

## Bollywood dawn in Hollywood

Longer Hollywood films with music, dance, drama and even melodrama may become the next fad with Indian corporate houses financing top Los Angeles-based studios.

Even as Mumbai-based UTV is set to unveil its first co-production with 20th Century Fox, 'The Happening' directed by Manoj Night Shyamalam who is of Indian descent, the much-publicised mega deal between Reliance Big Entertainment and eight Hollywood production studios has signalled the beginning of a new era in global entertainment.

UTV was till recently sailing in uncharted waters. It was the only Indian company to have projects with major Hollywood studios like Walt Disney.

According to Siddharth Roy Kapoor, CEO of UTV Motion Pictures, the company has also announced its first independent Hollywood venture 'Ex-Terminators' and is producing two movies with Will Smith's production house, Overbrooks.

But Reliance Big Entertainment's investments in companies owned by A-list Hollywood stars takes the relationship to an entirely new level. And the \$1 billion injection comes at a time when Hollywood studios are facing a severe cash crunch.

The companies that have joined hands with Big Entertainment include Nicolas Cage's Saturn Productions, Jim Carrey's JC 23 Entertainment, Sean Clooney's Smokehouse Productions, Tom Hanks's Playtone Productions and Brad Pitt's Plan B Entertainment.

Most trade analysts agree it's time Hollywood studios adapt to local tastes if they want to grow further. The investments by Indian firms are likely to drive that.

India-born international filmmaker Shekhar Kapur's prediction that global entertainment consumption patterns are pointing towards the day when 'Spiderman' takes off his mask and reveals an Indian face seem closer now than ever before.

Amit Khanna, Reliance's chairman, says: 'Bollywood is somehow personified by song and dance and Hollywood by sex and violence, and there is this idea that neither can meet. We don't believe this is true.'

It is hoped that as many as 30 scripts will be developed under the deal, of which about 10 would go into production.

'The value of this slate of films will be worth a billion dollars. The films will be made in the next two years under different genres and will have a range of budgets,' Khanna says.

At the same time, trade observers are upbeat about Hollywood's continued influx into Bollywood. According to news reports, approximately Rs.4 billion from various Hollywood studios are committed to Indian film projects.

*Priyanka Khanna ( © IANS / India eNews)*