

### COMEDY ON THE WAY

The trailer of cross-cultural film *Kudi Haryane Val Di* in Punjabi and *Chori Haryane Aali* in Haryanvi was launched in Mumbai by the lead stars of the film, Ammy Virk and Sonam Bajwa.



# Tribune Life Style

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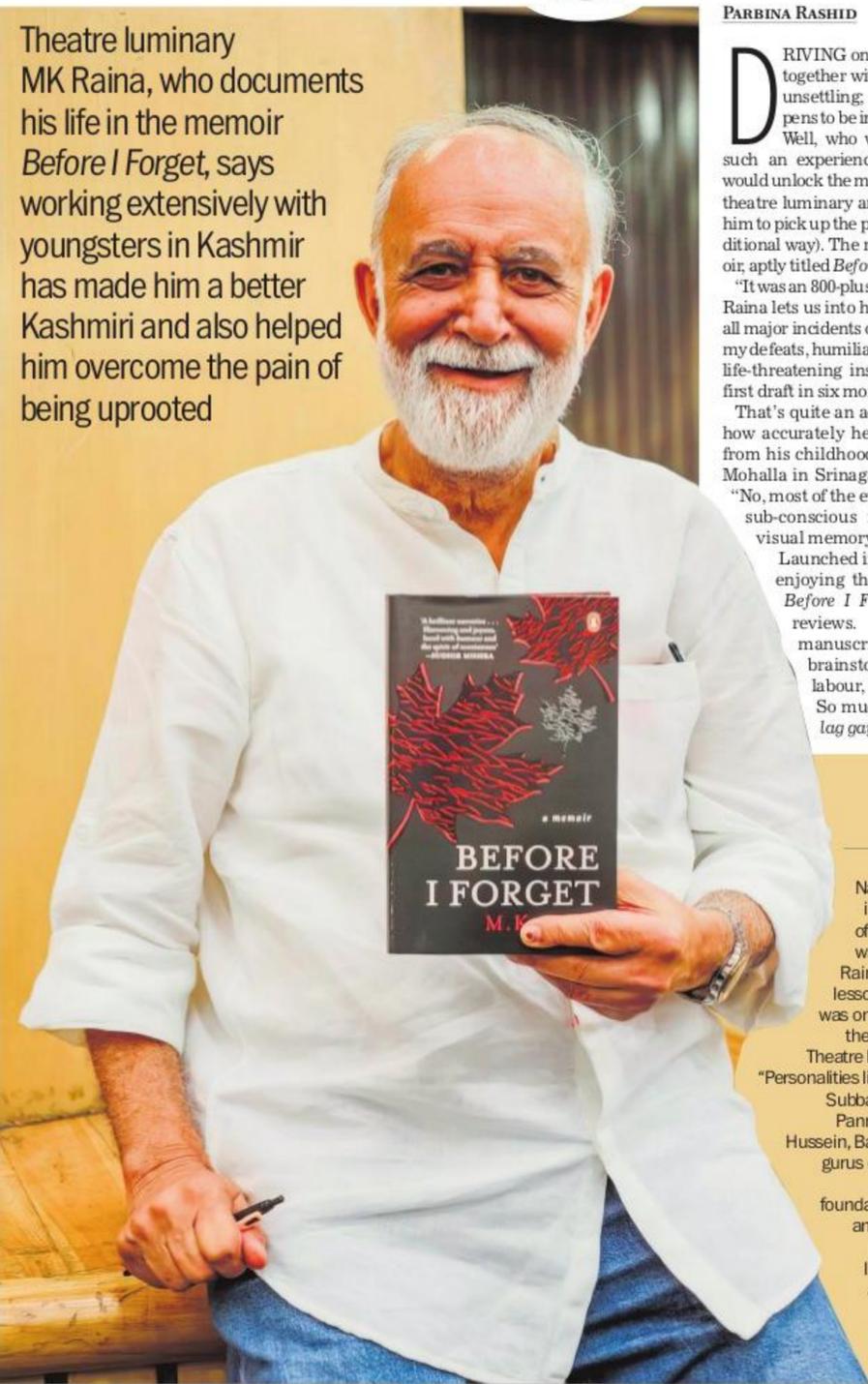
### Tough task

Sonakshi Sinha, who has also stepped into the world of business with her nail label, has said being an entrepreneur is a bit more daunting as it doesn't come 'naturally to her'.



# Unforgettable!

Theatre luminary MK Raina, who documents his life in the memoir *Before I Forget*, says working extensively with youngsters in Kashmir has made him a better Kashmiri and also helped him overcome the pain of being uprooted



PARBINA RASHID

**D**RIVING on an empty road for miles together with no soul in sight can be unsettling; more so if the road happens to be in a buzzing city like Noida. Well, who would have thought that such an experience during the pandemic would unlock the memory bank of MK Raina, theatre luminary and film actor, and induce him to pick up the pen (yes, he prefers the traditional way). The result — a 409-page memoir, aptly titled *Before I Forget*.

"It was an 800-plus page book to begin with," Raina lets us into his journey. "I wrote about all major incidents of my life — my struggles, my defeats, humiliations, triumphs and some life-threatening instances. I completed the first draft in six months."

That's quite an achievement considering how accurately he recounts his life, right from his childhood in Sheetal Nath Sathu Mohalla in Srinagar. Did he keep a diary? "No, most of the events are culled from the sub-conscious mind. I have a strong visual memory," he beams.

Launched in Delhi recently, Raina is enjoying the fruit of his labour, as *Before I Forget* is garnering rave reviews. To prune an 800-page manuscript into half took some brainstorming and serious labour, but the journey was fun. So much so that *mujhe chaska lag gaya likhne ka* (I got addicted

to writing), he reveals. This bit of information would surely come as a relief to his friends and well-wishers, who have been encouraging him to share his vast experiences as a theatre activist and actor in the form of a book. "I had dodged them till now, but in my head I always knew that it was a matter of time. I am a storyteller and have so many experiences to share," he tells us.

Did the trigger point have anything to do with the film, *The Kashmir Files*, considering that he too has been a victim of terrorism in the Valley and his family was forced to relocate to Jammu when the mass exodus of Kashmir Pandits took place during the early '90s? The reaction is a throaty laughter. "I fell asleep twice while watching that movie. Would you believe it? It bored me. There was no depth, no shades, only propaganda. And, it didn't start any dialogue on this tragedy, it just pleased the right wing."

As he talks about the right, we can't help but ask — does it make him a leftist? "Not really, I have never been a member of any political party. My association with Safdar Hashmi may have given people the impression that I am a leftist, but no, I choose my own path," he says.

Political leaning is one thing, but the pain of loss and longing has been a part of his being. Glimpses emerge as he writes, "For fear of being labelled as communal, I used to keep quiet and suffer our tragedy in silence."

Elaborating how in Mumbai some old friends had once accused him of 'behaving like a communal-minded person', he says, "It hurt me deeply because all these years, all I had owned was my belief in a multi-cultural, multi-religious India for which I had joined all the movements and struggles that were in support of communal harmony. I have grown up in a syncretic culture. And as a theatre person, I can't take sides, I can't say that my tragedy is the only tragedy."

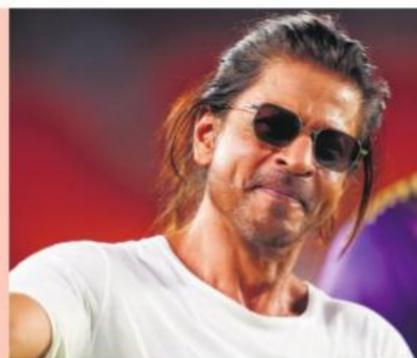
Has writing it all down helped him heal? "Working in Kashmir has helped me. This book is just documenting my healing process. Meeting Kashmiri youngsters, folk artistes and people from all walks of life has enriched me. I think I am a better Kashmiri now."

But what about Kashmir, is it any better that what it was once? Raina, who has been visiting his hometown not to reclaim his home but his legacy and heritage, says, "There are cosmetic changes, but the core remains more or less the same. It's just that people don't talk anymore. They simply have become indifferent."

Seems it's time for another *Badshah Lear*. The play, which he produced with the dwindling *Bhand* community of Kashmir, transcended the caste and class divide, and united his audience to feel the pathos of the Kashmir situation. Before we all forget!

### DIGNITY OF LABOUR

MK Raina joined the National School of Drama in 1967, when the doyen of Indian theatre, E Alkazi, was at the helm of affairs. Raina recalls one of the first lessons he learnt from Alkazi was on the dignity of labour, as they built up the Meghdoot Theatre brick by brick. He writes, "Personalities like Shivam Karanth, K V Subbanna, Kovalam Narayan Panniker, Giriraj Kishore, MF Hussein, Bala Saraswati — the great gurus of the Indian performing streams — laid in us the foundations for understanding and decoding the multiple plural traditions that are India's cultural treasures and infusing in students the desire to build modern Indian theatre in all its many regions."



## Shining stars

Deepika tops IMDb's 100 Most Viewed Indian Stars, SRK is second

Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone, who will be soon seen in *Singham Again* and *Kalki 2898 AD*, has topped the IMDb list of Top 100 Most Viewed Indian Stars of the Last Decade. Following her is the actor opposite whom she made her debut in *Om Shanti Om*, Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan. This list of all top Indian stars is determined by the actual page views of the more than 250 million monthly visitors to IMDb worldwide.

Deepika said, "I'm deeply grateful to be included in a list that captures the sentiment of a global audience. This recognition is truly humbling." The third spot on the list is occupied by Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. Alia Bhatt is on the fourth spot followed by the late actor Irrfan Khan.

Aamir Khan and Salman Khan, too find a place in the top 10. While Aamir is at number six, Salman holds the eighth spot, separated by the late actor Sushant Singh Rajput at number seven.

The list also includes Hrithik Roshan, Akshay Kumar, Katrina Kaif, Amitabh Bachchan, Samantha Ruth Prabhu, Kareena Kapoor, Nayanthara, Ajay Devgn, Triptii Dimri and others. The list has actors from the Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada film industries.

Kamal Haasan is at number 54. — IANS



## Honour board

Rani Mukerji feted with Movified Best Actor Award for *Mrs Chatterjee Vs Norway*

Rani Mukerji has been awarded the Movified Best Actor Award in the Female Category. The actress was honoured for her work in the critically acclaimed film *Mrs Chatterjee Vs Norway*. In the film, inspired by true events, Rani essayed the role of a mother, who fought the legal system of Norway over the custody of her child.

Rani expressed gratitude towards Movified and its owner Neeketa Singh. She said, "Thank you Movified, for honouring me with the Best Actor Female Award for *Mrs Chatterjee Vs Norway*. I am so grateful for this recognition and would like to thank my director Ashima Chibber, my producers Nikkhil Advani, Monisha Advani, Madhu Bhojwani, everyone at Zee Studios, and Emmay Entertainment. My wonderful co-stars from Tallinn, Bengal and Mumbai, the Estonian crew, and all the technicians."

The actress also shared that *Mrs Chatterjee Vs Norway* held a very special place in her filmography. — IANS



## Haryanvi flavour

DAKS Music's latest video *Bada Saang*, a Haryanvi song written by Rajesh Majaria, and sung by Raj Marwar and Anjali, was launched in Mohali on May 28. Co-founder of the company Kulbir Ahlawat stars in the music video, along with Nandani Sharma. It has been directed by Aman Jaji.

When the cast was asked about

the inadvertent promotion of gun and drugs through songs nowadays, Kulbir replied, "Our song is quite different; the female lead, in fact, asks Kulbir's character to stay away from them. Nandani nods, "We hope our message reaches out to the audience. Although I do not understand Haryanvi well, I love to work in the industry. I have

previously done a few projects with the same music company."

This was the first song shot abroad by them. The crew worked in Armenia for three-four days, and the whole process took about a month's time. For Kulbir Ahlawat, this was his first on screen, but definitely not the last!

— Bhanuni Saini & Divij Sharma

## Melody man

Aparshakti Khurana teams up with Savi Kahlon for *Zaroor*

Actor Aparshakti Khurana, who has teamed up with singer Savi Kahlon for the new love ballad *Zaroor*, has shared how the track allowed him to explore new dimensions as an artiste. *Zaroor* is the soulful ballad, penned and composed by Savi and backed by the soothing vocals of Aparshakti. — IANS

