

Media is malicious in modern times...

Respected Brother,  
Sadar Pranam,

I read your views on media, journalists, and public relations on your latest blog. I somehow remember the times when you had all powerful days behind you and you could take the media one on one and still not get affected by it. You were at your prime then and had decided not to give interviews to the select or maybe it was all inclusive set of press and media. Those were different days, you were in a far more commanding position at that period of time, you had string of successful films behind you and probably you did not need the positive or negative comments from the media of that time rather it was media who wanted to make money by selling you.

Media must have developed an intense burning desire to have a chance to pounce upon you at the slightest excuse at your first mistake to time their revenge. With so very little available to them from you they had no option but to keep off from you. The media tried to create and take more interest in much less successful Anil Kapoor, who probably started getting a feeling that he was in same or later started misbelieving of a higher status. Or it was that you had successfully managed to keep away from them and yet not get affected by the media's presence or absence in shaping your career. Whatever be the case maybe it did spark an insecure feeling amongst their clan to get you on to the defensive. Earlier too, they would make stories from half information on your relationships with Miss Rekha. I still remember how with great difficulty I had defended you in my service selection board interview of NDA fending one such question. Probably she herself might have liked the idea of being linked to the most successful man and egged on to some of the controversies and still got away with it as you did have great chemistry with her on screen. You could not deny your producers to cast other heroines when they knew that your salability with her as the leading lady was a sure mantra for the box office success. In this period we had Khoon Pasina, Mr. Natwarlal, Suhag, and a couple of flop films as well like Besharam and was she also there in Alaap, Ganga Ki Saugandh and Imaan Dharam. Anyway I have no interest in your personal relationship with her now yet at that time I could not hear anything against you! ( and believe me there were thousands like me who actually could be considered as crazy Amitabh followers! I would still not like to be called a

fan even in those days! I could think for myself and could still tell a flop to be a flop even if my favourite actor was in the film.

So there was this theory that had been working in the mind of media that you had denied them their bread and butter by not speaking to them by shutting your doors on to them in your heydays! They were helped in the early eighties when all of sudden the filmgoers started taking and talking of parallel cinema, some of it was good and had good performances from the likes of Naseeruddin Shah, Om Puri, Smita Patil and Shabana Azami. People considered it a fashion to discuss and describe art cinema. We had a string of films like Ardh Satya, Sparsh, Akrosh, Bazaar and Mandi etc. during this phase, the media had a role in it too! They caught the nerve of people and hordes of writings were available on such cinema and that was the end of your first stint with success. To make things easy for press, it coincided with your accident on the sets of coolie which had put you out of action for nearly quite a big time. On your return, you were never the same Amitabh Bachchan which we all knew. On top of that the kind of movies which you did especially the new ones came cropper. I can tell you now that I could not stand movies like Ganga Jamuna Sarasawati, Aaj Ka Arjun, Jadugar and Toofan. Maybe more than anything else you had lost the charisma that you possessed. The kind of expression that your face had before the accident was now almost absent, maybe the drugs and long hospitalization were responsible for all this. In the post accident times I think coolie was a hit more for the reason that people wanted to see the scene where you got injured than for the mere merit of the movie! I had not seen the movie in theatre and saw it much later maybe on Television. The decline was very obvious and you announced your sabbatical got into politics in between after the death of Mrs. G and left the politics with some sort of scar or blot, whether true or false, by being named in the Bofors scandal. I would now believe you that you were not directly involved and you were made a scapegoat by the then set of politicians from opposition as well as ruling. But you probably never realized that your leaving the politics strengthened their case and Media was just waiting for these opportunities to kill the goose.

Then followed your launching of ABCL, I had voiced my opinion that one should not make movies that glorify dacoits. I had a very limited circle so I probably could not have had any possible impact on your success or failure. Then came the pageant show after the initial success of Sushmita Sen and Aishwarya Rai's at world level that you invested to take upon hosting

and organizing the show almost single handedly. I think this was outside your domain and probably you had no first hand knowledge of running something of that order as well as you should have known! I would not blame Media for the failure of Bangalore chapter. It did land you in greater troubles as you would probably know it better than anyone of us. I had suggested the launching of Amitabh Bachchan's Complex of Libraries and that was the first time I had just had begun my first website with angelfire. (<http://www.angelfire.com/ab/abhayasharma>). I had voiced my opinion publicly on this website other than handing over the printed copy to the sentry at Prateeksha to this effect. It was the first time that I had stopped over at your bungalow. There, I had also mentioned about an Indian Heritage section where one of the contributor could have been your own father the great Dr. Bachchan. I am not here to register it as a complaint or try to establish some connectivity.

There was only one second time I tried to get in touch with you when my younger brother's family was here on May 25, 2006, on our way back from Juhu Beach in the afternoon, I did try to make inroads to meet you, it was embarrassing to fail in front of the two young boys (sons of my younger brother) and my own son Amrit, who was only 7. In fact Amrit was in real tantrums on not being allowed and would not move without having met you! He had thrown his towel (that he was holding) in anger.

I had once killed my strong desire to be there on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2003! Knowing it was impossible to wish my bigger hero his first and last farewell. That I believe was out of fear, to be honest, I knew there was not much point in meeting him now when he was not alive! Yet I strongly wanted to pay my homage but could only send a fax of a poem in his honour!

Oh! Brother, I think I am loosing the track, I wanted to make you realize that Media indeed is powerful, it is not always and not everyday that they get to take you by the scruff, not easy for some one of your stature, that they do try to teach a lesson or two of protest and exhibit their power.

The best way would be to join hands with them and let them have your point of view. One should not have expectations that they will improve so easily still there is no harm in giving it your best shot. They (Media) would rather love to remain uninformed of your side of the story to sell their piece (manifestation) of work. Sometimes it may be kind in nature, at times it can be neutral yet there could be times when it could hurt and hit below the belt.

There will be thousands and millions reading it as it has something about the man who at one time had a label of one man industry, someone who ruled the Hindi Cinema like no one else could, a man of high values, intellect and integrity.

It is in this respect that I had requested you to take up to television in India. One can improve the system by being a part of it and not by watching from outside. I know Television is a hugely powerful medium that can make or break nations. It is up to us in what we are interested or where do we go from here! Do we walk forward or we continue our dilly-dallying approach to use something as powerful as Television! I know you commanded lot of respect in the past during the two different times that you anchored Kaun Banega Crorepati. You can do it again with Celebrities and more professional programs. If Prabhu Chawla, Karan Johar and Karan Thapar can be successful you too could impress your point upon the junta! It could take the country ahead and on to the path of success!

I wish I had some poetry to incorporate that could be apt for the present situation. I feel Main Haar Nahi Manunga ...(jpeg) could describe your action with media and journalists. But I would rather put Viron Ki Bhanti here and keep both in the copy of this blog on my website!

Abhaya Sharma, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008, 00.15 Hrs.

Post Script: This blog has basically been written after announcement of my blog on day 119 as the last blog. The credit must go to my very recent yet very dear friend Reshmi Philip. She made me write by asking to do so whenever I felt I had something to share. I think the observations here could help you and fellow bloggers to be able to know me a little better. I treat you as an elder brother, a well meaning younger brother can not keep away for too long from someone who is actually a world figure. I am very thankful to the kind words of Reshmi about me on that last blog. I almost cried for the happiness she gave me that day! This blog is sincerely dedicated to her and I wish her all success in meeting you at the show at London! My own younger sister Rajyashree Sharma, who works in the field of nuclear medicine in London, would in all probability not have time to attend! It is OK.

**BEST WISHES FOR GREAT SUCCESS DURING THE EUROPEAN LEG OF THE UNFORGETTABLE!**

मैं हार नहीं मानूंगा..

जीवन के अन्यायों से  
मैं हार नहीं मानूंगा..

भरसक कोशिश करके भी  
गर जीत नहीं पाऊंगां  
पथ की बाधाओं से पर  
कभी हार नहीं मानूंगा..

सत्य मार्ग पर चलकर  
कितनी ही विपदायें हो  
उनसे घबराकर भी मैं  
कभी हार नहीं मानूंगां

लकड़ी की तरह जल जाऊं  
दुविधाओं की अग्नि में  
मानवता की खातिर पर  
मैं हार नहीं मानूंगां

सपने बिखरें या टूटें  
इस कर्मभूमि में अपनी  
मैं अभय रूप धर कर फिर  
कभी हार नहीं मानूंगां

मैं हार नहीं मानूंगा..

अभय शर्मा, मुम्बई 1 मार्च 2007

## वीरों की भांति

लड़ना ही अगर पड़ जाये कभी

लड़ना तुम वीरों की भांति

झुकना ना कभी डरना ना कभी

मुश्किल को बना अपना साथी

हो अदा तुम्हारी आंधी सी

विपदायें कितनी भी आये

मत हार मानना मन में कभी

दुर्गम पथ पर चलना है तुम्हे

विजयी होना है स्मरण रहे

मन में ऐसा संकल्प लिये

लड़ना ही अगर पड़ जाये कभी

लड़ना तुम वीरों की भांति

अभय शर्मा

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