

## Wrong timing for 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi'?

It is rather ironical that Yash Raj Films' much-talked about forthcoming release 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi', which is expected to bring cheer to the production banner and wrap up the year on a happy note, is being released in a not very happy time.

Starring Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan along with newcomer Anushka Sharma, the romantic drama is releasing Dec 12.

The people in Mumbai, in particular, are still haunted by the wounds inflicted on the nation's movie and financial capital by terrorists 10 days ago. But the production house is hopeful that by the time the movie hits the screen, normalcy will return to [Mumbai](#) and the mood of the people, not only in Mumbai, but elsewhere in the country, too, will undergo a change.

'At least, we are expecting that to happen, though nobody can predict what will happen tomorrow,' a spokesman of Yash Raj Films told IANS Thursday.

In Mumbai, the people have begun to come to the cinema halls. But there are palpable signs of suspense around most of the cinema premises and most cinegoers are still caught in fear and uncertainty.

This accounts for the sparse clientele of family audience, particularly the females who, otherwise, throng the multiplexes in the city.

'Following Mumbai police's order, we have stepped up the security check at our properties. Though this may have inconvenienced our patrons, we must say that it is for their own safety that we have had to do so,' said Yogesh Mehta, manager of Cinemax property at Goregaon, a north-west suburb of Mumbai.

The news floating around currently that there might be another terror attack only adds to the city's tense situation, even though the people in general have taken it in their stride and are going about their jobs as usual.

'After what Mumbai went through 10 days ago, it is understandable if a fear psychosis has gripped the city and there is a little drop in the number of people visiting the theatres of late. The theatre managements can do nothing but to bear with it and hope that the scenario will turn for the better soon,' said R.C. Vidhani, president of the Theatre and Multiplex Owners' Association.

'Whether the scenario turns for the better or not, 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi' is important for Yash Raj banner for more than one reason. The stakes are high on the movie primarily because, after last year's 'Chak De! India', Bollywood's most prestigious production house has not had a hit so far,' said Vikas Mohan, editor of Bollywood's trade magazine Super Cinema.

'All the four Yash Raj productions so far this year, 'Tashan', 'Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic', 'Bachna Ae Haseeno' and the animation movie 'Roadside Romeo', could not warm up to the box office. These successive failures, obviously, put a dent on the banner's image,' he added.

Apart from that, with 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi', Aditya Chopra has returned to direction after nearly

eight years. His last directorial venture was 'Mohabbatein', released in 2000. And this, according to Mohan, also adds to the banner's pressure.

Said trade analyst Vinod Mirani: 'Aditya Chopra-Shah Rukh Khan team has given the Bollywood's biggest hit ever, 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge'. The question that is being asked is, will the duo be able to do it again? Since the audience's expectations from the movie are much higher, this has put an additional pressure on the banner.'

The movie has a newcomer, Anushka. How will the audience react to her? Will Anushka be able to do a Deepika Padukone in 'Rab Ne Ban Di Jodi'? That's pressure number three.

'The movie being Shah Rukh Khan's first release this year, much depends on him to see it through the box-office,' Mirani said, adding that for the superstar's own sake and for the sake of everybody at the banner, 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi' should click at the box office.

Shah Rukh and Yash Raj Films had worked wonders together in the past. That's the reassuring factor and it bespeaks of probable box-office success of 'Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi', notwithstanding the panicky situation prevailing in the country currently.

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