

# Riz Ahmed Opens Up About His Transformation For Latest Movie 'Mogul Mowgli'

Oscar-nominated actor Riz Ahmed recently opened up about the dramatic physical transformation he underwent for his latest role in the film 'Mogul Mowgli'.

The 38-year-old actor told IndieWire that his latest role as Zed, a Pakistani rapper whose career is threatened when he's diagnosed with an autoimmune disease, was "about intense weight loss", reported People magazine. "I lost 10 kilos [about 22 pounds] in three weeks. I wouldn't recommend it to anyone," Ahmed said.

The actor was sure to enlist the help of an expert to safely undergo his extreme weight loss for 'Mogul Mowgli', but he said the process was still challenging.

"I had a professional dietician working with me, but it was really grueling and took me emotionally to an intense place, which probably informed the movie," he explained.

"That was a big part of it, being in a place of weakness and fatigue and insatiable hunger," the actor added.

Ahmed quoted fellow actor Daniel Kaluuya to explain his process for embodying Zed, telling IndieWire, "Dan Kaluuya said something I liked: 'If you're in your head, you're dead.' I think that's true."



Riz Ahmed arrives to the Oscars red carpet for the 93rd Academy Awards in Los Angeles, California, U.S., April 25, 2021.

He added, "Acting has to be in your body. Anything that brings you into your body centres you, and you can perform in that place."

Ahmed's latest role comes not long after he played another musician onscreen in 'The Sound of Metal', the 2019 film in which he starred as a drummer named

Ruben who is losing his hearing. To bring his character to life, Ahmed learned how to play the drums, he told People magazine in December.

"As soon as I met Darius Marder, the director, he told me: Listen, we're going to do this all for real. When you're drumming onscreen, you're going to be drumming for real. And when you're playing a gig, we're gonna play in a real nightclub in front of a real audience," Ahmed said.

The actor described playing an instrument as "a very psychological thing," adding, "You can't think your way through playing the drums, you have to kind of surrender; you have to let them play you almost. You have to trust. I think it kind of opened me up in new ways."

While his role in 'The Sound of Metal' didn't require the gruelling physical changes he underwent for 'Mogul Mowgli', Ahmed modified his body in a different way to play Ruben.

The actor told People magazine he wore "modified hearing aids placed deep into my ear canal" that played white noise. The sound was so intense that Ahmed "couldn't even hear myself speak," he added..

-ANI

## A Minute With: 'Mumbai Diaries' Director And Actor On Medical Thriller

By MARISSA DAVISON

-LONDON

Medical thriller "Mumbai Diaries 26/11" looks back at the 2008 Islamist militant attack on the Indian city of Mumbai through the eyes of first responders and staff at a hospital as they fight to save lives.

The eight-part television series is based on the four-day attack, which began on Nov. 26, 2008 when a group of militants targeted key landmarks in India's financial capital. More than 160 people died.

Reuters spoke to director Nikkhil Advani and actress Konkona Sen Sharma about the series, to be released on Amazon Prime Video on Thursday, Sept. 9, 2021.

Below are excerpts edited for length and clarity.

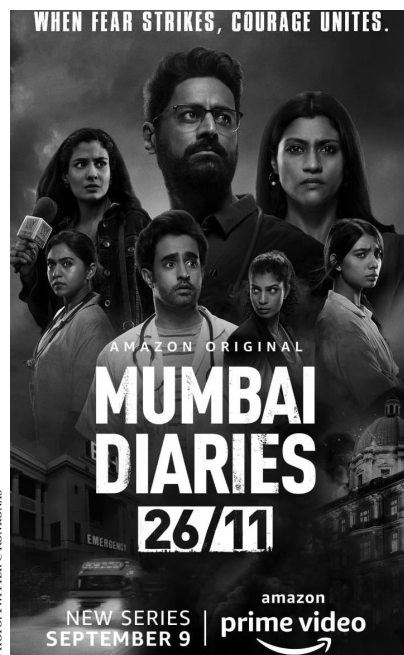
**Q: What inspired you to make a series based on the events in 2008?**

Advani: "I know friends who lived in New York and who were living in Boston

and New York and on 9/11, everybody had a story (saying) 'I was here on 9/11. I was here when the towers came down. I was here and when the planes went into the building'. Similarly, 26/11 has the same kind of feeling for most Indians and especially Mumbaikars living in Mumbai. It's a day that's etched in our memories."

**Q: How did you come up with the concept for the show?**

Advani: "I know lately people have been hearing about oxygen not being available...and medicines not being available (to treat



Poster of Konkona Sen Sharma's 'Mumbai Diaries 26/11'.

COVID-19). That's the reality that the ordinary Indian lives with in this country.

"Now, you have doctors who just have mad motivation and dedication to just get you better. They don't have infrastructure, they don't have facilities, and that's a normal day for them. They're dealing with that every single day. And what if I flipped that and made that an extraordinary day, and what if that day is 26/11? That's the story of what we are doing."

**Q: What preparation did you do for the show?**

Sen Sharma: "Overall for the show, we needed to know what happened and how we are choosing to portray it and what is our attitude..., and for that actually the script was very detailed. We had a lot of discussions with the director and his team.

"... We're all actors, none of us are doctors..., so we all had to learn the basics – sutures and putting on gloves really quickly and injections and basic medical terms and things like that."

**Q: Was there a scene that was particularly impactful?**

Sen Sharma: "There is a moment where my character has an interaction with one of the terrorists, which is a very weird, obviously horrifying, terrifying, very frightening experience. But also there is a moment of connection, which is just a very weird and unusual thing and an unexpected thing to happen. So it's weirdly emotional."

-REUTERS

## Shankar's Next Directorial Starring Ram Charan, Kiara Advani Goes On Floors

Actors Ram Charan and Kiara Advani's upcoming film directed by Shankar went on the floors on Wednesday at Annapurna Studios in Hyderabad.

Dil Raju, who is co-producing the film under his banner Sri Venkateswara Creations, announced the news with the film's concept poster on his Twitter handle. In the poster, apart from Shankar, Ram Charan and Kiara Advani, Dil Raju, Sunil, Anjali, Naveen Chandra, Jayaram, and other cast members can be seen. Thaman S, Jani Master, and others can be seen as part of the crew.

S Thirunavukkarasu, Sai Madhav Burra,

Harshith Reddy, Ramakrishna, Monika Nigot, Ramajogayya Sastry, Ananta Sri-ram, and Narasimharao N form the rest of the team of #RC15.

"We are coming!!! #RC15 #SVC50 Muhurtham Ceremony Today," the tweet on Sri Venkateswara Creations' official Twitter handle read.

Reportedly, the grand launch was attended by Bollywood superstar Ranveer Singh, Chiranjeevi Konidela and SS Rajamouli.

On a related note, Ranveer is also collaborating with Shankar for 'Anniyan' remake, which is expected to go on the floors soon.

Ram Charan's team took to Twitter and posted a glimpse of the film's clap shot delivered by megastar Chiranjeevi Konidela.

The forthcoming movie marks the second collaboration of Kiara and Ram. The two had earlier collaborated for the Telugu action movie 'Vinaya Vidheya Rama', which had released in 2019.

The upcoming project is jointly produced by Dil Raju and Shirish Garu under the banner of Sri Venkateswara Creations for a pan-India release.

Tentatively titled 'RC 15', the upcoming movie marks the 15th film in Ram Charan's career. It is also Dil Raju's 50th production venture. Reportedly, S Thaman

has been roped in to score the music for the film.

'RC 15' will release in three languages - Telugu, Tamil and Hindi.

Apart from this film, Kiara also has Karan Johar-produced movie 'Jug Jugg Jeeyo' and Anees Bazmee-directed comedy 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2', in the pipeline. She was last seen in recently released 'Shershaah' opposite Sidharth Malhotra.

Ram Charan will next be seen in SS Rajamouli's period action drama 'RRR' and in the Telugu film 'Acharya' alongside his father and superstar Chiranjeevi.

-ANI