

Thick Skin A Must To Survive In Films: Manoj Bajpayee

MUMBAI: National Award winning actor Manoj Bajpayee says one needs to develop a thick skin to survive in the film industry.

"We need to have thick skin to survive in the film industry. I have spent quite some time here, and have realised that you get friends usually with success and they go away during your tough days," Manoj said.

The actor on Friday opened up about the mantra to survive in the industry during an interactive session with Sushant Singh, actor and general secretary of CINTAA, at the ActFest.

Looking back at how people treated him during his struggling

days, the "Aligarh" actor said: "One of my friends invited me for his film's premiere where media was also present to click photographs of celebrities. They saw me and one photographer said 'he is not important, don't take his photograph'."

He continued: "And I just thought 'when my film will be successful, people will come again to click my photograph'. I don't let vanity affect me."

Manoj believes he was the "happiest when I had no acting offers".

"Because that was the time when I worked on myself to develop my skill."

The actor also condemned the



terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district, saying it is "very sad".

"We can't imagine what their families must be going through," he added.

ActFest is being organised by CINTAA (Cine and TV Artistes' Association). The two-day festival features popular artistes participating in discussions, conducting workshops or giving lectures on various aspects of the art. The event is conceived and designed by The 48 Hour Film Project, India.

Talking about the fest, he said: "It is a great initiative where actors are coming and sharing their journey."

Banita Sandhu 'Super Excited' To Return With 'Varmaa'



MUMBAI: "October" actress Banita Sandhu, who will be seen as the female lead in "Varmaa" - the Tamil remake of Telugu film "Arjun Reddy" - is looking forward to return to a film set. She says she was waiting for the right project to come her way.

For a few days now, news reports of Britain-based actress Banita, who played Varun Dhanwan's comatose soul-mate in Shoojit Sircar's "October", replacing the original female lead, Meghna, a model from Kolkata, in "Varmaa" was doing the rounds.

Banita has confirmed she is indeed doing "Varmaa".

"Yes, I am doing 'Varmaa'. And I am quite excited about it. After 'October', nothing really interesting was coming way. Until now," Banita said.

She looks forward to begin preparation to play the out-of-

control alcoholic hero's quiet subdued love interest. "I am waiting for the acting workshops to begin. The shooting date is yet to be finalised. But I am hoping it would begin in the next month or so."

"I was just waiting for the right film to come along after 'October'. This ('Varmaa') made perfect sense. I am super excited about getting back on a film set." A shake-up in the cast and crew of "Varmaa" left the project with only the hero in place, Tamil cinema doyen Vikram's son Dhruv, whose launchpad "Varmaa" is meant to be.

However, the producers were so disappointed by what director Bala had achieved that they decided to scrap the entire film after it was complete, dismantle the entire cast and crew, except for Dhruv and remake the film from scratch.

B-Town Mourns Death Of Producer Raj Kumar Barjatya

MUMBAI: Raj Kumar Barjatya who produced popular films like "Hum Aapke Hain Koun...!" and "Hum Saath-Saath Hain: We Stand United" under the Rajshri Productions banner died at a hospital here on Thursday. He was 7.

He was cremated at a Worli crematorium.

After the news of his death broke on social media, Bollywood celebrities like Madhuri Dixit Nene and Sonam K. Ahuja mourned the death of the "kindest, sweetest and most generous soul".

Raj Kumar is survived by wife Sudha and son Sooraj Barjatya "Nadiya Ke Paar" actor Sachin Pilgaonkar and "Maine Pyar Kiya" actress Bhagyashree Patwardhan-Dasani visited the Barjatya residence to console the filmmaker's family.

Filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt with wife Soni Razdan, and actors Swara Bhaskar, Satish Kaushik and Mohish Bahl attended the funeral.

Rajshri Productions Pvt Ltd was established by Raj Kumar's father Tarachand Barjatya in 1947.

The film production and distribution company has also produced titles like "Main Prem Ki Deewani Hoon", "Vivah" and "Prem Ratan Dhan Payo".

Raj Kumar's son Sooraj, who is in his 50s, resurrected the banner when it was on the verge of closing by directing "Maine Pyar Kiya", a blockbuster.

"Hum Aapke Hain Koun...!" actress Madhuri Dixit Nene said he was a warm soul.



Director Satish Kaushik at the Barjatya residence.



Actresses Swara Bhaskar (on left) and Bhagyashree.

Describing him as a person she would always look up to, Madhuri tweeted: "Deeply saddened by the demise of Raj Kumar Barjatya."

"Thank you for inspiring and guiding me through my journey. Condolences to Sooraj Barjatya and family. Hope you will find the strength to grieve this loss."

Actor Anupam Kher who has given memorable performances in multiple films of the banner tweeted: "Deeply saddened to know about the demise of Raj Kumar Barjatya."

"Had known him since my

first film 'Saaransh'. Most humble and amazingly knowledgeable human being. Had a child-like curiosity. I loved speaking to him for hours about goodness. He practiced it. Will miss him."

"Prem Ratan Dhan Payo" actress Sonam K. Ahuja said: "I have no words to express the deep and incredible sadness that accompanies the news of Shri Raj Kumar Barjatya's passing. He was a visionary whom I was lucky enough to work with and I pray for his family and loved ones."

Big B Gives Rs. 5 Lakhs To Families Of Slain Pulwama Troopers

MUMBAI Megastar Amitabh Bachchan will be donating Rs 5 lakh each to the families of 49 CRPF troopers who died in the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district.

The actor is currently finding out "from several government sources where and how the amount will be distributed to ensure it is expedited".

His spokesperson confirmed the news, saying: "Yes, Mr Bachchan will be giving Rs 5 lakh to each of the martyr's families and is currently finding out the correct process to do so."

The "Piku" actor on Friday also cancelled his attendance as a special guest of Virat Kohli's Foundation event, which will now be held on Saturday.

Rajnikant Not To Contest LS Poll

CHENNAI: Amid dragging speculation whether he will take the plunge or not, superstar Rajinikanth has announced that he will not contest the coming Lok Sabha polls nor will he support any political party.

In a statement on a letterhead of his fan club Rajini Makkal Mandram (RMM), he informed his fans that his name or photograph should not be used by anyone seeking votes. "I am not going to contest the coming Lok Sabha elections. Our target is Tamil Nadu Assembly elections. I am not going to support any party in the Lok Sabha elections. So nobody can use my photo in the campaign of any party."

The 68-year-old actor, who has worked in over 200 films, appealed to his fans: "Tamil Nadu's main problem in the coming elections will be water. We will support any party which can solve the water crisis of Tamil Nadu permanently."

Khushboo OK With 'Fat Girl' Roles



MUMBAI: Actress Khushboo Shroff has no qualms about playing a "fat girl" on screen, but is against working on "mindless things like showing fat people in a funny and useless context".

"I don't mind playing a fat girl because your body... to a certain extent decides the type of roles you get. A fat girl cannot play the role of a thin girl so, I am fine with that," the 'Bodyguard' actress said.

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