



Madhuri Dixit in the 2007 film Aaja Nachle

Former Bollywood queen Madhuri Dixit will play Indira Gandhi, India's first and only female prime minister, in a biopic, according to reports in the Indian media.

Indira Gandhi with her two sons Rajiv (L) and Sanjay in 1977. Photo: AFP

Mother: The Indira Gandhi Story will be directed by Asian-American filmmaker Krishna Shah with filming scheduled to start in mid 2010.

"I have followed Indira Gandhi's life through media, books and critics. It's such an exciting and dramatic story. I want the future generation to know her story. A whole new

generation has grown and matured since her assassination and through this film I hope to connect people with their history and legacy," Shah said in a press release.

Apart from Dixit, who was Bollywood's top heroine in the late 80s and 90s, actors Dharmendra, Abhay Deol and Nana Patekar have been approached to play Motilal Nehru (Indira's grandfather), Rajiv Gandhi (her son) and politician Jayaprakash Narayan respectively.

Hollywood stars Tom Hanks and Tommy Lee Jones have also been reportedly approached for the roles of US presidents

Bollywood star Madhuri Dixit to play former Indian PM Indira Gandhi



Indira Gandhi with her two sons Rajiv (L) and Sanjay in 1977

Lyndon Baines Johnson and Richard Nixon.

The film will be made in two parts and will be shot in India, US, Pakistan and Russia. The first part will cover the period

from her birth to the war against Pakistan in 1971 while the second will deal with her political career and the controversial rise of her son Sanjay Gandhi upto her

assassination in 1984. Shah is best-known for his 'crossover' 1978 thriller Shalimar

starring Rex Harrison alongside

Dharmendra and Zeenat Aman.

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ESCAPE ARTIST Meanwhile, big sis Jessica Simpson – sporting some super-sized shades! – slips through a throng of photographers Friday after lunching at Sur restaurant in Beverly Hills with BFF stylist Ken Paves.



TO THE BEAT Jennifer Lopez hits the stage at L.A.'s Nokia Theatre on Thursday in preparation for her big performance on Sunday night's American Music Awards. No word on what she'll sing, but it could be a track off her new album Love?, due out in January.

CROWD PLEASER With a frenzy of fans following close behind, a casual Tom Cruise keeps the pace while sightseeing in Salzburg, Austria, on Thursday. The movie star is in town to film his new action-comedy, Knight & Day, which also stars

TAKING THE LEAD Are they grabbing presents for the birthday boy? A giggly Ashlee Simpson-Wentz clings to son Bronx, who turned 1 on Nov. 20, during a trip to L.A.'s Dragon Books with husband Pete Wentz on Friday.

CALLING THE SHOTS Let's go, Lakers! Heroes star Hayden Panettiere roots for the home team Thursday night during a basketball game at L.A.'s Staples Center. The reigning NBA champs beat the Chicago Bulls 108-93.

MEAL TO GO Satisfying a craving? Decked in an oversized plaid top, a pregnant Kourtney Kardashian exits Starbucks with coffee and raisin bread in Los Angeles on Friday.