



Many Voices, One Region: 19th MIFF curates special section to showcase films from North-East India

From Khasi Hills to Manipur's Floating Grasslands, MIFF 2026 upholds rich traditions, historical, and ecological tapestry of India's North-East

Mumbai, 17 June 2026

The 19th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF 2026), being held from June 15 to 21, 2026, has a specially curated section dedicated to short fictions and documentaries coming from the culturally-rich north-eastern states. These films showcase the rich traditions, historical, and ecological tapestry of India's North-East. Through portraits of remarkable individuals, enduring traditions, varying communities, and landscapes under change, these films reveal the many voices that define India's North-East. Made in local languages like Khasi, Nagamese, Ao, Kokborok, Bhutia, Assamese, Manipuri and Mizo, these films introduce festival audiences to the vibrant mosaic of heritage, identity, resilience, and nature that continues to shape the rhythms of everyday life in the region.

KA PATENG (Khasi)

Directed by **Sankirang L. Khongwir** and produced by **Ponvishal Chidambaranathan** for the **National Film Development Corporation Ltd.**, *KA PATENG* is a 30-minute Khasi-language short fiction film from India (2023).

The film unfolds in the aftermath of a mother's death, which brings three estranged siblings back together under the same roof after years of separation. The oldest brother returns after a long stay in the city, the middle child carries the weight of a painful childhood memory, and the youngest sister harbours a secret that makes her doubt her imminent motherhood.



LENTINA AO - A LIGHT ON THE EASTERN HORIZON (English, Nagamese, Ao)

This 2023 documentary, directed by **Sanjib Parasar** and **Nilakshi Medhi** and produced by the **National Film Development Corporation Ltd.**, is presented in English, Nagamese, and Ao. The film chronicles the extraordinary life and legacy of **Lentina Ao**, a social worker who dedicated herself to the welfare and upliftment of the Naga people. Beginning her journey in 1955 as a midwife in the remote Naga Hills, Lentina Ao devoted decades to serving her community, often confronting social injustices, entrenched prejudices, and personal hardships.



MY LAST FACE: FLAT-NOSE (MY LAST FACE: KUNGBARA) (Kokborok, Kaubru)

This 2024 documentary, directed by **Sujit Debbarma** and **Pranab Jyoti Deka** and produced by **Pranab Jyoti Deka, Dilip Debbarma, and Sujit Debbarma**, is presented in the **Kokborok** and **Kaubru** languages. Set against the verdant landscapes of **Tripura**, the film explores the rich cultural heritage of the **Reang community** through its traditional attire and ornaments. More than mere adornments, these garments and ornaments serve as enduring symbols of beauty, spirituality, identity, and protection, carrying stories, beliefs, and ancestral knowledge across generations. By documenting these living traditions, the film offers a nuanced insight into the community's cultural practices and the vital role they play in preserving collective memory and identity.



SHANGRILA - THE HIDDEN PARADISE [Sikkimese (Bhutia)]

This 2025 documentary, directed by **Samten Bhutia** and produced by the **National Film Development Corporation Ltd.**, is a 90-minute film in the **Sikkimese (Bhutia)** language. Set in the Himalayan state of **Sikkim**, sheltered by the majestic **Mount Kanchenjunga**, the film goes beyond the region's internationally celebrated landscapes and tourism appeal to explore its lesser-known history, culture, and geography. Through a deeper examination of the state's heritage and identity, the documentary offers a compelling portrait of a land whose rich legacy remains largely unexplored.



TEENS OF 1942 (BIYALLISAR LARALI)(Assamese)

The 2023-made Assamese documentary "**Teens of 1942**" is directed by **Samiran Deka** and produced by **Samiran Deka** and **Bhaskar Jyoti Das**. Created as a tribute to **75 years of India's independence**, the film celebrates the extraordinary patriotism of teenage freedom fighters **Bholanath Nagaria** and **Radha Bora**. Through a sensitive reconstruction of their fragmented memories, the documentary honours these valiant yet unsung heroes, preserving their stories and inspiring future generations with their courage, sacrifice, and commitment to the nation's freedom struggle.



THE HEALING PRIEST (PUITHIAM) (Mizo)

This 2026 Mizo-language short fiction film, directed by **Napoleon RZ Thanga**, is a 9-minute exploration of tradition, belief, and contemporary anxieties. Drawing on the ancient Mizo healing ritual of **Daibawl**, in which a **Puithiam** (healing priest) performed ceremonies and hung a **Lenglep** to ward off evil spirits believed to cause illness, the film bridges past and present. It follows a frustrated young man searching for a way to cure his ailing father, reflecting on the tension between traditional healing practices and modern desires for health and well-being. Through this narrative, the film offers a glimpse into Mizo cultural heritage and enduring beliefs surrounding illness and healing.



MANIPUR BROW ANTLERED DEER (SANGAI) (Manipuri and English)

This 2025 documentary, directed by **Akanksha Sood Singh** and produced by **Roshni Nadar Malhotra** and **Rushikesh Atmaram Chavan**, is a 30-minute bi-lingual film made in Manipuri and English. It follows the story of the **Sangai**, the endangered deer subspecies that has become the iconic symbol of **Manipur state**. Set against the backdrop of a region shaped by ethnic and political tensions, the documentary captures the graceful animal moving through the state's unique floating grasslands while highlighting its long struggle for survival. Through the Sangai's story, the film reflects on the fragile relationship between wildlife, habitat conservation, and the socio-political realities of the region.



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