

Bollywood singers dominate Kannada film music

After making a mark in Bollywood, Hindi film singers like Sonu Nigam, Shreya Ghoshal and Udit Narayan have shifted their focus to the south and are in great demand in the Kannada film industry.

While Udit has been singing for Kannada films for the past seven years, Sonu is the highest paid playback singer in these movies, charging around Rs.200,000 per song. As far as Shreya is concerned, Kannada music directors find it extremely difficult to get her dates.

The music directors are prepared to wait for months to get Sonu to sing a song in the film. His song 'Anisuthide' in the blockbuster 'Mungaru Male', 'Ninidale' in another hit film 'Milana' and 'Minchaagi neenu baralu' in 'Gaalipata' were not only hugely popular but contributed to the success of the films.

Another well-known Bollywood singer Kunal Ganjawala says Karnataka is his second home. 'Ever since I rendered my first Kannada song, I have been receiving a lot of encouragement from my fans in Karnataka,' said Kunal.

Kunal became popular after his first Kannada song 'Neene neene' in the Puneet Raj Kumar-starrer 'Aakash' became a huge hit.

'Though I got a break in Hindi films as a play back singer, I have to say that Karnataka people have been highly supportive of me. I have sung many songs in Kannada, which have been liked by the audience. My song 'Neene Neene' is still a popular number and I have a large number of fans in Karnataka,' said Kunal.

Nothing can illustrate the domination of Bollywood singers in the Kannada film music scene better than the number of trips the state's music directors make to [Mumbai](#) to record the songs.

However, the dominance of Bollywood singers in Kannada films has not been much liked by some music directors, who feel that the quality of Kannada songs will go down in the process.

While composers like Mano Murthy, Hari Krishna and Guru Kiran invariably use Bollywood singers, there are those like V. Manohar, who prefer local talent.

Noted music director Hamsalekha, who also uses Bollywood singers, feels that over-emphasizing the importance of Hindi film singers may not be good for the cause of Kannada films.

He said: 'I use them only when a song requires a different voice. I have tried to give prominence to local talent.'

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