# FIPRESCI-INDIA NEWSLETTER–68

**August 2026**

**Monthly Bulletin of the India Chapter of International Federation of Film Critics**

Website: https://fipresci-india.org


## FIPRESCI-INDIA FILM FESTIVAL HOSTED BY PIC AND NFDC AT NFAI

FIPRESCI-India Film Festival 2026: CINEMAS OF INDIA was inaugurated on 21 Aug 2026 at the National Film Archive of India (NFAI) Pune (*pic above*). The festival organised by FIPRESCI-India in collaboration with the Pune International Centre (PIC) and The National Film Development Corporation Limited (NFDC) showcased ten recent Indian feature films at the NFAI Auditorium, Law College Road, Pune on 21, 22 and 23 August 2026. Participating films were: (1) *Magazine*, Marathi, by Shubham Sanjay Shevade, (2) *If on a Winter's Night*, Malayalam, Hindi, by Sanju Surendran, (3) *Whispers of the Mountains*, Rajasthani, by Jigar Nagda, (4) *Feminist Fathima*, Malayalam, by Fasil Muhammed, (5) *The Lost Path*, Karbi, by Khanjan Kishore Nath, (6) *Gondhal*, Marathi, by Santosh Davakhar, (7) *Adamya*, Bengali, by Ranjan Ghosh, (8) *Yakasi's Daughter*, Mising, by Jayanta Madhab Dutta, (9) *Victoria*, Malayalam, by Sivaranjini, and (10) *In the Name of Fire-Swaha*, Magadhi, by Abhilash Sharma. Before Pune, the festival was held in Delhi in July & Aug by India International Centre at IIC New Delhi, from 8 to 11 June by Federation of Film Societies of India Eastern Region at NANDAN Kolkata, in May by Suchitra Film Society and Bangalore International Centre in Bangalore, in July at Ritwik Sadan Baharampur, West Bengal by Berhampore Film Society, and at Nagpur, Ratnagiri, Satara and Mumbai in Maharashtra in July and August by Federation of Film Societies of India Western Region. The festival will soon travel to Coochbehar in West Bengal, Jorhat and Guwahati in Assam, Imphal in Manipur, Kochi, and Palakkad in Kerala, and other places. The festival has now become a very popular and critically acclaimed cinema event in the country. Many film societies, film schools, and other educational institutions are showing interest to host the festival.

## FIPRESCI-INDIA PODCAST-2

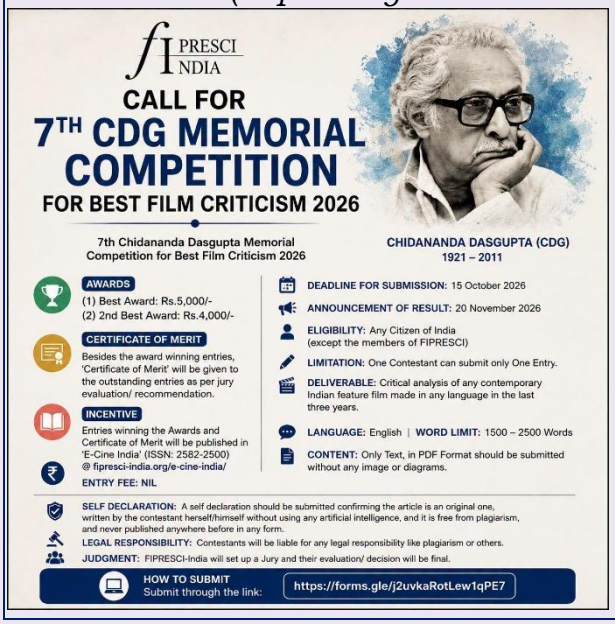
FIPRESCI-India released the 2nd episode of its video podcast series 'Filmmakers of the Future' on 2 Aug presenting the collaborator Oorvazi Irani in conversation with Anuparna Roy, director of the films - *Songs of Forgotten Trees* and *Lovers in the Blue Night* which is available on FIPRESCI-India's official YouTube Channel at: https://youtu.be/KHj45xyMNYQ .

## FIPRESCI-INDIA FILM APPRECIATION COURSE WITH MSFTI IMPHAL

FIPRESCI-India's 3rd Film Appreciation Course, jointly with the Manipur State Film and Television Institute (MSFTI), was held from 6 to 25 August 2026 at MSFTI, Imphal. More than 40 participants, mostly students, research scholars, and film enthusiasts joined the course. FIPRESCI members Ashok Rane, Meghachandra Kongbam, Dr Rita Dutta, Dr Minakshi Dutta, and Dr Pranjal Borah attended the course as Resource Persons. Local filmmakers and film technicians also conducted some sessions. Certificates were given to the participants in the Valedictory Session on 25 August where Naorem Praveen Singh, Secretary of the Department of Art and Culture, Govt. of Manipur; Angom Shijalembi Chanu, Director MSFTI; eminent filmmakers Haobam Paban Kumar, Dr. Meena Longjam, and several other dignitaries were present (*in pic*).

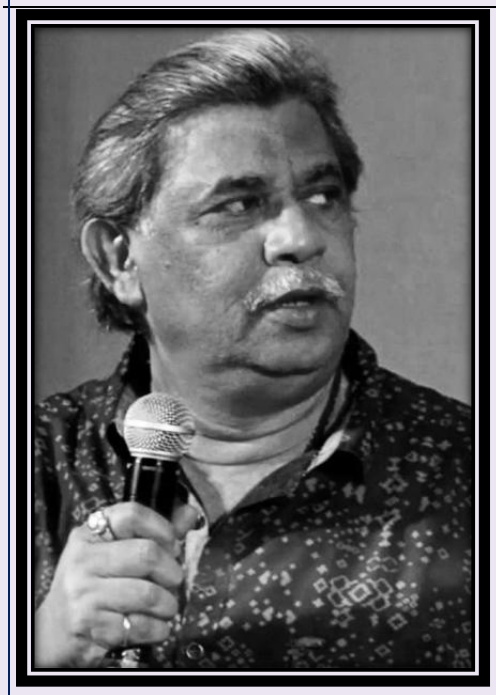
## SMARTPHONE FILM FESTIVAL IN KOLKATA

POCKET CINEMA 2026: 1st Smartphone Film Festival was organised by the Federation of Film Societies of India (Eastern Region) in collaboration with Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Kolkata from 29 to 31 July 2026 at the MMB Auditorium at Park Street, Kolkata. More than 40 films, all made on smartphone were showcased in the festival. The jury composed of Abhijit Guha, Rita Dutta, and Sharmistha Sarker awarded Farha Khatun, Md Mostofa Monowar, and Rayati Bhattacharya for their films *A Kurta for Eid* (India, 4 min 58 sec), *Foul* (Bangladesh, 5 min 5 sec), and *Suddenly, One Day* (India, 17 min 17 sec) as the best three films respectively. The Gold, Silver, and Bronze Awards were handed over to the winners present by the festival mentor Atanu Ghosh, and jury members Abhijit Guha, and Sharmistha Sarker present in the occasion. (*In pic: Rayati Bhattacharyya and Farha Katun with their awards*).




## CDG COMPETITION ON FILM CRITICISM

FIPRESCI-India announced the 7th CDG Memorial Competition for Best Film Criticism 2026, organised in memory of its Founder President, Chidananda Dasgupta. The competition aims to encourage serious and insightful film criticism among Indian citizens. The Best Award carries a cash prize of Rs. 5,000, while the Second-Best Award carries Rs. 4,000. Certificates of Merit will also be awarded to outstanding entries on the recommendation of the jury. Award-winning entries and those receiving Certificates of Merit will be published in FIPRESCI-India's quarterly journal E-Cine India (ISSN: 2582-2500). There is no entry fee. For further details, the intending contestants may contact at indiafipresci@gmail.com



## RAJA SEN PASSED AWAY

The world of Bengali cinema, television and documentary filmmaking has lost one of its distinguished creative voices with the passing of veteran filmmaker Raja Sen, who died in Kolkata, on 16 August 2026. He was 70.

Born in Calcutta on 10 November 1955 and educated at the University of Calcutta, Raja Sen developed a distinctive body of work marked by literary sensibility, humanism and a deep engagement with Bengal's cultural heritage. His career encompassed feature films, television serials and documentaries, earning him three National Film Awards and numerous other honours. Sen first attracted wide attention through television with *Subarnalata*, which established him as a director capable of translating substantial literary narratives into engaging television series. He followed it with popular productions including *Adarsha Hindu Hotel*, *Arogya Niketan*, *Samparka*, *Anirban*, *Anjuman*, and *Tarasankarer Chhoto Galpo*. His television work played an important role in shaping Bengali audiences' engagement with literary and socially rooted narratives. His documentary filmmaking was equally important. *Suchitra Mitra* won the National Film Award for Best Arts-Cultural Film, the first of his three National Awards. His other documentary subjects included filmmaker Tapan Sinha, theatre personality Sambhu Mitra, poet Subhas Mukhopadhyay, writer Jyotirmoyee Devi and novelist Samaresh Basu. He also documented Bengal's folk and urban heritage through works on *Alkaap*, *Itihasher Kolkata* and other cultural subjects. His three-hour documentation on Sambhu Mitra for the East Zone Cultural Centre was particularly significant as an archival record. Sen entered feature filmmaking with *Damu* (1996), which won the National Film Award for Best Children's Film. *Atmiyo Swajan* (1999) subsequently won the National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare. His other notable features included *Chakrabyuhya*, *Desh*, *Debipaksha*, *Krishnakanter Will*, *Laboratory,* based on a story by Rabindranath Tagore, and *Maya Mridanga*. Beyond awards and popular recognition, Raja Sen's enduring contribution was his role as a cultural chronicler. He used cinema and television to preserve the lives, ideas and creative worlds of eminent Bengalis while bringing literature, history and folk traditions to wider audiences. He received the Indira Gandhi Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015 in recognition of his contribution to cinema. He is survived by his wife, actress Papiya Sen, and daughters Subhasree and Sreyoshi. Raja Sen leaves behind a diverse and valuable body of work that constitutes an important part of the cultural memory of Bengal.

## BEYOND BORDERS DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in the 11th Beyond Borders Kastellorizo International Documentary Film Festival, Greece, August 23 - 30, 2026 awarded to *Yrupe* by Candela Sotos, (Spain, 2025, 79 min). The jury comprising Paola Casella (Italy), Nino Kovacic (Croatia), and Robenson Eksiel (Greece) in their motivation said, "By taking a personal cinematic journey, the author skilfully balances archive and art as well as creatively approaches intertwining disciplines like history, politics, ecology or ethnography with family memories. The awarded film manages to transcend its specific topics into universal themes of curiosity, exploration and love for the cinema. In addition, for the filmmaker's audacity to be experimental in the cinematic language without sacrificing the understanding of the narrative layers while researching the unique story of her uncle, the FIPRESCI award goes to *Yrupe* by Spanish filmmaker Candela Sotos".

## ONE BATTLE AFTER ANOTHER WON FIPRESCI GRAND PRIX 2026

*One Battle After Another* (2025), an American action-comedy thriller of 162 minutes, written, directed, and produced by Paul Thomas Anderson won the FIPRESCI Grand Prix 2026. A total of 591 members of FIPRESCI from 69 countries voted it as the Best Film of the Year. This is the fourth time that a film by Paul Thomas Anderson bagged this recognition after *Magnolia* (1999), *There Will Be Blood* (2007), and *Phantom Thread* (2018). The prize will be presented during the opening gala of the San Sebastián Festival's 74th edition on 18 September 2026. The winning film will be screened on the same day. *One Battle After Another* was the winner at the last edition of the Academy Awards, scooping six statuettes: Best Picture, Director, Actor, Supporting Actor, Casting, Adapted Screenplay and Editing. The other four finalists were *Stille Freundin / Silent Friend* by Ildikó Enyedi, *The Voice of Hind Rajab* by Kahouter Ben Hania, *Hamnet* by Chloé Zhao, and *Fjord* by Cristian Mungiu.

## LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL

FIPRESCI Prize in 79th Locarno Film Festival, Switzerland, August 5 - 15, 2026 awarded to the film *Far from the Trees* by Meritxell Colell Aparicio, (Spain, Peru, Italy, 2026, 117 min). The jury consisted of five members: Sona Karapoghosyan (Armenia), Virat Nehru (Australia), Anne-Sophie Scholl (Switzerland), Mihai Fulger (Romania), and Georgios Papadimitriou (Greece). The festival presented 233 films, with the International Competition featuring 17 titles. The festival's highest honour, the Golden Leopard (Pardo d'oro), went to Romanian filmmaker Florin Şerban for *You Don't Belong Here* (*Nu e locul tau aici*). The film centres on a widowed physician and his troubled teenage son, whose involvement with a violent, xenophobic vigilante group brings the father into confrontation with the darker side of his son's life. The Special Jury Prize went to *A Margem do Rio* (*The Riverbank*), directed by Brazilian filmmakers Matheus Farias and Enock Carvalho. The Brazilian-German co-production explores a homosexual relationship threatened by intolerance and violence, giving the film a strong contemporary social dimension. South Korean auteur Hong Sangsoo received the Best Director award for *Nowhere to Lay My Eyes* (*Nun Dul Dega Eomne*). The Indian presence at the 79th Locarno Film Festival was particularly significant because Gurvinder Singh's *Rehmat* was selected for the main International Competition. *Rehmat*, directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Gurvinder Singh, stars Naseeruddin Shah, Suvinder Vicky, Mita Vashisht, Navjot Randhawa and Anita Meet, alongside several younger actors. Set in contemporary Punjab and drawing on stories by celebrated Punjabi writer Ajeet Cour, the film brings together three interconnected narratives dealing with grief, displacement, violence, faith, loss and compassion. Its stories are rooted in the social and historical complexities of Punjab, particularly the divisions and human consequences associated with Partition and its aftermath. (*In Pic: Gurvinder Singh and his team in Locarno*).

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