

Bengali film is the best at New York fest

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KOLKATA: Bengali film *Sthaniya Sambaad* was adjudged the best feature film at the 11th Annual New York Indian Film Festival held in Manhattan.

The movie, directed by Arjun Gourisaria and Moinak Biswas, traces the story of a settlement of refugees from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in contemporary Kolkata and sweeps through the lives of its four main protagonists. "We wanted to make a film on Kolkata. The film tells a love story, but our hero wears a painful disguise, his search for love hiding his escape from the scene of battle," said Biswas, who teaches Film Studies at the Jadavpur University.

Sthaniya Sambaad is the first Bengali film to use the specialised Red camera technology. "The

actors were mostly chosen from the same areas and backgrounds. We also used live sound and real locations to enhance both the realism and the hallucinatory take offs," said Gorisaria.

Director Aparna Sen won the Best Director award for her Bengali film, *Iti Mrinalini*, featuring her daughter Konkona Sen-Sharma. Sharma won the best actress award for playing the title role in the film, while Rishi Kapoor won the best actor award for *Do Dooni Chaar*, and Mohan Raghavan won the best screenplay award for *TD Dasan Std VI B*.

Capping off five days of Indian cinematic excellence, the prestigious festival concluded on Sunday night with the spectacular closing night red carpet premiere of Rituparno Ghosh's powerful film *Noukadubi* at the Asia Society in Manhattan.