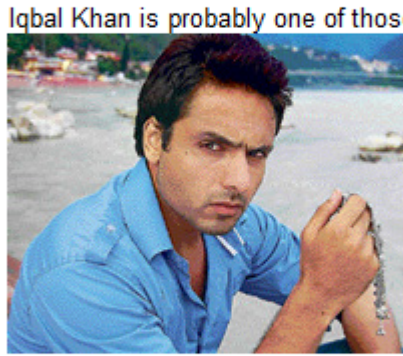


Loads of charisma

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While the television industry has produced many celebrities, it is not very often that you come across an actor who looks, acts, walks and talks like a superstar. Someone who oozes charisma, who lives life like a star and has that mysterious aura around him.



Iqbal Khan is probably one of those few men in the television industry who qualifies as a true superstar. The actor who became a heartthrob after playing the role of Angad Khanna in the serial *Kaisa Yeh Pyar Hai* is back in action after a gap of almost two years. His comeback vehicle, *Sanjog Se Bani Sangini*, is currently being aired on Zee TV.

But isn't two years too long a gap? What did he do during this period of hibernation? Iqbal Khan smiles and says, "Two years is a long gap. More so for an actor like me who likes to be immersed in work throughout the week. I used to work 16 hours a day and suddenly I had the entire day to myself, so it was a big change. Now, when I have started working for Sangini... I feel at home."

Was it a self-imposed exile or was he not getting good opportunities? Khan says that it is a mix of both. "I wanted to take a break and I was not getting the right opportunity either. Almost everyone I met in the last two years has asked me where I was and what I was doing. But since I was not doing anything significant, I preferred to not answer those questions."

But what was wrong with the offers in the last two years? We have seen quite a few popular serials on television in the last two years and it is difficult to believe that Iqbal Khan did not find anything lucrative. The actor has his own views about it though. "There has been a sea change in the Indian television world in the last two years and the serials that are being churned out. The industry has become much more rustic and the shows have developed a very regional flavour. Dialogues, storylines, everything seems to be driven by local languages. While I don't want to get into whether that is right or wrong, I must say that I do not like it too much. That is the reason I stayed away from those serials," explains Khan.

He explains further, "Having said that, I must also reiterate that television industry is controlled by content and not by stars. Here, content is king and if some actor claims that the show was successful because of him, I don't think that would be the right statement to make."

That is quite a statement from a person who has been largely responsible for the success of shows like *Kaisa Yeh Pyaar Hai*, *Kahin To Hoga* and *Kawyanjali*. So what was so special about *Sanjog Se Bani Sangini* that made Iqbal Khan take the plunge? "I play the role of Rudra, a man jilted in love. He is always neglected by his family members and is ditched by the love of his life at the same time. I decided to work on the show as it's something that I have not attempted so far."

With this show, Iqbal is returning to his tried and tested genre of playing romantic roles. It is something he has always achieved success with. Ask him about this, and you will get an instant response, "Almost every discussion I have, I spend some time in explaining why I play romantic roles. I have a standard answer to them — God has been very kind to me. The romantic characters I have played, be it Angad (*Kaisa Ye Pyar Hai*), Shiv (*Karam Apna Apna*), Abhimanyu (*Choono Hain Aasman*) or Shankar (*Waaris*) have been popular largely due to my fans. I strongly believe that *Sangini*.. will be no exception."