

Bachchan takes on Ramadoss: bring law to stop alcohol scenes

Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan has appealed to Health Minister Anbumani Ramadoss to enact a law that would ban alcohol drinking scenes in films, in a strictly tongue-in-cheek entry on his blog.

"I shield myself behind the pages of our revered constitution and law and the censor board. Bring in a law to ban such participation and we shall follow it diligently Mr. Minister," Bachchan has written in his blog.

Asking for "mercy on professional actors", the mega star said they do not promote alcohol.

"We fake it on screen. Diluted tea, honeyed water, an aerated drink, soda watered to match the colour of champagne. That's what we are actually drinking on set to simulate the whisky.

"Our intoxication, Minister, is in the credibility we bring to a drunken scene without being literally drunk, not to propagate alcoholism," he explained in his entry made from his London hotel room.

"Have mercy on us, sire, we are but professional actors enacting stories."

Bachchan wrote: "You and your merry brethren, I have heard, allegedly (smart word to keep defamation at bay) enact similar stories when you seek admission every five years into the 'Large O' or to be more precise the 'Large Half O'!" The Large O refers to India's circular parliament building.

"I believe, Honoured Excellency, there is great respectability accorded to what I gather from sources (another smart word to keep defamation at even greater bay) to be, 'The Liquor Lobby', a body of distinguished 'hala ites' that, on the issuance of a licence to manufacture liquor, make gracious contribution to government coffers! Official, of course! Of course, official!!

"Did I notice a blushed tinge on your 'healthy' facial skin!"

After targeting film stars over smoking scenes, Ramadoss had Tuesday expressed his reservations against drinking scenes in films and appealed to film stars not to promote alcohol advertisements - direct or surrogate.

"I appeal to all of them not to promote alcohol. Alcohol cannot be justified as a stress reliever as portrayed in films. Liquor has become a subject of fun and humour in movies,' he had said after unveiling the Alcohol Atlas of India.

The minister, however, had not named any actor.

Bachchan wrote: "You have not named me, Honoured Sir, on this factor. It is perhaps the general knowledge amongst most, that I do not consume alcohol, nor smoke, nor eat meat, nor drink tea or coffee, nor Coke or Pepsi, nor paan or paan masala, nor Indian sweets or chocolate, nor cake nor pastry and recently no rice. I am grateful for this mercy.

"But I have been named on your no-smoking campaign, along with my colleague the Great King Shah Rukh Khan.

"I applaud your concern, Sir, and applaud the choice of your example, in my dear friend and colleague, the other true King of Cinema, Rajnikanth. But Honoured Sir could we perhaps dare to inquire whether you, being in governance have considered first, to ban this dreaded habit from all government servants in the country?"

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