

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

CD Launch

Title: Tabo Mukkhani
Artist: Rebeka Sultana
Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi
Date: August 18
Time: 6pm



Theatre

Play: Raja...Ebong
Onnyanya
Troupe: Prachyanat
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA
Date: August 16-17
Time: 7:30pm



Musical Soiree

Title: Shrotar Ashor
Venue: Ramesh Chandra Dutta Auditorium, Chhayanaut
Date: August 14
Time: 7:30pm



Photography Exhibition

Title: Survivors
Artist: GMB Akash
Organiser: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka
Venue: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: August 14-27



Jaya Ahsan becomes a "Princess"



mannerisms, the kind of clothes they wear and how they speak to their clients."

Jaya also completed shooting another play, in which she is a member of a *jatra* troupe. According to the actress, "The play has been named after the superhit song 'Panjabiwala.' I play the role of Princess Monika. Dancers, usually referred to as 'princesses,' perform as opening acts at *jatra*."

"It's not your traditional, sophisticated dance. The kind of dance princesses usually perform -- with racy songs -- would probably be considered 'lewd,' " she continues. The play was shot with the help of a *jatra* team called Anjali Opera, and has been directed by Shumon Anwar.

An excited Jaya said, "I thoroughly enjoyed playing these roles as they gave me opportunities to see the world from unfamiliar points of views."

The plays are scheduled to air this coming Eid. Jaya's fans will have to keep a watch on the date.

The writer is a freelance contributor.

Jaya Ahsan dons the role of a 'Jatra Princess' in an upcoming play.

SYEDA SHAMIN MORTADA

The vivacious actress who lights up the small screen, Jaya Ahsan, is donning an unconventional role in a forthcoming play, titled "Tarpore Angurata Nando Ke

Bhalobashey."

In it, Jaya plays the role of a sex worker. The actress said that she craves challenging roles. The play has been directed by Mesbaur Rahman Shumon, and Jaya is paired opposite Animesh Aich, a talented young director.

About the play, Jaya said,

"The play was shot at the Goolondo Rajbari red light area, which houses about 1500 sex workers. I wanted to get into the skin of the character I played, so I visited the area and observed these women closely. I studied their

Monpura screened in Australia



Farhana Mili and Chanchal Chowdhury in a scene from "Monpura."

Giasuddin Selim's much-talked about feature film "Monpura" became the first

Bangladeshi film to be screened at an Australian theatre. The film was recently

screened at Hoyts Bankstown in Sydney from August 7 to 10, says a press release.

Tempestra Entertainment was the organiser of the event, which was also graced by the filmmaker.

There are a couple of upcoming shows in the pipeline as well. The film will be shown at Melbourne on the August 15. There will be two more shows in Westfield's Eastgardens Pagewood, Sydney on August 16 based on audiences demand.

The response for the film from the expats in Australia has been outstanding. The Bengali audience are eagerly waiting for the next film to be released in Australia.

"Monpura" stars popular TV play actor Chanchal Chowdhury and debutant Farhana Mili. Arnob is the music director of the film.

Kingbodontir Dhaka on Banglavisision

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Today at 5:55pm, Banglavisision will air "Kingbodontir Dhaka," an information-based programme on the capital city.

The programme will highlight the changes Dhaka has gone through since it became the Mughal capital in 1610.

After the Mughal era, Dhaka became the capital again in 1905, in 1947 and finally in 1971. Dhaka has sustained its position as a capital city for its rich heritage, culture and geographical position.

The TV show also addresses Dhaka's current problems, developments and possibilities.

Planned by Abu Sufian and researched by Kajol Ghosh, "Kingbodontir Dhaka" is produced by Fazlul Haque Akash. Nila is the host of the programme.



A scene from "Kingbodontir Dhaka."

Music Review

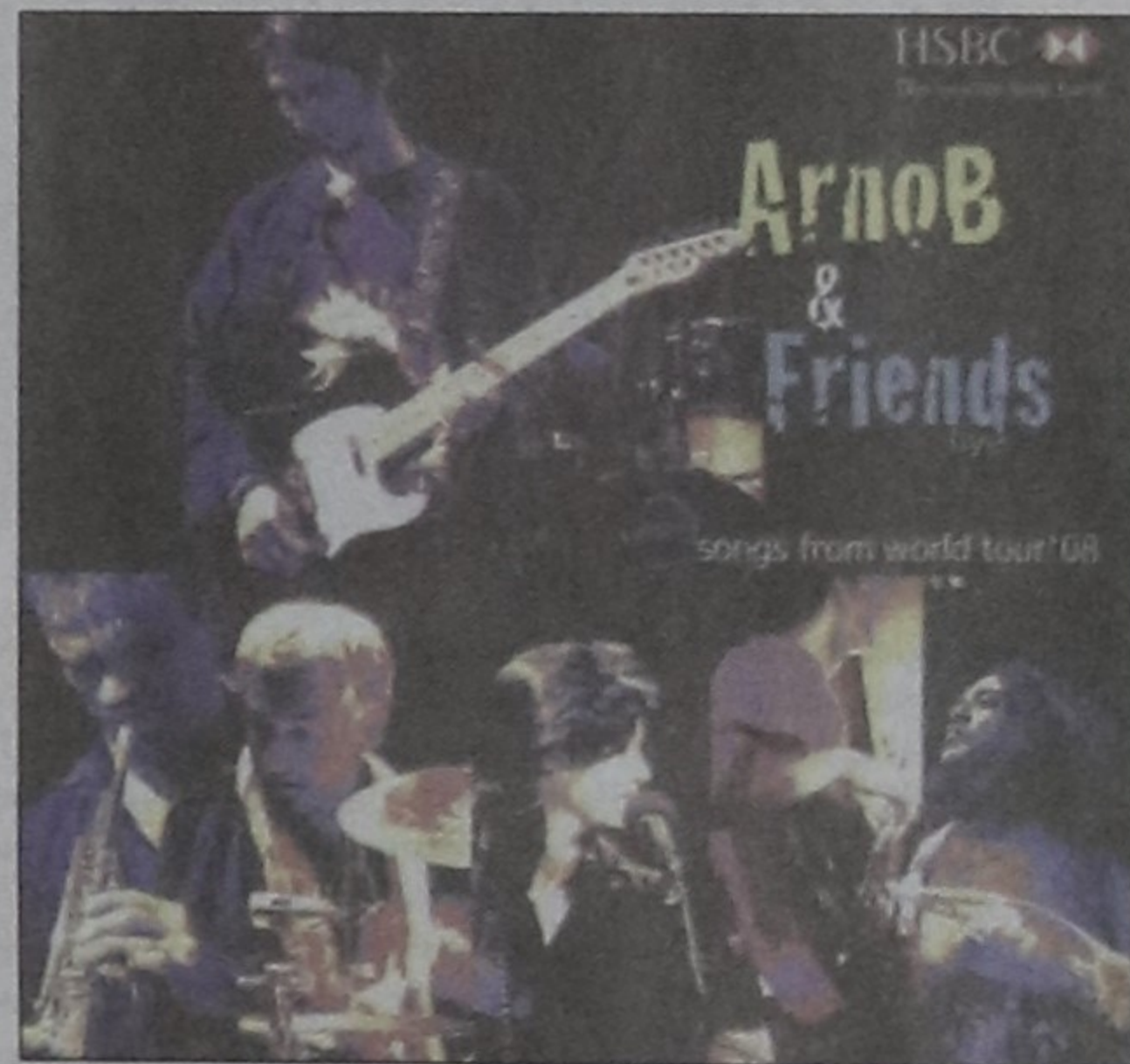
Arnob & Friends Live: Spirit of indie wrapped in commercial sheen

KARIM WAHEED

Last year, Dristipat (a non-profit expatriate Bangladeshi organisation that works on human rights) partnered with Arnob for a worldwide concert to raise funds for its humanitarian projects. 'The Unheard Voices World Tour' featured Arnob and his compadres -- Andrew Morris (saxophonist), Nazia Ahmed (vocalist), Resalat Rasheed 'Dhrubo' (bassist), Tarek bin Taher Akhanji 'Jibon' (drummer) and Nazrul Islam (dhol player) -- playing to full houses in the UK, US and Canada.

Bengal Music Company Ltd. recently released a live album (recorded during stage performances) featuring songs played by the band during the 'Unheard Voices' tour. Titled "Arnob & Friends Live," the album presented by HSBC, is part of the bank's latest brand campaign.

Music enthusiasts familiar with Arnob are well aware that the artist's sound is essentially indie. With this album, however, Arnob has seemingly decided to combine the raw energy and warmth that define indie music with the cutting edge studio produced gloss that makes mainstream sound lucrative. And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. It takes a genius with the Midas touch to be able to combine *Lakshmi* and



Saraswati. Famed composers and musicians have laboured throughout their lives to achieve this.

The genre-bending album features 12 tracks -- some new, some old and some borrowed.

The opening song, "Amaye dhore rakho" (written and composed by Arnob), stays true to the musician's roots. Andrew Morris deserves special mention. The Welsh saxophonist is like salt in Arnob's curry. Morris' sax not only introduces jazz elements, it changes the whole mood and familiarity of particular songs.

"Lalpahari" (a folk song from West Bengal) is a foot-tapping composition based on *jhumur* beats. With Nazia

as the backup vocalist, Arnob effortlessly takes the listener to the land of red hills, far from the hustle and bustle of city life. The song could just as well be a yearning to break free of monotony.

"Amay bhashaili re" (written and composed by Jasim Uddin) is a slow, melancholy take on the ever-familiar folk classic. Featuring impressive drum beats by Jibon, Nazia's vocals sound easy to the ear, but the song somehow lacks that X-factor.

Arnob returns with "Hok kolorob" (written by Rajib Ashraf and composed by Arnob). This is a renewed cover of a song from one of Arnob's previous solo albums (with the same title).

Nazia breaks the mould with her cover of "Orey nil

doriya." This classic Bangla film song (written by Mukul Chowdhuri and composed by Alam Khan) from "Sareng Bou" gets a complete makeover without losing any of its essence. It takes a seasoned artiste to sell a song intended to be sung by the opposite sex, and this emerging vocalist succeeds with flying colours. Armed with Nazrul's *dhol* and Morris' sax, Nazia's rendition of "Amar mon-er nongor poira roisey Sareng barir gharey..." goes beyond a sailor's nostalgia and becomes a universal yearning to reunite with the beloved.

Arnob has also included his interpretation of the Tagore song "Majhe majhe." Rendered in a scale higher than usual, this devotional piece has a rather whiny sound, but on the whole it's enjoyable.

The highlight of the album is perhaps the last track "Nao chhariya de," another widely known folk song (written and composed by Jasim Uddin). Arnob and Nazia gel like yin and yang and Morris' sax sounds surprisingly inseparable in a folk ditty. This is how it's done. All fusion and remix enthusiasts should take note.

Indie, folk, semi-classical (Nazia's rendition of a Raaga Yaman based composition "Piya ki nazariya"), Rabindra Sangeet -- this album should have been called "Jhalmuri Redux."

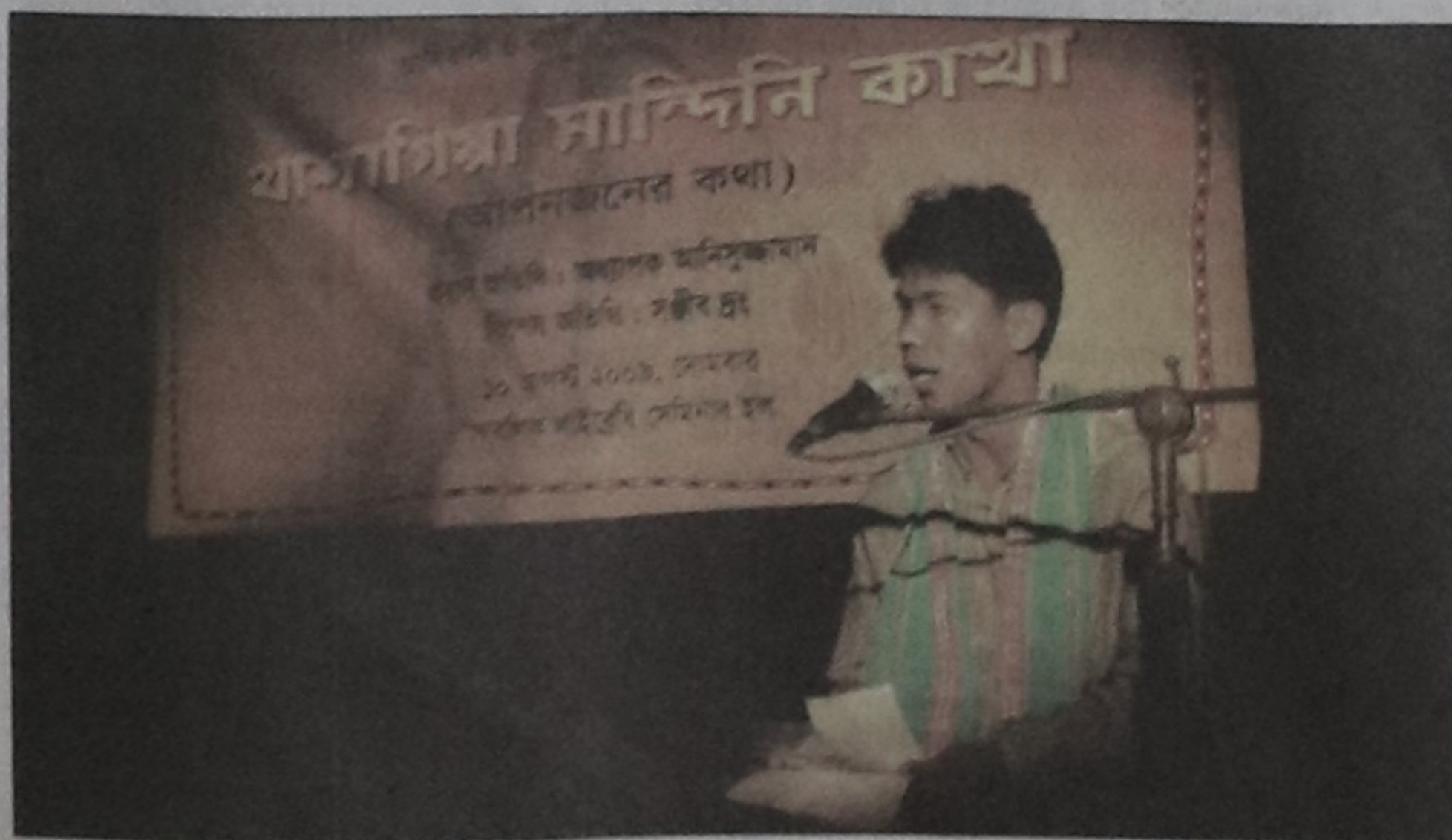
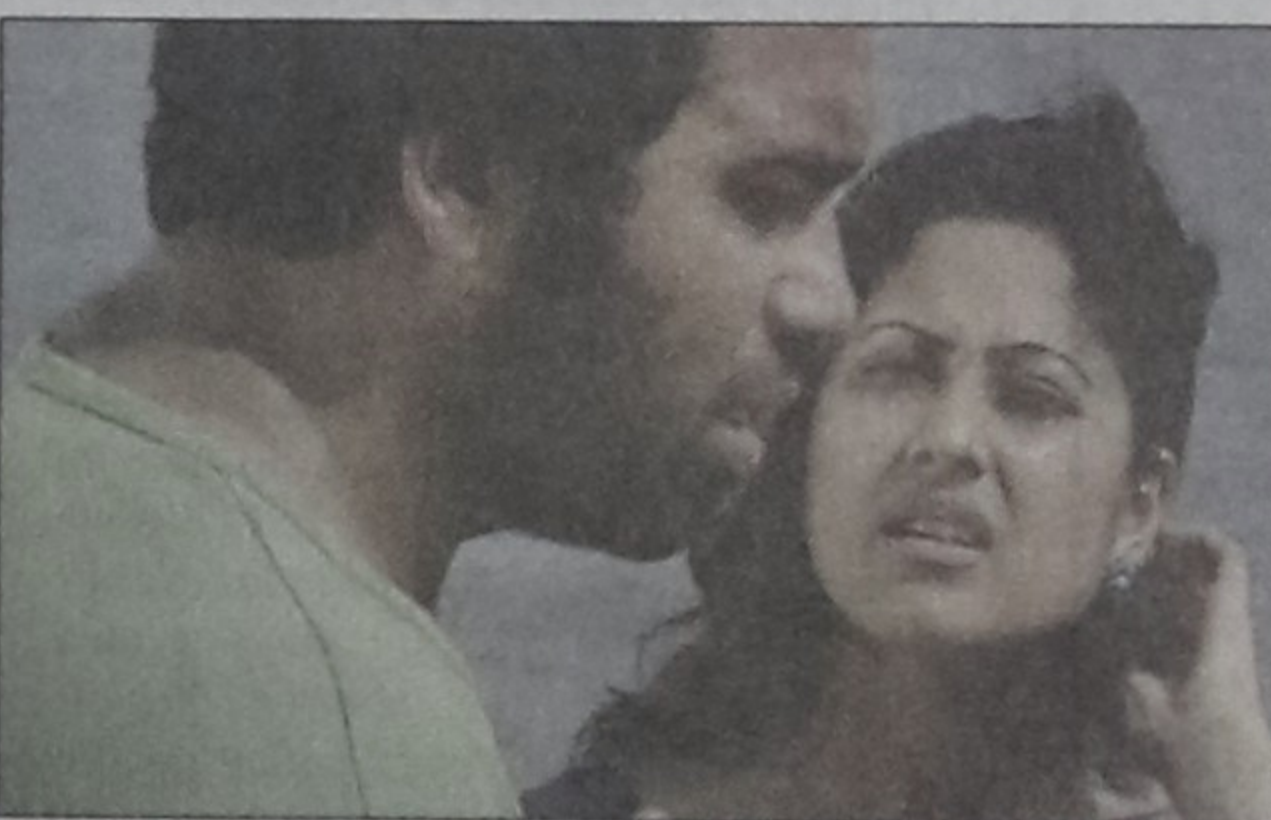


PHOTO: MUMIT M

An artiste recites at the programme "Khashagippa Mandini Kattha" held on the occasion of International Day of World's Indigenous People, arranged by Kajona at the Seminar Hall, Central Public Library, Shahbagh recently. Professor Anisuzzaman was the chief guest at the programme.

Single-episode play Shunyo on ntv



Iresh Zaker and Sumaiya Shimu in "Shunyo."

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Single-episode TV play "Shunyo" will be aired on ntv at 9 pm tonight. Directed by Mujahidul Islam, the play has been jointly written by Sumon Bhaduri and Rohitashya Mukherjee.

The protagonist of the play, Shubhro, is a university student who has developed this strange idea that he is a jinx, and brings bad luck to anyone he gets too close to. At first he doesn't take this seriously but as series of events occur, he becomes convinced that he is indeed connected to all those mishaps. This starts to bother him a lot, and he starts to distance himself from everyone. Noticing a sudden change in Shubhro's behavior, his girlfriend approaches him and tries to make him realise that he is actually under a false impression and is not connected to any of the bad things happening to people.

Iresh Zaker and Sumaiya Shimu have played the lead roles.

Love Aaj Kal

Saif Ali Khan's current affairs

The recent release of "Love Aaj Kal" is not Saif Ali Khan's only claim to fame. According to a report by The Times of India, Saif has attracted the ire of the Punjabi Cultural and Heritage Board for sporting a trimmed beard, which the Board had alleged was offensive to the religion of Sikhism. To pacify his detractors, Saif gave a written apology to the Board.

His explanation for the trimmed beard was that he had grown the beard for the past six months to play the character of a Sikh. The Board president said that Saif had conveyed in the letter that the beard looked trimmed because of "less facial growth."

Sapra also asserted that several decisions were taken at the Board's head office for which Saif, his partner Dinesh Vijan and director Imtiaz Ali turned out.

The film goes back in time to reveal how love was perceived in the old days and how it is now.

Here's the plot line of the film: Jai (Saif) and Meera (Deepa Padukone) are a modern couple and do not believe



Deepa Padukone and Saif Ali Khan in "Love Aaj Kal."

in tying each other down.

Cut to 1965 when the turbaned Veer Singh (played once more by Saif) romances Harleen (played by newcomer Gisele). The film has attracted rave reviews and should be a box office hit.

"Love Aaj Kal" also marks Saif's debut as producer. The actor says that he would like to produce at least one film a year with him starring in it. In a freewheeling interview with Filmfare, he states, "Ideally I'd

like to produce films like "Omkaara" and "Being Cyrus."

In the same magazine, Saif is open about his well-publicised relationship with the bubbly Kareena Kapoor. His retort to questions about whether the duo had secretly tied the knot: "Why would I want to do that?"

As for Kareena's alleged remark that Saif was perfect husband material, the actor-producer stated that, "I take

that as a compliment. But I don't think I'm perfect from any angle. But that's what makes us interesting. It's nice to be tolerated for being imperfect. That's what love is."

Saif's second production is "Agent Vinod", which he terms as a cross between "Mission Impossible" and "Syriana". Evidently Saif has just set the ball rolling in his avatar as producer.