

# Gaming goes *filmi*

PC game makers believe Indian films have great potential to be converted into games. *BT* explores



**N**OW, you can relive your favourite movie's most thrilling moments in a whole new world of gaming. You can assume the role of Mr A (*Dhoom 2*) or Don or Aamir Khan's character in *Ghajini* and make your way through numerous exciting missions, beating up the villains.

Some Indian game makers have joined hands with production houses to produce game versions of hit Indian films. Some of the 3D and HD versions of films set to hit the market are *Dhoom 2*, *Ghajini*, *Sholay*, and Rajnikanth's *Sivaji*, *The Boss*. And makers promise mind-boggling quests, and stunning sound and visual effects.

"The most popular video game in India sells about 20,000 units. Other than super hits like *Need For Speed* or *Halo*, most games do not even sell a few hundred copies," says Sashi Reddi, founder and chairman of a Hyderabad-based gaming studio. The reason could be that most young Indians are unable to relate to foreign games, unless it's something like *Warcraft* or *FIFA*, he explains.

So, movie games tend to become very popular for a short span of time, although they release on playstations first and then as PC games, seconds game master, Daniel Christopher. "People try it and compare it with the movie. Hardcore gamers sometimes go by the review and buy the software even if they haven't seen the film and fall in love with it," he says.

"It's great to play games that are adapted from hit films. Hollywood has been doing it for a long time now. Besides, Indian films are filled with action and drama," says gaming enthusiast Akash Shetty. But they have to be visual-

ly impressive, counters Saipreeth. "Even the US hasn't got the gaming funda right as yet. Of all the movie games that I've come across, *King Kong* was the best. Others were very ordinary. As for Hindi films, *Dhoom 2* would probably make a good game because it has a good mix of action and the hero looks good. Which guy wouldn't want to be Hrithik Roshan?" he says.

Hollywood, however, has gone a step ahead in the gaming world, says Daniel. "*Warcraft* was first launched as a game 5-6 years ago. Now, Hollywood is making a film based on the game, which is set to release in 2009, starring Vin Diesel and Angelina Jolie," he says.

The biggest disadvantage Bollywood has is that films like *Dhoom* or *Krrish* don't happen all the time. "You can't take a family drama or comedy flick and make it into a game. Plus, the graphics have to be more than just good," he adds.

Sashi believes that building games with local content will help boost the gaming industry and break through cultural barriers. And what better local content than films? "Once games based on films hit the market, Indian youth will embrace gaming as another form of entertainment. After all, gaming is as big as films in many parts of the world. In India too, we will see gaming become mainstream. Once movie games show the way, other genres will have an easier time succeeding in the Indian market. So far the responses from the industry has been positive," says Sashi.

TEJASWINI TIRTA

teju.thirtha@timesgroup.com

(WITH INPUTS FROM DARSHANA RAMDEV)