



### CREATIVE WORLD

## Felt my personal approach needed to change: Abhishek on two-year film break



**MUMBAI, AUG 30 /-/** Abhishek Bachchan says he had reached a "complacency point in his career" and that made him realise that he needed to take a break professionally. The actor, who is back with 'Manmarziyaan' after two years, said taking a back step was scary and he did fear he would be forgotten as there is this widely held notion of being out of sight is out of mind in the industry. "It is not just about this industry, life in general, it is about out of sight, out of mind. Initially it was a thought that I had. But I was very confident that it would not become an issue," Abhishek told PTI in an interview. The actor, best known for his roles in "Guru", "Yuva" and "Dhoom" franchise, said feeling stuck was a bigger fear than being forgotten for him. "I just wanted to re-evaluate where I was in life, wanted to re-energise myself. There was a definite complacency that had come into my work and I wanted to change that," he said. For Abhishek, 42, "it was not the films that he was doing but how he was doing it that was bothering him." "I have worked very hard on all the films I have done. I have loved all the films that I have done and I have enjoyed every one of them. (But) I felt my personal approach needed to change." As a leading man his 2015 film "Ali Is Well" did not do well at the box office. He was then seen in "Housefull 3" with Akshay Kumar.

Asked if he ever felt that his viability as a hero was questioned, Abhishek said, "The films like 'Happy New Year' and 'Housefull 3' were doing well, they were enormous hits. But you have to go beyond that. It was a more personal decision than a commercial one." In his break, Abhishek focused on supporting his football and kabaddi teams. "Sports is very inspirational, you learn about team spirit, fighting spirit, how to push against all odds and still try and come out victorious. I have been a sports man all my life. Having my football and kabaddi team has helped me so much. The two years when I was not making films, I was concentrating on my supporting teams and setting them up. It is very rewarding." Today, the actor said, he is a "lot of more focused".

"In all these films, when you feel the onus of the film is not on you, you feel liberated and it becomes very easy. But your job is to be in a position to be tough and you are meant to feel and take the pressure. That is more important." The actor does not look back at his past career "fondly". "When you see what you have done in the past, you figure out a better way and that is good as it means you are evolving as an actor," he said. "Each individual has to learn to grapple with success and failure themselves. It has different definitions for everybody. With success, you learn humility and from failure you need to learn strength," he added. "Manmarziyaan" is directed by Anurag Kashyap. (PTI)

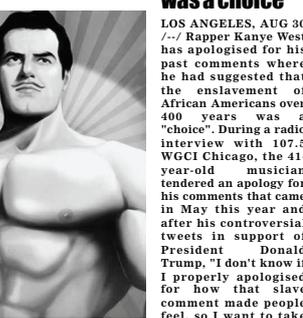
## Comic book series on 'Superhero' Dara Singh to motivate youth in Punjab

**AMRITSAR, AUG 30 /-/** The heroic exploits of legendary Dara Singh, in the ring and outside it, would soon come in a graphic avatar as a comic book series is set to be launched on the wrestling icon's life. Graphic artist George Emmanuel, speaking to PTI over the phone from Mumbai, said Dara Singh was as 'institution' known across the globe for his achievements in wrestling as well as the film industry. "The motive behind the launch of the comic book series, particularly in Punjab, is related to the rising drug menace among youth. The comic books would motivate youth and children on how to exercise, proper diet, and valuable tips to keep the body fit and fine," Emmanuel said.

The son of the wrestler, Vinodoo Dara Singh, may introduce the comic series first in Punjab in November close to his father's birth anniversary, he said. Dara Singh was born on November 19, 1928. Tips for achieving a fit and muscular physique would also be there in these comics, he said. Eye-catching sketches of the sturdy Dara Singh in the comic series will motivate children to workout, Emmanuel said. "The dialogues will be by Mumbai-based Maruk, who is a renowned dialogue writer," he said. Dara Singh defeated renowned and powerful competitors in the field of wrestling which put him in the limelight worldwide. Emmanuel said adding all this would be a part of the narrative in these comics. Dara Singh's childhood in the village where he a considerable



time will feature in the stories which will show how friendly and generous he was with his childhood friends. Emmanuel was asked about the idea behind a comic book series. "I had an idea which was discussed with Vinodoo Dara Singh who was happy to know that a comic series book could be introduced about the life of his late father," Emmanuel said. Indian youth need role models like Dara Singh, a pure Punjabi at heart, and it would help in keeping them away from drug addiction, he added. Dara Singh would be depicted as a superhero in the comics, Emmanuel said. The legendary wrestler had earned the title 'Rustom-e-Hind' in his life time, he added. The work on illustration was on at hand-footing for the last



nine months with high-end computer techniques. Free on-line access would also be provided," Emmanuel said. Telling about his past experience, Emmanuel said earlier he had developed a graphic novel based on the life of Sikh warrior Hari Singh Natwa, which he claimed was a unique do graphic documentation on the Sikh general and how he used weaponry in battles. (PTI)

## Kanye West tenders apology for saying 'slavery was a choice'

**LOS ANGELES, AUG 30 /-/** Rapper Kanye West has apologised for his past comments where he had suggested that the enslavement of African Americans over 400 years was a "choice". During a radio interview with 107.5 WGCI Chicago, the 41-year-old musician tendered an apology for his comments that came in May this year and after his controversial tweets in support of President Donald Trump. "I don't know if I properly apologised for how that slave comment made people feel, so I want to take this moment right now to say that I'm sorry for that comment," West said. "And I'm sorry for people who felt let down by that moment, and also I appreciate you guys giving me the opportunity to talk to you about the way I was thinking and what I was going through and what led me to that," he added. West also talked about the moment he was left speechless on Jimmy Kimmel Live! when asked why he feels Trump cares about black people.

The rapper offered his reply to the question, saying "I feel that he cares about the way black people feel about him, and he would like for black people to like him like they did when he was cool in the rap songs and all this. He will do the things that are necessary to make that happen because he's got an ego like all the rest of us." "He wants to be the greatest president, and he knows that he can't be the greatest president without the acceptance of the black community." So, it's something he's going to work towards, but we're gonna have to speak to him," he added. (PTI)

## Abhishek brave to pause, reflect and return to movies: Taapsee

**MUMBAI, AUG 30 /-/** After a brief sabbatical from film, Abhishek Bachchan is returning with 'Manmarziyaan' and his co-star Taapsee Pannu calls the actor's decision to take a break extremely "brave and courageous." Post his 2016 release "Housefull 3", Abhishek took time off from cinema as he went on analysing his career and where it was headed. His decision to hold off for a while may show that the actor's instability in the industry puts everyone on the same level - be it a star kid or an outsider - but Taapsee says for her it only reflects one thing: strength. "Abhishek will sometimes be sure, sometimes unsure of things but you need strength to survive all the ups and downs. Then to take a break to sort things out and return with a film like 'Manmarziyaan'. It is not a conventional heroic film for him to do. It is very brave and he is strong as a person to do that. It requires courage," Taapsee told PTI.



"The 'Pink' star says it would be wrong to say that Abhishek has not proved himself as a performer in the industry. "If you talk about his background, he is Amitabh Bachchan's son and he has a legacy on top of him. Yes, they (star kids) do get privilege of being a star regardless of whatever work they do. But he has proved himself as an actor in films. It is not that he is totally devoid of good performance and we all know that." The 31-year-old actor says there is both an advantage and a disadvantage in having a famous last name. "They (star kids) will never have a dearth of opportunities but they have to filter things. Unlike people like me, who have a dearth of opportunities at the first place, forget about filtering the offers. That's the difference. "But it doesn't make things easy for them because they have a name to live up to and people to answer to. I don't have that baggage." Directed by Anurag Kashyap, "Manmarziyaan" is written by Kanika Dhillon and also features Vicky Kaushal. The Aanand L Rai backed romantic-comedy-drama is scheduled to release on September 14. (PTI)



The 75th Venice International Film Festival - photocall for the movie "Roma" competing in the Venezia 75 section - Venice, Italy - REUTERS

## Felt tremendously sad about Kelly Marie Tran's bullying: John Cho

**NEW DELHI, AUG 30 /-/** "Searching" star John Cho says it was sad to read about the bullying that "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" actor Kelly Marie Tran went through. Tran, in a New York Times op-ed, opened up about dealing her social media account after being subjected to severe sexist and racist trolling for her role of Rose Tico in the film, which, she said, fed into her own childhood insecurity of growing up as an Asian-American star in America. Cho, one of the prominent Asian-American actors in Hollywood, said he was emotional after reading the "forceful" statement from Tran. "When I learnt the bullying that Loan (Tran) was going through, I felt tremendously sad. I find that people somehow tend to be meaner online. They

tend to pick up fights that they would not face to face. "But it also galvanised a lot of support for her. The only positive thing to come from this, if any is that it brought this forceful statement from Kelly. I found it quite an emotional read and I think it is something that resonated around the world," Cho told PTI in a phone interview from Los Angeles. Asian-American stories and actors are having a groundbreaking moment in Hollywood with the success of "Crazy Rich Asians" and all the positive buzz surrounding Cho's technology-driven thriller "Searching", which hits the screen tomorrow. In the film, being released in India by Sony Pictures Entertainment, Cho plays the role of a recently widowed man, who wakes up one day to find his teenage daughter missing. He starts to look for clues on websites, social media, smartphones and computer screens. The thriller, that premiered at Sundance Film Festival to good reviews, is directed by Indian-American Aneesh Chaganty. Cho revealed that he initially refused the film because of all the technology involved but Chaganty convinced him otherwise. "Aneesh reached out to me personally and explained how he would make it look like a traditional thriller. I was just bowled over by what a charismatic and intelligent person he was. I realised he can do it." The film is being called as the next big project to drive the momentum ahead about

authentic Asian-American stories. Cho said he is hopeful about the future but also acknowledges the contribution and mentorship of films and people that preceded his work. "What's happening is that the audience is getting more boisterous. They are getting louder and they are being heard." The 46-year-old actor, best known to the viewers internationally for his role in franchise films such as "Star Trek" and "Harold and Kumar", believes American public has always been open to diverse faces but the studios have been slow to realise the potential of telling varied stories. "The studios are realising that actually it is great publicity. Putting together a diverse cast attracts positive attention. People tend to

like it, so why not?" Citing the example of "Harold and Kumar", which he did with the American actor Keanu Penn, Cho said it would not have worked with white actors but became memorable because the lead came from different ethnicities. Asked whether there were any plans to come up with another "Star Trek" movie, he said, "I don't know anything about it yet." He is, however, more enthusiastic about a possible fourth film in "Harold and Kumar" series and even has a new idea. "I have talked with them and I had a fun idea for number four: They (Harold and Kumar) deal with being an adult as now they have children. I don't know if it will ever get made but I would love to do one." (PTI)