

BHABNA 'Cannes' do it

The usual scenario of attending any film festival is that artists go to showcase their films. An unusual scenario took place when Bangladeshi actress Ashna Habib Bhabna returned from the 77th Cannes International Film Festival, after scoring a Malaysian movie.

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SHARMIN JOYA

As soon as Bhabna returned home, she spared some time for a glamorous photoshoot with The Daily Star.

"The experience was a dream come true and the tour was completely worth it," shared the artiste. "The first actress to walk on the red carpets of the prestigious Cannes was legendary actress Babita, and we also saw Jaya Ahsan visiting the Cannes, so I had a dream to visit the French Riviera someday to represent my country."

She informed that after applying to the festival as a South Asian actress, she received an accreditation letter to attend the event. She got around 20 days to prepare for the adventurous solo trip. "As

I was selecting my attires for the festival, I was quite concerned about the fact that I would be representing my country, my culture, my family—swiftly blended with my taste, which ultimately showcased during the festival."

Renowned Indian newspaper Times of India published an article titled, *Sari not sorry! This Bangladeshi actress dressed better than any Bollywood star at Cannes*— remarking on her great fashion sense. "I consider this as an award for myself, the report was such a sweet surprise for me. I saw the article when I returned to Dhaka. I have pinned this message on my Facebook timeline as well."

During the eight days of her solo trip, she enjoyed the premiers of many films, walked on the official red carpet wearing her mother's elegant wedding saree, and also graced the event with some unique attires, that caught everyone's attention. Her outfits for the festival included traditional jamdani, a gown made with Banarsee material, and a crown-styled fancy outfit, which earned her praises. During her visit, she also signed a Malaysian film *Zenubia*, announced to be directed by Bangladeshi-born filmmaker Zafor Firoze, and executive produced by Qiao Li. "The

director told me that he had been trying to reach me for a long time, and when we met at the festival, he approached me for this work; everything seemed like a miracle to me!"

According to Bhabna, it has been a great experience for her as she could meet many international artistes and directors there. "There is a misconception regarding the festival that you can only attend if you go with your work. Many international artistes visit the festival for networking, to approach or collaborate for new projects. It is a huge arena and the film market itself is a great way of worldwide networking. As a media personality, anyone can visit the event if they are eligible and receive an invitation from the festival."

Bhabna mentioned that one of her dresses carried the names of her most favourite actresses, which included Meryl Streep, Audrey Hepburn, Babita and Suborna Mustafa. "It was another miracle that my first visit coincided with Meryl Streep receiving an Honorary Palme d'Or at the festival."

The actress had the opportunity to watch the premiere of the Chinese film *Caught by the Tides*, directed by Jia Zhangke. "After walking the official red carpet, I watched this film at Rumer Hall, and at that time, I made a wish that one day my film would be premiered in this hall, which I believe will come true someday!"

As Bhabna dreams big, she is now flooded with good wishes and appreciation from her admirers. At the same time, she is also facing criticism, as she was trolled on social media a few days ago over posting a photo of a cow standing on a truck in extreme heat. To this, the actress remarked, "I saw an animal suffering in the heat, where I was sitting in an air-conditioned car, it deeply hurt me, and I couldn't resist posting this, as I always do. I didn't suggest anybody to refrain from eating meat, nor did I say I don't eat meat."

Bhabna has three films awaiting theatrical release—*Dampara*, *Payel* and *Japito Jibon*. The actress also shared that the shooting of *Zenubia* would commence from November in Malaysia.



OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



Art exhibition: **Inner Speed**
June 1-4 | 3pm- 9pm
Alliance Française de Dhaka



Batighar Theatre Festival
June 8-10 | 7pm- 9:15pm,
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



Paradise and Papers:
Exhibition of Rare, Vintage
Collectibles
June 7-8 | 10am-9pm
Bishwo Shahitto Kendro

TRENDY STREAMS	<p>Netflix Crew</p>	<p>Prime Video Panchayat Season 3</p>	<p>Chorki Kalpurush</p>	<p>Disney plus The Acolyte</p>	<p>HBO Max Ren Faire</p>
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WHAT'S ON THE GRAM

ARIFIN SHUVOO

Last year, Arifin Shuvoo caught the Bollywood limelight with his performance in the Bangabandhu biopic, *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*.

Recently, the actor shared some eye-catching photoshoot outcomes on his Instagram account, exuding a mysterious vibe in a printed black, white, and golden shirt that adds an alluring touch to his appearance.

He looks fierce, channeling his inner masculine aura as he wears matching rings to add to his whole vibe.

The actor will next appear in the Mithu Khan directorial film *Neel Chokro*.

WHAT'S PLAYING

KHOONEYE MA

Marjan Farsad's *Khooneye Ma* is a hauntingly beautiful Persian folk song that evokes a profound sense of nostalgia for the old world of Iran. With its simple yet poetic lyrics, the song offers a glimpse into the longing experienced by those who leave their homeland behind.

Released in 2014 as part of her album *Blue Flowers*, *Khooneye Ma* masterfully blends traditional Persian melodies and heartfelt storytelling. Farsad's soothing voice creates a melancholic atmosphere, while the lyrics paint a vivid picture of cherished memories and a yearning for the warmth and laughter of home.

A few lines of the song loosely translate to: *Our house has stories/It has sour cherries and pistachios/Behind its warm laughs/It has tired people.*

TV TALKIES

'THE 8 SHOW'

A high-stakes tale of survival and greed

It seems that South Korea takes its series based on high stakes survival games rather seriously. *The 8 Show*, based on the Webtoon *Money Game & Pic Game* by Bae Jin-soo, which premiered on Netflix this month is yet another wildly extreme show that sticks the landing in its genre.

On the heels of the success of the popular South Korean show *Squid Game*, this show centralises around eight random individuals in financial crisis. The show presents a compelling narrative, particularly with the ultimate prize money amounting to burgeoning outrageous degrees.

Participants are offered a chance to engage in a clandestine game with intricate regulations. The objective? Secure a prize of 44.8 billion won. At first glance, it appears straightforward, until the players grasp the bewildering intricacies of the competition and realise the lengths to which each of them is prepared to go.

The 8 Show relies on the even playing ground that the participants begin with to exploit the various degradations of human nature. Enveloped in plunging mystery, the series ends with a promise to be able to do more in a possible second season.