

Media should not indulge in loose talk: Deepika Padukone

'Om Shanti Om' girl Deepika Padukone is annoyed with the press for publishing stories about her romantic link-ups, saying they will dent her reputation and cause future embarrassment.

'The media needs to be a little restrained. I am a simple girl and from a respectable family. And loose talk about me harms my reputation,' Deepika, who will be seen in 'Chandni Chowk to China', told IANS in an interview.

'One day, like any other girl, I intend to settle down and have children. How would those write-ups look at that time? I'm so glad I've found a man who comes from the same space and understands the pitfalls of sensational journalism.'

Deepika, who was apparently seeing cricketer Yuvraj Singh at one time, is now reportedly set to tie the knot with Ranbir Kapoor.

Ask her why she and beau Ranbir went public about their relationship, Deepika said: 'Because this is the first time I've actually and truly fallen in love. Being in love is the loveliest feeling. When two people are getting close they need time to understand one another.'

Both of them will be seen together for the first time on screen in 'Bachna Ae Haseeno'.

Excerpts from an interview:

Q: Post 'Om Shanti Om' (OSO) how has your life changed?

A: All this is very new for me. My father (bandminton champ Prakash Padukone) was also a celebrity, but we were never exposed to media coverage. Before I went into the modelling profession, I did go into my dad's profession - it was the expected thing. I played badminton at the national level. But I realised my heart was set on modelling. Movies weren't even in my range of vision. But after two years of modelling, I started getting film offers I was only 18 then. I didn't want to jump into anything.

Q: What took you down south?

A: You mean my Kannada film 'Aishwarya'? I am from Karnataka and it was directed by a young and talented man, Indrajit Lankesh. And I was paired with a huge Kannada star, Upendra.

Q: Did you speak your own lines?

A: Yes, I did. I learnt Kannada in school. Farah Khan had already offered me 'OSO'. But we were to shoot a year later. So I did the Kannada film.

Q: You remind me of Aishwarya Rai.

A: I'd take that as a compliment. I grew up watching her. When I was in school I remember how thrilled I was when she won Miss World. Ash and Sushmita Sen are people I've admired.

Q: What do you and Ranbir talk about?

A: Well...we do know what's going on in each other's careers. But otherwise we try to keep cinema out of our conversation. We try not to get into one another's workspace.

Q: It's amazing but both of you started your careers in Hindi films as fierce rivals in 'Saawariya' and 'OSO'?

A: That rivalry was more media-created than anything else. Comparing me with Sonam Kapoor was so uncalled for. We come from two totally different spaces and we started differently. She assisted Sanjay Leela Bhansali. I come from the modelling world. And our debut vehicles are so different. Fortunately, we were too involved with our own projects and had no time to think of each other as competition.

Q: You started with Shah Rukh Khan as a co-star. Can it get any bigger?

A: I hope it does. Initially, I was very nervous about working with him. But Farah and Shah Rukh made it very comfortable for me. We did readings together, we met socially so that we were comfortable when we faced the camera. He's again someone I grew up watching.

Q: He kept making those uncle jokes.

A: He was just being kind. I'm really glad I came in at a time when there're so many co-stars to work with - from Shah Rukh and Akshay Kumar to Neil Nitin Mukesh and Ranbir and Harman Baweja, who's coming into films this year.

Q: You have acquired the reputation of being extremely choosy.

A: Yes, every project takes up so much of your time. You've to be sure of what you're doing. So often I say no because I don't have the time. I meet every director who wants to meet me. I do consult my parents. It would be unfair to distance them from my career just because they aren't part of the entertainment industry. But the final decision is mine.

Q: How do your parents react to your link-ups?

A: It used to affect them initially. Now they're fed up reading new things every morning. We've decided to continue with our normal lives.

Q: Is the image of the boyfriend deserter hurtful?

A: The media needs to be a little restrained. I am a simple girl and from a respectable family. And loose talk about me harms my reputation. One day, like any other girl, I intend to settle down and have children. How would those write-ups look at that time? I'm so glad I've found a man who comes from the same space and understands the pitfalls of sensational journalism. I feel after a point no one will take these write-ups making a tamasha out of my life seriously.

Q: Why did you and Ranbir decide to go public about your mutual feelings?

A: Because this is the first time I've actually and truly fallen in love. Being in love is the loveliest feeling. When two people are getting close they need time to understand each other. I've reached an age when I can't be in a frivolous relationship. Linking me to so many men at a time when I wasn't sure about my feelings was unfair.

Q: Did the earlier link-ups collapse because of the excessive attention they got?

A: Quite possible. At the end of the day it was just destiny that I was meant to be with Ranbir and we're very happy together.

Q: Do you get time to be with each other?

A: We try to be together as much as possible. We did a film together, 'Bachna Ae Haseeno'. That's when we got close. We had met and interacted earlier, but we didn't get a chance to know each other well enough. He was busy with his film. I was busy with mine. We were under all kinds of pressure. Everything became very messy. In Australia, when we shot together we started afresh. We almost met like two new people. There was no baggage to be carried forward from the past because even in the past we didn't part bitterly.

Subhash K. Jha (© IANS / India eNews)