

## **Actor Gajraj Rao shares his new-found love for podcasts during an insightful session of BIG FM's 'Onward & Upward – The BIG Morning Show'**

*~ The show, now in its third season, sees the celebrated actor shed light on the rise of audio content, adapting to the new normal and being inspired by his mentor Pradeep Sarkar ~*

**National, 26th October 2020:** With an aim to spread positivity, upskill their workforce and encourage them to embrace the new normal during the global pandemic, **BIG FM**, one of the leading radio networks in the country, had introduced '**Onward & Upward - The BIG Morning Show**'. The show, curated exclusively for their employees, plays host to prominent industry leaders and experts to share their experience and insights. Recently entering its 3<sup>rd</sup> season, it hosted the supremely talented actor and everyone's favourite on-screen dad - **Gajraj Rao** as a special guest. Filled with insight and humorous anecdotes, the acclaimed actor spoke about his life amidst lockdown and how the creativity of storytelling is evolving with each passing day in a candid conversation.

Held via video call, Gajraj Rao revealed his love for audio content stating, "I watched numerous shows on different OTT platforms in the initial months of the lockdown. Gradually, I reached my level of saturation consuming video content and realised that I was parked on my sofa without contributing much to the household. I was then introduced to the world of podcasts, especially the fiction and storytelling audio libraries. I was hooked to various forms of audio formats like analysis, storybooks, interviews and current affairs. I feel the future of podcasts is going to be brighter as audio entertainment provides one unbeaten advantage - that the consumer can do various other things while consuming this form of content. Audio content is surely going to boom in the coming years."

Adapting to the new normal owing to the pandemic, the actor also shared his experience on the same, "Although I have been associated with the ad world for over a decade now, shooting over the past few months over video calls is something very new to me. My son, who has done his major in graphic designing, helped me with the lighting and other technical aspects to ensure everything was perfectly in place. This experience will be a once-in-a-lifetime feeling for me. I have recently shot 2 ad films over video calls. It is a completely different experience."

Walking down the memory lane and remembering his days with his mentor Pradeep Sarkar, Rao also recalled the advice of the writer-director. "You can judge a person by the way they engage themselves with fellow human beings. If one is sitting in an influencing position – the way you manage your human resources speaks volumes about your personality. These are things which are often passed on to your colleagues and newcomers. This quality has been the USP in Pradeep Da. I always remember this advice for my personal and professional life." Commenting on the age old debate whether life imitates art or the other way round, the actor shared that it's a two way street, one will always influence the other.

Speaking about the session, **Abraham Thomas – Chief Executive Officer, Reliance Broadcast Network Limited**, said, "*With Onward & Upward – The BIG Morning Show Season 3, the idea is to further cultivate and encourage the culture of learning by having bright and like-minded people of the industry in our presence. Being such a relatable and charming personality who is so positive in his ideas and beliefs, we were honoured to have Gajraj Rao interact with the BIG FM family. It was a*

*... treat hearing his experiences and insights over decades of being part of the industry in different functions.”*

Big FM’s ‘Onward & Upward’ show is a one-hour session conducted every morning that pushes the employees to be motivated by sharing their insight and perspective & prepare them for what lies ahead. After two successful seasons, the show recently entered its 3<sup>rd</sup> season with new formats such as panel discussion being included to make it more interactive and engaging for the employees. Started at the onset of lockdown, the show is being conducted everyday for over the last 7 months and sees the attendance of more than 200 BIG employees. Since inception, the series has featured eminent personalities from various sectors such as Vidya Balan, Anupam Kher, Boman Irani, Prahlad Kakkar, Raj Kaushal, Ranveer Allahbadia, amongst many others.

**ABOUT BIG FM:**

BIG FM, one of India's largest radio network with 58 stations, reaches out to 1.9K towns and 1.2 Lacs villages and over 34 Crore Indians across the country. BIG FM has evolved with the changing times. With the new positioning, BIG FM will play a meaningful, relevant and compelling role in lives of consumers. It will not just be about entertainment but a brand that has a purpose. With its extensive reach, localised content and credible RJs the brand will play the role of a ‘thought inspirer’ and an agent of positive change in society. The new tag line of ‘Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho’ reflects the philosophy that ‘Changing the world for the better starts with changing your thoughts’.

Realigning the programming to reflect the new positioning, BIG FM has refreshed the music promise playing your favourite music tested with the audience besides bringing on board some big names from the Radio and entertainment spaces across all key markets. The network’s occasion-based programming, CSR Activities and client integrated campaigns strongly reflects its Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho ethos. The original content-based shows and engaging brand led campaigns has consistently won accolades at prestigious industry awards like the EMVIES, ABBYs, Asian Customer Engagement Awards, Indian Radio Forum & New York Festival.

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