

Press release
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AWARD GIVING CEREMONY HELD ON SHORT FILM COMPETITION 2017

“The youth of today are helping us dream again with them, so we must let them give hope to others about making their own choices themselves” said the speakers at the Award Giving Ceremony on short film competition 2017.

The Award Giving Ceremony was held at National Chitrashala Auditorium of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka.

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), BRAC University organized a short film competition across the country to continue engagement with young people to raise awareness on current issues and concerns regarding the rights to consent and choice with regards to marriage, personal liberty, and freedom of expression and the threats resulting from gender-based violence or discrimination, in particular those affecting young people.

The contest, open to all Bangladeshis from 16 to 30 years of age, received huge response across the country. The competition was open from November 1 to 30, 2017, during which time, a total of 104 films were submitted from all over Bangladesh.

The subjects of the film competition are - freedom of decision and consent in personal life, child marriage, gender-based violence, cyber-crimes, sexual harassment and limitations on speech and association.

‘We were interested in arranging the short film competition for second time after the success of the competition last year. Films are one of the strong tools to activate social change’ said Sara Hossain, Honorary Executive Director of BLAST, at the opening remarks of the ceremony.

Malay Kanti Mridha, Associate Professor of BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, said that the participation of youth have to be ensured through the film for changing the society and state.

Based on the decisions made by the jury Board, the film ‘Saj’ by Sayma Farjana won the competition and was awarded BDT 50,000, the film ‘I’m Anika’ by Umme Aysha awarded BDT 30,000 as 1st runner up and the film ‘Kariman Bibi’ by Md. Ashraf Ali awarded BDT 20,000 as 2nd runner up at the short film competition. Apart from this, certificates and crests were also provided. The winners expressed their gratitude towards the organizers and shared their feelings and stories of inspiration behind their filmmaking.

The Jury board of the short film competition comprised of Dr. Gitiara Nasreen, Professor, Department of Mass Communication & Journalism, University of Dhaka, Shireen Huq, Member, Naripokkho and Dr. Zakir Hossain Raju, Professor, Department of Media and Communication, Independent University, Bangladesh

Dr. Gitiara Nasreen said that the language of the movie is very strong for social change. She said that viewers of any age are able to understand a lot by just by seeing the films. Making films is a difficult task, because the film makers have to convey their message to the audiences within a very short time.

Shireen Huq said that every participants in the competition worked very hard. Conveying social message through movies is not easy task. We are fascinated by the performance of this generation.

Dr. Zakir Hossain Raju said that the youngsters have performed really well in the competition. Today, the youth are self-taught on technology. They are learning from the internet themselves. Young people have done a lot of good work on the issues of 'right'. Such initiative will encourage the youth to make films.

The making of films on subjects like 'rights' and 'decisions' are a commendable initiative. There is no alternatives to films enable a change in the society' said the prominent actress and producer Rokeya Parchi in her speech.

At the event, HE Leoni Cuelenaere, Ambassador, Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, was present as the Chief Guest. In her concluding remarks HE Cuelenaere stated that everyone has the right to decision making on his/her own, regardless of men and women. To create a beautiful world, gender-based violence must be stopped. It is heartening to see that so many young people are taking the time to make films about this subject - these people uplift Bangladesh as a country. Besides, ZI Khan Panna, Member, Board of Trustees, BLAST was also present at the Award Giving Ceremony.