

THROUGH THE EYES

ZAKIR HOSSAIN RAJU

Zakir Hossain Raju is a celebrated filmmaker in the Bangladeshi film industry. Among his directorial ventures, 'Bhalobaslei Ghor Bandha Jay Na' brought him huge success, and the film received seven 'National Film Awards' for different categories. Besides making cinema and dramas, he is also a great story writer, screenplay and dialogue writer. This week, the man behind the camera shared his passionate journey as a filmmaker.

AN INDEPENDENT START

I had the idea of making films when I was in college. I used to watch a lot of films during that time. If I liked a certain film, I would probably watch it several times. That's when I decided that I would become a scriptwriter. Later, I realised that my stories would not be shown on-screen exactly the way I imagine them to be. So, I decided that the best course of action would be to become a director as they have the power to make films which match their visions. I then worked as an assistant director for a while. I wanted to maintain my individuality, so I decided to write and direct my own stories. I never had anyone to inspire me; my own enthusiasm and self-belief encouraged me.

ESCAPE FROM REALITY

When I have time to myself, I try to utilise it to the fullest. I love reading books; I might even be addicted. I sometimes stay up all night reading. Even if I'm busy, I still make sure to do some light reading before bed. Although I like the writings of many, Rabindranath Tagore is incomparable in my eyes. Aside from him, I like Jibanananda Das, Shamsur Rahman and Humayun Azad. However, it is poetry that I consider my safe haven. Sometimes, when I'm in an emotional dilemma, I use poetry as an instrument to compose myself.

FAVOURITES FROM THE FIELD

I love the works of several Bangladeshi directors, like Kazi Hayat, Zahir Raihan, Khan Ataur Rahman and A J Mintu. Other than that, I really like the work of James Cameron; I feel that we think alike. Satyajit Ray is also a favourite of mine. His film, *Pather Panchali* is superb. There are many actors that have won my heart. Sohel Rana and Kobori Apa are two of my favourite senior actors. I also like the work of Shakib Khan and Golam Mostafa. Although Khan Ataur Rahman isn't an actor by profession, he could surely act like one.

MAGICAL VOICES

My list of favourite singers is virtually



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unending. Some of my favourites are Sabina Yasmin, Shahnaz Rahmatullah, Rafiqul Alam, Kanak Chapa, Syed Abdul Hadi, Subir Nandi, Monir Khan, S I Tutul, Baby Nazneen, Nishita Borua and so on. I really love the voice of Abdul Alim. I have never heard a voice with that much depth and soul in it.

LOVE FROM PEERS

I have plenty of pleasant memories related to my work. During the shooting of *Premi O Premi*, Arifin Shuvoo and Nusraat

Faria made a strong bond with me. When I hopped into the car of one, the other would be sad. *Poramon* actor Bipasha Kabir also said that I'm the one she liked to work with the most. Shakib Khan praised my work, especially my scriptwriting, saying how it is able to captivate the soul. Actor Afzal Sharif even called me an intelligent, tasteful, polite, humble and a genuinely good director and a person. That really touched my heart. I consider these my greatest achievements.

DREAMS LEFT UNFULFILLED

I still haven't been able to make a film which matches my imagination completely. There still isn't a film which I am satisfied with from the start to the finish. I don't know when or if I will ever be able to do that. So, it is something that I have yet to achieve. This is what I consider an unfulfilled desire.

Interviewed by Zahid Akbar
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