

MATINEE

I never chased fame; only did films I wanted to do: Rajkummar Rao



Rajkummar tied the knot with his long-time girlfriend Patrilekhaa last November

Patrilekhaa says that she has never really chased fame. I was just doing films that I really wanted to do," he says.

WHEN YOU GET SO MUCH LOVE FOR A FILM, I THINK THAT IS A VICTORY FOR ANY ARTISTE

The success of *Badhaai Do* has been thrilling for the entire team of the film. Rajkummar said, "When I saw the movie, I was happy and proud of the kind of response I was getting for the film after the release. Then we saw the kind of 'business' it did at the box office. We were elated. We did make films so that people go and watch them, and when you get so much love for that film, I think that is a victory for any artiste... that you get respect, credibility

and your producers make money as well. I think that is the best combination for any film. To date, people are watching *Badhaai Do*. We get so many personal messages where people share their experiences and tell us how this film has given them the strength to come out to their families. I think that our film is doing a great job. It is still trending."

'LOVE IS LOVE. JUST BE WHO YOU ARE'

Talking about the ongoing Pride Month, the actor says, "I think every day should be a Pride Day and everyone should have the freedom to live their life the way they want to live. We all should be there to support each other and be proud of each other's choices. Love is love. Just be who you are."

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He says, "I prefer to play these parts, which can challenge me because sometimes there is no arc, and there is nothing happening inside the character's mind and heart. For me, the internal journey of a character is more exciting than its physical appearance. Also, for me, this film was slightly tough because I had to build a certain kind of physicality for it. Getting that kind of physique was not easy, but you have to be in a certain shape."

Gay characters have rarely been portrayed in Hindi films and was every bit real and believable. "Some actors, people have preconceived notions that why is a straight guy playing a gay character? I am glad that people from the community who saw the film, loved it. I have met so many people who better than Ritvik (Podeskyari) and me. And they thanked me that we made a film like *Badhaai Do*," he adds.

MY FILMS

Last November, the 37-year-old tied the knot with his long-time girlfriend, Patrilekhaa. "I just feel very happy and proud," he says when asked about his wife and his wedding. "Nothing really has changed for Patrilekhaa and me. It has been 11 years that we have been together. It's a beautiful feeling to be married. She is a very honest critic of my films. And *Badhaai Do* is her favourite film of mine. When we saw it together for the first time during the edit, she came out crying and couldn't stop. She found it tough to control her emotions. That was the time she told me that it was her favourite film of mine," he says.

'GROWING UP, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE AN ACTOR'

Success and fame have come to Rajkummar gradually and after a lot of sweat and toil. As he notes ahead, he doesn't let himself lose focus or forget the reason why he stepped into showbiz. "I think I have just started, and I still have a long journey ahead. I feel that first and foremost, one has to be an actor and that was why when I was growing up, I always wanted to be an actor... I never thought about becoming a star. That's how my journey started - I began learning acting through theatre. I went to film school, and

then I came to Mumbai and started doing films that I believed in. After that, things happened organically. I was never really chasing fame. I was just doing films that I really wanted to do," he says.

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