

I'm single, Riteish is just a friend: Genelia

Genelia D'Souza, Imran Khan's petite and perky co-star in 'Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na', brushes off rumours of any relationship with Riteish Deshmukh with a 'we're just friends.'

Genelia teamed up with Riteish for her first Hindi film 'Tujhe Meri Kasam' and they were seen together once again in 'Masti'. While 'Tujhe Meri Kasam' bit the dust at the box office, 'Masti' hit bull's eye. But the film's success didn't help much in shaping her career.

'I'm very much single. Riteish is a friend. But that's it. I've no idea where these rumours come from. We're both very busy. When we occasionally meet up, we're normal with each other, not the least selfconscious about what's written about us. I'm very new to all this. I've done two films with Riteish - 'Tujhe Meri Kasam' and 'Masti',' Genelia told IANS.

The actress forayed into showbiz with Amitabh Bachchan as her co-star.

'I did a Parker pen ad with him when I was still a kid. It seems I've been acting forever. I started young, yes. In 2003, I had three releases in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu. Strangely acting was never an option. That ad was directed by Mansoor Khan. He kept me in mind for 'Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na', and here I am,' she said.

'Actually 'Jaane Tu...' was being produced by Jhamu Sugandh first. That's when I screen tested for the role of Aditi. I met the director Abbas Tyrewala and he almost finalised me. But he needed bulk dates from me and I was busy down South. He wanted to shoot at a stretch. I couldn't do that.

'Then one day I got a call from Aamir Khan's office. Abbas wanted a complete newcomer. But Aamir wanted a girl who suited the character. The next thing I knew, I was on board.'

Genelia said she was never that keen on an acting career.

'But when I saw how I was appreciated down South, I fell in love with the industry. I've been lucky. I didn't plan anything. I've never contacted a single producer. So far it's been an awesome journey.'

After Tamil and Telugu, Genelia has just made her debut in a Kannada film.

'I'm sure I'll be able to dub in all the South Indian languages soon. I know I can do it. I just need to get the slangs and colloquialisms correct. Honestly, I need to dub my own lines in the South to give complete performances.'

Like Asin, Genelia is now dividing her time between Bollywood and the South.

'I'm getting a lot of calls in Mumbai. I want to balance it out. But the priority would be Hindi films right now because I've worked really long in the South. But my South Indian films are also very important.

'I get very satisfying roles in Tamil and Telugu. And I can't let them go. Let's just say I'll do one film down South for every two films I do here. In any case, they wrap up their films superfast down South.

'I also had fun doing Priyadarshan's 'Mere Baap Pehle Aap'. I enjoy doing films in all languages and genres.'

She said that her commitment to southern directors affected her Bollywood career.

'I got busy with the South; that's the only reason why it took me so long to get noticed in Bollywood. There's a buzz about 'Jaane Tu... Ya Jaane Na' because it was Imran's debut film.'

Right now she is busy shooting for 'It's My Life' with Harman Baweja. It is a Hindi remake of Telugu hit, 'Bommarilu'.

'I've done the original in Telugu. Then I also did the remake in Tamil. Now I'm doing it in Hindi. The Tamil and Telugu versions were similar. But the Hindi version is very different. Today, both the South and Hindi are high-potential industries for me. I'm still a newcomer in Bollywood.'

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