

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE BRAINS BEHIND AGONTUK



PHOTO: COURTESY

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Agontuk is an open-world game in development by M7 Productions, and Attrito. It's something that is being talked about on social media as well as among the gaming community of Bangladesh for a while now. *Agontuk* has a dedicated team of 35 members working behind it, and we sat down with four of them recently — Mehraj Maruf, Zahin Adeb, Rayhan Sharif, and Koushik Sarker, to talk about the game, and what we can expect from it.

The hype surrounding *Agontuk* has been surreal. Were you expecting such a reaction?

We started posting stills from the project, hoping that it would promote the game. What we didn't expect was how fast it would spread, because despite not having sponsored any of the posts, they got a lot of likes and shares, and it was all organic. It felt amazing, and definitely beyond our expectations.

The trailer received a lot of positive feedback as well as a few raised eyebrows. The main character's voice was something people thought could've been better. What is your say on that?

We specifically instructed the voice artist to speak that way. It was part of the game's plot. People didn't get it, and that's understandable. Once the game comes out, and people play through the story from the main character's narrative, it will be clear as to why he was instructed to do so. But yes, we are keeping track of the feedback and will make sure that we take all the reasonable suggestions into account before the final launch.

Could you tell us a bit about the specifications of the game?



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We can't confirm anything on the specs yet. *Agontuk* is a work in progress. There will be multiple changes made to the game throughout its development phase. But we are hoping to decide on the specifications soon.

Do you have any sort of funding for this project?

Initially, we didn't have any sort of funding. We were just making it work among ourselves. We plan to make an announcement soon about the future plans regarding funds.

Do you think the project would come to a halt if you are unable to get sufficient funding?

This is something we are still trying to work out. However, we can assure the people that we're doing everything we can to make sure the game comes out and is

available to the general public in due time.

What, according to you, are the risks associated with this game now that you are looking to make it happen?

Not being able to finish in time, and not having a good enough budget are two of the risks that we think could affect us at the moment.

Are you on a strict deadline?

No. Since we are yet to find ourselves a developer or a promoter, we are currently not under any sort of deadline. We did, however, have a strict deadline for the trailer as it was to be released at the Unite India 2019 Unity Developer Conference.

Bangladesh is not really known for making games. Over the years, all we've seen are mods or modded games being flushed out to the public, resulting in overall dissatisfaction. What if people, especially the gaming community in

Bangladesh, don't find your game up to the mark?

This is something we've been seeing since our childhood. Having said that, gamers might not find our game up to the standard but that would depend on which parts of the game they are unsatisfied with.

If we do hear such complaints, we would ask them to stick around for the next game we build. Games will have flaws, and ours will be no different. But yes, we're learning and hopefully if we do face such criticism, we will make it work the next time.

A lot of game development companies, and not only developers, have asked the same from the crowd but have failed. What do you think sets your argument apart from the rest?

What sets us apart from other initiatives is that we have a dedicated team assigned to each department, which I don't think a lot of other companies or developers do. Each team member specialises in their work. We also have people to look after the quality. We follow a specific system for whatever we do, and that to us, is something that will ensure that we live up to our words.

How will you address piracy concerns?

Firstly, we would like to request the people not to pirate the game or anything that's not free. Secondly, we do plan on taking the piracy issue seriously and will of course, work on ways to limit it.

Do you have any message for the people looking forward to playing *Agontuk*?

With our dedicated team and with the work we have done without any sort of funding, shows how passionate we are for this project. So we would like our people to wait a little bit longer. There is a lot to come, and we hope to deliver accordingly.



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