



Shah Rukh Khan's Wankhede Stadium spat: Are film stars above the law???



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Delhi: Depending on his mood, actor Shah Rukh Khan is in turn philosophical, reticent and self derisive on Twitter. In front of the international media he wears his celebrity status quite well, casually slung over a shoulder, shifting that chip to the other. It's only during moments like those at the Wankhede Stadium that shows the cracks behind the carefully preserved veneer.

Shah Rukh faces a ban by the furious Mumbai Cricket Association for an allegedly drunken brawl at the Wankhede Stadium with the security and officials of the MCA after the Knight Riders won the May 16 IPL game against the Mumbai Indians. Photographs from the stadium showed Khan charging angrily at security guards, pointing an accusatory finger while his daughter Suhana, players and other officials try to hold him back.

Off the moral high ground, I can honestly vouch for the fact that the majority of us have had fights and done embarrassingly stupid things while drunk at

least once in our life. So why should it be any different when it comes to a film actor?

Shah Rukh Khan 'banned' from entering Wankhede



Here's why,

Film stars enjoy a status in our country quite unlike that of any other. They rule our hearts and logical thinking in everything we do, be it the uncomplicated task of selecting a Friday cinema outing for the family or defending them tooth and nail, as if it were our own honour that was slighted, in the drawing room or on social networking websites. I speak from experience that a contradictory comment about any of our popular matinee idols is enough to bring on the wrath of their million fans on Twitter. Their counter arguments are often illogical, prompted more by emotions than logic, and frequently abusive.

What makes people like Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, who mowed down people with his car, or Saif Ali Khan, who slapped a man because he asked him to keep the noise down at a diner they were in, display the arrogant disregard for rules and flout publicly acceptable behaviour with impunity?

The self-proclaimed 'King of Bollywood' has had an eventful two decades in an industry that has seen the rise of potential stars but never one to seriously challenge and dethrone him. But as he enters middleage, Khan's frequent outbursts and flouting of civic rules have drawn the attention of the media to instances that could not have gone unnoticed in the age of 24x7 television cameras and celebrity event photographers.

His spat with filmmaker Shirish Kunder was widely covered and he was summoned by a Jaipur court for smoking at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium during an IPL match between Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders in April in front of thousands of spectators.

Is a star allowed to be human sometimes in public? Of course, as long as they are not disrupting public law and order. Khan tweets often about his daughter Suhana, the same girl shown frantically trying to pull his dad away from the May 16 spat at the Wankhede.

Professionally, Khan has taken some beating from critics for his beloved science fiction film RA.One. He is surprisingly philosophical on Twitter, sometimes reacting to the criticism to the film, sometimes maintaining a stoic silence to reports of his growing closeness to Priyanka Chopra and giving out his tongue-in-cheek one-liners to fans asking him how he likes to be addressed by people. "Like a rose...by any name...I remain the same...."

Yet behind the supreme self confidence is a man easily provoked and goaded into anger.

Ironically in 2012 Shah Rukh was among the top three youth icons in a survey of people in the age group of 15-24. The Brand Equity's Most

Exciting Youth Brands Survey was topped by Sachin Tendulkar, followed by Shah Rukh and Salman.

Clearly our stars have little regard for the responsibility that comes with the faith that youngsters have in them.

While he shrugged off his airport detention during his visit to the Yale University, on Wednesday night he lost his cool at a guard who was perhaps only doing his duty. Yes, I agree stars too have to put up with heckling from

abusive crowds and constantly live under the spotlight but the power, fabulous riches and international visibility are part of that bargain.

Do our stars consider themselves above the law? It's debatable. They have their version of events I am sure. For officials at the Wankhede Stadium it's just another crowd control issue, for the media it's a field day with dramatic visuals, but for the boy in front of the TV set, more often than not bad behaviour is something 'cool' to do because his 'hero' has led the way. Think about it.

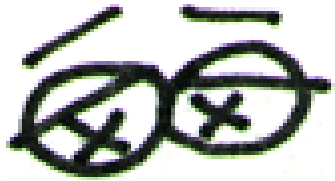


Kolkata Knight Riders' co-owner and Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan was on Thursday banned for life from Wankhede Stadium after getting into an alleged scuffle with Mumbai Cricket Association officials as the IPL continued to be dogged by controversies.

IPL Chairman Rajiv Shukla saying a final decision on the matter would only be taken after getting the version of all the involved parties.

“I will take the version of the MCA, Shah Rukh Khan and the police before talking about the issue,” he told reporters in New Delhi.

“The decision on ban is taken by the Working Committee so I will speak to MCA President Vilasrao Deshmukh on this. I have to take the version of all the parties involved and then speak,” Mr. Shukla added.



Dead or
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