

Briefly: Tamil Cinema



In overdrive, making friends, he's back and second innings. While sizzling the Tamil screen with her oomph and her sexy pouts, Namita has bagged a lot of films, albeit most of them with senior heroes. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Namita tops the list of actresses with the maximum number of films. Now the screen charmer is off to Malayalam to star in a film with none other than Malayalam Superstar Mammootty. The film is titled 'Bus Conductor'. With

Malayalam films giving enough scope to heroines also to perform, one can be sure Namita will get to 'reveal' more of her talent.

Police dubbing

Except for the T Rajendar-directed 'Veerasamy', Mumtaz has hardly any films. But there's a treat awaiting her fans. One of her Telugu films, in which she'd played the lead, that of a cop, is soon to be released in the dubbed version. The film, called 'Police Judgment' in Tamil, has Mutaz playing an IPS officer. She had played the cop in an earlier Tamil film and had taken training in fights and stunts from a master. Apart from the mandatory fights, there surely would be those sensuous dance numbers for which the actress had earned popularity and a great fan following.



Second innings



Kiran is back in circulation. The 'Gemini' heroine, after doing a few films, suddenly found she had no takers. After a gap one saw her in an item number in the Arjun-starrer 'Chinna'. And now Kiran is back to acting again. She plays the female lead in 'Ithu Kadhal Varum Paruvam' with debutant Harish Kumar as the hero. The film is produced and directed by Kasthuriraja and promises to be a youthful film for the young generation. Offers have been trickling in since for the actress and if she plays her cards right, there's no reason why her comeback shouldn't be a more fruitful one than her first innings. But that depends on how she handles her career and her dedication to it, for Kiran, in the past, has been known for letting her body go.

He's back

After a fairly long sabbatical, where he was neither very high profile on the political scene or on the big screen, Ramarajan now returns to acting. The actor, famous for his rustic roles, so much so that he was even referred to as 'Gramarajan', has since signed his new film, titled 'Madurai Thangam'. And, naturally, it is going to have a rural backdrop. Efforts are also on to release the Ramarajan-Roja film 'Velan' for Deepavali. The movie has been lying in the cans for a long time.



Scriptwriter



DMK chief Karunanidhi is back again to penning scripts for the big screen. After his recent efforts like 'Kannamma' and 'Mannin Mainthan', he is writing the story, screenplay, dialogue and lyrics for a new film, titled 'Paasakiligal'. The film has Prabu and Murali in the lead with Navya Nair, Vineeth, Roja and Malavika in the cast. Produced by Ramana-yanan, the film is directed by Amritham who returns to films after a long gap.

Politics?

Is Kartik's 'Saranalayam' only a charity outfit, or is it a prelude to his jumping into the political fray? Kartik had always claimed that he was not interested in politics and the organisation that he had founded was only a charitable one, but now the gossip is that the actor is all set to launch his own political party. His acting career not quite taking off, thanks to the actor's lack of real interest, how can he think he could make a success of politics, wonder many. Apart from the fact that he represents a large community, he lacks a balanced temperament and maturity, comments a colleague. So, Kartik better brush up his act before he makes a final decision



Cine Scope

Repeating her role



'Something Something Unakkum Enakkum', the remake of a highly-successful Prabhu Deva-directed Telugu film, had Tirsha and Sidharth in the lead. Now Trisha is re-enacting the role in the Tamil versions with Jayam Ravi. The Telugu version had dancer-actress Nandita in the second lead, a glamorous role, with her one-sided love for the hero. Here it's Richa Pallod who's playing that role. The Mumbai model had disappeared from the scene after doing a couple of films with the likes of Vijay and Manoj.

Editor



K S Ravikumar says that he had wanted to direct Sharat Kumar's 100th film. Producer R B Choudhry says that he had wanted to produce Sharat's 100th film. "but madam Radhika was in a hurry to produce it herself!" Lavish praise was bestowed on Sharat at the function held to launch his 100th film 'Thalaimagan'. The film is a home production, produced by Radhika's Radaan banner. The film, directed by debutant Balaji, has screenplay by Cheran. Sharat plays the role of a newspaper editor. Most of the industry bigwigs had gathered at the venue to felicitate the hero. Nayantara who had debuted in Tamil with Sharat in 'Ayya', plays the heroine in this film too.

Making friends



Vijay and Ajit had gladdened the hearts of their fans by their great bonhomie at a film pooja. While this duo had patched up on their alleged differences, there's this young duo that needs to take a leaf out of the books of its seniors. It is Simbu and Dhanush who don't seem to share warm vibes. For his part, when Simbu was asked in an interview if all was well between him and Dhanush, the actor, not one to mince words, candidly replied that he had always tried to maintain cordial relations. "During Prashanth's wedding, when I met Dhanush, I greeted him with a 'hello', but Dhanush didn't reciprocate my greeting," added the Little Superstar.

On a roll



Actress, Asin, is on a roll, with four films, two in Tamil and two in Telugu, due to be released on Deepavali. The films due to be released in Kollywood are 'Sivakasi' and 'Majaa' and the films due to be released in Tollywood are the Telugu versions of the Tamil hits 'Majaa' and 'Ghajini'. The actress who is renowned for being extremely choosy when selecting the films to star in, has already her diary booked for next year and comments "I am happy that I have got several good offers in my kitty. I will perform to me potential and do justice to my roles." When asked whether she would consider doing glamorous roles, she states "yes, but with a limit. I will not do out and out glamorous roles."

Blame game



Actor Rohan, who recently accused director Murali-Krishna of cheating him of several lakhs of rupees, whilst shooting the film 'Thirudiyal Idhayathai', is now being accused himself by the director. The director is now hurling back accusations, denying the charges of the actor and instead stating "the actor is to blame for everything. I completed the entire movie in minimum budget. It was Rohan who spent the money flying several times between Chennai and Bangalore." Stating that he has yet to be paid his own salary, Murali-Krishna states "cheques given to Nizhalgal Ravi and music composer Barani too have bounced."

Once more



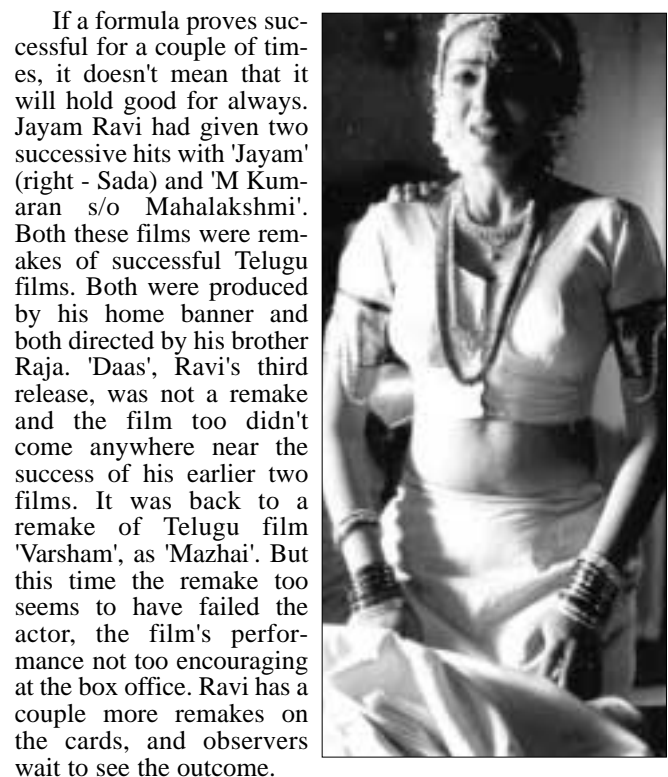
Srikanth and Meera Jasmine came together but the film was not a success. The duo team up together again for the new film, 'Mercury Pookkal'. The film is produced by Aradhana Reddy, granddaughter of Nagi Reddy of the prestigious Vijaya Vauhini Studios. The banner, which has produced films with the likes of MGR, Sivaji Ganesan, Rajnikant and Kamal Haasan, has been inactive for some time. Now Aradhana has ventured into her debut production effort under her banner name Srinandhi Productions. The film is scripted and directed by S S Stanley, who directed Srikanth's earlier film, 'April Madathil'.

Speaking up



The producers accuse the actors of charging astronomical fees. The actors respond that it's the producers who are responsible for it! This was supported by Satyaraj's comment at one of the industry functions. The actor, who rarely beats about the bush, has this to say. "Some producers had approached me for dates. And though I told them that I had not dates free till 2007, they insisted on signing me and even gave me an advance on my fee. The producers should first stop chasing actors before they grumble about their high remuneration." Touche!

Third time lucky?



If a formula proves successful for a couple of times, it doesn't mean that it will hold good for always. Jayam Ravi had given two successive hits with 'Jayam' (right - Sada) and 'M Kumaran s/o Mahalakshmi'. Both these films were remakes of successful Telugu films. Both were produced by his home banner and both directed by his brother Raja. 'Daas', Ravi's third release, was not a remake and the film too didn't come anywhere near the success of his earlier two films. It was back to a remake of Telugu film 'Varsham', as 'Mazhai'. But this time the remake too seems to have failed the actor, the film's performance not too encouraging at the box office. Ravi has a couple more remakes on the cards, and observers wait to see the outcome.

Luck



After a slow start with his debut film going unnoticed, director Vishnu Vardhan is now one of the most sought after directors in Kollywood. Undeterred from the failure of his first film, Vardhan worked hard on the script of his next film 'Arindhum Ariyama-lum' and produced a film which scored well with its audiences. Following on from the success of his second film, Vardhan is now busy shooting his next film 'Pattiyal', which stars his lucky mascots Arya and Bharat in the lead roles. Vardhan comments "the success of Arindhum Ariyamalum has made me more responsible and I am now in a position to sustain the same momentum." The director who was once a one-time associate of cinematographer-director Santosh Sivan, says "I would definitely urge aspiring filmmakers to do their own thing. Take the advice of experienced professionals. Be a good listener. Only when you work with passion, can your film be successful."

Favouritism



Actor Vikram, who is due to make the Tamil remake of the Malayalam hit 'Chandhupottu' has apparently requested his mentor, Bala, to direct the film. The duo, who received rave reviews when they worked together in the films 'Sethu' and 'Pithamagam' and also walked home with several awards and accolades, are renowned for their successful combination. Vikram has been noted as saying "I would love the movie to be directed by Bala. I have requested him. However, I don't know about his other commitments. Ours is a successful combo and it would be a great experience for me to work with him. However, it looks unlikely that he might wield the megaphone." In the event of Bala not being able to direct the film, Vikram has urged director Shafi (who directed Vikram's current hit film 'Majaa') to direct the film.

New town



Director Hari often tends to base his films around one city, for example with the film 'Tamizh' he based it around the city of Madurai, with 'Samy' it was Thirunelveli and with 'Kovil' it was the city of Nagercoil. Now with his latest film 'Aaru', which stars Surya in the lead, he is basing the film around the city of Chennai. Hari comments "the entire movie revolves around Chennai. For this purpose, we have erected a huge slum set up at a huge cost near Saidapet and all credit should go to producer Charan and art-director Kathir." Kathir who designed the huge set, which houses several huts, a mini subway and a few shops, states "I visited several slums before erecting the sets. Watched them at very close quarters and tried to replicate them here. Everyone including the entire cast and crew were stunned at the reality of the sets."

Still going strong



Unlike most actresses who disappear after a few films, and then try and stage an unsuccessful comeback, actress Laila's comeback seems to be proving very successful for her. Laila who previously starred in several hit movies in the late 90's and early 2000, mellowed away from Kollywood for awhile, however, she has now returned and is determined to stay - and with a string of films in the pipeline, it looks like she'll be making it to the list of top actresses once again. Currently Laila is filming 'Kanda Naal Mudhal', which is directed by Priya for Prakashraj's home production, and she is also starring opposite Ajith in the film 'Paramasivan' and opposite Prashanth in the film 'Petrol'. Her film 'Ullam Ketkumae' is at present doing well at the box-office and is proving to be another step to the top.

Small time

Actor, Madavan, is to venture out of his box and is set to host a game-show titled 'Deal Ya No Deal' on Sony TV. The interactive show, which is going in to compete with Amithabh Bachchan's show KBC II on Star TV, will be shown thrice a week. Madavan, a renowned star in Kollywood, who only made it into the film industry having acted in several serials on the small screen, has been receiving the raised eye brows from several Kollywood legends who think this could lead to his demise. However, Madavan brushes aside these remarks and comments "what's wrong in hosting a game show on earth today (apparently referring to Amithabh Bachchan's show)." And when asked will he be bidding Kollywood goodbye, he states "No, this industry has given me name and fame and there is no reason why I should quit this forever."

Name game

Things don't seem to be going so smoothly for actor Dhanush of late. Following a string of unsuccessful films, his latest film 'Ashokamithran' directed by Karu Palaniappan, hasn't even been released yet and is causing protest. And the cause of the problem is the title of the film. One might wonder why such a title is causing so much trouble, the reason being is that a popular and well respected writer in Tamil has the same name and he feels that titling the film 'Ashokamithran' will tarnish his own name. The quiet, suave writer, who pens in both Tamil and in English, is reportedly not happy with the title of the film and has made his feelings quite clear to the director. And since the writer rarely makes such a fuss and is clearly upset by the name of the film, the directors have agreed to change the name of the film. Therefore, until a new title has been found, the films release shall be delayed.



Twice over

Director-hero S J Surya teamed up successfully with actors Ajit Kumar and Vijay in 'Vaali' and 'Kushi'. Now it's Vijay-S J Surya who are coming together again for a new film. The film is titled 'Puli' and though the heroine is yet to be finalised, it's Nila's name that has cropped up. And Surya has got A R Rehman for the music for this film also. The actor and the director being busy with other assignments, 'Puli' would have to wait for them to get their dates free. It would be a boon for the distributors if the duo can repeat its 'Kushi' success with this film.

