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My Bicycle

Bangladesh's first Chakma language short film

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Aung Rakhaine, a film activist, makes his debut with *Mor Thengari (My Bicycle)*. An event from his childhood forms the central element of the story: a bicycle and how it affected the lives of the people in the Hill Tracts. It was during his HSC exams when Aung Rakhaine witnessed the effects of a bicycle entering into a society where that particular transport was not available before. He struggled for 10 years to reproduce those experiences, and the shape and significance they took in his mind, into visual images.

Mor Thengari had been showcased at the 13th International Short and Independent Film Festival in Dhaka. At a recent BRAC University event, Aung Rakhaine talked about the struggles of creating *Mor Thengari*, as well as being an independent filmmaker and a film activist while screening that film. According to Aung Rakhaine, it is the first short film in the Chakma language in Bangladesh. He also talked about the present situation of Bangladeshi films. He observed that this was both a time of opportunity and risk for Bangladeshi films because the local film industry had become stagnant since the '80s while movie-going has become a popular pastime again. Aung said it is the duty of filmmakers to keep these audiences in the halls.

Mor Thengari also draws attention to language and cultural and political rights of people, especially with the fact that the indigenous languages are struggling for their existence. Here's to hoping that this paves the way for more films in languages other than Bangla.