

SHAPE OF WATER

wins best pic at Venice

Master Spanish filmmaker Guillermo del Toro's "The Shape of Water" earned the highest honor at the Venice International Film Festival, picking up the Golden Lion.

"I believe in life, I believe in love and I believe in cinema," declared a visibly moved del Toro as he accepted his award to a standing ovation — his first festival honor since "Pan's Labyrinth" took the 2006 Cannes jury prize.



Other big winners at Venice

included Samuel Maoz picking up the Grand Jury Prize for "Foxilot", Charlotte Rampling winning Best Actress for "Hannah's", Kamal El Basha winning Best Actor for "The Insult", Martin McDonagh taking home Best Screenplay for "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri", and Best Director going to Xavier Legrand for "Custody".

"The Shape of Water" is a love story between a woman and a sea creature, which premiered at the Venice Film Festival, played at Telluride, and will play at the Toronto International Film Festival.

Source: *Collider*

Four-day Sultan Utshob concludes

KARTIK DAS, Narail

Crowds milled about both sides of Narail's Chitra riverbanks despite scorching afternoon heat, as ardent devotees of SM Sultan gathered to celebrate the concluding day of the four-day Sultan Utshob on Saturday. The festivities included myriad activities such as boat racing, swimming competitions, an art camp, and discussions. Noted artists from Bangladesh and West Bengal attended the cultural programmes.

With the assistance of Bengal Foundation, the four-day event was arranged by SM Sultan Charu O Karukola Foundation at the premises of Narail Government Victoria College.

Despite infectious cheer and joy at the memorial festival, Professors of West Bengal's Government Arts and Crafts College Swapani Kumar Rai and Suman Kumar Pal thought it could have been more enlivened, with more involvement from noted artists. "SM Sultan was a student at our college from the years 1938-1942. Mdul Deo was the headmaster then and Zainul Abdin was an instructor here. We are proud to be here today," they added.

Following the boat races, a discussion session was held at Sultan Auditorium of Victoria College presided over by Narail DC Md. Emdadul Haque Chowdhury. Guests in attendance included Principal and professor of Narail Government Victoria College Mohammad Samad Ullah Mazumder, upazila chairman Shohrab Hossain Biswas, Permanent Secretary Sardar Rakibul Islam, RFL Marketing Head SM Arafatul Rahman, General Secretary of Sultan Foundation Ashiqur Rahman, Associate Professor of Jahangirnagar University Mohammad Golam Rabban, West Bengal Government Arts and Crafts College Professors Sumon Pal, as well as artistes Swapani Kumar Rai, Niaz Uddin and more. Welcome addresses were delivered by Chairman of SM Sultan Children's Arts and Crafts Sheikh Hanif, as well as General Secretary of Khulna University's Fine Arts Department Bimanesh Biswas.



"Doob" continues to make waves at festivals

El Gouna, Vancouver and Busan nods for Farooqi's Irrfan-starrer

FAHIMM FERDOUS

"Doob", Moshtafa Sarwar Farooqi's magnum opus starring India's Irrfan Khan, is continuing its impressive run at the international film festival circuit, adding three big names to its poster. The Bangladesh-India joint production will screen in the main competition for the inaugural edition of the El Gouna Film Festival in Egypt, as well as Asia's top film fest Busan International Film Festival (in South Korea) and Vancouver International Film Festival (Canada).

"Doob" is also the only South Asian title in the competition, with Indian title "Mukkabaaz" by Anurag Kashyap playing out of competition.

The El Gouna Film Festival was officially unveiled on the eve of Cannes this year, and with more than \$200,000 worth of cash prizes to the winners, becomes one of the biggest film festival prize money pots in the Arab-speaking world.

The prizes will be awarded across three categories at El Gouna: feature narrative, feature documentary and shorts. In the feature narrative competition, the best film will receive the \$50,000 El Gouna Golden Star for a Narrative Film, followed by the \$25,000 El Gouna Silver Star and \$15,000 El Gouna Bronze Star for the runners-up.

Other than El Gouna, the film has also been selected for Asia's top festival Busan that has become a Farooqi stronghold of sorts over the eight years: he has screened three films there ("Third Person Singular Number", "Television" and "Pipra Bidiya") and was on the jury of the Sonje Award for short films. The film will screen in the Window on Asian Cinema section there. Between El Gouna and Busan, Farooqi will also travel to Canada's Vancouver International Film Festival (September 28 - October 13) where the film will be screened in the World Cinema Panorama section. Sources close to the production said the film is in contention to go to a couple of other film festivals, but those have not been finalized yet.

The film that also stars Nusrat Imrose Tisha and Indian actress Parno Mittra, is set for a wide theatrical release in India and Bangladesh on October 27. The date came after months of uncertainty over the film's future as it was blocked from going to the censor board in February by a government film review committee.

Talking to The Daily Star, Tisha said "We make a film with a lot of dreams and anticipation, and it's really satisfying to see it get so much appreciation internationally. The best part of it is to represent Bangladesh at such prestigious events, and I'm really excited for all the selections."

Mehzabien didn't realise "Boro Chele" would be such a hit

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Lux Channel i Superstar Mehzabien has made a name for herself since the competition, beginning with modeling and then moving on to acting. She currently has a busy schedule shooting for TV plays. This Eid-ul-Azha, Mehzabien made a mark through her performances in TV plays, most notably Mizanur Rahman Aryan's "Boro Chele" opposite Apurbo that was one of the biggest hits of the festive season. In a recent interview with *The Daily Star*, Mehzabien spoke about her work and future plans.

How did you spend Eid?

Mehzabien: It was spent very well. I was able to spend some quality time with my family, and also go about the city with my friends.

Did you watch your Eid special plays?

Mehzabien: I couldn't watch all of them, but tried to watch most. I really enjoyed some of them. Quite honestly, when I watch the ones that I know have a good story, it inspires me to keep doing good work. I also watch plays done by others.

Your play "Boro Chele" was highly appreciated. Were you able to watch that one?

Mehzabien: Yes, I was. It's an amazing story. And a lot of people seem to be speaking about it. Even those close to me have made it a point to let me know how well I have done in it. Being a part of "Boro Chele" was a very satisfying experience for me.

During shooting, did you know "Boro Chele" would go on to be this popular?

Mehzabien: Not really. None of us really thought it would be so well received by the audience. But while we were doing the work, we all felt like we're collectively doing a good job.

What kind of work piques your interest?

Mehzabien: Honestly, the whole "university student in a love story" thing does not appeal to me. I am always interested in a good storyline and a strong character. Unique stories excite me, because they are the kind the audience always wants.

What are your future career plans?

Mehzabien: The only plan I have is to keep doing good work. I don't want to overwork myself, but I want to make sure the work I do is praiseworthy.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSED

AR RAHMAN

was told he'll 'not sustain' after "Roja"

From "Roja" to "Rang De Basanti", AR Rahman's music has struck a chord with his listeners, but the Academy award-winning composer feels he has mostly received a mixed response for his tunes. Rahman's film career took off when he composed for Mani Ratnam's "Roja" and ever since he has been the most sought-after musician in the country. Some of his memorable compositions have been in films like "Bombay", "Dil Se", "Taal", "Lagaan", "Swades", "Gum", "Jodha Akbar", "Rockstar", "Enthiran", and "Slumdog Millionaire" for which he got Oscar nominations.

He always got a response when "Roja" came in, people said I was not sustainable for more than three months. Then "Bombay" came, people said what is this? Then "Rockstar", "Slumdog Millionaire", "Momin" happened. I accept it all.

"Internally, I try to be honest with my work and I always do this," Rahman told PTI when asked about the audience not liking his music in some films. He says music composing as a profession is often not regarded as a great career move as



many believe it does not have credibility.

"Everybody says do your job and then do music as a part time (job). We want to make that more and more as a profession to look for. When you look at the worse scenario... I think creative professionals have more scope (to excel professionally) than other things (referring to profession)."

Rahman, who is the music director of "One Heart: The AR Rahman Concert Film", is keen on bringing more musical films. "We are concentrating on music-based films and so we can play out more music to people," he says.

"One Heart: The AR Rahman Concert Film" shows how concerts are conceptualised and the stories behind the stage. In the film, Rahman will be seen in multiple locations including his concerts. The proceeds from the movie will go to Rahman's One Heart foundation to help old musicians and their families.

Source: *Billboard*

Source: *PTI*

Facebook looking to enter music licensing biz

"Hundreds of millions" offered to labels and publishers

Social media giant Facebook is reportedly looking to enter the music business. The site is offering major record labels and music publishers "hundreds of millions of dollars" so its users can legally include copyrighted music in videos they upload to the platform, according to Bloomberg.

It's no secret that Facebook has been a strong advocate of video for some time, not-so-subtly incentivising traditional media outlets to join the video marketplace. Already a major force behind certain sites' "pivot to video", the tech giant has continued to benefit from its relationships with advertisers, whose viewership metrics appear significantly higher for video content, at least according to reports from the platform itself. Facebook is already one of the biggest advertisers in the world, taking in over \$26 billion in the last week (September 5).

Source: *Billboard*

