

**CREATIVE WORLD**

**Multitasking helps me as performer: Shraddha**



**MUMBAI, AUG 9 /-/-** From promoting her upcoming film 'Street' to doing prep work for Saina Nehwal biopic, Shraddha Kapoor is multitasking at the moment and the actor says while it takes a toll on her, it also helps her as a performer. It has been a busy year for Shraddha with 'Street' and 'Batti Gul Meter Chalu' releasing back-to-back, the shooting of 'Saaho', and prep work for Saina Nehwal biopic. "Sometimes working on films simultaneously can get difficult. It takes a toll on you. But it also helps switching between characters. I feel taking a break from one character to another helps me. "But at the same time, you do not want to over-exhaust yourself thinking about one character. One day you are this person, the other day you are another, it is the perk of being an actor that we can be someone else," Shraddha told PTL.

At the beginning of her career, Shraddha was seen as a girl-next-door, but today she feels blessed to be getting diverse roles. "With 'Haseena Parkar', I had the opportunity to try something different. Also, all my characters be it in 'Street', 'Batti Gul Meter Chalu' and Saina Nehwal biopic are very different from each other. I am glad that makers are looking at me in a different way."

While she is proud of doing 'Haseena Parkar', its box office failure disappointed her. "I think a lot of people watched on TV, which is ironic because why did not you go to theatres? I don't hold both success and failure close to me. That is bound to happen. The only thing I can control is on working hard and giving my best."

The 'Ok Jaanu' star has now shifted focus on the Saina Nehwal biopic, for which she starts shooting from next month. The film will be directed by Amole Gupte. "It is a physically demanding film. But it is an inspiring story as so many people look up to her. I feel grateful to be playing that part. I will begin shooting for it next month and the prep is on. I am having a great time playing badminton. It is fabulous to be part of such a great story," Shraddha says. Asked if she has mastered the game by now, she said, "I don't know that. I am trying to. It is the second most difficult sport in the world. It is not easy." The 31-year-old is equally happy to be a part of Prabhas's next film 'Saaho', that is being shot simultaneously in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi. She will be doing her own stunts.

"It is difficult but I want to do as much as I can do on my own. If there is a stunt for which I am not qualified enough, I will be happy to use a body double for it. "So one has to be responsible. Sometimes I tend to get over excited and over involved but the professionals know what you have to do and what not. I follow what I am told." She says an action film is quite difficult to do and comes with its own set of challenges. "Certain level of fitness always helps. I am pushing myself maximum for 'Saaho', Saina Nehwal biopic and whatever is the demand of the role." Currently, Shraddha, is busy promoting 'Street', a horror comedy with Rajkummar Rao. (PTI)



**Zee5 presents 'AranyaDeb': Zee5 announced the launch of 'AranyaDeb', its first engali original premiering on August 10. Picture shows the Director Debashish Sen Sharma with star cast Jisshu Sengupta and radio presenter Mir-Afsar Ali-Ashok Sarkar**

**Two-day Inter School fest of BDMI held**

**KOLKATA, AUG 9 /-/-** It was a fun-filled day of activity at the B.D.M.I premises in Pratapgarh, Garia, as Euphoria- their inter-school fest- started with an inaugural ceremony, followed by various activities. Vijaya Chaudhuri, Principal of B.D.M.I mentioned that this season is the 4th Edition. There are an array of activities happening, from slogan writing to classical dance, from Rangrasiya to Kodlash, from Mom's Chef to beat boxing to name a few. The two day activity spreads over 9th August & 10th August 2018. There are about 19 reputed city schools participating in the activity including Lakshmipt Singhania Academy, Asian International School, Ramkrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Technocrat School, Abhinav Bharati School. (EOIC)

**A decade after death, Solzhenitsyn draws a blank with young Russians**

**MOSCOW, AUG 9 /-/-** A decade after the hugely influential author's death, some young Russians admit to only a passing knowledge of Russian dissident writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who won a Nobel Prize for chronicling the horrors of the Soviet Gulag. "Solzhenitsyn was a dissident, someone who opposed the Soviet regime and he was a great writer," summed up Alexander Polyakovskiy, 23, who is studying international relations. He admits he has not read any of the author's books. "They talked about him a bit when I was at high school, during the Russian literature lessons, but I don't remember too much," he added. Rather than hearing about Solzhenitsyn from teachers, "it was my mother who explained to me that he was one of the greatest writers of the 20th century," Polyakovskiy said. By

contrast, his mother Yelena emotionally described how she discovered one of Solzhenitsyn's works hidden among the family's books during the Soviet era. "I was a teenager and my parents drilled it into me that I mustn't tell anyone we had the book at home. It was a forbidden fruit," she said. "It was such a different era that it's hard for my son to imagine it," she added, explaining his lack of interest. Solzhenitsyn, who died on August 3, 2008 at the age of 89, shot to fame in the USSR with his 1962 novella that was the first in Soviet literature to describe everyday life in a prison camp, "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich." It was based on his own experiences of seven years of imprisonment for criticising Stalin. Solzhenitsyn's most widely read book, "The Gulag Archipelago," a lengthy

chronicle of the workings of Soviet terror, sold millions of copies after being smuggled out and published in Paris in 1973. Solzhenitsyn was expelled by the Soviet authorities soon after and spent 20 years in exile in the United States before returning in triumph to Russia in 1994. Alexander Altunyan, who teaches journalism at Moscow's International University, also notes the younger generation has little interest in Solzhenitsyn's weighty historic tomes and grimly realist novels such as "Cancer Ward." "Out of a class of 30 students, no more than two or three will have read a book by Solzhenitsyn. Most of them don't know a thing about him," School teachers say they have to choose which books on the curriculum to focus on in literature lessons and some get the bare minimum of class time. Yet some do focus

on Solzhenitsyn, saying his moral and political views are still relevant. "We really do need to read Solzhenitsyn today as there are more and more attempts to deny Stalin-era repressions, when some people say nothing terrible happened in that era," said Olga Mayevskaya, a teacher of Russian language and literature. She said she spends several lessons on books by Solzhenitsyn including "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" and "Gulag Archipelago." "I quote the most powerful passages of Gulag Archipelago to the students," she said. "What's unbelievable is that they are not told about this in history lessons. This is the history of our country. They have to know it so it does not happen again." Russia in recent years has seen a strong tendency to present Stalin in a positive

light, while officials downplay the repressions and forced collectivisation that killed millions. Nevertheless, Solzhenitsyn remains a touchstone to many Russians. A poll last year by state pollster VTsIOM on Russians' "idols" from the 20th century put Solzhenitsyn fifth, behind such figures as cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin and World War II commander Georgy Zhukov. President Vladimir Putin, who has quoted Solzhenitsyn in speeches, has ordered official celebrations for the centenary of the writer's birth in December. A statue of Solzhenitsyn is due to be put up on a Moscow street that he named. Putin has named Solzhenitsyn a state prize a year before his death. Increasingly nationalist and conservative in later years, Solzhenitsyn backed Putin's course. (AFP)

**22nd edition of Paramapara series begins today**

**NEW DELHI, AUG 9 /-/-** Grammy-winning instrumentalist Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Carnatic vocalist Abhishek Raghuram, Khyal singers Pandit Rajan and Sajal Mishra are among the many eminent artists who will be performing at the 22nd edition of "Paramapara Series- National Festival of Music and Dance". Organised by Natya Tarangini led by Padma Bhushan awardee Kuchipudi couple Raja and Radha Reddy, the music and dance festival will be held at Kamani Auditorium here from August 10. The festival aims to offer a platform to young talents trying to make their foothold in the world of art and culture, organisers said. "Indian dance and music were created by illumined minds of yore to enlighten people and bring peace and tranquility to society. Natya Tarangini's Paramapara Festival combines this ancient ideology with modern technology to teach the future generation the essence of our 'Bharatiya' culture through 'natyam' and 'sangeetam'," Reddy said.

The three-day event will also see performances by veteran classical dance couple The Dhananjayans (Shanta and Vannadil Pudiyaevettil Dhananjayan) and Kathak exponent Uma Dogra. "I have been in Mumbai for 34 years now but Delhi is both home and an emotional abode. It's here I grew up with my sitar player father, met my guru, Pt Purgalalji, from whom I learned until his sudden demise, watched stalwarts of classical dance and music including Raja and Radha Reddy ji and in Delhi only I blossomed into a soloist. I truly feel blessed and honoured to be part of the Reddy's Paramapara Series," Dogra said. In the past, the festival has featured artists like Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Dr Balaramakrishna, Pandit Shivkumar Sharma, Pandit Birju Maharaj, and Kelucharan Mohapatra among others. The musical event will come to an end on August 12. (PTI)



**Cuban singer Albita Rodriguez (2L) stands with Cuban dancers (L to R) Yuyu Vega, Katia Aisler and Alejandro Alí beside a Buick Century classic car as the Grammy-award winning performer stars in the musical 'Carmen La Cubana' at Sadler's Wells in London, Britain—REUTERS**

**Archie Panjabi to star in NBC's new legal drama**

**LOS ANGELES, AUG 9 /-/-** NBC network has given pilot order to a legal drama with Archie Panjabi attached to star. In the show, Panjabi will play a successful LA attorney who leaves her comfortable, coastal bubble to practice law in her home state of Wisconsin. She is forced to confront preconceived stereotypes and realise there is more that unites us than divides us, reported Variety. The one-hour project comes from Alex Berger, who will serve as writer and executive producer. Panjabi will also be a producer on the series. Gero's Quinn's Home banner will produce the show in association with Warner Bros. (PTI)

**David Schwimmer to guest star on 'Will & Grace'**

**LOS ANGELES, AUG 9 /-/-** Actor David Schwimmer has joined the cast of "Will & Grace" for the reboot's sophomore run. The show will premiere on October 4 on NBC. The "Friends" alum will join returning cast members Debra Messing, Eric McCormack, Sean Hayes, and Megan Mullally as Grace's new love interest. Alec Baldwin, Chelsea Handler, and Mary McCormack are also set to guest star in the second season. (PTI)

**Keanu Reeves recalls shaving his legs for a commercial**

**LOS ANGELES, AUG 9 /-/-** Keanu Reeves has revealed that he once shaved his legs for a soft drink commercial. In an interview with James Corden during his talk show, the 53-year-old actor said he did a Coca-Cola commercial in the 1980s which was a father-son relationship between the cyclist and his coach. "So I had to play a cyclist, who's like, you know, a young kid, my father's my coach, it's a big race," Reeves told Corden. "But it was a three-day shoot for me, it was a great experience because you're going from school and study to the real world. To practical. So it was like hitting marks, we had to improv some scenes, we had to pretend it was hot and we were filming in the winter. You know, so it was a real world, working experience," he added. The actor then revealed that to play the character, he "shaved his legs." A shocked Corden asked, "You shaved your legs for this commercial?" to which Reeves replied, "Yeah! Because I'm playing a cyclist." (PTI)

**Always had to prove myself at every point: John**



**MUMBAI, AUG 9 /-/-** John Abraham has been working in films for nearly 15 years and has several commercially and critically acclaimed films to his credit but the actor says he had to "prove himself" at every point in his career. Even though he garnered success in films like

even after 'Parmanu'. I don't hold any grudges. I have a beautiful relationship with the industry. "I was the captain in my school at the forefront of doing things. I always had an identity of myself. This very strong sense of self has put me in a situation today where I never wanted to be a part of any entourage or any camp. I have survived that way," John told PTL. It is being said that for outsiders it is important to network in the industry to get good work. But John says going to parties or manufacturing a relationship was never his style. "In Bollywood, if you try too hard to make a relationship work, it won't happen. I don't try. My relationships with people are organic. I don't try too hard to be someone's friend." His choice of films as a producer from "Vicky Donor" to "Madras Cafe" to "Parmanu" has been lauded by audiences and John, 45, feels happy about this positive change in viewers who can "sniff out" a good movie. "Honest content-

driven films are surviving. Audience can sniff out a good and a bad film. You can manipulate the audience to get a massive opening. I am one of those few people who does not believe in the opening of the film," he says. "I believe in the Monday of the film. Your film is only good if it will last two or three weeks. That's what we as actor-producers, directors shy away from because we are scared to accept failures." His next, "Satyameva Jayate" is today's representation of the angry young man thing that happened when Amitabh Bachchan first came out. It resonates with what happens in society today. "There is a lot of anger which exists in the society. The world is being polarised. There are fringe elements, extremism but the father of it all is corruption. We are talking about that," he says.