



RENDEZVOUS with EMINENT FILM DIRECTOR **KABIR KHAN**

He has directed a wide range of films of different genres like Kabul Express, New York, Ek Tha Tiger, Phantom, Bajrangi Bhaijan etc. He has won the National Award recently for directing a wholesome family entertainer 'Bajrangi Bhaijan'. This time Rail Darpan introduces a suave and progressive director who subtly conveys political and social messages through his films. Meet Kabir Khan a film director, screen writer & cinematographer par excellence.

 Chief Editor

Do you feel Railways play a great role in fostering a sense of national unity & patriotism?

Yes, of course a composite culture like ours of different castes, religious, languages, communities is seamlessly united by Indian Railways. People from all classes, backgrounds travel in a railway compartment, which is a true representation of national integration.

Have you ever been associated with WR's suburban system?

Yes, basically I'm a Delhi boy who used to come to Mumbai for my holidays. One of my relatives, a railway officer, used to live at Badhwar Park & I remember we used to alight at Churchgate, walk upto Colaba and jump over the Cusrow Baug gauge wall near Badhwar Park.

What is your experience of shooting in a Western Railway office?

It was a wonderful and unique experience. I have shot in various locations, but the co-operation I received here was appreciable. I know we were demanding at times too, but Western Railway gave us all the help and assistance to make our experience and shoot smooth and memorable. I do hope if a script in future demands, I would like to shoot again in a Western Railway office.

If not direction, which other profession would you have chosen?

In connection with my shoot, I have travelled to over 70 countries. Travelling for me is a passion. If not a film director, I would have been a professional travel writer.

In your directing career, could you narrate any anecdote/experience of a memorable shot on the railways?

Well, the most memorable train sequence I have shot, has to be the shot in Bajrangi Bhaijan. The little girl getting off the Samjhauta Express and running behind the train would be the most memorable shot for me.

Caught in a traffic jam, did you ever shun your car and hop into a train.

Yes, I have done it many times without a blink. Quite often when I am stuck in a jam, I get off and go to the nearest station to board a train. I have done so in the past and would continue to do so in the future. Fortunately for us directors, unlike stars, the problems of celebrity status doesn't come in. Max if a train passenger recognizes me, he will discuss my film and ask for a selfie with me.

How would you compare our trains with those abroad.

As regards punctuality of our trains, I think our train frequency and punctuality is comparable to the best in the world. As regards cleanliness, it is the sheer pressure, but I find these days when I travel from Delhi to Kathgodam, Kalka etc for my shoots, cleanliness is being given top priority and effort and I can notice the positive change as regards cleanliness not only in railways but in all civic spaces.

In spite of Railway relentless, efforts and providing subways, foot over bridges & now even escalators, passengers and commuters still lose their lives due to the menace of trespassing. A social message for our valued commuters please.

It is sad that such trespassers not only harm themselves, but also cause trauma to their families who depend upon them. It is basically important here to instill a sense of civic responsibility,

that come what may, I will not trespass. What will I do with the extra 15 seconds in my life anyway? I may not even have a life left. Not only in Mumbai, I have seen this at Level Crossings in Delhi too. Such deaths and injuries are most distressing. Campaigns should say in very strong terms, that we must refrain from such adventurism and bravado.

Keeping in mind, Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of a Swachha Bharat, an appeal please, to passengers to keep railway premises clean & hygienic.

Absolutely, I fully agree. Everyone must firmly believe that cleanliness is not a favour. Whom are you keeping the trains clean for? yourself. It is a social awareness problem. Commuters must realize that these are their trains, stations which they use every day and keeping them clean is going to benefit them & them only.

Under the guidance of our Hon'ble Minister for Railways, Indian Railways has turned very proactive on social media to enhance passenger amenities for its passengers. Your views sir.

Yes, I have been noticing that Indian Railways have been using social media like facebook, twitter, websites extensively to ensure a safe and enjoyable journey. Today's world is fast paced. Its got time neither for television nor newspapers. All the information they have is on a cell in their hand, and as such being proactive on social media is an important initiative by Indian Railways.

Could you please name a favourite rail journey of your choice.

The Kalka – Shimla journey definitely with its tunnels and scenic beauty has always fascinated me. I have also travelled in some of the fancy and luxury trains like Palace on Wheels and Royal Orient which have been an incredible and awesome experience.

“

It is sad that such trespassers not only harm themselves, but also cause trauma to their families who depend upon them. It is basically important here to instill a sense of civic responsibility, that come what may, I will not trespass. What will I do with the extra 15 seconds in my life anyway? I may not even have a life left. Not only in Mumbai, I have seen this at Level Crossings in Delhi too. Such deaths and injuries are most distressing. Campaigns should say in very strong terms, that we must refrain from such adventurism and bravado.”



Interviewed by:

✍ Hormazd Mohta, PRO/CCG, Churchgate

✍ Ajay Solanki, CPRI, Churchgate

✍ Prabhat Mohite, Photographer & Videographer