

'INDIAN TV HAS LOST IT'



It's beautiful the way the British revere royalty. When Prince William announced his engagement, the House of Commons forgot their differences and cheered. I doubt if our Parliament would react the same way to Rahul Gandhi's impending marriage.

Says filmmaker Shekhar Kapur who will flag off his first online talent show with AR Rahman as his co-judge

Roshmila Bhattacharya

roshmila.bhattacharya@hindustanimes.com

He loved his job as a judge on India's Got Talent, and is now planning to produce an online talent show that he will co-judge with AR Rahman. "It should start in about two months. We're just trying to get the technology in line. We tried once, about half a million people called in, and the server crashed. This time we are expecting at least a million and we don't want the same thing happening again," Kapur chuckles.

Doesn't he plan to return to TV? "Indian TV has lost it. Why would they pay Rs 2.5 crore to that American actor — what's her name? — Pamela Anderson to sweep the floor during a three-day stay in the Bigg Boss House when they could use the money for something more creative?" he grouches.

Spiritual quest

Meanwhile, tomorrow, Kapur is all set to launch a set of four DVDs of his conversations with his spiritual guru on love, miracles, education and life for the Isha Foundation. He says that he met the Sadguru eight years ago, then lost touch, but connected again three years ago. He has always found that being in his ashram has enhanced his creativity.

"The idea is to keep these conversations simple so the common man can understand," he points out, adding that while the spiritual journey is about finding peace, it is full of angst and turmoil.

He adds, "Stress increases



AR Rahman

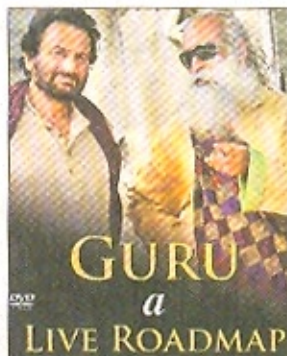
when you try to avoid it since it comes from within and not the outside world. We are not providing answers, but asking the right questions that can point you in the right direction. These conversations don't promise peace but they could bring about understanding. If you want peace, then pop a sleeping pill."

Kapur's next film, Paani, starts shooting in February-March 2011. Toplining Hrithik Roshan, it touches on the water problem and how recurring wastage can lead to water wars in the future.

"Again, as a filmmaker, I don't promise to solve the problem; I aspire only to create awareness," he says.

Rahman will be composing the music of Paani and will also collaborate with him in a media company to create mobile content.

The Last Full Measure, he admits, is not happening and neither is The Long Walk To Freedom, as long as Nelson Mandela is on this planet because "his story is still going on." But Kapur would like to make a film on Buddha after Paani "if no one makes it before that"



And what about the third film in the Elizabeth series? "I'm waiting till Kate Blanchett grows older," Kapur laughs.

Quiz him on the royal wedding next year and he says it will help take the British minds off their problems. "It's beautiful the way they revere royalty. When Prince William announced his engagement, the House of Commons forgot their differences and cheered. I doubt if our Parliament would react the same way to Rahul Gandhi's impending marriage," he points out.

And Kapur's take on the future queen, Kate Middleton? "She's sexy!"