

Bollywood presents summer of comedies

Move over romantic sagas. It's time to take a break, action flicks. Made-in-Bollywood comic capers like "Bhoothnath" and "Don Muthuswami" are expected to give respite in the sweltering summer ahead.

Comedy will be the genre of choice for the [Mumbai](#) studio-based Hindi filmdom that is suffering from short supply of enough bankable stars who can make typical Bollywood potboilers work at box office.

As the mercury scales new highs, old-timers, newcomers and even child artists will be pressed into service to tickle audiences' funny bone and get crowds into the cool confines of movie halls.

"Most Bollywood superstars have become too choosy and at the same time are tied-up in multi-film contracts with corporate houses. This leaves small and medium-size filmmakers with no choice but to go for character actors who have proved to be box-office draws in comedy films," say trade observers.

The month's first offering - 'Mr. White Mr. Black' - itself is a comic caper though it failed to get the desired response from the critics as well as the audiences. The film starring Suniel Shetty and Arshad Warsi has been dismissed as crass and a mash of jaded jokes.

The trade, however, is looking forward to upcoming "Bhoothnath" that will feature Amitabh Bachchan as a ghost who along with child actor Aman Siddique paints the town red. The film is appropriately timed to coincide with the start of summer vacations across the country. Juhi Chawla and Shah Rukh Khan will also be seen in the film.

A unique storyline, great star cast and publicity blitz accompanying the release of "Bhoothnath" are not the only pluses going for the film. The concept itself is a sure shot success.

It is now well established that children are the most favoured segment for both advertisers as well as entertainers given their pivotal role in deciding consumption patterns of families. In addition, children's comedy films are known to do very well at box-office.

And this perhaps explains why the month of May will also witness the release of animated film "Ghatothkach" that comes on the heels of success of Shemaroo's "Bal Ganesh".

"Ghatothkach" is a feature-length animated Bollywood musical that promises to be a magical treat. The movie will be released in seven languages which, according to its makers, is the biggest ever for any animation film in India. To ensure animation quality as per world standards, best talents from India, US, Philippines and Canada have been utilised to make this movie.

The movie is a co-production between Shemaroo Entertainment and Sun Animatics. It is directed by renowned Singeetam Srinivasa Rao, who has earlier directed internationally acclaimed films like "Pushpak", "Appu Raja" and "Son of Alladin", amongst many.

Child artists will also be seen at work in "Hari Puttar - A Comedy of Terrors" that stars Sarika and Jackie Shroff. Unlike "Bhoothnath" and "Ghatothkach", the film will not rely on special effects or

magic to warm hearts of both children and their parents.

Besides Amitabh, another industry old-timer who will be seen in a comic avatar this month is Mithun Chakraborty in "Don Muthuswami". Though the film sounds suspiciously similar to Sanjay Dutt's "Munnabhai M.B.B.S.", Mithun has a strong fan following in certain circuits that make the film a significant release.

"Dhoom Dhadaka" starring Anupam Kher, Satish Shah, Satish Kaushik, Gulshan Grover, and Rakhi Sawant, among others, and "Hastey-Hastey", starring Jimmy Shergill and Rajpal Yadav are among the other releases that will hope to make people laugh and the box-office tickle even as the sun shines bright.

By Priyanka Khanna (© IANS / India eNews)