



'Once y Balaji. there's going b

Iqbal Khan breaks
Ekta Kapoor, *birwi*
interviewed by Riy

FLYING HIGH: Iqbal Khan

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Choona Hai Asmaan is ready for take-off. Is it a sequel to Saara Aakash?

No, it's a completely new show, and has nothing to do with *Saara Aakash*. Hey, just because JP Dutta made *Border* first, that didn't make *LOC* its sequel, right? The backdrop may be the air force, but the story of *Choona..* revolves around human emotions and relationships.

It's a young show.. without any women in saris.. about everyday life. It's different from what's happening on television today. I guess that's evident from the promos.

How different is the Abhimanyu of Choona.. from Angad of Kaisa Yeh Pyar Hai?

(Smiles) Well, Abhimanyu is not a Casanova like Angad. He's a man of few words and many

rules that he follows religiously. He's a no-nonsense guy, but that does not mean he's boring.

How different is Miditech from Balaji Telefilms?

It's a decent production house, not into too many fictional shows. A lot of detailing has gone in this show and they've given me the best of everything. (After a longish pause) I have nothing against Balaji. No matter what happens I'll never forget the fact that they gave me my big break.

I wasn't too convinced about Shaurya (*Kavyanjali*) and I didn't like Angad much even though he made me famous. But Shiv (*Karam Apna Apna*) was the best character I've played to date. I enjoyed him, and now I love Abhimanyu as much.

But you seemed stressed while

doing Karam Apna Apna?

It was a good show, I really liked the story. When I quit, the TRPs were up to 11. But I was fed up of working 24x7. You can slog 20 hours a day, but not 24. I had no life! For two years all I did was walk from my vanity van to the set and back.

You could have taken a short break..

It's not possible to take a break when you are working in a daily soap. The only option was to quit. I desperately needed a break. There was my family and my wedding.

I'd like to clarify that no one at Balaji forced me to overdo things. It was my decision.

I used to hang around the sets and keeping shooting. After a point, this became a habit. Now, I'd like to keep normal hours.

Didn't Ekta Kapoor offer you anything post Karam Apna Apna?

No. After I quit Balaji, Ekta not offered me anything. C you quit Balaji, maybe there no going back.

But you were expecting a call?

I wanted a change of pace have dinner at home. And explained earlier, the only out for me was out. I met Shaaji and Ekta and explained reasons for wanting to c There were no arguments. my way. And after that I di call Ekta, neither did she call

No regrets?

No regrets, no complaints. These few months when I g be by myself, were a period introspection and growth helped me evolve as a per Earlier, my view was limited just my role, now I look at

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his silence about
and being back on TV..
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whole package. Everyone has to look good on the show, not only me.

Given your popularity on TV you must have got plenty of film offers?

Yeah, but nothing really exciting. Even on TV, the shows I was offered were not very different from what was going on. Even *Kaisa Yeh Pyaar Hai* was primarily a love story. The money was tempting, but I had to think of the long-term prospects.

These days, most actors are dragging their spouses into the spotlight, irrespective of whether they can act or dance.

(Laughs) Not me. Sneha's Iqbal Khan's wife. Period. Yes, we've been offered shows.. reality shows..but they are a big no-no. I can't dance. And I don't want my fans to know that.