

In brief

In-charge VC for BU

» Prof Jagadeesh Prakash, dean, Faculty of Arts and professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, has been appointed as in-charge vice-chancellor of Bangalore University by Governor Vajubhai Vala who is also the chancellor of state universities. Vice-chancellor B Thimme Gowda's term ended recently.

Course on soft skills

» Snehadeep Trust for the Disabled is conducting a four-month free training course on soft skills and computer basics for visually, physically challenged and hearing impaired candidates aged between 18 and 35 years. The course will start from February 15 and will be held at Snehadeep Trust for the Disabled, # 36, Charles Campbell Road, Cox Town. For details, those interested call 99720 77673 / 080 - 2580 1069.

Poetry recital competition

» Government Arts College, in association with Kannada Sahitya Samvardhaka Trust, is holding an intercollegiate poem recital competition in memory of poet Kavyananda (Siddaiah Purnanik) on February 22. There is no entry fee and interested students can register their names along with confirmation letter from the principals of their respective colleges by February 20 with the college. For details, call 9060400677.

Course on hardware design

» The Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineers (IETE) is holding a short-term course on advanced hardware design for a period of 8-10 weeks from February 19. The course will be held at IETE Bangalore Centre, Ballari Road, Ganganagar Extension only on Sundays. The institute is also holding a one-day workshop on quality awareness and management on the same day. For details, send an email to bangalore@iete.org or call 99017 43330.

Vocational courses

» DB Tech organisation is starting a training course with job in electrical, plumbing and retail management along with soft skills, spoken English and interview skills. The minimum qualification to apply for the course is SSLC, PUC, ITI, diploma, degree pass / fail. The duration of the course is 90 days and the age limit is 18-32 years. The last date for enrolment is February 10. For details, call 9164998882.

Hindi examinations

» Mysore Hindi Prachara Parishad is holding Hindi examinations on February 11 and 12. Pracharaks have to collect their students' admission tickets from those in charge of respective centres, the Parishad said in a press release.

Train cancelled

» The service of Kurla Lokamanya Tilak Terminus - Coimbatore Express (Train Number 11013) scheduled to start at 10.35 pm on Tuesday was cancelled due to late running of its pairing train. In effect, the pairing train Coimbatore - Kurla Lokamanya Tilak Terminus Express (Train Number 11014), scheduled to depart from Coimbatore at 8.55 am on Thursday will remain cancelled.

Free health camp

» Udayabhanu Kalasangha, with the support of Sri Shankara Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, is holding a free cancer screening and awareness camp on February 26. The camp will be held at Udayabhanu Kalasangha auditorium from 10 am to 12 pm. It is also holding a free eye check-up and dental camp on February 12 and 26. For details, call 080-2660 9343.

Film institute in time warp

Students seek stalwarts' support as GFTI reels under crisis

Meghana Choukkar

BENGALURU: As filmmakers from across the globe take part in Bengaluru International Film Festival (Biffes), students from the state's film institute scramble to get a decent education.

Students of the Government Film and Television Institute (GFTI) in the city are approaching filmmakers to draw their attention to the problems in the institute. "The rest of the world has moved on from film cameras, but in our college we have only such outdated equipment. We do not have a single digital camera," said Shameer

Ahammed, a second year student of sound recording department. Students had raised this issue and several others at a protest in April last year. Not much has changed since then, they say.

Advisory committee Students have urged local filmmakers to form an advisory committee so that they can make a representation to the higher education minister. "We have spoken to directors M S Sathyu and B S Lingadevaru and they have agreed to be part of the committee. Girish Kasaravalli, G S Bhaskar, Deepa Dhanraj and G V Somashekhar have agreed to support us,"

Ahammed said. The purpose of the committee is to suggest remedial measures and to develop a vision for converting it into a full-fledged film institute, he said.

GFTI is currently under the Department of Technical Education (DTE), since it was formerly part of the SJ Polytechnic. Veteran filmmaker Kasaravalli said it was a shame that Karnataka could not maintain its only government film institute properly when other states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have more than one and they are doing well. Both he and cinematographer Bhaskar said problems at GFTI would be taken up with

the government after the festival.

'Find guest faculty' Crippled by the lack of trained staff, institute authorities have asked students to find guest faculty who could conduct sessions for them.

"In the cinematography department, there are no teachers besides the head of the department, who does not know the subject himself. We don't have regular classes as well," said Nirmal R, a first year student. As a volunteer at the festival, Nirmal is talking to cinematographers and directors to find someone who would be interested to teach them. He and other students volunteer-

ing at the fest are attending every workshop and seminar to learn all they can.

"We don't know the basics because we have learned nothing in the first semester. When they speak in technical terms we cannot understand, but we still attend because we are eager to learn," they said. The students are organising workshops with their own resources and are using their mobile phone cameras to practise filmmaking.

Principal of GFTI R Vijay Kumar acknowledged that the institute lacked faculty.

"Discussions are taking place in the DTE and I am not aware of them," he said. **DH News Service**

Indywood launches film carnival

BENGALURU: Indywood, which is working to raise Rs 70,000 crore to convert conventional film theatres into multiplexes, launched the third edition of its film carnival here on Tuesday.

Businessman Sohan Roy, who conceptualised Indywood, said the future of film industry is dependent on latest high definition (HD) screens which are currently very few in India.

Noting that the HD race has stopped at television screens, Roy said theatre owners are yet to upgrade their systems.

Director Rajamouli made Bahubali in 4k (4,096 x 2,160 pixels) resolution. But there was no projection facility in the country to screen it. He had to come to Thiruvananthapuram to see his movie and experience its visual effects," he said.

Thiruvananthapuram's AriesPlex SL Cinemas was once a conventional theatre. But it has been renovated now. It boasts of having the only 4k resolution projection facility in south India.

"We realised that the film industry will need good theatres as much as it needs good films for survival. Last year, Indywood received positive response from NRIs to invest in conversion of conventional theatres into multiplexes. So far, the platform has received a positive response," he said. **DH News Service**



Actor-producer Mohan Agashe (left) interacts with delegates at the Bengaluru International Film Festival on Tuesday. DH PHOTOS / B H SHIVAKUMAR

sion will be the leading cause of mortality," Agashe said. Drawing the metaphor of a mother turtle who hatches her eggs and leaves before the young ones are born, 'Kaasav' tells the viewer how patience and love can help a person with depression. Director Sukthankar said, "The movie does not try to provide a solution or tell the viewer how to deal with depression. Each case is different and the movie shows just one of them."



Agashe stressed on the importance of listening with patience and understanding. "Our education system prepares us in a way that we are

always ready with an answer and analysis. Instead, when someone wants to talk we should simply listen," he said. As producer of a film without big stars or exotic locations, Agashe said that recovering his investment requires more effort. "Audience come to theatres because they like a certain star or to see great locations. You have a good story to offer but they do not know that before watching," he said. **DH News Service**

Can film fest help blur parallel-mainstream divides?

Filmmakers ponder over good cinema's commercial potential

Rasheed Kappan

BENGALURU, DHNS: Do film festivals help parallel cinema gain wider acceptance in the wider world? Do they kindle that elusive interest in good cinema struggling to keep pace with the pyrotechnics of mainstream movies? The message thus far from the Bengaluru International Film Festival (Biffes) has been clear. No!

Path-breaking, gripping stories in celluloid from around the world have nourished the audience. Packed movie halls at Orion Mall are testimony to the power of the moving images, irrespective of the cultural context. But as veteran filmmaker P Sheshadri reminded

DH, those crowds will disappear if the same films were screened commercially.

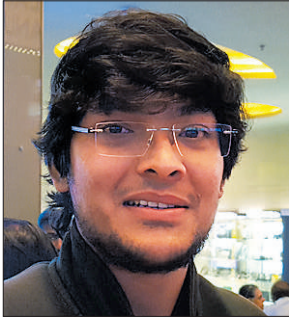
Sheshadri should know. His nine films never competed with the big budget movies. He was lucky to screen all his films commercially precisely because his budget was low and expectations of profit-making modest. Now working on his 10th film, the veteran is convinced the public would always make that distinction. Parallel cinema, at least here, would be just that: Parallel.

Is that an admission that film festivals will remain exclusive clubs frequented only by the discerning few? That they have no role in evolving a mature audience outside the circuit? Sheshadri does not agree.



P Sheshadri, director

Festivals fulfil that role indirectly, by inspiring filmmakers to experiment with new storytelling techniques, by foraying into hitherto unexplored genres. "I myself became a meaningful filmmaker through the festivals. I realised that cinema is not only about Rajkumar and Vajramuni," he recalled. Experiments would be suicidal in mainstream cinema. But that is not always true.



Vishnu, law student

Thanks to the evolved film society culture in Kerala, filmmakers had managed to transcend those boundaries of commerce and good cinema. Bengaluru, noted Sheshadri, could have achieved that had it nurtured film societies. But he wondered where were they, barring the now defunct Bangalore Film Society and the Suchitra Film Society.

Mansore, director of



British director Paul Spurrier at Biffes on Tuesday.

Thai films losing out to Americanisation, rues British filmmaker

BENGALURU, DHNS: Local culture and issues find no place in Thai films because of 'Americanisation', said British director Paul Spurrier, during a press interaction at Biffes.

Spurrier has spent more than 12 years in Thailand and his movie set in that country 'The Forest' was screened at the film festival. "You are lucky that you have such a thriving regional film industry here," he said.

He said that the share of regional cinema in the Thai industry was 30% in 2014 and in 2015, it dropped even lower to a worrying 13%. Hollywood movies have taken over the box offices leaving hardly any room for local filmmakers. "Even films made in Thailand are not representative of the country's culture and society. They show middle-class families, living in condominiums and eating at McDonald's," Spurrier said. The trend of Americanisation extends to their food and culture too, he said. "The government needs to do more in the way of supporting local films through subsidies. Also, the major studios in Thailand should form an association and work to reverse the trend," he said.

Egyptian director Hala Khalili said that a similar situation affects the film industry in her country. Distributors cre-

ate roadblocks for non-commercial films, she said. "They schedule it during big Hollywood releases. They do not give good time slots. They think that people like only Hollywood movies," Khalili said. Her movie 'Nawara' about the 2011 revolution in Egypt has won her several awards and was screened in the 'Country Focus: Egypt' category.

Just as in Thailand, local culture in Egypt is also being homogenised, she said. "A majority of the people are living a lifestyle which is American, mimicking their ways." Fortunately, a new generation of filmmakers is rallying against this by making films based on Egyptian culture, Khalili said.

'Dub into Kannada'

Social Welfare Minister H Anjaneya attended the film festival for the screening of the 1999 movie by Jabbar Patel 'Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar'. He urged the Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy to help dub the English movie into Kannada so that more people could watch it and learn about the life of Ambedkar. He also said the state government would be interested in making a movie on Ambedkar. Secretary of the Social Welfare Department, P Maniwanann and commissioner Vikash Kumar Vikash were also present at the screening.



A 3D projection mapping of Kannada actor Dr Rajkumar on the Public Utility Building on MG Road as part of the ongoing Bengaluru International Film Festival.

3D projection on Utility Building attracts crowds

BENGALURU, DHNS: The first 3D projection mapping on Public Utility Building (PUB) on MG Road, conducted by Tourism Department, attracted a large crowd.

The initiative was part of the 9th edition of the ongoing Bengaluru International Film Festival (Biffes). The PUB, that was used as a canvas, showcased the state's achievements in the field of literature, arts, and cinema. Images of Kannada actors such as Dr Rajkumar, Kalpana, Ambareesh, Vishnuvardhan, Radhika Pandit and others in the backdrop of folk music and songs left the spectators awestruck. Along with this, the statue of Bengaluru's founder Kempegowda, the monolith Gommateshwara statue at

Shravanabelagola, Mysuru Palace and other famous places of Karnataka came alive on the building. The mapping that was done through laser lights came to an end with information on Biffes.

The projection mapping started 7 pm and went on for more than an hour. People rushed to Barton Centre, Zee Building and Oriental Building, all located on M G Road to get a clear view of the show. Chairman of Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy (KCA) and the festival director S V Rajendra Singh Babu said: "The film festival gets bigger and better every year. We are excited about the initiative taken by the Tourism Department to throw the spotlight on this festival."

BBMP's bid to backtrack on enforcing zoning rules opposed

BENGALURU, DHNS: Various residents' groups are up in arms against the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's decision to form a committee to review its drive against commercial buildings in residential areas.

At a time when the BBMP decided to launch a drive against commercial buildings in residential areas and published advertisements asking owners to remove such buildings on their own, corporators came together setting aside their political differences to thwart the action.

During the council meeting on January 20, corporators took a decision to set up a committee to look into the pros and

Allowed

- Vegetable shops
- Small grocery shops
- Milk booths
- Small clinics
- Medical stores

cons of allowing commercial establishments in residential areas. They are also planning to write to the government seeking amendment to the zonal regulations that prevent commercial development in residential areas.

BBMP Taxation and Finance Committee chairperson M K Gunashekar told DH, "The

Prohibited

- Marriage and party halls
- Big showrooms
- Bars and restaurants
- Prominent food joints
- Big offices
- Godowns
- Agarbathi factories
- Lodging hotels

council has taken a decision to write to the government to amend the zonal regulations. The government will take a call on that. If the government acts on our plea, then action will not be taken. Else, the High Court order will hold good."

The crackdown was initiated based on a petition by citizens' group to implement the High Court order in 2012 banning any commercial development in residential areas. Various residents' welfare associations petitioned Mayor G Padmavathi on February 6 asking her not to constitute a committee.

Sneha Nandihal, president of BM Kaval Residents' Welfare Association said that the implementation of this law has been pending since 2012. "Four years after the HC order, there seems to be an attempt to subvert it. BBMP needs to begin enforcement on a war footing," she said, adding that even neighbourhood conveniences should not be allowed in

residential areas with road width of 40 feet and less.

C N Kumar from Jayanagar pointed out how the Revised Master Plan 2015 demarcates residential and commercial areas. "Certain commercial activities that are in the nature of neighbourhood conveniences are permitted in appropriate residential areas but commercial buildings will not be allowed," Sridhar Pabbisetty of Namma Bengaluru Foundation said the BBMP is bound to implement the order.

"Forming a committee itself is contempt of court. It should be disbanded if it has been constituted. Nobody can say that the High Court order cannot be obeyed," said Pabbisetty.

'Action against those flouting zoning rules'

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru Development Minister K J George on Tuesday said directions have been issued to take action against those running illegal commercial activities in residential areas.

Replying to Congress' N A Haris in the Legislative Assembly, he said Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has already started issuing notices to owners of such properties in the city. Using more than 20% of a plot on a road less than 40 ft wide for commercial purposes is illegal according to zoning regulations, he added. The minister said the BBMP

council has formed a committee of corporators to look into the issue of illegal commercial activities in residential areas. Appropriate measures will be taken based on the committee's report, he added.

George said that the existing green belt area will be protected while preparing the new master plan for Bengaluru.

To another question by C T Ravi of the BJP, the minister said the BBMP has not sold any public building for raising money. Currently, 11 public buildings in Bengaluru are mortgaged for a loan of Rs 1,434 crore.