

WAVES Explores India's Evolving Role in the Global Streaming and Film Economy

“For content to truly travel across borders, India must invest in studio infrastructure, production hubs, and technology-driven ecosystems”, says Shibasish Sarkar

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The breakout session on **“India's Evolving Role in the Global Film and Streaming Economy”** held at Mumbai today brought together key voices shaping the future of media and content, including Shri Vikram Tanna, CEO, Eros Now and Mzaalo (Xfinite Global); Shri Shibasish Sarkar, President, Producers Guild of India; Smt. Ektaa R. Kapoor, Joint Managing Director, Balaji Telefilms; and Ms. Shalini Govil Pai, Vice President & General Manager, Android TV, Google.

Highlighting India's deep-rooted tradition of storytelling, Shri Shibasish Sarkar spoke about the evolution of Indian cinema from a century ago to today's dynamic streaming platforms. He stated that streaming has enabled Indian stories to find global audiences. However, for content to truly travel across borders, India must invest in infrastructure studios, production hubs, and technology-driven ecosystems. He also called for a focused, pan-India approach to institutional capital support.

Underlining that compelling storytelling lies at the heart of global success, Ms. Ektaa R. Kapoor emphasised that the more relatable and emotionally resonant a story is, the more likely it is to connect with international audiences. She said that emotions such as pain, passion, and hope are universal. She noted that while taking creative risks is essential, content portfolios must be balanced and structured to de-risk investments and ensure long-term viability in a competitive ecosystem.

Ms. Shalini Govil Pai stated that globalization is the most transformative trend in content today. She pointed out that technology has broken distribution barriers and made it easier to scale stories globally. Artificial Intelligence (AI), she added, is reshaping content creation by making production faster, more efficient, and data-driven. She urged Indian creators to leapfrog traditional methods and lead in the use of AI and technology to deliver stories that resonate across geographies. She noted that content discovery is becoming crucial, and the next wave of success will hinge on smart navigation, discoverability, and tech-led storytelling.

Observing that India's digital-first audience behaviour requires a shift in storytelling formats, Shri Vikram Tanna said that with shorter attention spans and increased mobile consumption, content must evolve to be voice-driven, opinion-led, and immersive. He outlined three key drivers for success: redefining technology, crafting experience-led narratives, and building IPs that command loyal fandom. He identified Generative AI as a game-changing opportunity for creators and platforms alike, offering new ways to engage, monetise, and personalise storytelling.

The session concluded with a vision that India is well-positioned to become a global content powerhouse. With strategic investment in infrastructure, bold use of technology, and a commitment to authentic storytelling, India can lead the next phase of global media innovation.

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