

## Censors clear 'Chai Pani etc' at last

By Mandira Nayar

NEW DELHI, NOV.29. This is a truly Delhi film – and an unusual one at that. With a whole lot of amateur actors, aspiring film-makers as well as old familiar faces finding space in young Manu Rewal's "Chai Pani etc", here is one show that the city can truly call its own.

"I wanted to use as many people as I could from Delhi," says the Delhi-based film-maker. "So besides my main stars, Konkona Sen Sharma and Zafar Karachiwala, I have tried to give other actors from Delhi a chance. There are people like Bhaskar Ghosh who has spent so many years writing about bureaucrats. In my film, he plays one. It also has Inder Mishra, who is probably the voice of Delhi. His voice is used in almost every advertisement, but he has never acted. You will now see him doing a fantastic role in the movie."

A light-hearted movie that looks at the mighty wall of corruption a young film-maker encounters before he can turn his celluloid dreams into reality, it had Manu discovering to his horror that humour is not always appreciated. With the film running into major censor problems, it was a slice of real on reel for him. "The movie was finally cleared by the Board after I made some minor cuts. I wanted to enter it for the competitive section of the International Film Festival of India being held this year in Goa, but the film got delayed by seven months and couldn't qualify for that section. But there will be a special screening of the film now at the Festival which opened today," he says with a smile.

While it might well be the first time he has ventured into the world of fantasy and fiction, this is certainly not his



Konkona Sen Sharma and Zafar Karachiwala in Manu Rewal's brand new film 'Chai Pani etc', now showing at the International Film Festival of India that opened in Goa on Monday.

first film. An international award-winning documentary film-maker, Manu ended up spending well over six years making his script just right before making his first feature film.

"I don't think there is much difference between making documentaries and feature films. It is the same craft; it is not like the difference between a carpenter and a painter. I wrote the script a while ago and was looking for a producer to finance the project. I also wanted to see whether

people appreciate my brand of humour. So I made a short fiction film that I screened at Cannes and people just laughed through the whole show. So I knew my humour was working. I read lots of books by independent film-makers, made a business plan, and took out my begging bowl for finance," he recalls.

After knocking at many doors for money to complete the film and turning down offers from people who wanted their sons to play the hero's role in it, Manu finally man-

aged to complete the movie in 22 days of shooting with some help from family and friends. Offering more than just a glimpse into the life of a film-maker up against a corrupt bureaucracy that runs our world of cinema, "Chai Pani etc" is really about the enthusiasm of a young crew raring to go and willing to overcome all the odds on the way.

Now that it has overcome all the odds on the way from Delhi to Goa all right, its maker is all agog with suspense over audience response.