

THE WEEK

JOURNALISM WITH A HUMAN TOUCH

sive lover. Then she dons a black workout ensemble, sinews and muscle all put to display in three different poses, on the cover of her fitness DVD, promising you similar results if you just 'Pick It Up'.

Shilpa Shetty has already been down this route, helpfully recording a yoga DVD, the asanas of which she credits for her shapely torso. Interestingly enough, the fitness and yoga DVDs also double up as the latest releases of both the actors. Both Shetty and Basu have been conferred with the once dubious, but now sought after title of 'best body in the business' many times over and cashing in on this asset in a low phase of their career makes perfect business sense.

Then there is Sherlyn Chopra who has broken every rule in the book in an effort to get noticed. Last week, she put up nude pictures of herself on her Twitter account with the declaration that *Playboy* wanted her to pose for them. Her following, in her own words, jumped up from 1,500 to 15,000 and she landed on the front page of every newspaper supplement.

Writer Rebecca Dana of *Daily Beast* has no idea who the women we have talked about here are, but chances are that she knows the 'type'. Dana, in a column for the internet news letter, gave the definition to the term 'fembot' describing them as 'species of walking, talking Barbie dolls' who have little more than well kept bodies to their credit. There is very little to distinguish one fembot from another, who exist on the periphery of the charmed famous circle.

They show up on society pages dressed in designer togs, either coat-tailing on an elder sister's good fortune or a singing-acting-compeering career, none of which is going anywhere but one which is nevertheless controversial. With their poker-straight hair, they are a favourite with tabloids, handing out interviews and their latest photo shoots with a barely concealed glee.

"They are all casualties of fame," says a Bollywood stylist. "Not everyone can be an A-lister, it is imperative to stay in the limelight since obscurity is dogging their heels at every step. They do whatever they can to stay in the news," she says.

So Chopra talks happily about her 'babies' referring to her enhanced bust, even sharing her vital statistics with you. "I was flat chested... no amount of workout could make me go up to 34C, so I choose to go to a cosmetic surgeon," she says. And because of that she "embraces each day" today.

Happiness for the fembot is brought with the cut of a scalpel. The sculpted waist, the sharp jawline, the delicate chin, the enchanting dimple... in the immortal words of Rakhi Sawant, "What God does not give you, the doctor does."

Collectively, fembots are dictating fashion trends and beauty world over and India is no different. Young, impressionable minds are bombarded with similar images every day and believe this is what the world wants. Cosmetic surgeons share tales of young women trooping in with pictures of actors and models whose nose or chin they want. "One woman came to me with 19 profile shots of Deepika Padukone's nose insisting that is what she wanted, it was frightening," says Dr Mohan Thomas, senior consultant, Breach Candy Hospital, Mumbai.

Tales of starlets pumping up the area around their navel to give their stomach a more taut feel to getting their waists sculpted are dime a dozen. But it is when



Two years ago, Bipasha Basu was called fat and it jolted her. "That's when I decided to take the matter into my own hands," she says.