS NOT! Read on as she reveals to *Bollywood Insider* exactly how difficult it is to be Vidya Balan.

■ **What is the one thing that attracted you to a role like *Shakuntala Devi*?**

You know when someone says mathematics or science, there is automatically a picture of someone harried and absent-minded that comes to mind. And yet, everyone who has followed *Shakuntala Devi* has only awesome anecdotes to share about her. She was called the human computer, but she is also known for her sense of humor. Have you ever

heard of a computer that can make you laugh? Well, I hadn't, so I just had to make sure I was a part of something like this...

■ **Is it now a must for filmmakers to come to you only and only if they have something completely different and thought-provoking?**

I'm so glad you asked me this question; I am pretty sure that many filmmakers think like that while casting me. Half of them come to me telling me, this will definitely get you the national award. It is such a turn-off. I don't want to align myself with a film for an ulterior motive. I have done a lot of work where I wasn't even the central character, all this doesn't matter to me. I just want to align myself with a film that I believe in. I was really thrilled about doing *Ghanchakkar*, because it was a mad, mad film. For that matter, a film like *The Dirty Picture* or even now, *Shakuntala Devi* are charming for me because I really get a kick out of these ladies' sense of humor and their perceptions of life.

But then, actors have limitations; we cannot predict which filmmakers will come to us and who wouldn't, so we just have to make the most of what is offered. If the filmmaker thinks that I will fit into only a certain kind of roles, I can only hope that I change that impression soon.

■ **You turned to production with a short film, *Natkhat*... is that an answer to those filmmakers who have a stunted perspective of you?**

May be, may be not. Perhaps, somewhere in my subconscious, I don't want to wait any longer for someone to produce something that I so strongly believe in. It is a waste of time, also with Siddharth (Roy Kapoor), I think I am in good hands when it comes to guidance.

■ **Guidance is something you have never had, when it comes to this industry. Having Siddharth to guide you must be a welcome change...**

It is a huge change from my initial days. I won't forget how I dressed up in my best 'wedding/reception' outfits and went to my local photographer to get my portfolio snaps which I sent off for my auditions. I was so clueless. My sister who has no connections to the film industry was my only guide; she herself might not have known what to do, but she believed in me and helped me more than anyone else. She would draft my resume or bio-data whatever you want to call it, wait with me during auditions and so on. She helped me get my footing in the business, but then I had to hold on to that foothold which got very tough. Today I have reached a place where my mistakes and trials might be overlooked by others, but I remember each and every one of them, and use them as stepping stones to get ahead. With Siddharth, I know I have a sounding board who thankfully has his ears to the ground when it comes to the industry. I guess I got lucky there...

■ **Lucky only in work or also in lockdowns.... How good was it staying home with Siddharth through the lockdown?**

Oh, he is my perfect mate. We are very different in many things, but we are very much alike where it matters. Like for instance, he is not one of those men who thinks running a household is a woman's prerogative. He was very hands-on with chores, it was nice. Since we are both in a profession that has us traveling literally to opposite ends of the world, it was nice having all this time alone together.

■ **But the lockdown affected Bollywood very adversely. For instance, it did put your shooting of *Sherni* on hold. Weren't you in Bhopal when it all started?**

Yes, very much all shoots were put on hold. It will be a while till things get back to normal where the film industry is concerned. Yes, I was shooting in Bhopal, but we had a week's break, so we got back to our homes. We didn't know that the week would extend to months. But these are unpredictable times.

■ **Are you disappointed that *Shakuntala Devi* wouldn't get a theatrical release?**

I don't see why an actor would be disappointed about such things. For an actor, the thirst is to be seen by as many people as possible. So how does it matter if your audience has seen your film on a 70mm screen or on an OTT platform?

■ **What would you be if you weren't an actress?**

A failed actress? I don't know, I was very young when I saw *Tezaab* and I completely fell in love with Madhuri Dixit. Just everything that she was doing, *Ek Do Teen...* was like an anthem; I heard it over and over again. I have interests in terms of literature and poetry, but I just always wanted to be an actress. Even as a kid, even in college. It was not easy to take a bus from Chembur in Central Mumbai and travel every day to Juhu (western Mumbai) for drama classes at Prithvi Theatre, but I was that driven. And thankfully, I come from a family who saw and understood that passion in me. They supported me in every way. So, I really don't know what I would have done, had I failed to make it as an actress.

■ **Wasn't it scary that you almost didn't make it as an actress...**

I have been called 'bad luck'; many of my so-called debuts got shelved till finally *Parineeta* happened. Even post that, things almost didn't work out for me. But I was meant to happen to Bollywood.



Shakuntala Devi



kahaani



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BOLLYWOOD'S BEST



BOWL US OVER WITH KINDNESS!

By Dhaval Roy

The outbreak of COVID-19 has brought the world to a grinding halt, but that has not stopped Bollywood stars from sending migrants home, donating ventilators, footwear and hand sanitizers and

coming up with other thoughtful gestures to bail out the needy. While most stars have pledged generous amounts to different funds and initiatives, there are some who have gone beyond offering money.



Sonu Sood

Meals and transportation for migrant workers

The *Simmba* actor started a drive called *Ghar Bhejo* and arranged buses as well as trains to help migrant workers head back home safely. He also airlifted 177 stranded women from Kochi (Kerala) to Bhubaneswar (Odisha). He provided meals to 45,000 people at the beginning of April and even started a toll-free number to help the laborers, spending as many as 20 hours a day on the field. However, Sonu hasn't become the poster boy of charity just for his efforts during the tough times of COVID-19, but also for feeding and moving 28,000 people to safety before Cyclone Nisarga hit Mumbai.



King Khan

A Really Noble King!

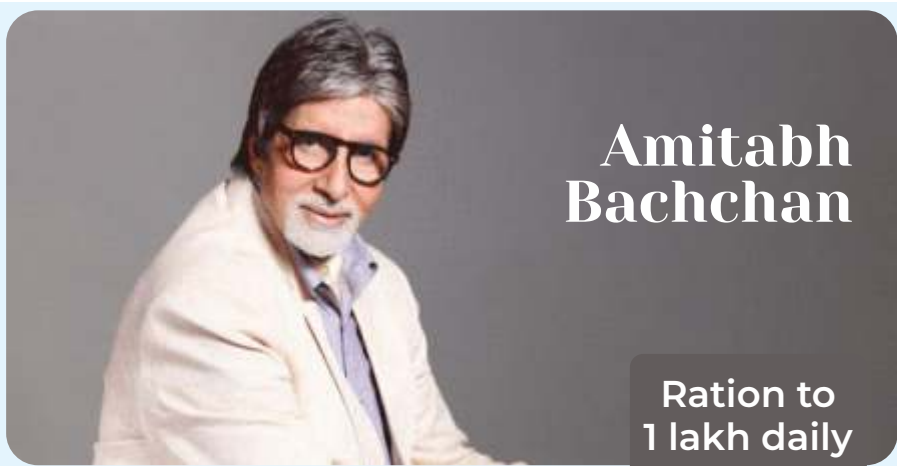
As India fights pandemic, Shah Rukh Khan has done his share by providing 25,000 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to medical teams across Maharashtra and lending his four-storey office as a quarantine site, equipped with essentials. He also donated to both the Maharashtra and West Bengal Chief Minister's Relief Fund, and committed contribution to the PM-CARES Fund. His Meer Foundation has collaborated with other NGOs to feed thousands of the stranded daily wage workers affected by the coronavirus crisis. But he won the most hearts by reuniting an orphaned child with his grandparents after the video of the toddler trying to wake up his deceased mother went viral.



“ I met Tom Suozzi in 2016, and noted his tremendous love for the Indian American community. I urge all my friends and fans in Long Island and Queens to support and vote for Congressman Suozzi in the Primary election on June 23. ”

Madalsa Sharma
Bollywood Actor





Amitabh Bachchan

Ration to 1 lakh daily wage workers of AIFEC

Just like every other industry, showbiz too has been adversely impacted by the pandemic outbreak. As workers struggled to make ends meet, Amitabh Bachchan joined hands with *Sony Pictures Network* and *Kalyan Jewellers* to pledge a monthly ration to support 100,000 daily wage earners of the All India Film Employees Confederation (AIFEC).

Always hailed for his generosity, Salman Khan did not disappoint during these difficult times either. He is social distancing at his Panvel farmhouse, but it's not just downtime for the actor. Apart from making his music videos, he has been helping villagers with food packets. He also donated 1 lakh bottles of sanitizers to the Mumbai Police, which won him accolades not just from the force, but also from Maharashtra's Chief Minister, Uddhav Thackeray.



Salman Khan

1 lakh hand sanitizers for the Mumbai Police



Priyanka Chopra Jonas

20,000 pairs of footwear for medical workers

Even though the *Quantico* star is settled in the US, Priyanka Chopra Jonas is doing her bit for India. She first donated \$100,000 to female heroes of coronavirus. Later, PeeCee donated 10,000 pairs of footwear to healthcare professionals in Los Angeles and then extended the same help to medical workers in Kerala, Haryana, Maharashtra and Karnataka. Priyanka also collaborated with a company to provide headphones to children to help

adapt to the new methods of online learning.



Akshay Kumar

PPE and smart watches to detect symptoms

The superstar has always made headlines for his patriotic acts. Not surprisingly, Akshay Kumar has been uber generous this time as well. Not only has he donated Rs 25 crore to the PM-CARES fund, but he also aided the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to procure PPE equipment, masks and rapid testing kits and thereafter, donated 1,000 smartwatches to the Mumbai Police and 500 to Nashik for detecting COVID symptoms.



Rakul Preet Singh

Feeding 200 families

When the families at a slum habitation near Rakul Preet Singh's home in Gurugram ran out of supplies, the actress came to their rescue. Along with her family and an NGO, she provided each person two meals a day that were cooked in her society complex. Every morning and evening, her father and staff members distributed the food while taking precautions.

Asia's largest slum, Dharavi, located in Mumbai, has become the epicenter of the pandemic. While many workers are sweating it out to look after the residents' needs, Ajay Devgn urged his fans to lend their support as well. The *Singham* actor has himself adopted 700 families in the locality. He is also sponsoring oxygen cylinders for 200 beds and two portable ventilators at the makeshift quarantine facility in the vicinity.



Ventilators and oxygen cylinders

Ajay Devgn



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The Budding Chefs



of Bollywood

Deepali Singh

Who knew that the lockdown would awaken the sleeping chef in a lot of us? From banana breads to sinful chocolate treats, our Bollywood brigade too seems to have been bitten by the cooking and baking bug. In all fairness, some of them certainly wouldn't qualify to enter a culinary competition, while others seem to have found their true calling! Here's a glimpse of what some of the actors have been up to in their kitchens during the lockdown...

Alia Bhatt

Yes, you have to take care of those sweet cravings but health is also important, *na*? Alia Bhatt seems to have found the middle path. While she can gorge on a sinful chocolate cake baked by her sister Shaheen, she also has the option of biting into a healthy grain-free paleo banana bread, that she made herself. Now, that's called having your cake and eating it too!



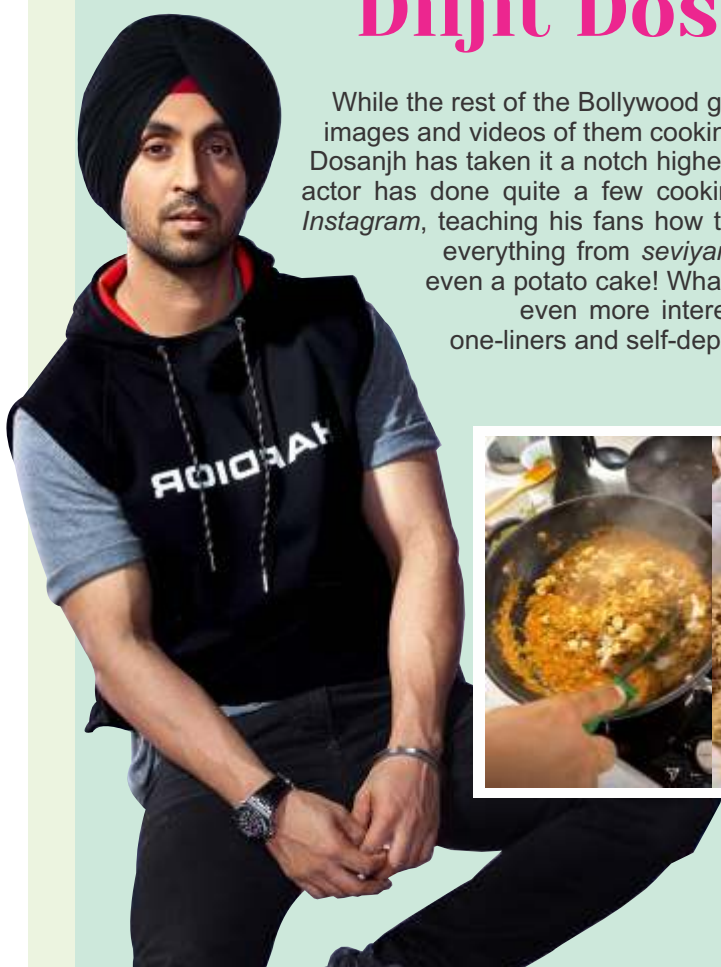
Kriti Sanon

When Kriti Sanon took cooking classes before shooting for *Raabta* in which she played a pastry chef, she probably had no idea the training would stand her in good stead during the lockdown. From chocolate coconut bites to Khow Suey to a beautiful chocolate tart that she baked for her mother on the occasion of Mother's Day, the actress is going all out to impress everyone with her skills in the kitchen.



Diljit Dosanjh

While the rest of the Bollywood gang is only sharing images and videos of them cooking and baking, Diljit Dosanjh has taken it a notch higher. The *Uda Punjab* actor has done quite a few cooking tutorials on his *Instagram*, teaching his fans how to prepare dishes - everything from *seviyan* to pancakes and even a potato cake! What makes the videos even more interesting are his witty one-liners and self-deprecating humour.



Malaika Arora

Malaika Arora has finally found time for brushing up on her culinary skills. The leggy lass likes to cook for her family whenever time permits and now, with ample time on her hand, she is experimenting with dishes she never made before. Recently, she shared a video of herself preparing Malabari veg stew, a recipe handed down to her by her mother. Though we couldn't smell the dish, from the looks of it, it must have turned out pretty yummy!



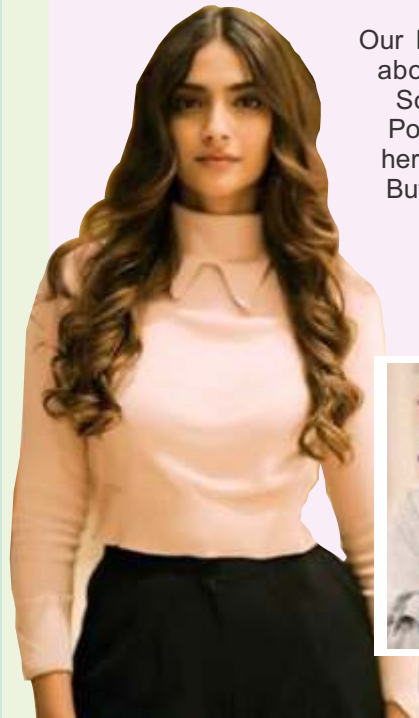
Janhvi Kapoor

For Sridevi's elder daughter Janhvi, the lockdown is all about spending time with family, especially doing little things to annoy sister Khushi. Janhvi seems to have taken to cooking and Khushi often ends up being the target to taste the end product. The young girl has so far given a thumbs-down to Janhvi's attempts at making carrot cake and banana with toffee sauce. Well, we at least appreciate the effort.



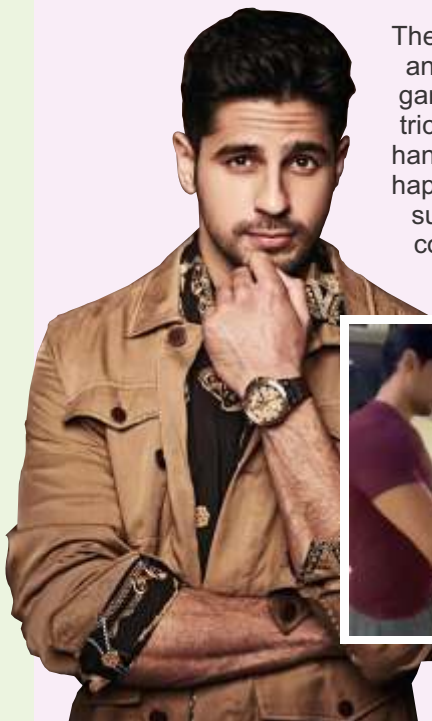
Sonam Kapoor Ahuja

Our lovely mademoiselle has never been shy about admitting she has a sweet tooth. Sonam's friendship with macaron queen Pooja Dhingra ensures that she always gets her share of cupcakes and other sweet treats. But, with the lockdown throwing things into a tizzy, the *PadMan* actress has taken to baking goodies on her own. Last we knew, she had perfected the chocolate walnut cake!



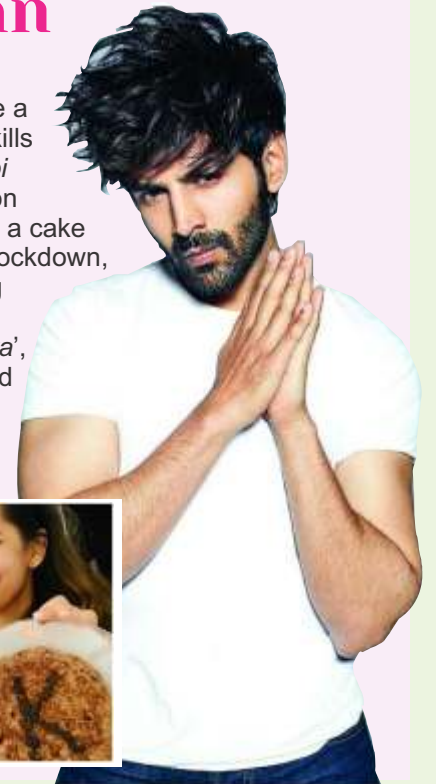
Sidharth Malhotra

There's always a first time in the kitchen and for Sid, the debut dish was butter garlic prawns. While prawns can be a little tricky to cook, especially when trying your hand at it for the first time, the actor was happy to announce that the result was successful. A good-looking guy who can cook as well? We'll take that!



Kartik Aaryan

Kartik Aaryan's recent social media images and videos show he is quite a funny guy. And while his culinary skills are pretty dubious, the *Luka Chuppi* actor knows how to turn the situation around. He tried his hand at baking a cake on his sister's birthday during the lockdown, except that it looked more like a big biscuit than a cake! '*Chota cake banane gaya, bada biscuit ban gaya*', he wrote below an image of him and his sister holding up the result for everyone to see. Well, it's the thought that counts after all!



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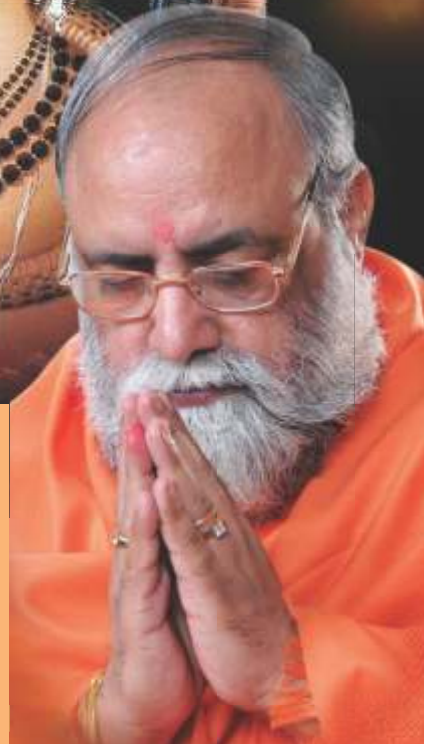
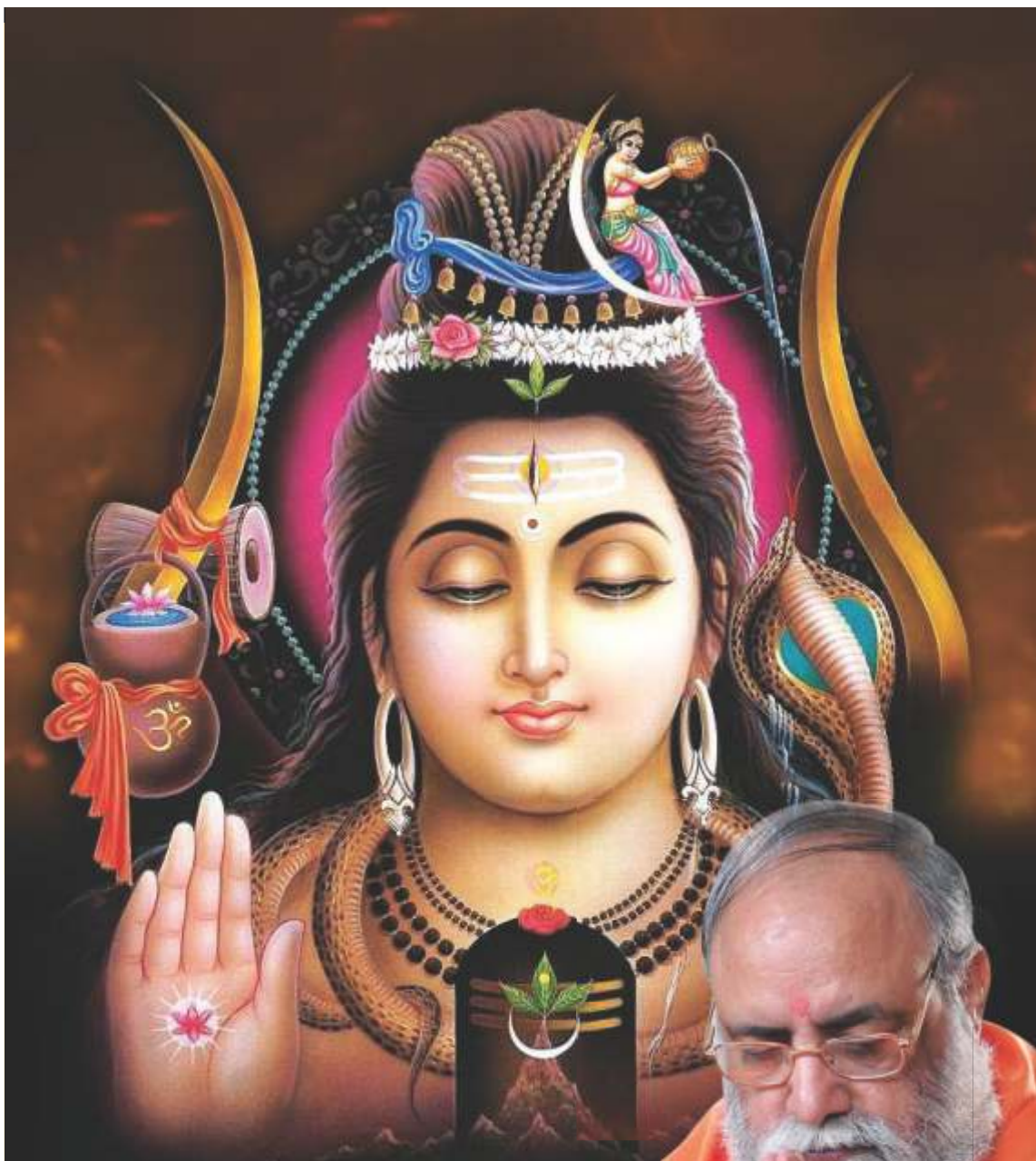
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Bolly-stars getting back to work mode

From a PSA ad to a music video and virtual auditions, these B-Town personalities have begun working of late



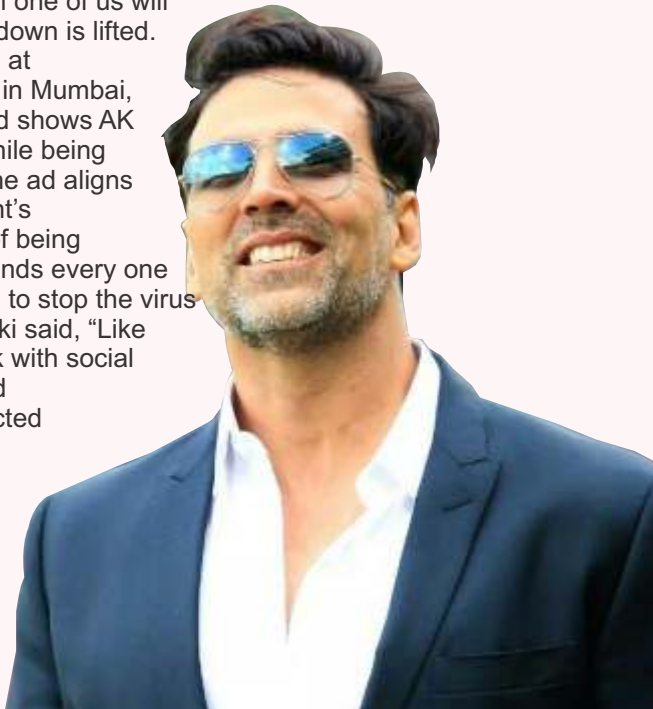
Dhaval Roy

Most Bollywood stars may be on a social media overdrive, doing household chores or exploring different talents to keep themselves occupied during the lockdown, but some others have been busy with projects. Sure, that sounds like an

anomaly during these times of social distancing! However, these personalities have found a way to be in work mode while following necessary precautions. Here's what they have been up to.

Akshay Kumar's COVID-19 awareness Ad

When the lockdown was announced in March, Khiladi Kumar shared a video wherein he earnestly advised people to stay indoors. Two months down the line, he features in a clip for the Health Ministry about the responsibilities each one of us will have when the lockdown is lifted. Directed by R. Balki at Kamalistan Studios in Mumbai, the public service ad shows AK returning to work while being mindful of safety. The ad aligns with the Government's recommendations of being self-reliant and reminds every one of the steps needed to stop the virus from spreading. Balki said, "Like getting back to work with social distancing, sanitized outdoor set, disinfected screen, masks. We got used to it in a few minutes. There was a minimal crew and very strict protocols."



Madhuri Dixit turns singer

The actress has taken to the mic in the past—reciting poetry with *Dhai Sham Rok Lai* (*Devdas*) and *Laila Majnu* (*Aaja Nach Le*), before singing a folk song *Rangi Saari Gulabi Chunariya* (*Gulaab Gang*).

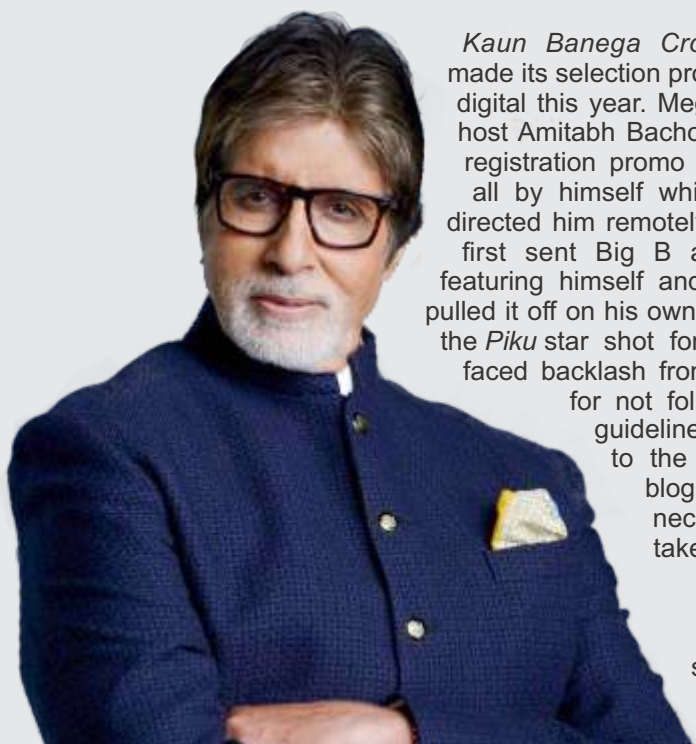


Now, during the lockdown, she has released her maiden non-film single called *Candle* which is about hope. The actress dropped a teaser on her birthday, 15th May and the song on 29th May.

The English track features her in a black outfit behind the mic with images as well as footage of deserted places and people affected by the pandemic. Apart for this, she also returns as the judge on *Dance Deewane 3* and has been judging virtual auditions for the same. As *Colors* gears up for the new season, dance hopefuls are uploading their entries on *VOOT*, adhering to social distancing and safety mandates. Mads shot the first promo at her home.

She reunites with filmmakers Shashank Khaitan and Tushar Kalita as well as host Arjun Bijlani for the latest edition.

Amitabh Bachchan starts shooting for KBC 12



Kaun Banega Crorepati has also made its selection process completely digital this year. Megastar and show host Amitabh Bachchan shot for the registration promo at his residence all by himself while Nitesh Tiwari directed him remotely. The filmmaker first sent Big B a scratch video featuring himself and the latter then pulled it off on his own. However, when the *Piku* star shot for the promo, he faced backlash from the audiences for not following lockdown guidelines. AB responded to the criticism on his blog by stating that necessary care was taken while shooting and that they wrapped up two days' work in a single day.

Salman Khan's two singles

Usually, fans are treated to Salman Khan's movie release on Eid-ul-Fitr every year. No films are hitting the screens due to the lockdown this year, but the actor didn't want to disappoint them and gave them a song, *Bhai Bhai* instead. The number is about brotherhood and sung by Salman and Ruhan Arshad. This is also Dabangg Khan's last project with long-time collaborators, music composer duo Sajid-Wajid, as the latter passed away a few days ago. But this isn't the only thing that has kept the actor busy. SK also released *Tere Bina* starring Jacqueline Fernandez, which he sang as well as directed while the actress handled lighting duties.



VOTE FOR TOM SUOZZI

Primary Election - Tuesday, June 23

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- The Indian American Voters Forum is pleased to endorse Congressman Tom Suozzi for the Primary on June 23.
- All of us - Friends of Tom Suozzi named below – urge each and every member of the Indian American community in the third congressional district of Queens, Nassau and Suffolk to vote for Congressman Tom Suozzi in the Primary on June 23.

Varinder K Bhalla

Chairman, Indian American Voters Forum

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Bollywood Stars' Birthday Celebrations in May

Thanks to the lockdown, their movies may have gone Over-The-Top, but their birthday celebrations certainly haven't. Here's a look at who did what in B-Town, as they turned a year older in May.

Anushka Sharma

1st May

One may not see the actress on the big screen at the moment, but she's keeping her fans entertained with her activities on social media. *Paatal Lok*, her latest outing as a producer, was a smash hit, making her birthday more special. Anushka did not celebrate her big day, but penned a poem wishing for all the sufferings in the country to end. Her hubby, cricketer Virat Kohli, shared an adorable picture of the two with a note that said, "You my love bring light into this world. And you light up my world every day. I love you." Now that's a perfect couple for you. Way to go, Virushka!



Madhuri Dixit

15th May

Bollywood's *dhak dhak girl* turned 53, but looks ageless with every passing day. The actress received many birthday wishes on social media from Shilpa Shetty, Manisha Koirala and her co-star from her breakthrough movie *Tezaab*, Anil Kapoor. On this special occasion, Madhuri shared the teaser for her debut non-film single called *Candle*, which she released later in the month. Mads will be seen in a *Netflix* series next, produced by Karan Johar. She's a superstar who never stops surprising her fans!



Vicky Kaushal

16th May

Bollywood heart-throb Vicky Kaushal turned 32 and his fans and co-stars ensured that his social media accounts were flooded with wishes. Vicky had a quiet birthday with video calls and virtual cake cutting with close friends and family. He thanked his fans on social media and even joked about how he feels like a king by not doing the dishes and dusting on his special day. His father Shaam Kaushal and brother Sunny Kaushal gave fans a treat by sharing his childhood pictures. His upcoming movies include *Sardar Udham Singh*, *Takht* and *Sam*.



Nawazuddin Siddiqui

19th May

The story of the most versatile actor in Bollywood today is awe-inspiring. Nawazuddin Siddiqui is a dependable actor who does justice to each role he helms, no matter how challenging it is. The actor turned 46 this year amidst chaos. From traveling during the pandemic to receiving a divorce notice from his wife Aaliya Siddiqui, the year 2020 seems to be a personally tough for the talented actor. Fans wished him with clips and images from some of his most memorable characters in movies such as *Talaash*, *Maanji: The Mountain Man*, *Gangs of Wasseypur* and the popular *Netflix* series *Sacred Games*.



Karan Johar

25th May

Karan Johar, one of the biggest filmmakers in Bollywood today, is also a social butterfly who loves partying with his favorite people. Karan welcomed his 48th birthday with a low-key celebration by cutting a K-shaped cake with his mother Hiroo Johar and children Yash and Roohi. The filmmaker also decided to color his gray hair on his big day. Amidst numerous wishes, the best one came from his closest friend, designer Manish Malhotra, who gathered all his friends and family for a video message.



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