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Bollywood, as India's Hindi film industry is referred to, has "three Khans", who are among its most successful movie stars.

Besides Aamir Khan, who is well known in China for his films like *3 Idiots*, *PK*, *Dangal* and *Secret Superstar*, there are Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan — who now seek to develop a fan base in China.

Salman Khan's 2015 movie *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* was released in Chinese cinemas on March 2.

The movie is about Bajrangi, an ardent devotee of the Hindu deity Hanuman, who attempts to take a 6-year-old Pakistani Muslim girl home after she gets lost in India. The odyssey has touched people in both countries.

Salman Khan plays Bajrangi, who is kind and stubborn.

The film, which was well received by Indian audiences, earned \$67.5 million at the box office in the country.

It has earned more than 80 million yuan (about \$13 million) since its release in Chinese cinemas.

Kabir Khan, director of the film, said Salman Khan was his first choice for the role.

Kabir Khan said he agreed immediately to do the film when he was approached by the writer.

"I felt it was a very sweet story, which spoke about very large issues in a very effective manner," he said.

Both Kabir Khan and Salman Khan believe that India is about religious coexistence.

And Kabir Khan said: "That's why it was important to make a movie like this, which basically talks about the fact that sometimes you get stereotypes about other people but ultimately all human beings are the same."

"They have the same emotions and same reactions to situations."

Kabir Khan said if he is given another story with a similar message, he would like to make it into a film.

"Every film, at the end of the day, does reflect the ideology and thinking of the filmmaker," he said.

The 6-year-old girl Shahida causes the audiences to both laugh and cry.

The role is played by Harshaali Malhotra, whom Kabir Khan chose from 2,000 girls who auditioned for the part.

"We brought eight to 10 girls to a workshop to Bombay for about one month and then we selected her," said Kabir Khan.

"She is very shy but talkative once she is comfortable."

Bajrangi Bhaijaan is the first Kabir Khan movie to be shown in China, and he is glad that Indian cinema is well accepted by Chinese audiences.



Director Kabir Khan (left) and Harshaali Malhotra hold Chinese knots at a promotional event in Beijing. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Indian film explores shared humanity

Sweet story of long journey and coexistence may be the pathway to a China fan base for another of Bollywood's 'three Khans'

He thinks it is natural because India and China are old Eastern cultures, and both react to emotional stories in a similar fashion.

"Actually, it's logical that India and China enjoy each other's films much more than Hollywood," said Kabir Khan.

"I hope we can get more Chinese films into India because I think there's a lot we can share."

Kabir Khan first visited China in the 1990s to shoot a documentary for the Discovery channel called *Beyond the Himalayas*.

He now plans to work with Chinese actors or collaborate on a film with a Chinese film company.

"It was a very sweet story, which spoke about very large issues in a very effective manner."

KABIR KHAN
Director



Indian film *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* stars Salman Khan and actress Kareena Kapoor. The film has earned more than 80 million yuan since its release in Chinese cinemas on March 2.