



Zee's new show aims to entertain by focusing on women and marriage in the real India

'Chhoti Bahu' premieres on Zee TV this month

Mumbai, 4th December, 2008: What makes a marriage? Is it taking the vows or is it observing the moral, spiritual, emotional and physical requirements of married life? Was Meera Bai in that sense married to Lord Krishna? These are some of the questions that have been important to Indian philosophy and Indian tradition for a long long time. Zee's new offering addresses these questions in the mould of a contemporary, engaging and dramatic show called "Chhoti Bahu" premiering on 8th December, Monday - Friday at 7:30pm.

"Chhoti Bahu" focuses on the life of Radhika, the adopted daughter of a temple priest, whose life revolves around her friendship, love and affection for Lord Krishna. She will do anything for the family that has adopted her, in particular her sister Vishakha, the biological daughter of the priest. But once, just once, she lets her good nature get the better of her as she covers up for her sister and that changes her entire life.

But this short synopsis hardly does justice to the subtle nuances of the show. Coming as it does from one of the most creative production houses in the country, DJ's Creative Unit; the show asks some really crucial questions about the institution of marriage, friendship and even spirituality in the modern, shining, racing ahead India.

How sacrosanct should merely the vows of marriage be in the absence of everything else? Given that India has changed so much over the last two decades, why do so many women still feel that they have to make commitments based on events they have no control about? Has the promise of a new India then not touched women that much, and are there only a few places - mostly urban - where Indian women are beginning to have more and more influence over their own lives?

Said Rubina Dilaik, the actress playing the challenging protagonist's role of Radhika, "It is so difficult to get into the head of a character like Radhika, who at the same time surrenders to circumstances, yet has a shining innocence, integrity and belief in her Lord, that sometimes makes me feel that I am missing out on something despite having so much control over my own life as a modern Indian woman." Other characters in the show are Avinash Sachdev playing the lead opposite Rubina, Rajeev Verma, Surinder Pal, Gopi Desai, Rita Bhadhuri, Prabha Sinha, Priyanka Mishra and Samta Sagar, etc.

Ajay Bhalwankar, Programming Head, Zee TV, said, "We had great difficulty in casting for this show because the protagonist is not as much of a go-getter initially. But if you look at the female leads in all our shows, you will see certain common threads. We strongly believe in the power of the woman in families and in society and came up

with the idea of this show to throw light on the fact that the promise of confident, outward looking India has perhaps touched women in a far greater degree than men. We were also interested in exploring the role of spiritual relationships with the divine in a woman's life today. We can tell you that casting for this show was one of our greatest challenges but we were lucky to find actresses who embody the characters and make their contradictions and subtleties come out wonderfully."

The show is being made by DJ's Creations, Tony and Deeya Singh who have given some super shows for the channel before like Jhoomain Jiya Re.

So, is this true that despite the changes in the environment women still feel trapped to a great degree in the larger part of the country?

To start a conversation about these important questions, but above all to be consistently entertained through superbly balanced mix laughter, tears, pathos and drama, you have to tune in to Zee TV's new show....

"Chhoti Bahu - Sindoor Bin Suhagan",
Premiering on 8th December, and airing from Monday to Friday at 7:30pm.