

The cause that helped Manushi Chhillar win Miss World 2017, and everything she's built since



Most Miss World contestants walk into the finale hoping their answer to the judges will be memorable. Manushi Chhillar walked in with something sturdier than a good answer: a project she had already been building for months before the crown was even a possibility.

That project was Shakti, her campaign to talk openly about menstrual hygiene at a time when the subject was still whispered about rather than discussed.

"It is a project with an aim. Shakti means "Power." Through my project, I want to empower each and every woman," she had said earlier while mentioning that her team had already covered over 20 villages in India. In addition to spreading awareness about menstrual hygiene, Project Shakti also featured the distribution of low-cost sanitary napkins and created employment opportunities by encouraging them to join the sanitary pad manufacturing unit in the area. GeographicReference

It was this work that became her Beauty with a Purpose entry at Miss World 2017, and it's what made her the fourth Indian woman to win that particular award. On 18 November 2017, at just 20 years old, Chhillar was crowned Miss World in Sanya, China, becoming only the sixth Indian to hold the title and the first since Priyanka Chopra in 2000, ending a 17-year wait for the country.

The crown didn't slow her down. The Haryana government backed Project Shakti with funding for free sanitary pads in state schools, and UNICEF asked her to front its Red Dot Challenge in India. Even now, years past the win, she still visits schools to talk to teenage girls about a subject she once refused to stay quiet about.

Chhillar also built a second career on screen. She debuted as Princess Sanyogita in Samrat Prithviraj (2022) opposite Akshay Kumar, followed by The Great Indian Family (2023), the bilingual aerial actioner Operation Valentine and Bade Miyan Chote Miyan (both 2024), and most recently Maalik and the spy thriller Tehran (both 2025), starring opposite Rajkumar Rao and John Abraham respectively.

Away from the camera, she's a trained Kuchipudi dancer under gurus Raja and Radha Reddy, a classically trained singer, and a National School of Drama alumna. She's since turned entrepreneur too, launching swimwear and resort-wear label Dweep, alongside brand ambassador roles for Adidas, Estée Lauder and Pantene.

What ties it all together is the same instinct that shaped Project Shakti: picking causes and careers on her own terms, rather than waiting for a crown to hand her a script.

Christopher Nolan wears tie by Indian designer Aahaan Tandon at NY premiere of 'The Odyssey'



Filmmaker Christopher Nolan was spotted wearing a custom tie designed by Indian designer Aahaan Tandon at the premiere of his film "The Odyssey" in New York. SouthAsians & Diaspora

It is crafted from fabric featuring Ajrakh, the centuries-old hand block-printing and resist-dyeing tradition originating in Gujarat's Kutch region.

The designer shared pictures of the film maker, who recently visited

India for the film's premiere, on his Instagram handle on Thursday, which also featured Matt Damon and Anne Hathaway.

"Christopher Nolan in a custom Aahaan Tandon Ajrak Silk Tie for @theodysseymovie premiere in New York City," he wrote in the caption.

Tandon is a New York-based designer and a graduate of Parsons School of Design.

Nolan's "The Odyssey" released

on Friday and features Tom Holland, Zendaya and Charlize Theron, among others.

It revolves around the Greek King Odysseus on a perilous 10-year journey home after the Trojan War. Beset by vengeful gods, sea monsters and enchantresses, he fights to reunite with his wife, Penelope, and son, Telemachus.

The film is produced under Syn-copy Inc and distributed by Universal Pictures.

Bollywood's brave voices: From Akshay Kumar to Kalki Koechlin, celebrities who turned personal trauma into awareness

Recently, actor Ram Kapoor and actor-filmmaker Sohail Khan made separate yet deeply personal revelations on public platforms about experiencing sexual harassment during their childhoods.

During an episode of the reality show 'Lock Upp Season 2', Ram Kapoor revealed that he was molested at the age of 13 by a Class 10 student while studying at a boarding school. He explained that the incident took place under a blanket in the school dormitory while 30 to 40 other children were around, causing him to completely freeze in trauma.

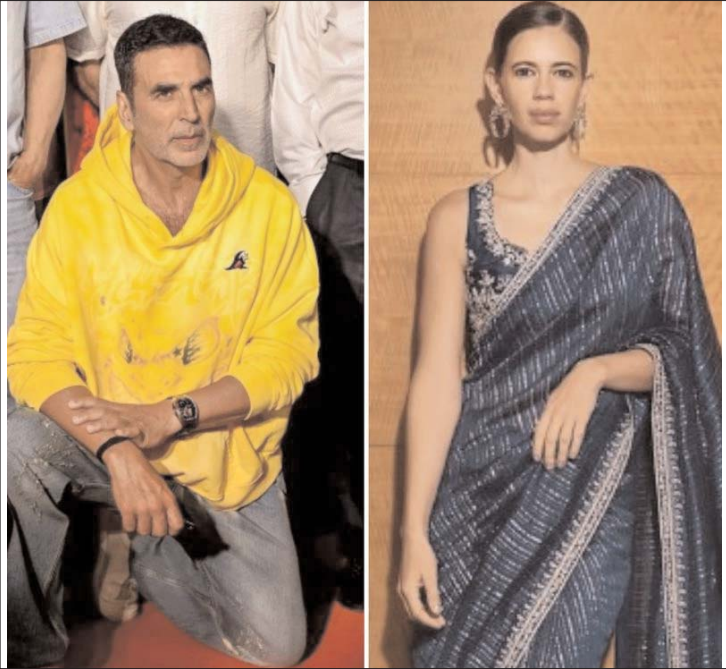
Before this public disclosure, only his wife, Gautami Kapoor, knew about the incident. He noted that the older student later apologized to him and they eventually became friends — which unexpectedly helped him heal.

Following Ram's disclosure, Sohail Khan also spoke out about his own past during an appearance on the talk show 'Alliance'. Sohail emotionally revealed that he faced sexual harassment as a child. He expressed that he carried feelings of deep embarrassment and shame for years before he finally found the courage to confide in his father, Salim Khan. He used the platform to strongly advocate against child abuse, bullying and ragging.

Several prominent Bollywood actors and filmmakers have courageously broken the taboo surrounding child sexual abuse by speaking publicly about their own experiences with molestation. Akshay Kumar revealed during a seminar on women's safety that he was molested at the age of six. He recalled being inside a building elevator when the liftman touched him inappropriately. Because he maintained open communication with his parents, he immediately informed his father, who filed a police complaint. The perpetrator was subsequently arrested and identified as a habitual offender.

Akshay Kumar frequently uses his platform to emphasize that boys face sexual abuse as well, urging parents to build a supportive, judgment-free space for their children to speak up.

While hosting a reality television show, Kangana Ranaut shared that she was inappropriately touched as a young child. She detailed an incident involving a young boy from her hometown in Himachal Pradesh. Ranaut highlighted how common yet heavily suppressed the issue is, noting that many children endure such trauma but families and public platforms frequently avoid discussing it. GeographicReference



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During an industry roundtable interview, the actress opened up about the trauma of being molested at a younger age. She recalled the incident vividly and confessed that she was so traumatised that she hid the experience from everyone, including her family, for two to three years before finally finding the strength to talk about it.

Fatima Sana Shaikh has spoken candidly about the multi-layered struggles she faced in the entertainment industry, including the casting couch.

Sana Saeed reveals battling bulimia: Didn't know I had it

Actor Sana Saeed, known for her role in Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol-starrer "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai", said she had bulimia for years and has recovered from the eating disorder.

Bulimia interferes with eating behaviours and is marked by uncontrolled episodes of overeating, followed by purging by vomiting or misuse of laxatives or water pills.

Saeed, who essayed the role of Anjali in Karan Johar's directorial, shared a video on her Instagram handle on Friday and said she didn't know about the disorder for years as she never heard the term.

The 37-year-old actor confirmed she has recovered and urged people to reach out for help if they find themselves struggling with eating disorders.

"I didn't know I had an eating disorder for years. Not because I wasn't suffering, but because I had never heard the words. Growing up, nobody talked about it. There was no language for what I was going through, so I carried it silently and alone for a long time. When I finally read about bulimia, I understood for the first time what was happening to me. And even then the shame of admitting it, even just to myself, took years to move through," she wrote in the caption.

"I'm sharing this because somewhere out there someone is carrying something they don't even have a name for yet. And I want them to know, it has a name. You are not alone. And there is a way through. I am fully recovered, and I have never felt more at home in my body or my life. If you are struggling, please reach out to someone you trust or look for eating disorder support in your region," she added.

"Kuch Kuch Hota Hai" served as Saeed's acting debut. She later went on to feature in Johar's "Student of the Year", where she essayed the role of Tanya. She is also known for her roles in projects such as "Har Dil Jo Pyar Karega" and Badal" and has appeared in shows such as "Jhalak



Dikhhla Jaa" and "Khatron Ke Khiladi", among others.



Beyond the outfit, it's Shreya's confidence that truly elevates this style moment. Whether she's smiling by the shoreline, enjoying the ocean breeze, or striking a playful pose, her relaxed body language reflects self-assurance and positivity. Her presence transforms a simple beach look into a memorable celebrity fashion statement.