

CENTRE STAGE

REDOAN RONY

Popular director, Redoan Rony started his silver screen journey with his debut film, 'Chorabali', for which he won the 'Bangladesh National Film Award'. In this interview, he talks about what it takes to be a director in this industry.



PHOTO COURTESY: REDOAN RONY

Tell us something about yourself.

I believe that my existence has a purpose. My place on this earth is to do good things, and I do so through storytelling.

What was your debut film?

My first film was a thriller, called *Chorabali*. It was released back in 2012. The protagonist of the film is a killer, and the story surrounds his mindset, and deals with the moral ambiguity of killing that he has to go through. Now, let's assume a real-life murderer watches the film. My main motive was to make that person question his doings; to make him fall in a moral dilemma. I won the *Bangladesh National Film Award* in five categories for *Chorabali*.

What inspired you to pursue directing?

When I was a child, there were many books in our house as my father was a Bangla literature teacher. So, I used to read a lot. When reading the stories, I could visualise them, and I wanted to somehow be able to bring them to life. During my Intermediates, I made a plan with my friend, Rana, in which he would act and I would direct. He unfortunately died in a

road accident around the time I enrolled in a university. I was incredibly depressed after that; I swore to never direct a film in my life. However, my parents inspired me to pursue directing. During that time, I was seeing someone. She also inspired me to not give up my dreams. She convinced me that Rana would be happy. I worked as an assistant director under Mostofa Sarwar Farooki for three years, and learned all the ropes of directing.

Do you prefer making films or TV dramas?

Definitely films. Television dramas are a practising ground. One builds their career from it. Film is the ultimate goal. However, it's quite a big deal to make a film in Bangladesh. Moreover, some stories cannot be made into films.

Tell us about your struggles.

I've had to face a lot of struggles. I came from a science and engineering background. People were not supportive of the decision to become a filmmaker. Moreover, a filmmaker is not as accepted in society as say, a doctor or an engineer. Many don't even know what a filmmaker does. People also have a negative

impression due to media. Then comes the financial part. A stable income can't be expected from this career. Every filmmaker has to struggle in the beginning. Later, when they're more established, films can be sold with their branding. However, at the end of the day, when people watch your films and appreciate them, it's all worth it, and the struggles decrease.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years?

I see myself making many good films. I want to have a financial backup, like a business, from which I can earn money, and use it for making films. I also want to make a fund for films which producers shun away due to the potential lack of commercial success, and help other directors with similar problems.

What's your dream project?

My dream project may not be achievable, but I wish to make a film which will be selected for *Cannes*. I haven't been able to design such a project, but I have some stories in my head, which may be able to reach there.

What is your advice for aspiring directors?

You have to face a lot of struggles in this field. It may look very glamorous from the outside, but the reality is quite different. If someone wants to be a director for the glamour or recognition, I'd suggest to not follow this career. If you have a specific purpose and love for directing, only then should you be a director. There are a lot of things you have to overcome.

Do you have any upcoming project the readers should look forward to?

I'm making my next feature film at the moment. I'll not disclose the name of the film yet, but I will announce it, with the cast very soon. I'll start the work by the end of this year, hopefully.

Any message for the readers?

I request everyone to appreciate good Bangla content; not just the commercial ones. Please promote good content as it will inspire more. Watch those films in the theatres, share them on social media. This is an art form which requires both talent and financial security. If people support them, then only can they flourish.