

TAMIL FILMS

Rahman receives Yesudas Award



Internationally famous music director A.R. Rahman was presented with the Seventh Yesudas Award by Swaralaya in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. The presentation ceremony which was held at the Nishagandhi open-air auditorium was attended by eminent cultural figures of Malayalam.

The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 1 lakh, a citation and a statuette designed by famous sculptor, Kanayi Kunhiraman. Yesudas, speaking on the occasion, appreciated the multiple talents of Rahman and acknowledged him as the best of his times.

Karan to speak Madurai lingo



When Kamal Haasan, the shrewd judge of men and matters singles out a performer to be special, he or she will certainly be.

Karan, whom he gave a big break in *Nammavar*, certainly is. After hovering in the middle range and out of it too, Karan came back strongly as a hero with *Kokki*.

It was a movie that gave him a new perspective and now Karan is ready to challenge new frontiers of excellence.

Jyothika ups the ante



Jyothika has again underlined what a fine performer she is, with her remarkable performance in *Pachai Kili Muthucharam*. In this delectable show as Geetha, a girl with good and dangerous things in her, she has now

upped the ante for her next release *Mozhi*. *Mozhi*, as per the word going around town, will be the fitting finale to her acting career. Domestic compulsions and marital bliss will keep her away from acting. *Mozhi* features her as a mute girl, with sensitivity. If Geetha has to tinge of black in the characterisation, then the *Mozhi* girl should be the contrast — all white.

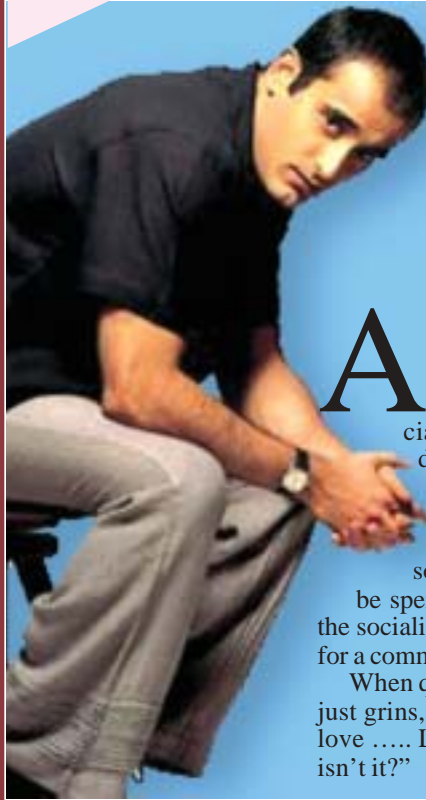
Short duration results in massive show count for *Eklavya*



New release *Eklavya — The Royal Guard* is just 100 minutes in duration and that seems to have only worked in the favour of the producer, distributors and the exhibitors. With no biggie apart from *Guru* running at multiplexes and *Traffic Signal* and *Black Friday* being the only other notable films in the fray, multiplex screens are in extreme shortage of Hindi film software.

Eklavya's duration reading just about 100 minutes has only been a boon as prominent multiplexes are bringing the film at as many as 16-18-20 shows a day, even though the print count is relatively low.

Says the GM of a leading multiplex chain, "The film is carrying excellent pre-release reports hence a good start is inevitable. Moreover, since there is zero competition for a biggie like this and our screens are anyway looking at something worthwhile to play on this weekend, we are bringing *Eklavya* at a dozen and a half shows a day."



How Akshaye Khanna spent his Valentine's Day!

Akshaye is known to be an introvert when it comes to his personal space. Even when there was speculation in the media about him dating a rich socialite from New York, Akshaye neither denied nor confirmed it.

Though Akshaye spent his Valentine's Day shooting for Abbas-Mastan's *RACE* in South Africa, sources close to him say that Akshaye will be spending a belated Valentine in Goa when the socialite will be coming down from New York for a common friend's wedding.

When quizzed about Valentine's Day, Akshaye just grins. "Yeah I totally believe in the power of love..... Love is what makes the world go round isn't it?"

Shabana having fun with youngsters



Amid the huge youthful ensemble of the eagerly awaited romantic comedy, *Honeymoon Travels...*, the veteran Shabana Azmi stands out as the only senior actor who seems to be having as much fun as the youngsters! "It's a special film because my kids Farhan Akhtar and Zoya Akhtar have put it together," she smiles.

"It's a remarkably heart-warming film. You will walk out with a smile. During the 45-day shoot in Goa everyone had a ball.

"The kids were so professional and organised. I'm extremely proud of them." Shabana is extremely impressed with Director Reema Kagti.

Bollywood

SRK video on mobile an Asian first

Hungama Mobile in association with T-Series launched the music video of *Kar le kar le koi dhamaal*, the KBC track on February 9. This is an Asian first and will be available for download via sms even before it is available in music stores. The formal launch took place at a suburban restaurant in the presence of Shah Rukh Khan, Bhushan Kumar of T-Series, Neeraj Roy of Hungama and others. With this, several add-on features including ring tones and polytones will be available.

Music Today has had a series of musical events last week. In association with Hotel Taj president, they launched *Rooh - Songs From The Heart* by Geetika on February 7. Ustad Zakir Hussain was the chief guest.

Another launch on February 8 was of the album *Prarthana - The Complete Prayer*, a series of 10 albums by Pandit Shivkumar Sharma and Pandit Hariprasad Chaurasia. This was in association with The Orchid.

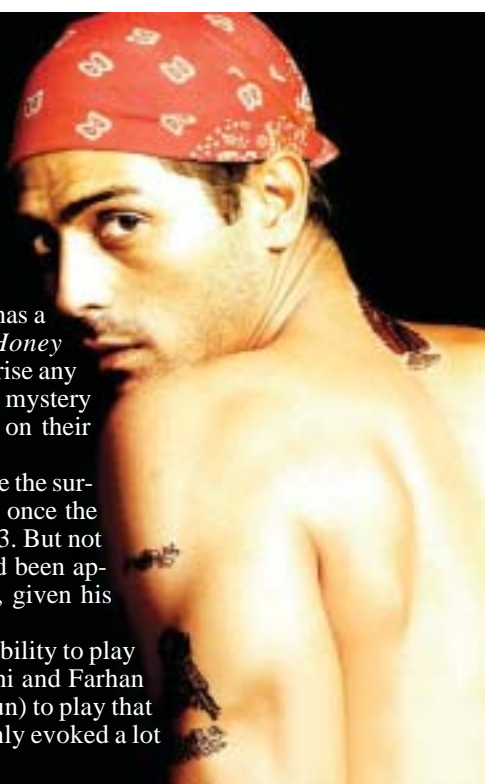
On February 9, two concerts were held under the label of Mystic Soundscapes at Hotel Taj Land's End featuring Amaan and Ayaan Ali Khan and Rakesh Chaurasia. Javed Akhtar was the chief guest.

Arjun plays a character offered first to John

The fact that Arjun Rampal has a surprise appearance in *Honeymoon Travels*, is not a surprise any more. In fact, he plays the mystery biker who follows the six couples on their honeymoon to Goa.

Why he's doing that might well be the surprise of the film, which will be out once the film hits the cinemas on February 23. But not many know that John Abraham had been approached initially to play that role, given his affinity for bikes.

But when John expressed his inability to play the part, producers Ritesh Sidhwani and Farhan Akhtar got their Jasjit of Don (Arjun) to play that special character, which has suddenly evoked a lot of curiosity!



Britney gone bald

After it was reported that Britney Spears spent one day in rehab earlier in the week, the pop star has shocked fans again by shaving her head.

Spears, 25, reportedly followed the head-shaving incident by getting a tattoo. It's been a whirlwind week for the singer.

The following day, as first reported by news show *Extra*, Spears checked into a rehab facility in Antigua, only to check herself out 24 hours later.

Speculation and rumours have run rampant regarding the star's lifestyle since splitting from Kevin Federline in November of last year.

Spears' reported hard-partying ways immediately following her split from Federline were well-documented, as was her concurrent—and rumoured short-lived—friendship with Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan, who has since entered rehab in California.

Hollywood

Movie world with Arthur Wamanan and Warren Balthazaar

Eckhart to play Two Face in Batman sequel



Aron Eckhart is in final negotiations to play Harvey Dent/Two-Face in *The Dark Knight*, the sequel to *Batman Begins*.

In *Batman* lore, Dent is the district attorney of Gotham City and an ally of Batman. After half his face is disfigured by acid, Dent becomes the insane crime boss known as Two-Face, who chooses to do good or evil by flipping a coin. Tommy Lee Jones played the character in 1995's *Batman Forever*.

Smith leaves everything to son

Anna Nicole Smith's will was released last week by a Florida court, which revealed she left everything to her son Daniel, who died in September. Smith's companion, Howard K. Stern, is named as the executor of her estate.

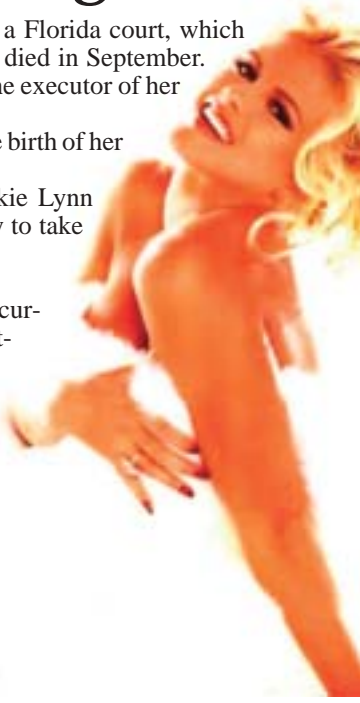
The will was written in 2001 and was not updated after the birth of her daughter, Dannielynn Hope, last year.

According to the document, which was signed by Vickie Lynn Marshall—Smith's real name—Stern is given full authority to take care of assets and property.

The will does not say where Smith wished to be buried. Stern and Smith's estranged mother, Virgie Arthur, are currently locked in a bitter court battle over where her final resting place will be.

Stern has been ordered to appear in person in a Florida courtroom to offer testimony regarding where Smith should be buried.

His attorney, Krista Barth, had tried to convince Judge Larry Seidlin to allow him to testify from the Bahamas by phone, claiming he could not leave Dannielynn.



Radcliffe hopes for a Harry Potter death

Harry Potter star Daniel Radcliffe can't wait to get his hands on J.K. Rowling's final book in the fantasy series—and he hopes his character has been killed off.

Rowling has finished *Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows* and it is due to hit bookstores on July 21.

Radcliffe, who has so far played Potter in four film adaptations and has signed to appear in the final three, wants to say goodbye to the franchise in style—with a dramatic death.

He says, "I sort of hope I'll die in it. I think that's the only way Jo can end it and I've a melodramatic yearning for a death scene."

Diaz moves on with Blood Diamond star

Charlie's Angels star Cameron Diaz has moved on from her split with Justin Timberlake and was seen getting cozy with *Blood Diamond* star Djimon Hounsou in Hollywood.

Diaz, 34, and Hounsou, 42, was seen dancing at Hollywood hot spot Hyde last week to Michael Jackson's *Burn This Disco Out* and Gnarl Barkley's version of *Gone Daddy Gone*.

An eyewitness told *People* magazine, "It looked like the perfect post-Valentine's Day date. They were totally vibing each other, lip-on-lip action."

Richie charged for DUI

Nicole Richie was charged with a misdemeanor for driving under the influence (DUI) by the Los Angeles district attorney Friday.

Richie was arrested before on December 11 after driving the wrong way on a Los Angeles highway.

Authorities found her stopped in a car pool lane and she subsequently failed a field sobriety test.

Because of a prior DUI conviction in 2003, according to California law, Richie faces mandatory jail time of 90 days and up to one year in prison if convicted of a second DUI.



Cage in *The Ghost Rider*

Nicholas Cage plays a former motor cycle stunt man who, in order to secure the safety of his true love (Eva Mendes), makes a deal with the devil.

Wes Bentley, Sam Elliott and Peter Fonda co-star in the PG-13 film. Long ago, superstar motor cycle stunt rider Johnny Blaze (Cage) made a deal with the devil to protect the ones he loved

most: his father and his childhood sweetheart, Roxanne.

Now, the Devil has come for his due. By day, Johnny is a die-hard stunt rider—but at night in the presence of evil, he becomes *The Ghost Rider*, a bounty hunter of rogue demons. Forced to do the Devil's bidding, Johnny is determined to confront his fate and use his curse and powers to defend the innocent.



Longoria all set for marriage

Eva Longoria and Tony Parker will marry in a \$488,000 French luxury chateau—according to press reports.

Longoria and her basketball fiancé are to wed in Paris this July, but guests including the actress' *Desperate Housewives* cast mates—Teri Hatcher, Marcia Cross, Felicity Huffman and Nicolette Sheridan—are being kept in the dark about where the actual event will be held.

However, the pair will wed in the 17th Century Chateau de Chantilly just north of Paris.

