

Himachali film ‘Khoonta’ to hit screens on September 18



A new Himachali film, *Khoonta*, written and directed by 32-year-old Anushi Sharma of Sirmaur, is set to hit cinema halls across Himachal Pradesh and the country on September 18. Sharma and film producer Mukesh Modi shared details about the film and its central themes here yesterday at a press conference. They were accompanied by Raja Singh Malhotra, founder of the Himachal International Film Festival, Amit Bhatia, founder of Feet of Fire, and members of the film's cast.

Anushi said *Khoonta* was an attempt to portray the rich cultural roots of Himachal Pradesh while highlighting the impact of development and destruction taking place across the state. The film also weaves together the story of a woman and a river, with different characters and themes connected through the central idea of a “khoonta” (peg or post).

Describing the film as more than just a cine-

matic project, Sharma said it reflects stories and concerns rooted in the lives of ordinary people. She said cinema provided an effective medium to bring important social and environmental issues before the public. She appealed to audiences to watch the film and support a story emerging from Himachal's cultural and social landscape.

Mukesh said the film had already received recognition at several international platforms. *Khoonta* was screened at the Cannes Film Festival, where it received an encouraging response from audiences. It has also won the Best Foreign Film Award at the London Independent Film Awards, the Best Indian Feature Film Award at the Indian Movie Awards and the Best Feature Film Award in Las Vegas.

The film was recently screened in Norway and has also had two shows in New York, receiving appreciation at both locations.

May El-Toukhy's 'Woman Unknown' wins Best Film at Venice; John Malkovich & Mathilde Arcel take top acting honours

May El-Toukhy's *Woman Unknown* wins Best Film at the 2026 Venice Film Festival, while Mathilde Arcel and John Malkovich take top acting honours

Woman Unknown has won the Golden Lion for Best Film at the 2026 Venice Film Festival, while John Malkovich took the Volpi Cup for Best Actor for his performance in *Wild Horse Nine*. Mathilde Arcel, the star of *Woman Unknown*, was named Best Actress.

The Danish drama, directed by El-Toukhy, follows a young housemaid whose intimate relationship with a German soldier during World War II threatens her future. It was the only film in competition directed solely by a woman.

Accepting the festival's top prize, El-Toukhy thanked jury president Maggie Gyllenhaal for highlighting the lack of equal opportunities for women filmmakers. “Thank you to the jury for this great honour and to you, Maggie, especially for using your voice and shining a light on the lack of equal opportunities for female film makers in our industry,” El-Toukhy said.

“This film has been incredibly challenging to make financially, logistically, emotionally. And what kept me going was the urgent need to illuminate the unknown women of our common history, to make them known. And especially tonight, I feel like I succeeded in doing just that.”

Gyllenhaal had addressed the issue earlier in the festival, saying, “There's a systemic problem. It's harder for women to get films fi-



nanced.”

Malkovich received the Volpi Cup for Best Actor for his portrayal of an eccentric CIA agent in *Wild Horse Nine*. The 72-year-old actor, who was filming another project in Montreal and could not attend the ceremony, accepted the award via video.

“I am humbled to be chosen for this award, which has been given to so many wonderful actors over the

past 83 iterations of the Venice Film Festival,” Malkovich said. He thanked director Martin McDonagh for “writing this lovely screenplay” and for the role, as well as his co-stars, “most especially my sidekick, the great Sam Rockwell”.

Arcel won the Volpi Cup for Best Actress for *Woman Unknown*. The win marked her first lead role in a movie, her first film festival appearance and her first film award.



When your body is tea, you got to flaunt it in the best way! Disha poses by the ocean in a bright yellow bikini with a sarong and waist chain.

CBI files FIR in Sushant Rajput's ex-manager Disha Salian's death case

The CBI on Monday registered an FIR in connection with the death of Disha Salian, former manager of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput, agency sources confirmed to the Reporter.

Earlier this month, the Bombay High Court ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into Salian's death and pulled up Mumbai Police for failing to register an FIR for six years. The court observed that the police investigation “raises more questions than answers”.

The bench criticised the police for treating the case only as an accidental death for six years and pointed to “glaring discrepancies” in the investigation.

Salian, who had briefly worked as Rajput's manager, died on June 8, 2020, after falling from the 12th floor of a residential building in Mumbai's Malad area. Mumbai Police had registered an Accidental Death Report (ADR) in the case.

A week later, Rajput was found dead at his apartment on June 14, 2020, triggering speculation about a possible link between the two deaths.

The uproar following Rajput's death led the Maharashtra government to order a CBI probe into it.

The agency subsequently submitted a closure report stating that Rajput died by suicide. The report, however, is yet to be heard by the court concerned.



Rishabh Sawhney makes his NYFW debut as showstopper

Rishabh Sawhney added another international milestone to his growing career with his debut as a showstopper at New York Fashion Week on Saturday. Walking for designer Paromita Ghosh's Paroma-À-la-Mode, Sawhney took to the runway at Sony Hall as part of the Runway 7 showcase, bringing his commanding presence to one of the world's most prominent style platforms.

For the Season 3 presentation, titled “Pink Panther,” Paroma-À-la-Mode embraced a glamorous aesthetic of bling, diamonds and elaborate embellishment, drawing on the classic sophistication and mystery associated with the theme. Sawhney stood out in a dramatic all-black look featuring a heavily embellished jacket with intricate silver detailing and star motifs, paired with black trousers accented by oversized stars. A flowing cape attached to the jacket added movement and drama, while layered star-shaped necklaces completed the statement ensemble.

The runway, however, was familiar territory for Sawhney. Before transitioning to acting, he began his career as a fashion model, an experience that was evident in the ease and confidence with which he carried the elaborate look.

Sawhney has steadily built a diverse acting portfolio since making his screen debut as Mehmood in the historical series *The Empire* in 2021. He later gained wider recognition as antagonist Azhar Akhtar in *Fighter* (2024), sharing the screen with Hrithik Roshan, Deepika Padukone and Anil Kapoor. He has since continued to explore varied roles, including a double performance as Ali and Ahmad Shah Abdali in *Nagabandham*, showcasing his ability to adapt to dramatically different characters.

