

Male actors suffered the recession inspired correction the most

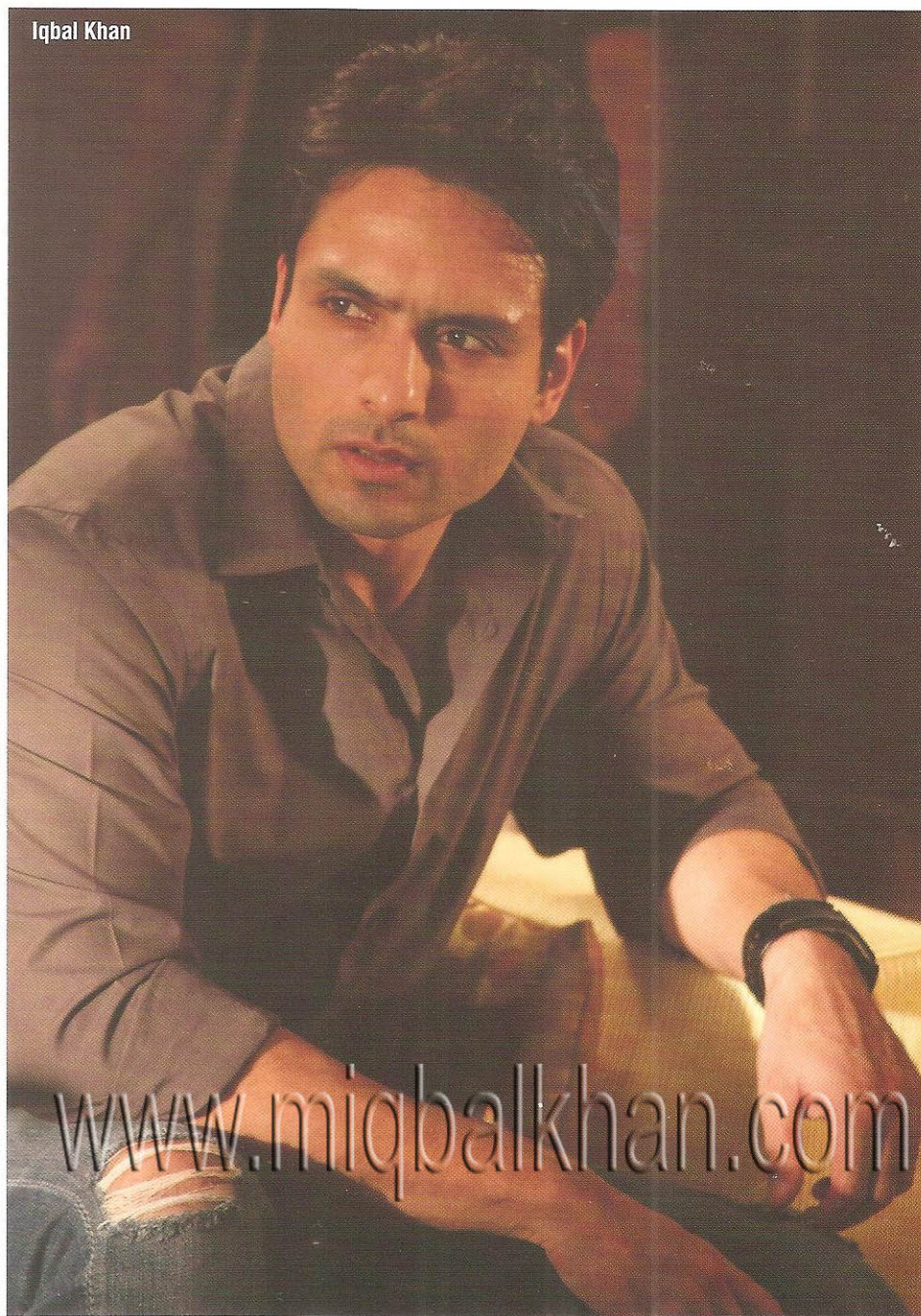
There was a time in the TV industry two or three years ago when only new faces dominated the scene. The experienced established actors were forced to cool their heels off at home. The production houses and channels justified their stand that the new shows needed new faces as characters required a clean slate to attract audiences.

But according to our sources, the real reason was that post-recession they wanted to cut corners and make big savings. Newbie actors were easy and more forthcoming and they even worked for a pittance and did as they were told. Besides, the creatives felt that daily shows were anyways female dominated, why should they pay extra? On account of all this, the male (established) actors were badly hit. What was really galling according to sources was that the creatives were even ready to accept mediocrity for the sake of the bottom line. The casting guys were told that they didn't want a good actor, ordinary new comers would also do. They were just not ready to pay premium for talent.

However, things have slightly changed post *Bade Achhe Lagte Hain* where Ekta Kapoor cast Ram Kapoor and Sakshi Tanwar in the lead. Since TV always followed the beaten track, the success of *Bade* then (now it is dipping though) other senior male actors like Hiten Tejwani (*Pavitra Ristha*) and Pawan Shankar (*Kya Hua Tera Vaada*) are also making a comeback. We spoke to a few actors, producers and channel heads to find out what they felt about the above trend.

Iqbal Khan (call to fame *Kaisa Ye Pyar Hai*; was away for a while; now back with *Yahan Main Ghar Ghar Kheli*)

"I needed something meaty to comeback with; I just can't work for the sake of being seen and end up doing anything mediocre and run-of-the-mill. Also as I am a firm believer in destiny, I always knew that what was mine would one day come along, so why compromise?"



Many people talk about actors getting less money, but I have always been lucky to get my due. I am very happy with my ongoing role in *Yahan Main Ghar Ghar Kheli*. This popular ZEE TV show produced by Rajshri is giving me a good platform to showcase my acting talent. Going down the past two to three years, I was also quite satisfied with my character

in Smriti Irani's *Waris* (ZEE), which as the name suggests was a male dominated show, a rarity in our TV space. Then I also did *Sanjog Se Bani Sangini*, which again generated good TRPs for the time it ran. I will also try my luck again in cinema with my upcoming film *Unforgettable*. I know my previous stints (*Fun2shh: Dudes In The 10th Century*, *Bullet - Ek Dhamaka*)

had not worked out, but then things in Bollywood have also changed for the good. But that does not mean that I will quit the small screen, which has made me who I am. I will continue to dabble in good work across all mediums."