

SHORT CIRCUITS

VARUN DHAWAN

We (Alia Bhatt, Siddharth Malhotra and I) have discussed competition, we do discuss these things but I think when you do your first film with someone, you form a bond and it's like (they are) family. You are just bonded for life. So you overlook that (competition) thing. I just have a lot of love in my heart for both of them.



SALMAN KHAN

As an actor, I don't want to do small films. If someone asks me to do such kind of films again then I might do a guest appearance in it. These are beautiful films but one will watch it on DVD or on TV but not go to theatre. I will continue to do larger-than-life stuff.



RAKHI SAWANT

If Uddhav Thackeray thinks that I will prove to be a better administrator than Arvind Kejriwal, I thank him. However, I feel very bad that my name is being used by politicians for now rhyme or reason. I'm just an actor who works hard.



KRIS JENNER

I'll definitely miss *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*. The crew is like family. We've had the same crew since day one, we're like a family. I'll miss working with my kids every single day on that level. I don't like change, it's inevitable. But for me, I'm a creature of habit, so I like it.

VICTORIA BECKHAM

I dreamt about being on stage. But it was a difficult part of my life. I suffered bullying. I did not fit anywhere...I was ambitious. I made a great effort, I respected teachers and rules. After school I went to dance lessons and singing and acting lessons. Meanwhile the rest of the kids hid for smoking and pretended to be cool, but I was not like that.



RAISE THE BAR TWO HOURS

A woman of spirit

LISA SRAO, famous as India's only liquor baroness, tells Divya Kaushik that her in-depth research and understanding of the monopolised and capital-intensive, male-dominated industry helped her break norms and create a brand identity

At a time when in India women could not even think of walking up to a bar to get a drink for themselves, she went on knocking at the doors of distributors with her new brand that promised quality and fine blend of whisky. "People thought I was joking. I had every distributor laughing at my face. Many would not let us through the doors and some even came up with things like, 'Are you giving it to us for free?' In the male-dominated liquor industry it was tough for people to believe that some Indian origin women, brought up in UK, is trying to establish a brand identity in the monopolised and capital-intensive industry. But I didn't give up," said Lisa Srao, chairman and MD of I Brands Beverages. Lisa was sharing her early experiences of venturing into liquor industry in India around 10 years ago. In all these years, Lisa, famous as India's only liquor baroness, has braved all odds and her brand has secured strong presence in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand, Pondicherry, Assam, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh. Plans are also afoot to launch in Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland and Andaman and Nicobar Islands shortly. I Brands is available in Gurgaon and will hopefully make an entry in major metros as well. "I think we have received a humble opening and have created a strong foundation in all these years. I believe in constant innovation and that helps our brand grow. I want to make luxury affordable to our consumers by creating products that are of an international standard quality margin in terms of blend, design, look and feel. Steve Jobs once said simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. I believe that, too," she said.

To say that Lisa was born with business genes won't be wrong. Her father launched the Double Dutch Beer in UK. "As a kid I watched him produce the brand, so I had an understanding of the manufacturing of liquor. But I never thought that I would be entering the beverage market while I was in UK. I worked with the best media companies and I moved to India after my marriage in 2003. While I was trying to settle here I noticed the lack of quality international products in India. In the liquor industry, I found a very specific gap in the market. I found the premium liquor segment in India's mass market completely underutilised, either good quality products were extremely



'BROWN SPIRITS ARE ALSO BEING PICKED BY WOMEN BUT THERE IS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO. MANUFACTURERS ARE MAKING MOST OF THE FACT THAT WOMEN ARE PREFERRING PREMIUM SEGMENT LIQUOR'

expensive, or affordable products were of bad quality. I kept thinking why we can't have good quality products available in India at affordable prices. In 2008, I thought to myself that I should bring my dad's products to India. But when I started researching I realised that each state was like a separate country when it comes to taste and choice of liquor. It was not like UK, the market that I understood very well. The awareness in terms of international brands was less and market was ruled by big players. I realised that getting my father's products here would not work. I have to create something specific to the market. So, I Brands was created to launch international standard liquor that specifically catered to the Asian market. Like every business, we faced challenges initially but the reason why we survived in the industry where new brands shut shop in six months is because we cater quality. We have set standards in packaging and those are being followed by big players as well," informed Lisa, who along with her father credits her husband who took her around the world to get the taste of finest malts.

The reason she ventured in market with whisky is because "eighty per cent of market is whisky in India and I chose the safest thing. Beer market was highly competitive with a very short shelf life."

She has successfully launched whisky, brandy and rum brands and expect wine soon from her label.

She agrees that liquor industry has changed drastically in last 10 years and women now have a variety to choose from. "Brown spirits are also being picked by women but there is still a long way to go. Manufacturers are making most of the fact that women are preferring premium segment liquor but I do not agree with those who are coming with special blends and flavours for women. Women should be allowed to make her choice and has a right to same quality being served to men. But the consumption of alcohol among women is not restricted to big cities alone, and this is a critical change in the drinking behaviour of women in India," she said.

On a concluding note, she added, "I believe that there is still a long way to go and my biggest achievement is the acceptability and recognition me and my brand has received in last few years."

SMOKE ON WATER ONE HOUR

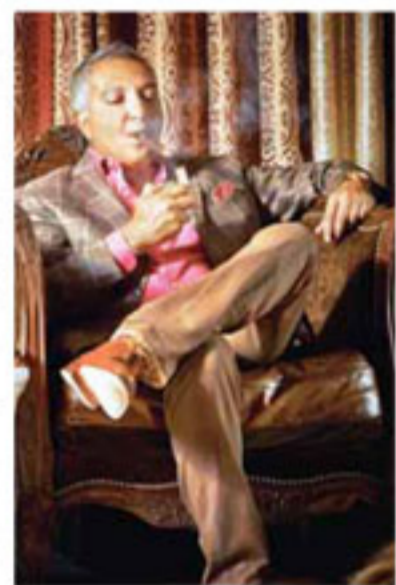
Puff away the taboos

ROCKY PATEL recently conducted a cigar tasting and rolling session. He told IKNOR KAUR that Cuban cigars are among worst in the world

Have't we all admired the way some of our favourite Hollywood actors sat on luxurious couches and lit a cigar? A lot of us have even tried to copy the way Al Pacino held that hand-rolled stick of clean tobacco while he rolled the smoke over his tongue and let it out with cinematic perfection. However, none of us managed to really do what they are doing because we never got our hands on anything that could be called a real cigar. Thus, to fulfill that need of almost every Indian fan of Hollywood, Rocky Patel brought down his own brand of premium cigars to the country. He recently collaborated with Cigar Conexon and conducted the first tasting and rolling session in the Capital where he cleared misconceptions and educated Indians about cigars.

According to him one of the most common myths that Indians have about cigars is that all the best cigars in the world are Cuban. Rocky rubbishes the idea and says, "If anybody who really understands the cigar industry was to evaluate Cuban cigars, they would find out that Cubans don't even have the money for fertiliser. Their land is undernourished, they don't spend enough time on the fermentation of the tobacco and don't pay enough attention to the quality and construction of cigars. So honestly if cigars are Cuban, they are some of the worst quality of cigars in terms of consistency." Managing director Cigar Conexon, Hemanth adds, "There is a world beyond Cuba. Today the quality which comes from the Caribbean side, like the Dominican and Honduras, are way superior to Cuban."

Rocky feels that Indians have less knowledge about cigars. He explains, "A lot of people here think that cigars are harmful and not good for health. But that is not true. We don't inhale cigars, they are not a habit-forming product, there are no chemicals in them, they are completely natural and the only thing we use to ferment the tobacco present in it is water. Plus the tobacco is fermented for five to six years which makes it an almost tar-free product. So technically, cigar smoking is much healthier than cigarette smoking. Also cigars come with different intensities. They are mild, medium and full-bodied and have



different flavour profiles, too, just as wines do."

Elaborating on the flavours of cigars, he adds, "There are no added flavours in a cigar. They are all inherent in the tobacco. One can get flavours like caramel, chocolate, white pepper, nutmeg or cinnamon that are all characteristic flavours that one gets in the mouth depending on the origin of the tobacco, the kind of plant it was and how it was fermented. The sowing of the seed, process of making and the way it is rolled impact the flavour of the cigar."

Cigars are considered as luxury products and rightly so, says Rocky. "From the time you plant a seedling into the ground till you have a cigar in the box it takes at least six to seven years. Three hundred different hands touch that leaf of tobacco in order to make a cigar. It is an art that has been transferred through generations. There is a labour intensive unit behind what looks like a simple cigar. This effort makes it a luxury product," he adds.

Rocky shelves accessibility as one of the biggest reasons for the lack of popularity of cigars in India. "Premium cigars were not readily available in India. If somebody wanted to learn how to smoke a cigar they didn't know where to go. Now the market is slowly opening up," he informs.

FREEDOM NOTE 45 MINUTES

Keep it real



The Lorraine Music Academy along with the LAMP Trust will be presenting an ode to India today. Founder AUBREY ALOYSIUS spoke to IKAUR about the exploitation of the National Anthem in present-day India

There is a song on our minds, a prayer in our hearts and passion in our souls when the words *Jana Gana Mana* pour out of us with ease. We feel the goosebumps. Such is the power of patriotism which resonates in every citizen of India when they sing the National Anthem. But what is the National Anthem, asks Aubrey Aloysius, founder of the Lorraine Music Academy and the LAMP Trust. "I remember, as a child, for exactly 52 seconds we were made to sing the National Anthem every morning at school. The lyrics, rhythm and pace of the song were ingrained in my system. Fifty two seconds, not more, not less. That is what the National Anthem is according to the Constitution of India, but that is not how it is being followed today. More than half of our country sings and listens to a song recital of the *Jana Gana Mana* written by Rabindranath Tagore, not *Jana Gana Mana*, our National Anthem," he says and without mincing words adds, "I went for a certain event the other day where the National Anthems of France and India were to be played. After the French Anthem



played I eagerly waited for ours to begin. What played then not only shocked me but saddened me to no end. They played Lata Mangeshkar and Asha Bhosle's version of the National Anthem. There is a code to every country's Anthem and so is there one to ours. It is not just the lyrics that define it but the format in which it is sung. Outraged with this trend that has set in the country of improvising the National Anthem, Aubrey started his own movement called 'Come India Sing *Jana Gana Mana*'. Under that initiative he will present his pro-



duction *A Musical Evening in Honour of India* at Epicenter, Gurgaon today. The event will include singing, dancing, poetry recitals and speeches in which "the content will be patriotic and folk. It will depict our patriotic fervour and culture. Some of the songs will include *Vande*

Mataram, *Saare Jahan Se Achha*, *Hum Honge Kaamyab*, *Cry For Freedom*, *Happiness and My Wish*. Embedded within the concert is a micro workshop which teaches people how to sing the National Anthem. People won't even realise that it is a workshop since it will be very interactive," explains Aubrey.

The musician will also be highlighting the fundamental duties of a citizen of India as per the Indian Constitution. He elaborates, "I think if all the men in the world were to read them, there would be no rapes. The fifth duty says, 'To promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women.' So we will also discuss these fundamental duties with people in respect to all these happenings."

At the end of the performance Aubrey will also give awards to 100 students from the Lorraine Music Academy who excelled in the field of music and art.

SING ALONG 20 MINUTES IT'S TIME FOR BRAZIL

JENNIFER LOPEZ, PITBULL and CLAUDIA LEITTE will feature in the Football World Cup 2014 song



FIFA says Jennifer Lopez will team with rapper Pitbull and Brazilian singer Claudia Leitte to perform the official World Cup song for this year's tournament. The soccer's governing body didn't mention when the song *We Are One (Ole Ola)* will be released.

The song was written and co-produced by Pitbull. Leitte says she is looking forward to "dancing samba with Pitbull and Jennifer Lopez in Brazil." Lopez wasn't in Rio for the announcement. Shakira wrote *Waka Waka* for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. AP



High fly

International kite flyers dotted the city's skyline with colourful kites, inspired by Indian culture

As the cloudy weather makes away for a pleasant afternoon, kite enthusiasts from various nations dotted the city's skyline with colourful kites. Here to take part in Delhi International Kite Festival, they surprised the viewers with their flawless skills. The 60-year-old Bob Cruikshanks from London comes to India every year in January. He has participated in kite festivals in various cities. "For me, it is a hobby. I feel good when I fly kites. Being an engineer, I like creative construction of kites. I



have been flying kites for 20 years and participated festivals in Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Mangalore, Delhi and other cities," he said. The festival also saw prominent names like Barbara Meyer (USA), Sami Sayeghs (Beirut), Sari (Indonesia), Cho (South Korea) and Antonio (France). The evening didn't damp the spirit as several experts flew kites attaching LED lights and kite trails, which had more than 100 kites on one string.