

Reality **BITES**

Israeli film-maker **ALON ALSHIECH** talks about the grueling reality of living on the edge through his documentary

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MOST of us who live in the cozy shelter of our homes can never imagine what it's like living on the border amidst continuous gunfire and being on the verge of death every day. Israeli film-maker Alon Alshiech whose award-winning documentary *Play Me Allegro* screens this week, talks to *After Hrs*.

Play Me Allegro tells the story of Julia, a Russian immigrant, and her five-year-old daughter, who live on the border between Israel and the Palestinian authority. The area has the highest ratio of rocket hits per square kilometer and the least amount of time for advance warning. In spite of



Alon Alshiech

the circumstances, the Russian immigrant and her five-year-old daughter decide to carry on with their life. "Life isn't easy for Julia and her daughter. Rather than running away from their home everyday and dying 50 times in a day elsewhere, they decide to live in their home and die once and for all. The situation brings out the best in Julia and as a parent and she chooses to raise her daughter in an unsurpassed manner," says Alon.

Alon believes that it's the selfish agendas of a few politicians that drive all wars and poor civilians end up facing the hardships. He draws a parallel between the situation faced by Israel and Palestine and India and Pakistan. "India and Pakistan face a tense



situation too. But whether it's Israel and Palestine or India and Pakistan, innocent lives are lost," he remarks.

Quentin Tarantino is among Alon's favourite film-makers. He finds the music in Indian films interesting. He says, "I know about *Slumdog Millionaire* which isn't by an Indian director but still I consider it Indian. Most Indian films are stylised and attract a lot of crowd in Israel. People in my country are fond of the music."

Awards won by *Play Me Allegro*

- Human Rights Award: Docu-days International Human Rights Film Festival — Kiev, Ukraine 2009
- Palestine-Israel Focus: BaKaFORUM Basel Karlsruhe Forum — Switzerland 2009

Play Me Allegro will be telecast on Documentary 24x7 on NDTV as *Allegro* on November 7 at 3 pm and November 8 at 1 pm.