

No Chinese premiere for 'Chandni Chowk To China'

There was an impressive line up of Hollywood personalities at the Los Angeles premiere of Nikhil Advani's 'Chandni Chowk To China', but the much-expected premiere of the action comedy starring Akshay Kumar and Deepika Padukone in China has not materialised.

Apparently the Chinese government has not given permission to release the movie, which was extensively shot there.

'What can I say? China only allows 20 international films to be released every year. Anyway, the film will be out on pirated DVDs in China so the people there will see how much we've done to honour the country,' Advani told IANS.

Interestingly, Advani saw his own film for the first time on Tuesday.

'I've to say at two hours 32 minutes it's much shorter than my last film 'Salaam-e-Ishq'. In fact, after I saw the film I edited out three minutes of playing time,' said the director.

John Landis, Rob Cohen and McG, who has just finished 'Terminator 4', were some of the topnotch Hollywood directors who turned up for the Los Angeles premiere of 'Chandni Chowk To China' Wednesday night at the posh Steve J. Ross theatre right inside the Warner Brother premises.

Before he jetted off with his cast to New York for the next premiere, Advani said: 'We couldn't stay for the LA premiere for more than 35 minutes because we had to leave for the New York premiere. But I could see the audience which included directors John Landis, Rob Cohen and McG plus top brass from Warner Brothers were laughing at the right places and for the right reason and in an emotional scene they all went silent.'

'We didn't know what the exact turn-out at the LA premiere was going to be. The RSVPs kept coming till the last hour. Over here the biggest of stars let you know if they aren't coming. It's Warner Brothers' prestigious Bollywood product and they're releasing it on a par with any Hollywood film with 50 prints in the US,' said Advani.

After the LA premiere the cast and director attended the New York premiere Thursday, followed by the Toronto premiere Friday.

'We then proceed to London on Jan 10. On Jan 12 is the London premiere at the Empire Theater at Leicester Square,' said Advani.

And Akshay's best friend, Toronto-based tycoon Ajay Virmani, lent his luxury 17-seater jet to his friend and his team of 'Chandni Chowk To China' for their whirlwind four-city premieres in North America.

Apparently, Akshay was overwhelmed by his friend's gesture.

'I really don't want to say much on this. But yes, Akshay did get very emotional when he saw what I had done to my jet. I think 'Chandni Chowk To China' is a very special film and lending one of my jets for the purpose is a very small token of my happiness.

'Out here in Toronto where I've my main business the film is so strong. People have been constantly calling to ask for passes to the premiere. I've been with Akshay from the time he was the 'Khiladi'. I'm very proud of him,' said Virmani.

The 17-seater jet, which is part of Virmani's 30-plus fleet of private aircrafts, is a luxury aircraft meant for long-distance travel.

After the film's Indian release Advani will go to Hong Kong and Dubai for the screening there.

Subhash K. Jha (© IANS / India eNews)