

Sadia Khalid Reeti

OFF TO CANNES

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Sadia Khalid Reeti recently made headlines after being invited as a jury for the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) in the Cannes Film Festival, which starts today. The dynamic young journalist, critic, scholar and activist spares time from her busy schedule for a chat with The Daily Star about her very first trip to the biggest film festival in the world.

Congratulations on being chosen as a jury to the FIPRESCI section in the Cannes Film Festival! What was your initial reaction after receiving the news?

Thank you very much! I got the email very late at night, when I was watching Netflix with my sister and my husband. I became very emotional! The love that I have received after this, especially from media outlets is overwhelming, and I am grateful to everyone for it.

You have served as a jury for other film festivals abroad as well. What are some of the responsibilities of a jury member in a film festival?

My first film festival which I adjudicated abroad, was the Religion Today Film Festival in Italy. I feel like film festivals are all about connecting with the people and culture there, especially if you're a jury member. Otherwise, one will feel isolated while watching movies there. Since I will have to watch five to six movies per day, as well as judge them, I will have to be comfortable with the festival itself.

What are the criteria for being selected as the jury in the FIPRESCI section in Cannes?

First, one has to be a member of the FIPRESCI. He or she must write regular film reviews, which are up to a certain standard for a while. A formal educational background in film is also important, and my graduation on screenplay from UCLA helped a lot regarding this. Your presence and impact in other major film festivals around the world is also taken into account. Knowing your role as a film critic, and separating your 'critic' identity from any other identity you have, e.g. filmmaker, scriptwriter is also crucial.

Do you think there is enough female presence in Bangladesh's film industry, strictly talking about directors?

Even though I would like more women to step up in these roles, there are certainly many who



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

are doing a great job at the moment. Tasmiah Afrin, the director of *Statement After My Poet Husband's Death*, Suborna Senjutee, who made *Fish Musings*, and of course, Rubaiyat Hossain are some of the names that come to mind. Criticism is something that the film industry here is still not receptive to, especially if it is negative. What are your opinions on this statement?

For a critic, credibility is everything. People are more likely to take your critique seriously if you build up your credibility whilst writing regular reviews, being a part of international film festivals, or have extensive education in this field. For example, even though I love Tauquir Ahmed's films, the last one, *Fagun Haway* did not impress me as much. However, the director took it well. Whilst there are makers who are not willing to accept criticism, the industry is changing and this aspect of it is becoming more professional.



72nd Festival de Cannes begins today

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Festival de Cannes is often regarded as the Holy Grail for film fraternities around the world. With an extravagant history that dates back to 1946 focusing on films and documentaries from all genres around the world. Besides the star-studded red carpet, special screenings, master classes, prominent juries and prestigious competition awards, Festival de Cannes also serves as a platform for networking with foreign dignitaries of the film fraternity.

This year's festival honours French filmmaker Agnès Varda, featuring her on the official poster of the festival, scheduled to be held from May 14 - 25. Mexican filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu will serve as jury president. The opening film of the festival is titled, *The Dead Don't Die*, a zombie flick starring Iggy Pop, by American director Jim Jarmusch. Other films competing in the prestigious Palme d'Or include Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, Ken Loach's *Sorry We Missed You*, Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite*, Marco Bellocchio's *The Traitor*, Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne's *The Young Ahmed*, Elia Suleiman's *It Must Be Heaven*, among many more.

The red carpet at Cannes 2019 is all set to amaze with celebrities like Rihanna, Elton John, Iggy Pop, Bono, Tom Waits and Selena Gomez, to name a few.

This year's jury for Palme d'Or will comprise of Mexican director Alejandro González Iñárritu, Senegalese actor Maimouna N'Diaye, Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos, American actor Elle Fanning, Moroccan-born French screenwriter Robin Campillo, Italian director Alice Rohrwacher, Polish filmmaker Paweł Aleksander Pawlikowski, American screenwriter and director Kelly Reichardt and French director Enki Bilal.

As per the usual proceedings, the festival will also include Un Certain Regard, Out of competition screenings, Special screenings, Short films, Cinéfondation, Cannes Classics, Documentaries, FIPRESCI and much more. Keep your eye on *The Daily Star* for more coverage.



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

Aupee Karim in 'Switzerland'

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Celebrated actor Aupee Karim has won the hearts of millions with her impeccable performances on television in the span of her career. She is set to star in the Eid tele-fiction, *Switzerland*, opposite Riaz. Filmed in Uttara, *Switzerland* is directed by Chayanika Chowdhury and written by Masum Shahriar. She is also preparing for Amitabh Reza Chowdhury's web series, *Dhaka Metro*.

Adit's 'Baayna' to all mothers

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On the occasion of Mother's Day, renowned artiste Adit released a music video, titled, *Baayna*, as a tribute to motherhood. Tuned and composed by Adit, the song was jointly penned by Faisal Roddi and Rakib Hasan Rahul.

Under the supervision of Adit, the music video is directed by AK Porag and Vasker Joni. The plot touches upon the hardship of losing one's mother, portrayed by Saberi Alam. The role of the father was played by Monir Khan Shimul, while *Dhaka Attack* fame Taskeen Rahman and Sarika Sabah were depicted as the children. Mehrin, ABM Sumon, Ridy Sheikh, Towfique Ahmed were among the many artistes who made guest appearances in *Baayna*.



PHOTO: SHANTO LAWRENCE COSTA

Rezwana Choudhury Bannya receives honorary degree



Renowned Rabindra Sangeet exponent Rezwana Choudhury Banna was recently awarded with a honorary Doctor of Arts degree from the Asian University of Women in Chittagong, on their Convocation of 2019.

PHOTO : SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

PM gives financial assistance to ATM Shamsuzzaman

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Yesterday, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina provided BDT 10 lakh for better treatment of ATM Shamsuzzaman.

On the premier's behalf, her Special Assistant Barrister Biplob Barua handed over a cheque for the amount to the actor's family at Asgar Ali Hospital, where he has been undergoing treatment since April 26. He was hospitalised after suffering from indigestion and he underwent a gallbladder surgery later.

Barrister Barua also enquired about his health condition from the attending doctors. Dr Samanta Lal Sen, the national coordinator at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and Arun Sarkar, the general secretary of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote, were present on the occasion.

"He is comparatively well now," said the veteran actor's brother, Saleh Zaman Selim. "He is not on life support anymore. We are grateful to the prime minister for her assistance."

ATM Shamsuzzaman was awarded the Ekushey Padak in 2015 and he won the National Film Award five times.



PHOTO: STAR