RENDEZVOUS with SUNNY DEOL

DHAI KILO KA HATH : EK RU-BA-RU MULAQAT

Regarded as a macho man like his dad Dharmendra, he studied acting from acting school in Birmingham and has belted out a string of blockbusters like Border, Gadar Ek Prem Katha, Ghatak, Damini etc. This time 'Rail Dapan' interviews the handsome hunk popularly known as 'Dhai kilo ka hath', whose power packed punches speak as hard as his dialogues. Meet the one & only... Sunny Deol.

Chief Editor

In your early days you have travelled on Western Railway suburban system, if yes, are there any special reminiscences, thoughts or anecdotes?

Basically in childhood school days, mostly we used to go by train. We used to travel from Vile Parle to Churchgate in the 1970s. To get down at Churchgate from a train ride with my parents was a satisfying and enjoyable experience those days.

Have you patronised any of our prestigious trains like Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Duronto Express?

Not much.... While travelling with my parents in my childhood, we used to go by Frontier Mail, travelling mostly to Punjab. I remember it was like a family reunion while travelling for a marriage to Punjab in Frontier Mail.

Once we have travelled by Rajdhani, it was like a picnic and it used to be like a family affair. While in train we used to eat from in those steel thalis and have train tea and coffee to enhance the travelling experience.

Do you feel Railways plays a great role in fostering a sense of national integration and unity?

Definitely because this is the only way of reaching out to people all over the world. Courtesy Britishers who have laid the tracks all over, which makes it very convenient to travel. Mostly trains are an interesting journey and one experiences so many things. I wish we could do it all over again but being an actor it is not possible to do many things due to my celebrity status.

If not an actor, what alternative profession would you have chosen?

I am not so sure what I would have chosen but I was more into sports. I always wanted to be a sportsman and was also passionate about car racing.

In your career you have acted in many movies, in which there were railway shots, Gaddar was one of them. Could you narrate any anecdotes, how was the experience?

We had a great experience when we were shooting a sequence in Bikaner. Railway had provided us with a train which was supposed to be of that period. We had taken lots of risk, I remember running over the train. It was very hot the sweat could not be seen as it used to get evaporated. We had taken lot of shots for perfection. Besides I did train shoots for a sequence in Dillagi, which was a romantic sequence.... Arjun Pandit movie also had lot of train sequence shootings at Mumbai Central. During these shoots I used to observe suburban train operations which are the lifeline of the city.

Honestly how would you compare our trains to the trains abroad?

It is very difficult to compare them because everything is compatible to the kind of society & comfort. Our trains are compatible to our comfort levels, the way we are, the way our civic sense is, the way we live. They are very well adapted to it and thats the way we use our Railway. Abroad their civic sense is different, they maintain cleanliness. Here we are dependent on the Railway department to keep cleanliness, as our people are not too bothered about cleanliness. Everywhere they have their own standards and their own ways of functioning. Our country is a country with a vast population, and we are catering to the needs of a large population and trains are moving all over across the country. Surprisingly without using much of computerisation, the system has been working so well over here.

Like all Mumbaikars at some time you might have got caught in a traffic jam, did you feel any time to jump out and board a train would be preferable?

Many times... but because I am an actor, it was a little difficult. It would be so practical and without stress to travel by local trains with their punctuality, if I had not been an actor. Just recently I landed in Delhi, I felt like getting down and taking the Metro to get to my destination in minutes.

“People think and discuss about trespassers when some accident happens but later it is forgotten. They are back to their old ways. I humbly appeal..If you are not bothered about yourself, think about your family, think about your loved ones and please refrain from trespassing.”

Trespassing - crossing railway tracks illegally on the Mumbai suburban section causes accidents despite Western Railways' constant endeavours, efforts through advertisements, etc Would you please have a message for the people who are jeopardising their lives and their families?

Breaking the law is the motto of our country. Our civic sense is real bad. There is no value for people in our country, which is very sad. We can have rules and regulations but people should realise that they are doing something wrong. People think and discuss about trespassers when some accident happens but later it is forgotten. They are back to their old ways.

I humbly appeal..If you are not bothered about yourself, think about your family, think about your loved ones and please refrain from trespassing. Don't do something which could jeopardise not only your lives but affect the lives of people who loves you.

Just like the appeal for trespassing, an appeal to our commuters and passengers to keep railway trains and premises clean and hygienic.

Yes. That is something which I would insist we should do it and think on a priority basis to keep the railway premises clean. We would not think of doing such things in our home, then let's treat the Railway premises also in the same manner as we are going to use these facilities in trains and at stations for our benefit and use.

You have travelled widely, the Rail destination of your choice.

The rail destination of my choice is my village town Phagwada. Though now it has changed a lot.

Would you like to work on a movie based on Railway?

Yes, why not, if it is based on the people who are involved with the Railways. A story based on achievements and lives of railwaymen. If something is linked to Railways, definitely I would be interested to do such a shoot.

Interviewed by:
Hormazd Mohta, PRO (Adm.), Churchgate
Ajay Solanki, CPRI, Churchgate