

Open Forum begins at IFFI 2017

BY A STAFF REPORTER
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Panaji: The 29th edition of Open Forum, a Federation of Film Societies initiative, was inaugurated at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2017, with a discussion on the new challenges in organising film festivals.

The initiative has been at the forefront of hosting discussions, deliberating important film topics since the first in 1988 in Thiruvananthapuram.

At the inaugural, Festival Director Sumit Tandon recalled fond memories of being part of the first Open Forum in 1988. He vividly remembered the poster designed by the renowned G Ravindran and also highlighted the history of the federation. He wished the federation all the success and was certain the discussions will prove to be enlightening.

Kiran Shantaram, filmmaker and president of the Federation of Film Societies of India said that the Open Forum is conducted to know 'what to watch and how to watch'. In context of the topic of discussion, he noted that doing the festival individually was a difficult task. Inadequate infrastructure and lack of funds are major constraints for organising film festivals. Film Festivals of International level could not be possible without the government's proactive support, he added.



Federation of Film Societies president and filmmaker Kiran Shantaram (2nd R) speaking at the Open Forum of IFFI on Wednesday. Others seen from (L to R) are Amnit Agarwal, Rajendra Singh Babu, festival director Sumit Tandon and Samantha Sartori. Pic: Atish Naik

The details of the consorted work undertaken by the Academy with the State were briefed by Rajendra Singh Babu, chairman, Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy, Bengaluru. He announced the upcoming 10th edition of the festival dates as February 22 to March 2. Further, the festival will not be confined only to Bangalore alone, but Mysore too will be included in the festival ambit.

New York-based journalist Samantha Sartori, who brings her extensive knowledge of covering film festivals was grateful to be present and was 'really impressed with the festival'.

Amit Agarwal, head, International Alliances, Global Film Festivals, Noida, noted that while organising a festival is easy in the digital age, he questioned the presence of good infrastructure and planning. He pointed to Cannes Film Festival as an example where the team commenced planning for the next one on the day after the festival ended.

After the panellists offered their important feedback on the various challenges, the forum was opened for audience interactions.

Next 'Open Forum' will be held on the topic 'film making in a changing

scenario focus on technology, audience, distribution, economics, screening facility, etc' on Thursday, November 23 at the Old GMC building, first floor, opposite Inox Multiplex, Panaji at 1:30 pm.

Sanja Appel, filmmaker from UK; N Vidyasankar, festival director, Bengaluru International Film Festival; Luong Dinh Dung, director and producer of film 'Father & Son' Vietnam; Bharat Mirle, filmmaker from Karnataka; Robin Sikawar, producer and director; Ahmedabad; Joywin Fernandes, filmmaker from Goa and Shreyans Jain, filmmaker from, Bikaner-Rajasthan will be the speakers.

'Banning films on account of moral censorship is wrong'



Marathi director and actor Nagesh Bhosle (L) speaks to GT reporter Nibedita Sen.

BY NIBEDITA SEN
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Panaji: After getting a green signal from the Censor Board, if a film is banned on account of moral censorship, then it is wrong, noted Marathi director and actor Nagesh Bhosle, while reacting to the dropping of two films from Indian Panorama section of the 48th International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

"It is assumed that the jury of Censor Board knows about a film and has studied film is some form. After getting a green signal from the Censor Board, a body of the government, if a film is banned on account of moral censorship, then it is wrong. I do not think it is good to drop a film after a legal censorship," Bhosle said.

Reacting to the selection of nine

Marathi films at the IFFI 2017, Bhosle opined, "This is a proud moment for Maharashtra as a large number of Marathi films are selected in IFFI 2017. Since the birth of the film festival, Indian cinema has seen handful names of directors topping the list on a regular basis. Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Gopal Krishna had given us a large number of good films. However, having Marathi films as a part of the national and international forum makes me proud of it."

Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Principal Secretary, Information, Tourism and Religious Affairs, Government of Uttar Pradesh and Chairman Film Bandhu, speaking at the knowledge series at the film bazaar organised by the national Film Development Corporation (NFDC) at Miramar, on the sidelines of IFFI-2017.

Open Pitches by UP, Telangana at knowledge series at film bazaar

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Panaji: Two sessions with the official representatives of Uttar Pradesh and Telangana were held at the knowledge series at the ongoing film bazaar organised by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) at Hotel Marriott, Miramar.

The representatives of two States spoke about the subsidies and benefits offered by them and how they plan to boost filmmaking and make it a smooth affair. The discussion was done primarily with the intent to make the filmmakers participating at the film bazaar aware of the benefits and services offered by them.

Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Principal Secretary, Information, Tourism and Religious Affairs, Government of Uttar Pradesh and Chairman Film Bandhu, said, "On behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government, I would like to congratulate the IFFI and the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. We would love to continue our association with IFFI and Uttar Pradesh will continue playing a pivotal role to boost filmmaking in India. We are looking forward to developing the state into a



Awanish Kumar Awasthi (R), Principal Secretary, Information, Tourism and Religious Affairs, Government of Uttar Pradesh and Chairman Film Bandhu, speaks at the knowledge series at Film Bazaar at Miramar. Pic: Atish Naik

filmmaking hub and with such associations we plan to make more creative investments like developing a film institute in Varanasi and a film city in Lucknow."

Dulam Satyanarayana, the award winning documentary filmmaker who is working closely with the Telangana government to promote State tourism remarked, "I am glad that we have been offered such a great platform by IFFI and film bazaar to boost tourism and filmmaking in the State of Telangana. It has also given us an opportuni-

ty to showcase the State to producers, distributors and other members of the filmmaking fraternity as an exciting filmmaking location."

The State Film Offices seek to understand the sensitivities involved while filming in various locations so they can assist the filmmakers with specific requests and give them what they want.

Knowledge Series, has over the years tried to evolve into a convergence point for the film industry to engage in conversations around emerg-

ing trends, their genesis and therefore the way forward - in cinema aesthetics and the business of it. The focus is on providing conversation starters to filmmakers from the various labs that define film bazaar.

The sessions will also introduce officials to sales agents who engage in Asian content like Asian Shadows and Shoreline Entertainment, provide them a platform to interact with the Festival Directors and Programmers from the top most festivals of the

world Cameron Bailey (Artistic Director, TIFF), Marco Müller (Festival Director, PYIFF), Paolo Bertolin (Correspondent Programmer, di Biennale Venezia, Venice Film Festival), Dorothee Weneer (Programming - Berlinale, Berlin International Film Festival) and get insights into how content aggregators and platforms like Vista, Reel Monk, 1018mb, Movie Saints et al help deliver monetising opportunities using the digital and innovative outreach methods.

10 States showcase their locations at film bazaar

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Panaji: As many as 10 States have collaborated with the Film Facilitation Office (FFO) of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) to showcase their locations to various filmmakers from India and abroad at the ongoing film bazaar at Hotel Marriott Resort, Miramar.

The film offices of Delhi, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh provide a platform to showcase locations and incentives that will benefit both the States and the filmmaker.

The FFO on behalf of these States

presented the various film incentives offered by them to filmmakers including giving an overview of their film policies to the participants of the co-production market. In doing so, the FFO urged the filmmakers to participate in joint discussions with the States so as to understand how they can integrate the locations offered by them into their narratives and at the same time leverage the benefits offered for filming in their jurisdiction.

The fact that India has 12 international co-production treaties with Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Korea, New Zealand, Poland, Spain and UK and Northern Ireland, was also highlighted. Structured meetings have been set up between the State Film Offices and

the filmmakers from the co-production market over a period of four days at the film bazaar, which is under the banner of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

It was impressed upon the filmmakers to keep in mind the guidelines, rules and regulations while filming in a location.

Co-production market is a platform where selected projects with South Asian themes are presented. Filmmakers get numerous avenues to find financial and artistic support from Indian and International producers, distributors, sales agents and financiers. This year 18 projects were presented in the co-production market from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Canada, Afghanistan and Nepal.

'Village Rock Stars' focuses on village children

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Panaji: Rima Das, who directed Assamese movie 'Village Rock Stars' said that the film was about the children in villages without any resources but they dream high. Though they are out of resources, they celebrate their life. "Mumbai experience helped a lot to get the story on screen, said Das.

The story of the film revolves around the Dhunu, a 10-year-old girl who lives in remote part of Assam amidst raging deprivation. A free spirit, she firmly believes in the power of her grand dreams. Her widowed mother struggles to make ends meet but, despite the poverty, Dhunu is determined to form a rock band with the boys in her village and wants to be the proud owner of a guitar. She remains undeterred in the face of gender discrimination, the lack of support from the boys and a society that threatens to pull her back.

Sharing her experiences about the non-feature film 'The Waterfall' (English), Lipika Singh Darai said, "We are moving away from nature where we belong. There is always a conflict of development and environment. On a visit to his cousin Nilu's beautiful hill town, city kid Karan immediately takes to the



Film directors Lipika Singh Darai (2nd L), Anik Dutta (3rd L), Ajay Kurane (2nd R) and Rima Dias (R) addressing a press conference of their films screened at the ongoing IFFI.

deep forests, he marvels at the bounty of nature in the small town. He soon learns that the waterfall they visited will soon be destroyed to make way for development projects. Deeply disturbed, Karan finds himself in deep contemplation about the conflicting progress of development and importance of conserving nature.

Anik Dutta, director of Bengali non-feature film 'Meghnadobd Rohosyo' said that it is not easy exploring the complex urban relationships through non-feature films. He said that there is a good future of non-feature films in India. The story of Meghnadobd Rohosyo is about Chingi, a mute girl. Her father an Indian army officer loses his life while on duty. Chingi lives with her mother and grandfather nurturing vivid memories of her father, his teachings and the gift of a tri-coloured pinwheel that she spends most of her time with.

When the statue installed in her father's memory is demolished, Chingi takes it upon herself to restore her family's pride. However, a shocking revelation awaits the family.

Marathi non-feature film 'Baluta' is about barter system. Director Ajay Kurane said that the story inspired from WhatsApp Message. Women's empowerment is what everybody talks but when it comes to reality it is totally different, said Ajay Kurane. In rural Maharashtra, it is never imagined that woman being a barber. Despite all odds Shantabai, accepts the traditional job to meet the both ends. Shantabai, a young woman, mother of four daughters, loses her husband and is on her own without family support. Baluta is her tale of struggle, bravery and most of all, the self-belief of a woman who defies all odds and proves to the world that stereotype is just another word.

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