



RAFI HOSSAIN WITH BUDDHODEB DAS GUPT ON FILMS

Buddhodeb Das Gupta is a renowned poet & film maker having multiple national accolades on his list of achievements. Indian cinema has been taken to a new height by this endowed artistry worldwide. Among his makings are: Shomoyer Kache, Durotto, Nim Onnopurna, Griho Juddho, Ondho Goli, Fera, Bagh Bahadur, Tahader Kotha, Chorachor, Lal Doroja, Uttora, Mondo Meyer Upakkhan, Shopner Din, Kal Purush and Janala. His new release, 'Top', will premier in January next year. This one-of-a-kind movie maker had visited Dhaka recently and Rafi Hossain had the opportunity to interview him in person at the Channel i building.

Why don't we start with the film you are producing with Channel i right now?

Buddhodeb Das Gupta: Should we talk about it? Would that be right? (Grinning) What is your opinion on Poetry, Photography and Cinema? Are they separate mediums of art or the same? Or is it the perspective that does the trick?

BDG: Somewhere similarities are definitely there and this similarity is very useful in completing any art. When any film maker understands these similarities and co-relates them that is when a good creation will be born.

Then can we say that each of these media are inter-related? There is a poetic touch to your films. Is it because you are a poet too?

BDG: I don't quite know how it happens. But poetry too has a theme and so a subject must be there.

What do you like to call yourself, poet or film director?

BDG: A very difficult question indeed. I am there in all of my works of art. I will be incomplete if separated from any of the platforms I work in.

How can we separate a commercial and non commercial film?

BDG: I don't really think of it that way. Whatever leaves a footprint on us is what makes me acknowledge it.

When does a film turn into a work of art?

BDG: When a film will make the audience bow down to it with admiration, that's when we can call it an art.

Are you inspired by Luis Bunuel?

BDG: A lot of things inspire me. Even nature. But yes, Bunuel has brought about a change in my life in many ways.

What is it in Bunuel that has affected you in this way?

BDG: I like the way Bunuel works. I'm talking about his style. There are others too. Tarkovsky, Gother and our Satyajit Roy. I like a lot of the new comers too.

Which recent works do you like?

BDG: There are many new comers and many films too, but they have the scope to do even better.

What is your advice in that case?

BDG: The cinema itself is missing. Completely missing! They have to understand their own story first. Recently Taiwan is producing a lot of quality work, I must say.

Can you name anyone in Bangladesh with prospect?

BDG: A lot of cinemas are being produced. There's talent present. Producing a cinema is not an easy work. People have to be encouraged to come to cinema halls. Film makers are not getting what they deserve, and distributors are minting all the money. When I make a film I don't think about what others may say about it. I know what I make. Money is playing a vital role in this art form and it is indeed important. Good films always have a market. Festivals in Cannes, Toronto and Venice should be exploited. Bangla films should utilise both the Bengals. That's

how the market will expand for film makers and the audience will get good films.

What exactly should be done to get out of this mess?

BDG: The subject is very important. Any theme that will not touch anyone's heart is a waste of time. The Independence war of Bangladesh is a very good subject but the problem is not many understand it's significance. We know how horrific the situation was then. How it went on, what was needed etc. This generation doesn't realise how noble it is to be born in Bangladesh. A lot of films on the liberation war are present but nothing on an international level is there. There are not a lot of cinemas on partion of the sub-continent. Hasan Azizul Haque is a well known writer. I think he is the most powerful writer in both Bengals. We can think of making films on his books. Novels like Shabitri Kotha, Agun Pakhi are pieces that can be worked on. We should have started thinking about films on his movies long before. The world is changing and we must keep it in mind while visualising a film. Movies should focus on local subjects that the people can relate to. Something that will make the outside world think.

There is a trend among the young producers to exploit controversial issues and come under the lime light. How do you see it?

BDG: These techniques have become old

and unnecessary. This is not a welcome method to come to lime light. There are better ways. A good theme will always draw positive attention. We just have to bring a new dimension to our films.

Among your films which ones are special to you?

BDG: I cannot exactly say which film has satisfied me. I am a very dissatisfied person. Dissatisfaction chases me everywhere and my quest for finding a new subject to work on is relentless.

When is a director ready to start on his next project?

BDG: A film maker never ceases to think. This process is not limited to particular moments. Whenever anything makes a film maker wonder or thoughtful he knows a film is due.

Does the same thing happen in case of poetry?

BDG: Poetry and cinema have a significant difference. There is a direct connection of money with films, which is absent in the case of poetry. A poetry can please or displease someone but a cinema with a displeased audience does not have the power to turn into a cinema because a displeased audience will mean an unfunded project that cannot reach cinema halls.

Are we getting any poetry collection from you soon?

BDG: 'Bhutura Kothay thake' will be published soon and another poetry collection is in the pipeline too.