



Iqbal Khan

Breaking out of the mould

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As Angad Bedi in *Kaisa Yeh Pyar Hai*, Iqbal Khan had taken the world of television soaps by storm. The popularity he earned was beyond his dreams and soon he was seen in several successful serials like *Kavyanjali*, *Kahin Toh Hoga*, *Karam Aapna Aapna* and *Choona Hai Asmaan*. Then came his sudden and long disappearance from the small screen, which left his fans wondering. Finally, Iqbal has returned to television in Zee TV's *Sanjog Je Bani Sangini* as angry young man Rudra. *HT City* catches up with the actor:

Why were you on a self-imposed sabbatical?

(Laughs) Basically I wanted to take a break for a few months... but it lasted a little longer. In television, we work under a lot of pressure and stress, which leaves us with no time for anything else. So, it's important to take a break.

Now I'm full of energy and raring to go.

And what did you do in this break?

Oh! I travelled a lot... abroad and in my own country. Then I made a short film. It's based on my personal experiences. I have both directed and produced it.

What was it about *Sanjog Se Bani ... Sangini* that excited you?

Sangini has a brilliant script. My character, Rudra, has a powerful graph. *Sangini* is a simple love story and the situations portrayed in the show are very interesting.

Is it true that television shows have no strong male characters anymore?

God has been kind to me because all my roles have been strong — be it in *Kaisa Yeh Pyar Hai*, *Karam*

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Apna Apna or *Choona Hai Asmaan*. So I can't complain.

What changes do you notice in the television industry today?

Channels spend lavishly nowadays — on sets and costumes. Even the serials are shot in outdoor and expensive locales. For *Sangini*, we went to shoot in Haridwar and Mussoorie:

You made your debut in the film industry with *Funtoosh*.

Producers and directors need sellable actors. They need superstars who can assure a bumper first-day collection. Yes, TV actors are doing films too, but for that some director has to take the risk.

But there were rumours that you are doing a film with Koel Mullick...

Yes, Vickram Bhatt's *Aapna Sa*. But the film got shelved after eight days of shooting. Anyway, I became very good friends with Koel. She is a great human being, full of family values. We still keep in touch.