

Abhishek Bachchan

Following in his father's footsteps

The name Abhishek Bachchan has been a reason for endless speculation. Initially, it was: Will he or won't he follow in his father's footsteps? Ever since he returned from his studies abroad and was spotted at functions towering over his mother and standing almost shoulder-to-shoulder with his larger-than-life father, Bollywood legend Amitabh Bachchan, he has had movie moghuls flocking to him.

Later, when he made his debut and suffered a string of failures, the speculation was: Was he fated to wilt in his father's shadow?

But the 6'1 feet tall Abhishek finally came good with a string of successes. And today, the speculation about him centres on his professional moves. The latest has it that he may play the role of a real-life inspired police officer in a forthcoming film titled 'Shootout At Lokhandwala', which is to be directed by Apoorva Lakhia, who directed the junior Bachchan in 'Mumbai Se Aaya Mera Dost.'

Born on February 5, 1976, to Amitabh and former Bollywood actress Jaya Bhaduri, Abhishek schooled in Switzerland and went on to study business in the United States. That was when thoughts of becoming an actor began to swirl in his mind. Soon he had decided on acting and gave up business school, a decision his father supported.

Abhishek made a strong debut in J.P. Dutta's 'Refugee' alongside Kareena Kapoor in 2000. Though the movie was not considered a success, he was liked both by audiences and critics.

In a span of five years, Abhishek went on to do many

movies, without any major box-office successes. A list of his early films include 'Tera Jadoo Chal Gaya' (2000), 'Dhai Akshar Prem Ke' (2000), 'Bas Itna Sa Khwab Hai' (2001), 'Shararat' (2001), 'Desh' (2002), 'Kuch Naa Kaho' (2003) and 'Mumbai Se Aaya Mera Dost.' During that period, he struggled for a blockbuster which could prove his talent. But that proved elusive, though he got meaty roles in 'L.O.C Kargil' (2003) and in 'Zameen' (2003), a movie dealing with terrorism, in which he enacted the role of a police officer.

However, in 2004, his performance in Mani Ratnam's 'Yuva' proved his mettle as an actor. The film earned him the Filmfare Best Supporting Actor Award and every other supporting actor award at major film award functions. In the same year, he starred in 'Dhoom', produced by Yash Raj Films, a thriller that became a huge success.

In 2005, he shot to fame with four consecutive hits — 'Bunty Aur Babli', 'Sarkar', 'Dus' and 'Bluffmaster',

He won his second Filmfare Award in the Best Supporting Actor category for 'Sarkar' in 2005, Star Screen Best Comedian Award for 'Bunty Aur Babli' and Zee Cine Best Actor in Supporting role for 'Sarkar.'

Abhishek's forthcoming films are 'Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna,' 'Dhoom 2' and 'Umrao Jaan.'

Judging by the trends that dominate the film industry, Abhishek is likely to pull it off in these films, too. If he does, he would have taken yet another step towards emerging as the rightful heir to the awesome legacy of his parents. ■



Abhishek Bachchan in a still from 'Sarkar' and, top, from 'Bluffmaster'