

Breaking the Silence: Arjunn Dutta's *Deep Fridge* Shatters Divorce Taboos

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Day 3 of the ongoing Pune International Film Festival (PIFF) showcased director Arjunn Dutta's latest creation Bengali film *Deep Fridge* starring Tnusree Chakraborty and Abir Chatterjee in major roles. The film explores the intricate dynamics of the relationship between a divorced couple Swarnava (played by Chatterjee) and Mili (portrayed on screen by Chakraborty).

Speaking at the 22nd PIFF, director Dutta shared that he enjoys delving deep into the nuances and existential crises of relationships. The protagonists, Swarnava and Mili, embark on their marital journey with ideals of an idealised union, only to witness its eventual dissolution in the painful reality of divorce. Divorce can be a difficult and complex idea, often posing a challenge to human minds to fully understand the idea of separation.

Now more than ever, divorce has become a prevalent reality in our society, and yet it remains a conversation we often avoid having openly. Unhappy marriages around the world are filing for divorce, leading to immense suffering for the children born of the marriage.

The story unfolds on a rainy evening as Tatai (their child) falls sick, setting the scene for a poignant meeting between the protagonists Swarnava and Mili, who encounter each other for the first time since they separated. Against a backdrop of persistent rain, blackouts, an old refrigerator, and their feverish son, the once-married characters discuss their relationship.

Both Swarnava and Mili have distinct phases of self-realization, each finding valid reasons for their divorce. In a twist, they achieve closure and willingly confront the accompanying agony. Yet, in the eyes of the audience within this parallel reality, their outward portrayal remains that of a happily married couple.

'I am a keen observer of human relationships and I have seen couples who sleep in one bed, under one roof and yet do not face each other. In India, divorce is still seen as a taboo and not talked about openly', says the director Arjunn Dutta while speaking about the idea behind this movie.