

Emraan ups his price to Rs.50 mn, buys a BMW

The success of 'Jannat' has surprised one and all, including the film's leading man Emraan Hashmi who has wasted no time in hiking his price from an estimated Rs.15 million to Rs.50 million.

'Ya, my price has gone up. I won't say drastically. Right now I can quote a higher price with some justification,' Emraan told IANS.

'And why not?' Emraan argues happily. 'Equations change every Friday. The sun has started shining for me. I seem to have had a solo hit at a time when only Akshay Kumar and the Khans (Shah Rukh, Aamir and Salman) seem to be getting the audiences in,' he said.

This is his first hit after duds like 'The Train', 'Good Boy, Bad Boy' and 'Awarapan'. There is celebration in Emraan's house.

'I've cut about 15 cakes in the past week. And I've just bought a new BMW. I was so confident about 'Jannat' that I had it delivered to my home on the day of its release.'

Emraan has even backed out of a film that Warner Brothers was to produce in association with Tandav Films that made the small budget hit flick 'Khosla Ka Ghosla'.

Here the actor gets evasive. 'I wouldn't like to comment on which project I backed out from. But yes, we were in serious negotiations. I only had to sign the contract. But as is the rule in the entertainment industry, they were waiting to see how 'Jannat' would perform.

'But now the ball is in my court. Since I'm in a position to negotiate now, why should I sign the film at a price I was supposed to? They were playing the wait-and-watch game. Now that they've watched, it's my turn.'

Emraan says his price also goes up for his mentors - Mukesh and Mahesh Bhatt.

'I haven't spoken to them about my price now that 'Jannat' has done so well. But they've always been very fair as far as the price goes. We share a professional relationship first, we're relatives later.

'I only sign Bhatt saab's films when I'm convinced about them. It isn't as if I've said yes to all his offers. I was picky earlier. I'm being more picky now.'

Emraan says he was always getting offers outside the Bhatt camp. 'But yes, after 'Jannat', the offers from outside are better. This is probably the best time as an actor for me.'

His next release is 'Raaz 2'. 'Like 'Jannat' and the earlier films that I've done with Bhatt saab, it tries something different.

'No one wants to touch the horror genre. It hasn't been explored sufficiently except in the first part of 'Raaz' that came five years ago. I've again done the unexpected in 'Raaz 2'. I feel the different will always work. I guess the same applies to me as an actor. I always go for the unconventional role.'

Strangely Emraan has always been working with new leading ladies.

'I don't see that as a burden. I think the audience wants to see me with new heroines. And yes, I did kiss my heroine in 'Jannat' too though this time it was more furtive than torrid. If the director feels the kiss has to be shown, I won't object to a kiss in future either.'

Emraan's wife Parveen loved 'Jannat'.

'She's zapped by its success. Suddenly to have your spouse blossom into a star...it completes our circle of happiness. The prolonged period of failure has been good for me. It made me realise I wasn't invincible. If people don't earn money out of you in the entertainment industry, they don't want you. As simple as that.'

Emraan says they were advised not to release 'Jannat' while Indian Premier League (IPL) matches were on.

'We were warned not to release 'Jannat' with the IPLs. Biggies like 'Tashan' and 'Kya Aap Paanchvi Pass Se Tez Hain' on TV had failed. I was very confident about 'Jannat'. We got a phenomenal opening. The collections have only been going up.

'Eventually a film stands on its own and the promos helped. The past year was really tough on me. If 'Jannat' hadn't worked, I would have been really frustrated. I was bitter and angry. So 'Jannat' was a do or die project for me. If it failed, I had told myself, nothing else will work.'

Subhash K. Jha (© IANS / India eNews)