

THE HINDU
METROPLUS

The tangiest one

EVENT Former Miss India and actor Sayali Bhagat launched Nimbooz in the city recently

Three months after it launched in the country's northern and western markets, Nimbooz by 7UP, the bottled *nimboo pani* from the house of PepsiCo, comes to Tamil Nadu. At the launch of the drink at Taj Coromandel recently, actor and former Miss India Sayali Bhagat played chief guest, dutifully sipping for the cameras and pronouncing her verdict with a wide-eyed "Wow!"

Sayali Bhagat has already entered Kollywood with S.J. Suryah's "Newtonin Moondram Vidhi". While past film forays include the forgettable Emraan Hashmi-starrer "Train" and Subhash Ghai's "Paying Guests", Sayali has better things to look forward to. "I am getting a lot of good offers in Tamil, but before that I'm concentrating on finishing three films in Hindi and one in Telugu," she says. "The Tamil film industry is something you learn from. They say one film in Tamil is equal to three in Hindi."

Bollywood projects lined up include Madhur Bhandarkar's "Jail", Subhash Ghai's "Paying Guests 2" and a Reliance production titled "Chaloo Movie". "Bhandarkar is known for making realistic cinema. My role in the film is short; I chiefly appear in a promotional song in the film. When he offered me the role, my first question to him was, 'Your films usually don't have promotional songs. Why this?', and he told me, 'Yours is the curiosity element in the film.'"

While films will keep happening, Sayali Bhagat and Rahul Dravid are not likely to forget her first brush with television. Many still remember a hapless Dravid trying to ward off the marriage proposal of a young "journalist" on MTV Bakra. "I was in school then, and I did it for some extra pocket money. We wanted to celebrate getting out of class IX and going to a more studious mode in class X. Dad wasn't ready to increase



SIP IN STYLE Sayali Bhagat PHOTO: R. RAVINDRAN

my allowance, and here I was getting Rs. 1,000 for Bakra," recalls Sayali. "Rahul still remembers me as the MTV Bakra girl and is wary of me lest I pull another stunt."

Coming to Nimbooz, Alpina Titus, executive VP-Flavours, PepsiCo India, elaborated on how Pepsi plans to tap the mostly home-based *nimboo*

pani segment through its new offering. "While *nimboo pani* is something all of us have grown up with, Nimbooz comes in a form that is both convenient and hygienic," she added. Nimbooz is available in glass bottles, tetra packs and PET bottles at Rs. 10 and Rs. 15.

SHALINI SHAH