

It'd be a pleasure to return to Zee: Gajendra Singh

TV music show producer Gajendra Singh, who left Zee to join STAR, says he is still attached to the channel and wouldn't mind working for it again.

'It'd be a pleasure and honour to return to Zee. I'd happily do another show for Zee. I'm still very attached to the channel. They did call me. I did present some concepts and the budget to the bosses,' Singh told IANS in an interview.

But Singh, who made successful musical programmes like 'Antakshari' and 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' for Zee, feels there are certain elements in the channel that don't want him to come back.

'I feel people from within the organisation don't want me to come back to do new shows for Zee. These are all newcomers. And they don't want me to work for Zee or to do well outside.'

He is currently working on a reality show for Sahara and also something for NDTV.

Excerpts:

Q: There's a concerted effort to keep you down after your departure from Zee.

A: I can't understand why this should be so! After serving Zee for 15 years, I should be allowed very happily to move on and grow as an artist. This doesn't seem to be the case. Though my former boss Puneet Goenka is very happy for me, some of his employees are all out to prove I'm a traitor to the cause. I'm feeling very isolated.

Q: But your show on STAR One is a hit.

A: Yes. But the movement from Zee to STAR has caused heartaches. This isn't the way to move forward in life. If I gave my hundred percent to Zee, I need to give my hundred percent to STAR. Is that wrong?

Q: Do you think Zee is trying to pull you down?

A: Not at the top of the organisation. Puneetji is very happy for me. In fact, I was called to do some shows for Zee again on behalf of Puneetji. He had blessed me and told me that the concept for the two shows - 'Antakshari' and 'Sa Re Ga Ma Pa' - belonged to me.

Q: You've offered shows to Zee after your departure?

A: Yes, they did call me. And I did present some concepts and the budget to the bosses. Next thing I know I'm being accused of being ungrateful to the channel.

Those from Zee who are saying such things about me need to prove themselves. These are all newcomers. And they don't want me to work for Zee or to do well outside.

I feel people from within the organisation don't want me to come back to do new shows for Zee. It'd be a pleasure and honour to return to Zee. I'd happily do another show for Zee. I'm still very

attached to the channel.

Q: How do you defend yourself against charges of stealing Zee's concepts?

A: Much before us, there was 'Antakshari' on so many other TV channels. It's a concept that has existed from the ancient times. But I've never repeated myself.

Now I'm doing 'Starvoice Of India' for STAR Plus. It's a music contest where we look for the voice of the common man. My area of interest has to remain unchanged. I'm passionate about music and my shows will be music-based. I can't change that.

Q: What next?

A: I'm working on a reality show for Sahara. That's my first non-music show. I'm also doing something on NDTV for my godfather Samir Nair.

Q: What are your chances of returning to Zee?

A: Anytime.

Subhash K. Jha (© IANS / India eNews)