

Idol talk

WHAT A MUSICAL EVENING! Now that's what you are bound to say when **Sunidhi Chauhan**, **Prajakta Shukre**, and **Abhijeet Sawant** perform on one stage. And with **Salim Merchant** singing his all-time favourite tracks - *Ali Maula (Kurbaan)* and *Aashayein (Iqbal)* - the evening gets all the more special. The *Indian Idol* team came to Delhi recently to announce the latest season of the show, and while host Abhijeet's track *Mohabatein Lutaonga* made the guests grow nostalgic about his win, the first for *Indian Idol*, Sunidhi gave a power-packed performance. A few of the few tracks she performed were *Sajana Ji Waari Waari (Honeymoon Travels)* and *Yeh Honsla (Dor)*. Amidst great music were many fun moments too. The audio-visual clips of contestants getting into a verbal row with the judges during the auditions had everybody in splits. That's not all, Sunidhi even sang *Ek Garam Chai Ki Pyaali* the way Anu Malek (who didn't turn up for Delhi event) does to amuse the guests.

VERSATILITY IS THE X-FACTOR?

We have heard that reality show judges demand that contestants to be versatile to win votes. When we asked self-taught singer Sunidhi to give her opinion, she said, "*Maine Lataji ke purane gaane aur Western singers ko sunke*

shiksha li hai. I do believe that a singer has to be born with the talent, but a lot depends on what he/she makes of it. There are many who'd want to sing in a particular style, but there those too who are interested in singing differently, which is appreciated. Everybody loves versatility." Asked to mimic someone, Sunidhi said, "I don't do that anymore. People get upset."

STATE IDOL VS INDIAN IDOL?

When asked if the winner is finally decided by the region or state he/she belongs to, Abhijeet said, "We have had instances wherein contestants from north-eastern parts have made it to the top positions too. It isn't that the country has been divided. *Kisiki koshish zyaada hai aur kisiki kam. Bas yahi ek fark hai.*"

DON'T PRESSURISE

KIDS: Agreed, competition is getting tougher by the day. But is that reason enough for parents to pressurise their kids, we asked Sunidhi's father **Dushyant Chauhan**. "Parents are obviously more ambitious than their kids. I have met many parents who take pride in the fact that their kids stage several shows in a month. What they fail to understand is the pressure the kid faces. *Main khush hoon ki maine apni beti ko kabhi paise kamane ki machine nahin banaya,*" he said.

SALIM'S A DESIGNER?

C'mon, it isn't just Bollywood stars who track trends in fashion. Salim Merchant is pretty style conscious too. "Just like I know how to 'design' music, I also know what suits me the most. And that's why I'm wearing a pair of Jodhpuri pants. I simply love designing. In fact, I have also designed my home," he smiled.



Sunidhi Chauhan

Photos: Pushpesh Dhingra



Salim Merchant



Dushyant Chauhan



Prajakta Shukre
& Abhijeet Sawant