

## Criticism of Mumbai hurts Javed Akhtar

Bollywood's well-known lyricist Javed Akhtar is in a nostalgic mood about the city that nurtured his dreams - and he calls it a no-nonsense city.

'I came to [Mumbai](#) on Oct 4, 1954. Since then this city has given me everything - from food to fame. I was taken aback when Reader's Digest called it a rude city. Mumbai isn't a rude city. It's a no-nonsense city,' Javed told IANS.

He added: 'Everyone is busy and has no time for niceties. But when it comes to showing solidarity, we're right on top of the map. Didn't we see how the compassion oozed out during the deluge in July 2005?'

In 2007, Javed is back to being the busiest bee among the bards of Bollywood. Last year he had Karan Johar's 'Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna' and J.P. Dutta's 'Umrao Jaan', but neither of the two films was received well.

'I'm glad people liked my work with Karan after 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' and 'Kal Ho Naa Ho'. 'Umrao Jaan' was a special challenge. The film had already been done gloriously earlier, and so were the songs. You can't fight history and myth. Anyway, I removed the fear of myth and destiny. For the first time I had to write poetry for mujras. I wrote one whole song in pure Awadhi.'

Javed, who enjoys working with new music directors, teamed up with Himesh Reshammiya for the first time in Vipul Shah's 'Namastey London'.

'Reshammiya has gone back to making music the old way. The tunes are all done in the bandish tradition that the ustads of music used to sing in, in the olden days. Taking the bandish, he has tuned it in a modern way. The songs are so catchy that listeners can't stop humming them. I enjoy working with new composers.'

Incidentally, Javed doesn't think much of Rekha as an actress, though he loved her performance in 'Krissh'.

'I've never been a fan of Rekha. Her performance never touched my heart. But I liked her immensely in 'Krissh'.'

*Subhash K. Jha* ( © IANS / India eNews)