

Will attract more international filmmakers

By : Editor Published On : 20 Nov, 2019 07:10 PM IST



INVC NEWS

Goa ,

In the luminous presence of two stalwarts of Indian cinema - Shri Amitabh Bachchan and Shri Rajinikanth, the golden jubilee edition of the International Film Festival of India got off to a mesmeric start at Panaji, Goa. Ending the long wait of cinephiles across the world, 50th International Film Festival of India kickstarted in all its glitz and glamour.

At a grand ceremony hosted by the master of entertainment Shri Karan Johar, the great doyen of Indian cinema Shri Amitabh Bachchan and the 'Thalaiva' of Indian film industry Shri Rajinikanth flagged off the extravaganza and announced the festival open, in the presence of Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting Shri Prakash Javadekar and other official dignitaries. Shri Rajinikanth was conferred the 'Icon Of Golden Jubilee Award' for his outstanding contribution to Indian cinema, a first time award beginning with the 50th edition. One of French cinema's defining faces actress Ms. Isabelle Anne Madeleine Huppert was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Shri Prakash Javadekar while speaking at the inaugural ceremony said that single window system introduced by the government will attract more international filmmakers to shoot their films in India. " India has lots of scenic and beautiful shooting sites for national and international films but shooting at these locations requires around 15-20 permissions. Government is now preparing for single window arrangement which will take care of all the permissions and it will benefit places like Goa, Leh-Ladakh and Andaman & Nicobar," he said.

Shri Javadekar pointed out that films, IT and music are India's soft power and we have to take it forward. "Every film and character leaves a long lasting imprint on our mind and it has the power to change our thoughts and mood" he said. He added that the audience for Indian films is growing by leaps and bounds and people across the world really like to watch Indian movies even in China.

"Many good films of the world will be showcased in this film festival and it will be a tribute to former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar," the Minister said. He mentioned about a film in the festival which has been made by local artists of Goa based on the lives of visually impaired people.

Receiving the 'Icon Of Golden Jubilee Award, Shri Rajinikanth expressed his happiness to receive the prestigious award from Shri Amitabh Bachchan. He dedicated the award to all the producers, directors and technicians who worked in his films, his fans and people of Tamil Nadu.

Shri Amitabh Bachchan expressing his happiness in being honoured stated, "I have no words to express my gratitude to IFFI for honouring me and having a retrospective of my films."

Earlier, walking the Red Carpet of IFFI 50, Shri Amitabh Bachchan said, " Films have always been an integral part of our social life. To have a festival of this magnitude in Goa exposes the Goans to what happens in the international world and also gives them an opportunity to meet and mix with people".

The Secretary Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Shri Amit Khare mentioned the noteworthy highlights of this year's festival and noted the tremendous change in the last 50 editions from a participation of 23 countries in 1952, to 76 countries this year.

The Chief Minister Dr. Pramod Sawant said that the IFFI package this year is an interesting mix of leisure and entertainment. " IFFI bridges the gap between India and international film industry and provides the opportunity to explore the cinema," he said. "We should not forget the objectives of cinema as the mirror of our time and the reflection of our society," he added.

Lights and luminaries of film industry such as world known Cinematographer and Chairman of IFFI International Jury John Bailey; Indian film maker, and Chairman of Indian jury Shri Priyadarshan and other jury members of Indian and International jury, Maria Lemesheva, Head of Russian delegation, graced the opening ceremony. A host of celebrities sashayed the red carpet, adding to the pomp and gaiety of the function.

As the festival glitters in its golden glory, former Goa Chief Minister late Manohar Parikkar, the man who made IFFI synonymous with Goa, was given a befitting tribute at the opening ceremony by screening a short film depicting his contribution to IFFI. Legends of Indian film industry Shri Ramesh Sippy, Shri N. Chandra and Shir P.C. Sreeram were honoured at the inaugural ceremony.

The inaugural ceremony of the festival also saw various senior official dignitaries such as Union Minister for AYUSH Shri Shripad Naik, Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Babul Supriyo, Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Shri Amit Khare, Prasar Bharati Chairman Shri A. Suryaprakash, Central Board of Film Certification Chairman Shri Prasoon Joshi, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Shri Atul Kumar Tiwari, Festival Director Shri Chaitanya Prasad, and Vice Chairman Entertainment Society of Goa. Shri Subhash Phal Desai.

Shri Prakash Javadekar released the commemorative postage stamp of 50th IFFI at the function. The inaugural ceremony also witnessed some enthralling audio visual performances which kept the audience spellbound through the evening. Noted music singer and composer Shankar Mahadevan and his band won the hearts with a spectacular performance that put the cinelovers and spectators in a frenzy. When rhymes and rhythms from different parts of India juxtaposed with the beats of international sounds, it was a treat for the audience.

The festival opened with the Italian film 'Despite the Fog' directed by Goran Paskaljevic. The cast and crew of the film also participated in the screening. Around 7000 delegates are participating in the golden edition of IFFI.

The 50th International Film Festival of India 2019 will witness over 200 acclaimed films from 76 countries, with Russia as the country of focus. It also includes 26 feature films and 15 non feature films in Indian panorama section. More than 10,000 people and film lovers are expected to participate in the golden jubilee edition. The festival ends on Thursday 28 November, 2019, in Panaji, Goa.

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