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# Bombay Times

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**CELEBRITIES CAST THEIR VOTE**

Riteish and Genelia Deshmukh cast their votes at a polling booth in Maharashtra's Latur district on Tuesday morning, in the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections

**poll star**



## SHEKHAR SUMAN JOINS BJP IN DELHI

**Shekhar Suman** joined BJP in Delhi on Tuesday. Addressing the media, the actor said, "Sometimes you don't know what you are supposed to do and you get a direction from above and you follow it. I have come here with a positive outlook."

Agencies



## 'COLLEGE FESTS THODE SCARY TOH HOTE HAIN'

Singers react to recent Dehradun college incident where an audience member tossed a water bottle at Sunidhi Chauhan during her performance, and share some of their own harrowing experiences at fests



P5



Lana Del Rey brought the forest down the Met steps as she wore a custom Alexander McQueen beige gown with branches down the entire bodice



Co-chair Zendaya served back-to-back high couture moments. Her Maison Margiela's John Galliano dress, based on a 1999 vintage Dior piece featured a hummingbird on her neck

P3

For her second outing at the prestigious fashion gala, held annually at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alia Bhatt opted for a floral sari by Sabyasachi that was crafted by 163 artisans. About the outfit and her look, the actress wrote in an Instagram post, "In our journey for an Indian interpretation of this universal theme, the outfit took on a life of its own... Nothing embodies tradition and innovation like the saree... Creating this has been quite an experience... fun and stressful in equal parts (sic)!"

## SALMAN'S LETTER TO FANS FROM 1990 GOES VIRAL



P3

# Is Bollywood in panic mode after the failure of big-budget films?

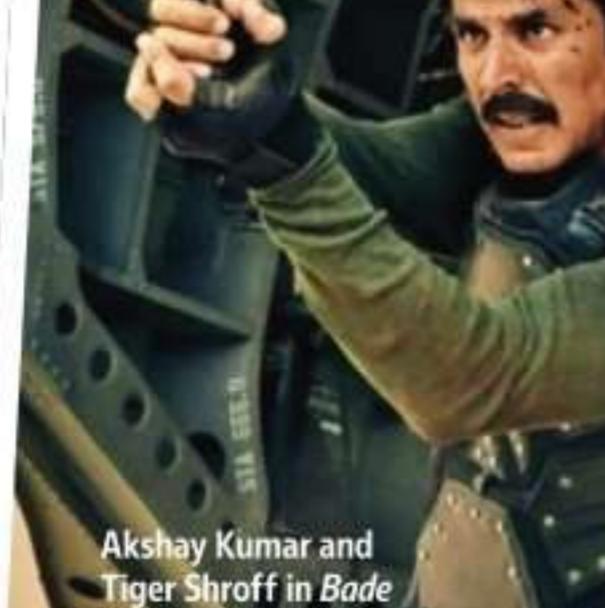
Astronomical star fees, lack of promotion or wrong timing of release – industry experts discuss what's led to the recent box office disasters

**BOX OFFICE COLLECTION**  
(in crore)

**₹48.85**

**BUDGET** (in crore)  
India nett

**₹250**  
India nett



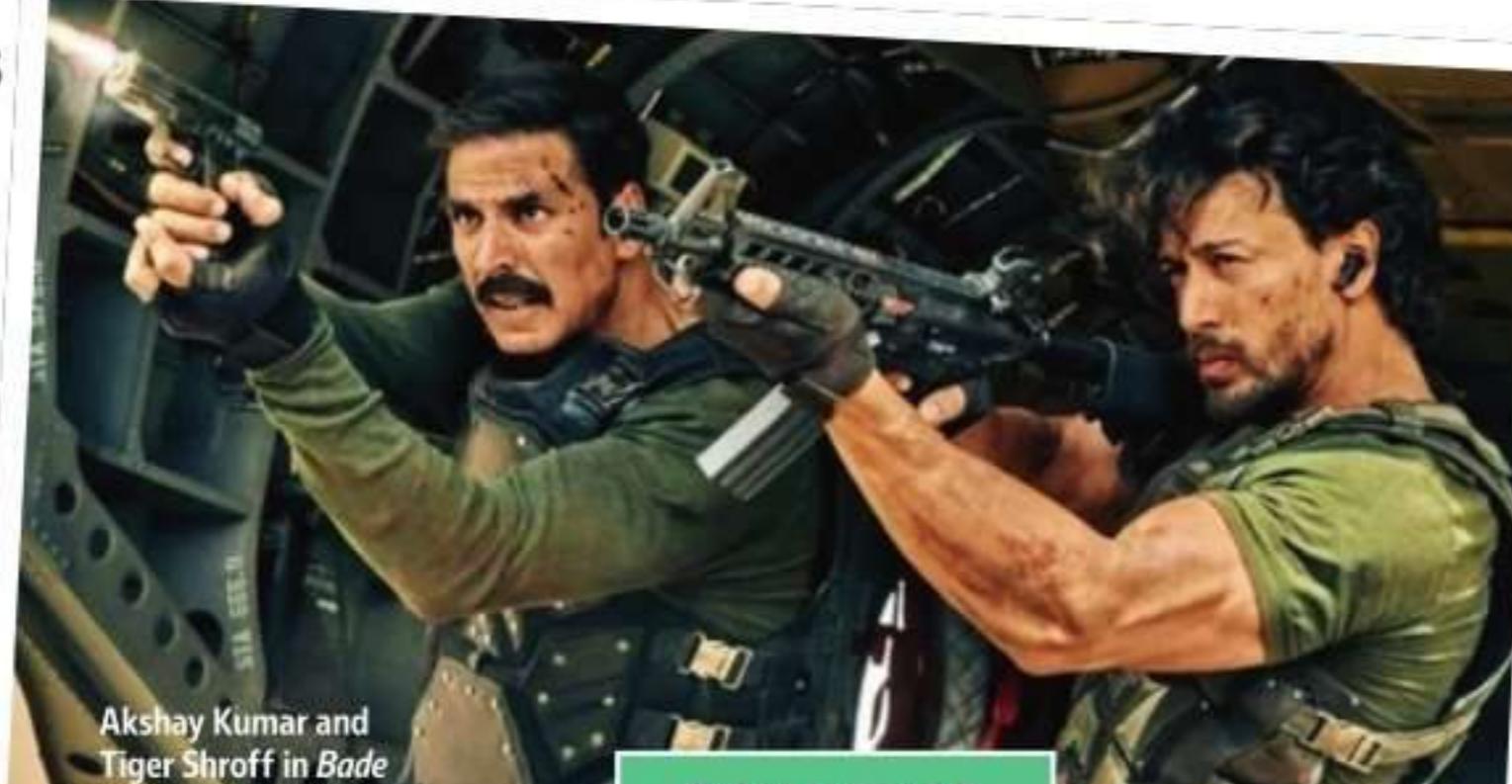
Ajay Devgn in *Maidaan*

**BOX OFFICE COLLECTION**  
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**₹48.85**

**BUDGET** (in crore)  
India nett

**₹250**  
India nett



**T**he dismal performance of the two big Eid releases has left the industry stunned once again. Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff-led *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan* (BMC) and Ajay Devgn's *Maidaan* were released on Eid. *Maidaan*'s budget was approximately ₹250 crore, while *BMC* was mounted at ₹350 crore. So far, *Maidaan*'s collections stand at ₹48.85 crore and *BMC* ₹64 crore (India nett). Reportedly, G7, a popular theatre chain in Mumbai, was temporarily shut down for renovation due to poor footfalls. Even the medium-budget movies that were released post-Eid, *Do Aar Do Pyaar and Love Sex Aur Dhoka 2*, didn't leave an impact at the box office.

### BOX OFFICE COLLECTION (in crore)

**₹64**

### BUDGET (in crore)

**₹350**  
India nett

**We need novel voices and different storytelling styles that can cater to different kinds of audiences. We need filmmakers from varied backdrops, who are united by the intent of entertaining the audience**

— Akshaye Rathi, film exhibitor

**Even high-quality content like *Maidaan* can struggle to attract audiences without adequate marketing. This highlights that good content alone is not enough to ensure box office success**

— Amit Sharma, MD, Miraj Entertainment

CONTINUED ON P5

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# Mumbai school applauds students on their results

J amnabai Narsee School is extremely proud of the 259 Class 10 students for having worked sincerely and tirelessly towards accomplishing their goal of doing well in the ICSE Board Examination. 284 Class 12 students have also secured excellent results in the ISC 2024 Board Examination.

## Class 10 toppers:

First in the school:  
**Myra Chamaria**,  
with 99.6%.  
Second in the school:  
**Tansee Sugla, Avika Mehta and Meghna Singh**, with 99.4%.



Myra Chamaria



Rhea Shah



Ananya Agrawal



Aayati Goyal

## Class 12, stream-wise toppers:

Humanities: **Ananya Agrawal** - 99.50%  
Commerce: **Aayati Goyal** - 98.75%  
Science: **Rhea Shah** - 98.25%

"The outstanding results are a testament to their hard work, diligence and focus, reflecting not only their academic ability but also their dedication to personal growth and excellence. My heartfelt congratulations to the students on their remarkable achievements. May they continue to dream big and seize every opportunity that comes their way," says Kalpana R Patange, principal of the school.

# Bassist Mohini Dey joins Willow Smith's band



Debarati S Sen



**M**ohini Dey, who has recently been signed up for Willow Smith's new band, is excited about the opportunities ahead. In an exclusive chat from the sets of Jimmy Fallon's show in New York, Mohini spoke to us about working with Willow (daughter of Will Smith and Jada Pinkett Smith) and the deep India connection that Willow has.

On asked about how she got the chance to work with Willow, Mohini shares, "I was hired for her band around three months ago. When her team called me, they said that Willow was a big fan of my playing and 'she wants you in the band'. I play a lot of fusion, and her music is more pop, but they assured me that her album was quite technical and 'kind of fusion'. So, we did Tiny Desk (concert series). I finally met Willow and the others a week before that at the rehearsals."

Mohini says that she "adores" Willow. "She has such a great voice! It was fascinating to see the music that she was creating. Willow has a masterful mind," Mohini concludes.

Mohini Dey; (left) Mohini, flanked by Willow on her right, and other band members at the Jimmy Fallon show

Photo: AP

Debarati S Sen

Photo: AP

Willow Smith's love for India and kirtan music



Willow is deeply rooted in ancient history, says Mohini. "She loves different cultures and follows kirtan music, which is why she was wearing a tilak at the Tiny Desk concert. She also has a Saraswati tattoo. She is very spiritual and does meditation and yoga. Kirtan for her is a way of meditating," Mohini adds.

# POV

## When stars make a sari-torial choice

**S**o when did the sari make its global red carpet debut really? A picture of a dashing Shashi Kapoor with Felicity Kendal, a sharp suited Smita Patil with Madhur Jaffrey wearing a green silk sari at the 1965 Berlin film festival often pops up in this thread. As does Shabana Azmi and Smita Patil's elegant look from a photocall at Cannes in 1976. Apparently the Nishant crew had no money for publicity or for stylists, and the supremely talented actors were asked by their director Shyam Benegal to wear their best saris and "walk up and down the promenade to attract attention." In a witty post about that iconic moment, Azmi also wrote: "When people turned around to stare at these strange looking exotic creatures we would persuasively plead: 'Our film is showing on so and so date pls come to watch it' and we managed a full house!"



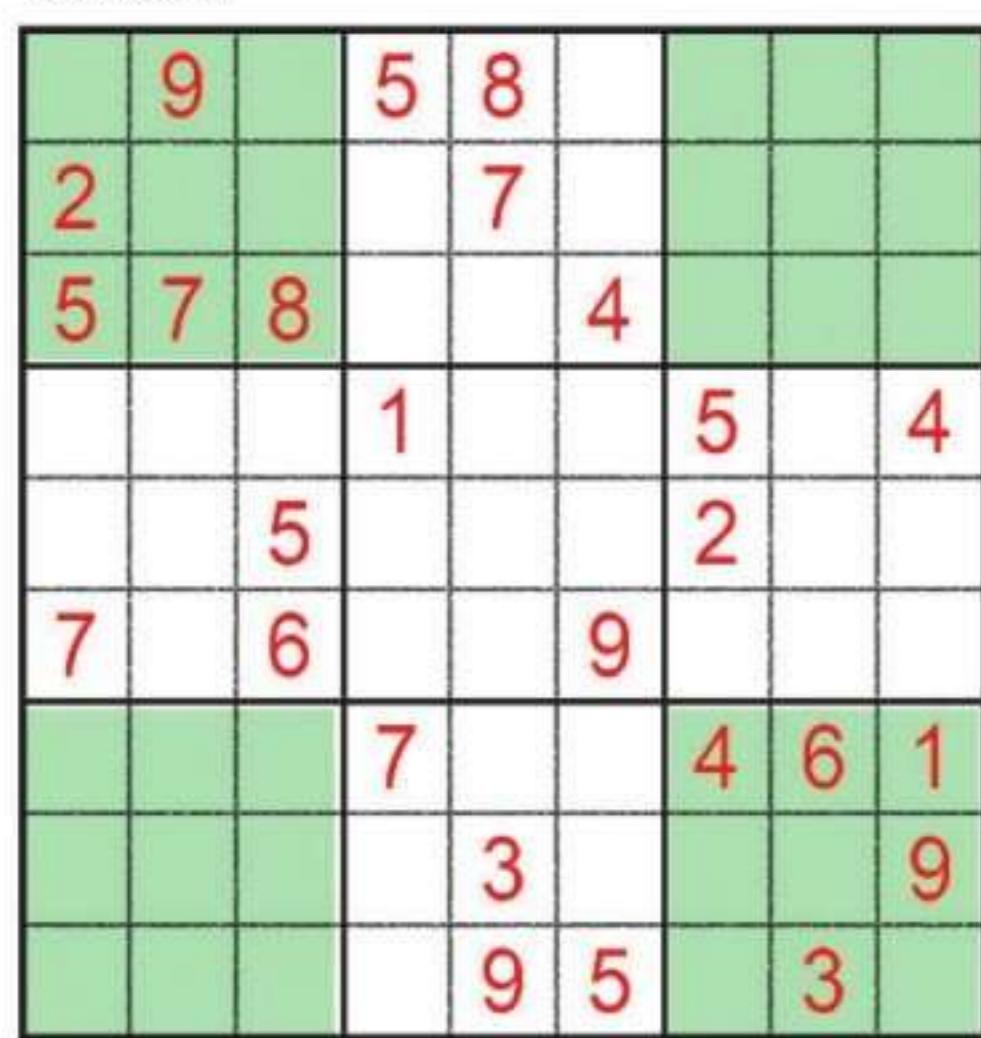
A lot has changed since then. Our actors, entertainers no longer have to make do with the best saris in their closet and parade around the promenade as exotic beings. The eyes are already on them. And there is a mini industry at their disposal with designers, stylists and karigars working a few thousands of hours to create one stellar look after the other. It is thus significant when an Aishwarya Rai Bachchan or a Sonam Kapoor, Vidya Balan or a Deepika Padukone or Alia Bhatt, champions the sari on the global stage. In fact, almost all the actresses in their many red carpet outings have shown how the modern Indian woman can rock anything - a classy gown, a futuristic ensemble or a sari. But let's admit it, it is always special when they stand tall in a sari in a sea of gowns.

At the Met Gala this year, Alia (who wore a chic pearl embellished gown last year), chose to go with a sari that exuded Indian royalty vibes. When asked by an interviewer about her look, she quipped: "What can be more timeless than a sari?" What, indeed.

Agree? Disagree? Got a POV idea? Write to us at: pov@timesgroup.com

## SUDOKU CHALLENGE

Level: Medium



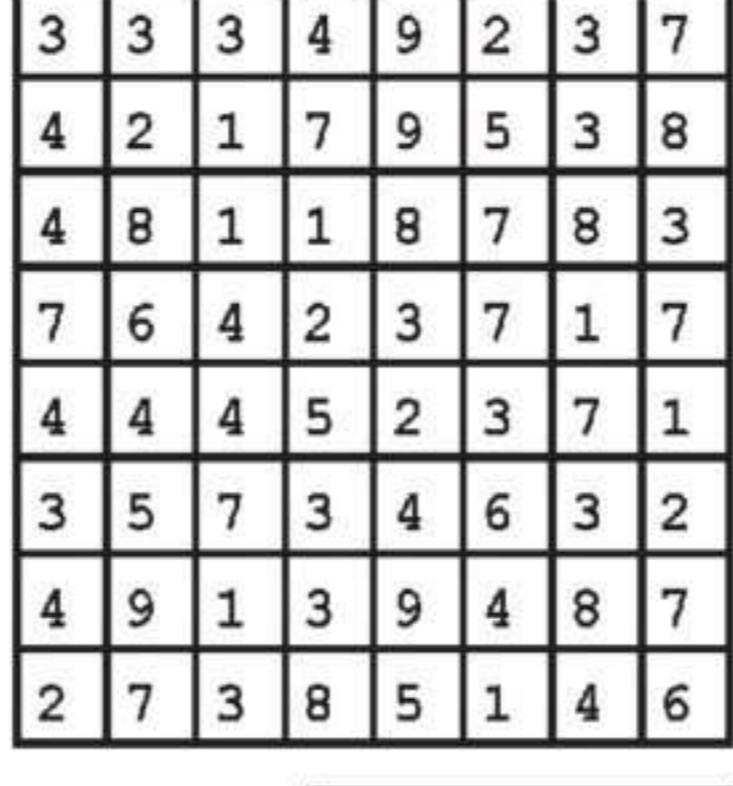
### HOW TO PLAY

Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9, without repeating the numbers in the same row, column or box. You can't change the digits already given in the grid. Every puzzle has one solution.

## TIMES HITORI

### HOW TO PLAY

1. A number may appear just once in each row or column. Eliminate repeat numbers by darkening cells. (see example)  
2. Darkened cells must never be adjacent in a row or column.  
3. Unmarked cells must create a single continuous area, undivided by darkened cells.  
4. Every time you darken a cell, you can automatically circle its vertical and horizontal neighbours, which means they cannot be eliminated.  
5. Any cell "sandwiched" between neighbours of the same value can be circled. (e.g. 6|4|6)  
6. A "triple" is a special case of sandwich. Circle the centre cells, and darken the ends. (e.g. 6|6|6)

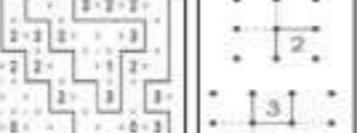


Example

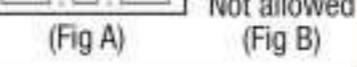
## LOOP THE LOOP

### RULES

- Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A).
- Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B).
- Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines.
- You can't draw lines around zeroes.
- Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



(Fig B)

### HOW TO BEGIN:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a deadend (Fig B).

## THE DAILY CROSSWORD



08/05/2024

By Natalie Murphy

### Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



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07/05/2024

28 "Tell me if you're coming" letters

29 Protruding window

30 Skillet

33 "Pic-a-nic" basket-stealing bear

34 Smart: wiseacre

35 Little more than

than

37 Bring it on!

38 Consumed

39 Dallas NBA team, for short

41 Perspective

42 Going around in circles?

43 "Naughty!"

44 Alpine songs

45 Poet laureate Limón

46 Embarrass

47 Branch of yoga

48 Less welcoming

51 Walkabout: director Nicolas

52 "RuPaul's" Race

53 Tasting menu portion

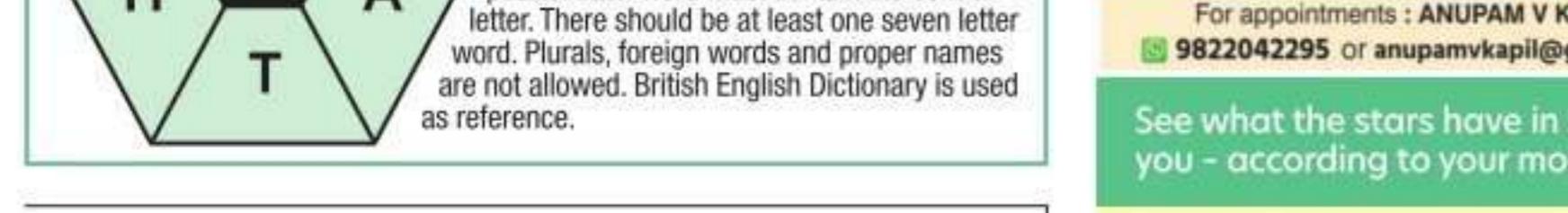
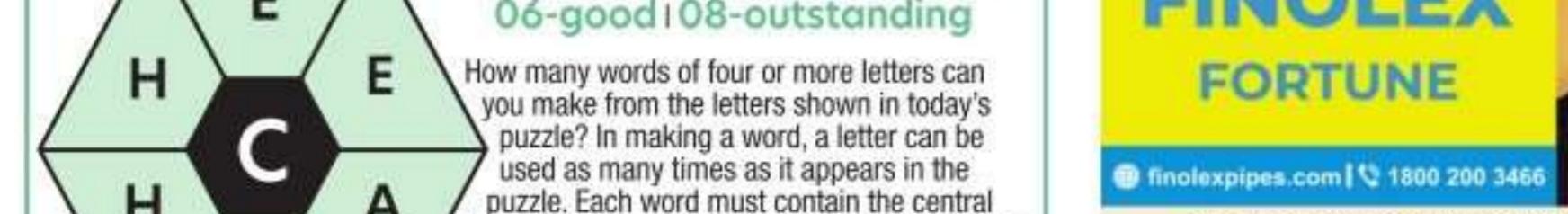
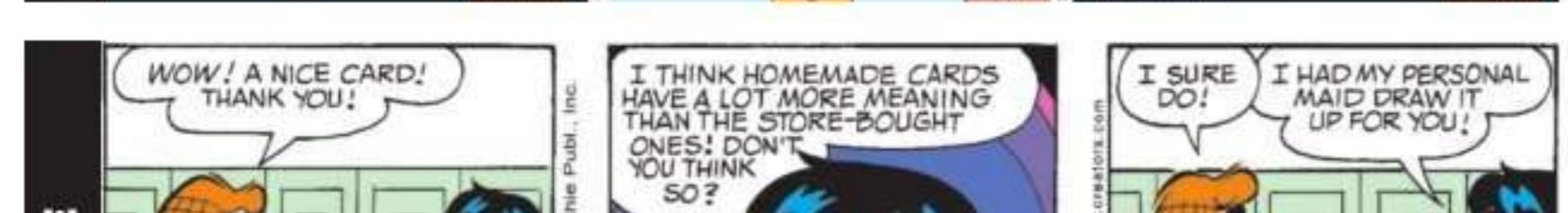
54 Schools of belief

55 Clarified butter

59 Maki sushi

topper

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ular choice for gifting on the day.

**ON A PLATTER**

Purchasing silver, copper and brass utensils like plates, glasses, or utensil sets is another way to invite wealth and prosperity into the household. This is because a well-stocked and prosperous kitchen is symbolic of abundance and nourishment. Individuals also consider replacing their old appliances on this day.

**DIVINE BLESSINGS**

Celebrants often buy idols or statues of deities, like Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha. These deities are associated with wealth, prosperity, and wisdom. Placing these idols in your home is believed to bring blessings and protection.

**THE APPEAL OF PRECIOUS METALS**

Purchasing gold in the form of coins or bars on this day is an important custom. Gold is seen as a



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mutual funds or insurance policies. The festival, after all, emphasises seeking blessings for wealth and financial well-being for a secure future.

Take your pick from these options to usher in prosperity and good fortune in your life.

**INSTRUMENTS FOR WEALTH**

On the day, people also consider investing in financial instruments like

symbolic act to invite prosperity and happiness into your life and home," concludes Srinidhi N, a silversmith in the city.

## Make a beeline for these big-ticket items

Believed to usher in wealth, good luck, and prosperity, these products should be at the top of your shopping list

**FLAUNT YOUR FESTIVE ATTIRE**

Buying and wearing new clothes is a symbol of a fresh start and good fortune. It's also a way of honouring the special occasion.

**ROAD TO PROSPERITY**

Some individuals choose to purchase or make bookings for new vehicles on this day. This is believed to ensure a safe and smooth journey ahead. Several car manufacturers and dealers offer attractive festive discounts as well.

**HOUSING HAPPINESS**

Akshaya Tritiya is also considered an auspicious day to purchase property. This act is believed to bring long-term prosperity and security. Here too, several developers offer incredible discounts, among other offers, to attract customers.

**Create room for wealth and abundance**

Cleaning your home on this day is believed to make space for positivity and happiness. Read on to find out how to go about this



Akshaya Tritiya is associated with wealth and abundance. Cleaning one's home can create a fresh and inviting environment, symbolising its readiness to usher good fortune.

**POSITIVE ENERGY**

Giving a facelift to a house also renews energy. "Cleaning is not just about removing physical dirt and clutter; it's also about clearing negative energy and making space for positive vibrations. It helps rejuvenate the atmosphere in your home, promoting positivity and well-being," says Rukmini Chandrasekhar, the co-owner of a city-based idol manufacturing unit.

Here are some tips to consider while cleaning your home on Akshaya Tritiya.

- Declutter your space: Start by removing clutter and unnecessary items that are no longer needed. This not only

creates a more organised and welcoming environment but also symbolises letting go of the old to make space for the new.

- Dust and mop: Clean every nook and cranny of your home, and dust, sweep, mop, and thoroughly clean all the surfaces. Pay special attention to areas that are often overlooked, such as corners and vents.

"This is easier said than done and is an important task on Akshaya Tritiya. There were times when our family used to do this together. Now, since the kids have grown up, and we have grown older, we seek the help of cleaning services," says Priya Nagar, a 62-year-old retired government employee.

- Window to happiness: Clean windows and mirrors ensure clarity and allow positive energy into a home.

Consider using a mixture of water and a few drops of lemon for a natural shine. You can also consider rearranging the furniture to invite fresh energy and create a harmonious space.

- Wash and wipe: Wash curtains, bed linens, and tablecloths to refresh your home. Clean

and fresh fabrics can enhance the overall ambience.

- Doorway to joy:

The entrance lends the first impression of a home. Ensure it's clean and inviting. Decorate the entrance with colourful rangoli designs, flowers, and traditional torans.

- Replace old items:

Old or dim bulbs can be replaced with new ones. Well-lit spaces are associated with positivity and clarity.

- Decorate the puja room:

Clean and decorate the prayer area with fresh flowers, incense, and lamps.

"Remember that the essence of cleaning your home for Akshaya Tritiya is not just limited to physical cleaning but also the renewal of energy and creation of a positive environment. It's a

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**MALDIVES SPECIALIST**

# YEH KAISA SCARY PYAAR HAI: SINGERS TO COLLEGE STUDENTS

All about love and drama: From cups hurled at the artistes to students chasing the singer's vehicles, performers tell us about their experiences at college festivals

Riya Sharma

**F**or the average concert-goer, a flying bottle, students dancing on barricades or throwing water during fests is a common sight. The recent incident at

SGRR University in Dehradun, where Sunidhi Chauhan dodged a bottle while performing on stage, is yet another in the line of instances that singers have faced at fests. "Fests mein aisa hota hi hai, woh thode scary toh hote hi hain," singers tell us.

**Salim Merchant:** These things happen, not so surprised

It happened a long time ago with me at a college in Faridabad. I think it was a plastic cup or something but a couple of them were hurled on stage. It didn't really hit my face. These things happen. I am not so surprised and I feel in a crowd of five to six thousand people, there are always a few odd ones but because of those, others should not suffer and miss out on the musical experience that they are having. You should just ignore and let it pass like Sunidhi did.

Pics: Ajay Kumar Gautam



**Nikhita Gandhi:** This has happened to me particularly in Delhi colleges

This has happened tons of times at my shows too, particularly in Delhi colleges. I was initially oblivious to it while performing, and then my bandmates told me that during several of our shows, bottles, oranges, and other random objects had been thrown around both in the audience and on stage. A bottle almost hit me once. It's really sad and scary that people can get like this during concerts. It can cause accidents to both them and the people on stage.



**Kailash Kher:** College fests thode scary toh hote hai

In 2014, we were performing at a DU college and there was some ego tussle within two university student groups. Excitement was at its peak and all of a sudden, there were a lot of lathis and so many sharp objects were thrown in the crowd. Palak jhapakte hi kuchh log stage tak aa gaye. Humko protect kar diya wahan ke management ne, lekin kuchh log wahan chadhke narebaaj karne lage. Phir humne dekha kisi ka sar phoota hua hai, humko toh jaake car mein baithna pada. Kuchh logon ko photos chahiye issliye jhagda hua. Hum car mein baithe, toh ek banda car ke peeche bhaaga aur bola, 'Bhai chahe mera haath toot jaye, main toh haath nikalunga nahi gaadi se'. Matlab mohabbat bhi hai, pyaar bhi hai, lekin aisa scary pyaar? Toh DU aur yeh college fests mein aisi cheeze hote hain yeh thode scary hai. Woh energy bhi alag hoti hai.



**Rahul Vaidya:** A host at a private party threw a glass with alcohol on stage

I was in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, it was a private party and the host got really drunk and I think he had a pattern of getting violent after having alcohol. He threw a glass with alcohol on the stage angrily which ended up hitting almost the right eye of my keyboardist. The injury was so bad that he had to get 12 stitches on his eyebrow. There was blood all over the stage, we were helpless because we were in a foreign country. And when someone invites us, you really can't do much about it.



**Sunidhi Chauhan:** I think the bottle was flung on the stage by mistake

**Sunidhi Chauhan hit by bottle on stage while performing, video goes viral**

**WHAT HAPPENED?**

During Sunidhi Chauhan's recent concert (May 2) in Dehradun, a bottle was flung at her. "The bottle came flying towards me and hit the mic. Mere saath aisa pehle kabhi nahi hua tha, so I was taken aback. I was not hurt, and I continued singing. I realised that it was not done intentionally," the singer told us.



**Akriti Kakar:** Don't know how I'd feel if a bottle was thrown at me

This has never happened with me in all of my performing career. But people have said nasty or borderline nasty things sometimes. And back in the day, I was too chicken to reply but now I am not. So that's one change I have brought in myself to handle situations like these. But honestly, I don't know how I'd feel if someone would throw a bottle or something else on stage. As an artiste, that is devastating and that's not why you display your art and talent in front of people. You want to be loved, appreciated and respected. If something like this happens, I think what Sunidhi did was absolutely praise-worthy. She handled it with utmost grace and so beautifully with a great presence of mind and I think I would like to salute her for it. Some artistes can be temperamental, call off a concert. One can shed a tear, one can get angry, there are so many ways to handle a situation like this, but what she did was incredible.



## 'The failure of big-budget films has been a shocker for the film industry'

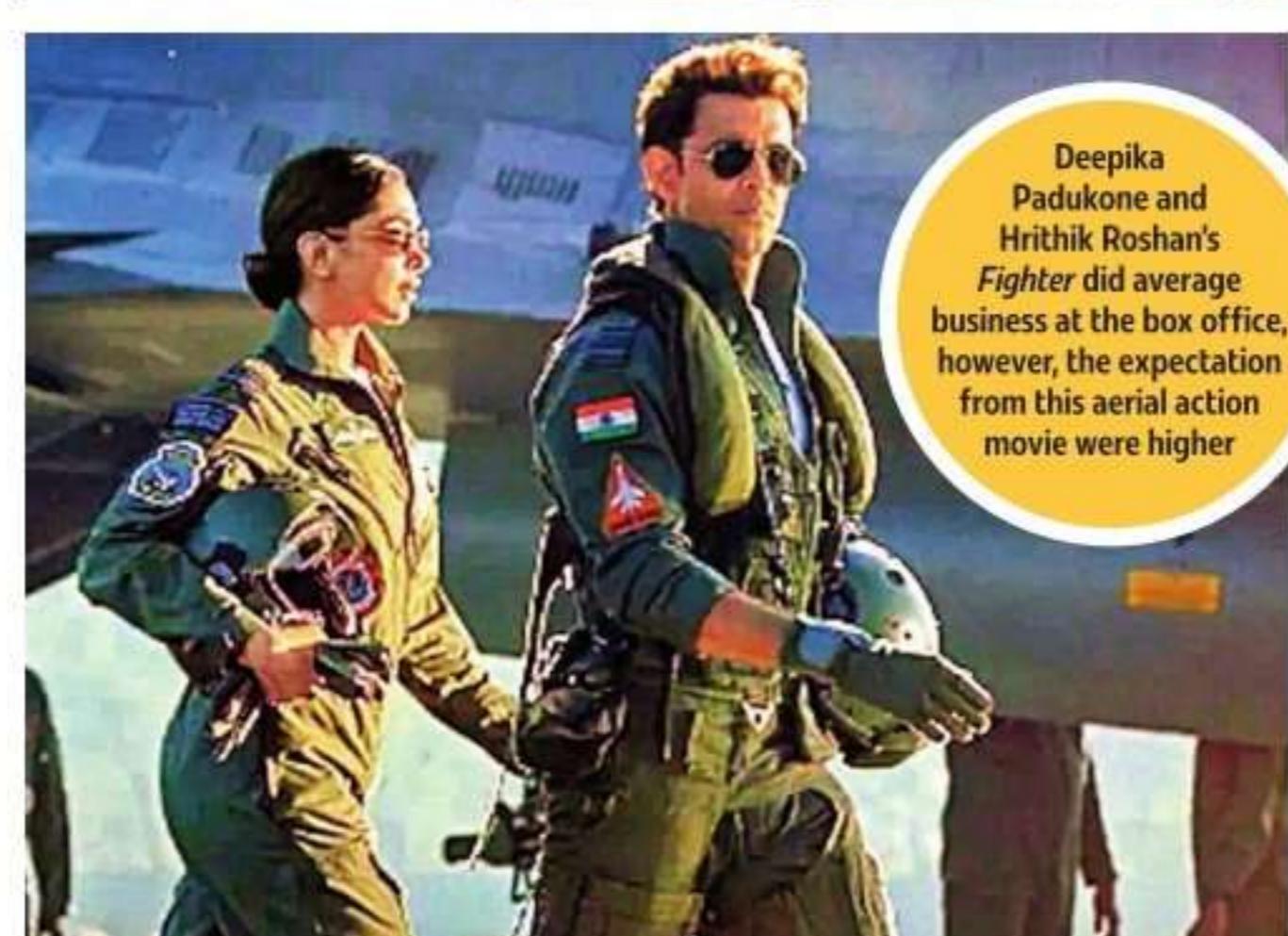
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In the first quarter of 2024, the total collection of all Hindi movies released was approximately ₹700 crore, with only the Hrithik Roshan-Deepika Padukone-led Fighter (₹212 crore India nett) being the tentpole film that was released between January and March. Exhibitor Anil Thadani says, "Everything was correct with BMCM, but we are yet to figure out what went wrong. We don't know what will work. We are living in an unknown territory."

According to industry experts, while the film business is largely unpredictable, there are certain measures that can be taken to help the current crisis.



Poor footfalls at theatres has become a cause of concern



Deepika Padukone and Hrithik Roshan's Fighter did average business at the box office, however, the expectation from this aerial action movie were higher

**C** Actors don't do interviews (to promote their films), they don't make appearances and they have even stopped promoting their films on television. Many people watch television, and if they don't see ads, the audience is not even aware that a film is releasing

— Komal Nahata, trade analyst

**Pick the right release window**

"The critics and audiences praised Maidaan for its superior content. Despite its quality production and storyline, Maidaan encountered significant challenges in its marketing efforts. There was minimal ground-level marketing, and the film's release was postponed multiple times, which is what probably diminished audience's interest and anticipation. These marketing missteps contributed significantly to its disappointing box office returns," says Amit Sharma, MD, Miraj Entertainment. Taran adds, "Maidaan shouldn't have been an Eid release. People want to watch a masala movie on such occasions and not something serious."

**The fees of actors and paraphernalia around them should be curtailed. Actors should do revenue sharing in today's times. Tab maulum hoga how much pull the actor has, aur doodh ka doodh aur paani ka paani hoga** — Taran Adarsh, trade analyst

**'Failure of BMCM and Maidaan has affected the trade badly'**

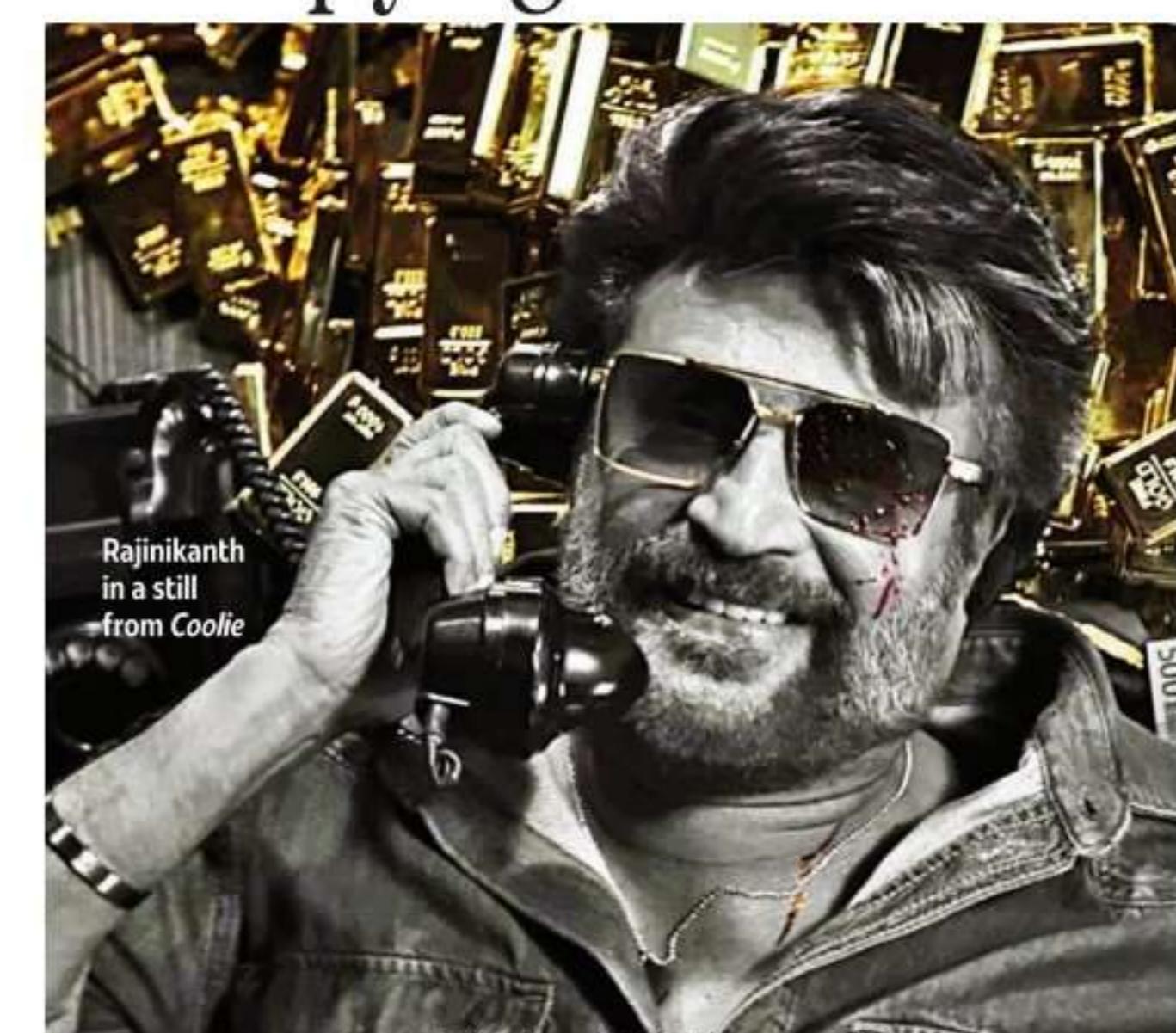
Film trade analyst Komal Nahata explains, "The underperformance of both these films has been a shocker. The budgets were so high that their failure meant a major setback for the industry. Exhibitors are in panic mode."

**Renegotiate stars' fees**

According to a media report, Akshay Kumar charged Rs 80 crore, while Tiger Shroff commanded a fee of ₹40-45 crore for Ali Abbas Zafar's directorial BMCM. Komal Nahata says, "If the budget is going to be ₹350 crores, out of which ₹150 or 200 crores are paid to the actors, it is nonsense. People are eventually going to see the content. Yes, stars do add value, but if the content is not up to the mark and the films are costly, they will only take the movie down."

Akshay Rathi suggests a better pay model. He explains, "Given the uncertainty that the box office has thrown at all of us, irrespective of who the star is, what the size and scale and production values are, I think purely for the sake of sustainability and survival, stars need to work on a revenue sharing model!"

**Between producer & Ilaiyaraaja: Rajinikanth on copyright notice**



Rajinikanth in a still from Coolie

**'Obtain permission or remove song'**  
**Ilaiyaraaja sends notice to makers of Rajini's film**



Last week, music director Ilaiyaraaja had sent a legal notice to the makers of Rajinikanth's newly announced film 'Coolie', which will be directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj. The composer urged the makers to "either obtain proper permission/consent" for the use of a portion of his song 'Vaa Vaa Pakkam Vaa', which was used in a modified version in the announcement video of the film.

On Saturday, when Rajinikanth arrived at the Chennai airport after wrapping up a shoot schedule of his upcoming film 'Vettaiyan' in Mumbai, he was asked for his reaction to the composer's action. The Superstar replied, "It's between him and the producer."

The actor also informed that the response to the 'Coolie' video has been good and that 80 per cent of 'Vettaiyan's shoot has been completed so far.

TNN

Ilaiyaraaja sent a legal notice to the makers of 'Coolie' for using his music without the composer's permission

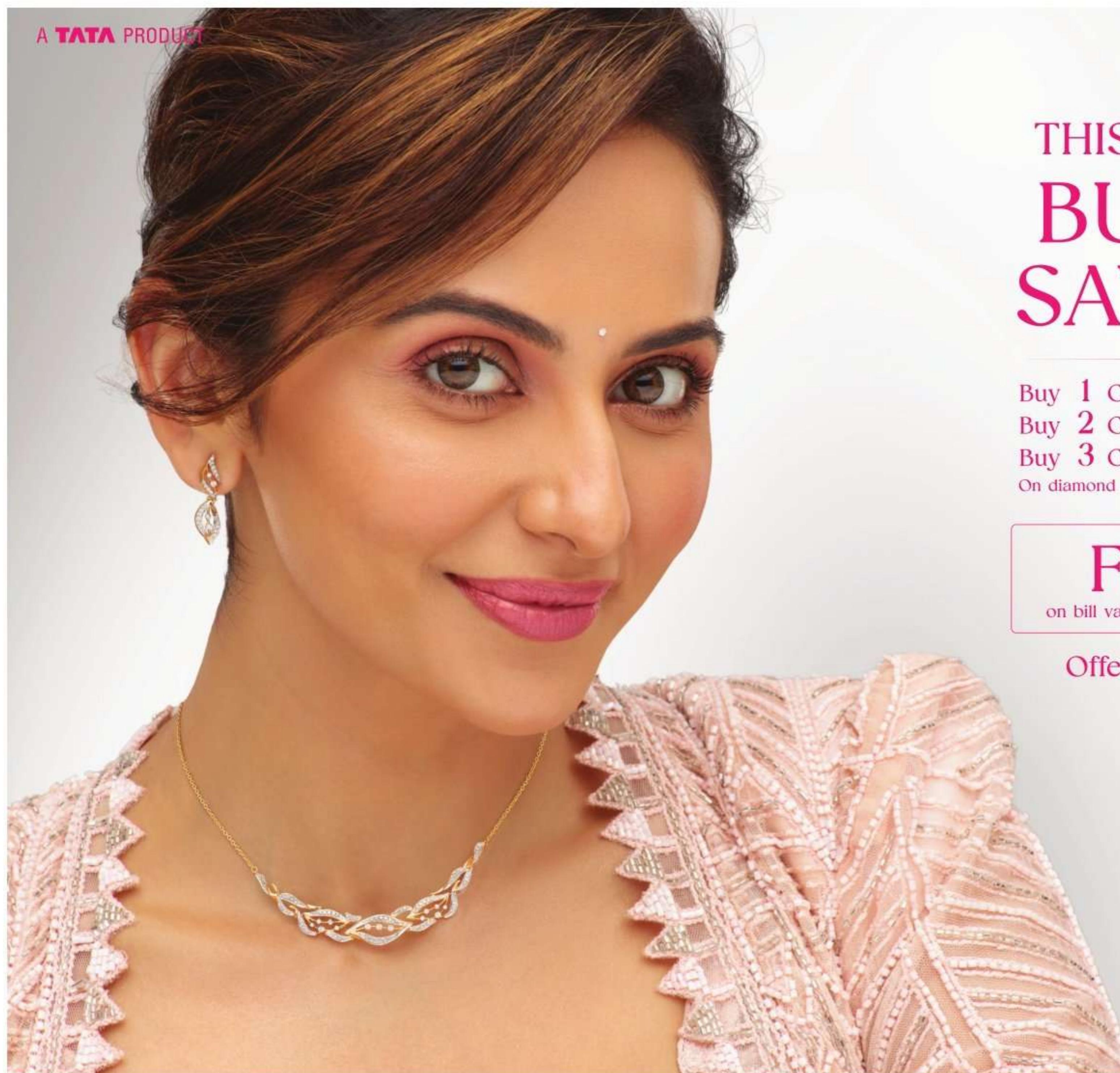
Trade analyst Komal Nahata adds, "Actors don't do interviews, they don't make appearances, they don't go to the malls, and they have even stopped promoting their films on television. Many people watch television, and if they don't see ads, the audience is not even aware that a film is releasing."

Film exhibitor Akshay Rathi shares, "More than lack of promotional activities, it's the direction of the promotional activities that matters. We should not just make the audience aware, but also have them excited and compel them to buy tickets. For that, the vanilla template for marketing and PR that's being followed needs to be reworked."



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