



56th IFFI comes to a close, but the magic of cinema will last forever!

Vietnamese film 'Skin of Youth' earns the prestigious Golden Peacock award in 56th IFFI

Films shape public consciousness, inspire social change, preserve cultural heritage, and foster unity across India's diverse society: Goa CM Dr. Pramod Sawant

WAVES Film Bazaar generated business worth over ₹1,050 crore, 50 films directed by women were screened, reflecting rise of Nari-Shakti in films: MoS (I & B and Parliamentary Affairs) Dr. L. Murugan

"This Honour Is for the Film Industry": Rajinikanth Felicitated for 50 Years in Cinema

Santosh Davakhar earns Silver Peacock for his directorial work in Marathi film 'Gondhal'

Ubeimar Rios receives Silver Peacock for Best Male Actor, Jara Sofija Ostan receives Silver Peacock for Best Female Actor

Iranian film maker Hesam Farahmand and Estonian film maker Tõnis Pill joint winners of Best Debut Feature Film of a Director Award

#IFFIWood, 28 November 2025

As the curtains came down on the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025 at the Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Goa this evening, a vibrant closing ceremony—illuminated by captivating cultural performances and graced by a galaxy of film personalities from around the world—marks the conclusion of yet another remarkable edition of this cherished celebration of cinema, culture and storytelling, even as anticipation begins to build for the next chapter of this prestigious film festival.

Over the past nine days, powerful stories and vibrant performances light up the silver screens and stages in the film festival's venues spread across Goa, thereby enthraling audiences and reflecting a universal artistic spirit.

The red-carpet moments featuring both emerging and celebrated artists, the spectacular cultural performances, and the awards honouring distinguished as well as newly discovered cinematic talent together made the evening a memorable one for cine enthusiasts and film aficionados.

The festival came to a close with the screening of the Closing Film *A Useful Ghost*, directed by Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke — a surreal gem that has earned acclaim at several renowned international film festivals and awards.

Amid the evening's celebrations, the highlight unfolded with the announcement of the eagerly awaited awards, honoring the brilliant creators and outstanding talents who enchant audiences with their artistic excellence.

'Skin of Youth' directed by Ashleigh Mayfair bags the prestigious 'Golden Peacock' for Best Feature film

Vietnamese film *'Skin of Youth'* written and directed by Ashleigh Mayfair was adjudged the best feature film in the International Competition section, thereby bagging the prestigious *Golden Peacock* in 56th IFFI.

With its compelling narrative, the film delivers a powerful message—to humanize, to illuminate, and to challenge silence. All elements of the film came together beautifully with good music and skilful editing. The Jury defined the film as - Bold and brave, stunning and stylish. The love and sacrifice shown in the film informs us of a life few of us will know, and hence the film will live long in our minds.



Santosh Davakhar, Director of Marathi film 'Gondhal' receives Silver Peacock for Best Director

Marathi feature *'Gondhaal'* earned director the Silver Peacock for the Best Director in 56th IFFI.

Set against the rich fabric of cultural tradition, Director Santosh Davakhar has given birth to a cinematic gem. A captivating narrative that keeps us on edge, surprising us beyond our wildest imagination – is how the Jury praised the film. *Gondhal* is like a Shakespearean fable set in a real world, the Jury further said.



Ubeimar Rios, Lead Actor of Spanish film '*A Poet*' receives Silver Peacock for Best Male Actor

The lead actor of Spanish film *A Poet*, Ubeimar Rios was honoured with the Silver Peacock for Best Actor (Male) award in the 56th IFFI.

The film explores the age-old clash between Art and Survival, but in a unique and unexpected way. The Jury stated that the film showcased a brilliant first time performance from actor Ubeimar Rios who portrays a suffering, defeated poet in a serious emotional crisis until he meets a talented teenager who changes his life. The film and Ubeimar's portrayal are supremely uplifting and ultimately wonderfully redeeming, the Jury further stated in the citation.



Jara Sofija Ostan, Lead Actor of Slovenian film *Little Trouble Girls* receives Silver Peacock for Best Female Actor

Jara Sofija Ostan, lead actor of Slovenian film *Little Trouble Girls* was honoured with the Silver Peacock in 56th IFFI for her remarkably subtle and deeply expressive performance.

The Jury applauded her acting skills by citing that much is said through the simplest, most truthful, tiniest expressions and extremely delicate gestures.



Silver Peacock for Best Female Actor Jara Sofija Ostan being accepted by Producer of the film 'Little Trouble Girls'

Akinola Davies Jr, Director of *My Father's Shadow* receives Special Jury Award

British-Nigerian film maker Akinola Davies Jr. was honoured with the Special Jury Award for the film *My Father's Shadow*, in 56th IFFI.

The Director and Screenplay writer has been applauded by the Jury, who said that Intimate moments and small gestures are at the heart of this film's warm embrace.



Hesam Farahmand for Persian film *My Daughter's Hair (Raha)* and Tõnis Pill for Estonian film *Frank* jointly receive Best Debut Feature Film of a Director Award

Iranian film-maker Hesam Farahmand for his debut film *My Daughter's Hair (Raha)* and Estonian film-maker Tõnis Pill for his debut feature *Fränk*, have been declared as joint winners of the Best Debut Film of a Director Award in 56th IFFI.

The Jury praised both the films, which they cited to have stood tall, and equally were equally struck them by their brilliance.



Karan Singh Tyagi, Director of Hindi film *Kesari Chapter 2* receives 'Best Debut Director of Indian Feature Film Award' award

Kesari Chapter 2 director Karan Singh Tyagi received the award for his debut film in the 56th IFFI. Indian Panaroma jury congratulated the director, producer, actors and technicians of this film.



Bandish Bandits Season 2 receives Best Web Series (OTT) Award

The Best Web Series (OTT) award in the 56th IFFI went to the team of Bandish Bandits Season 2. The Jury felt that the story of the web series makes music and art accessible for all.



Norwegian Film "Safe House" Wins the Prestigious ICFT–UNESCO Gandhi Medal

The Norwegian film "Safe House", directed by Eirik Svensson, has been awarded the ICFT–UNESCO Gandhi Medal at the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI 2025) for its outstanding contribution to cinema that promotes peace, non-violence, and intercultural dialogue.



A Golden Saga: Rajinikanth's 50-Year Reign in Indian Cinema Celebrated

Legendary actor **Rajinikanth**, who has completed 50 years in Indian cinema—a milestone that reflects his enduring influence on the nation's film culture—was specially felicitated at the closing ceremony today. The iconic star, who has captivated Indian audiences for half a century, expressed his gratitude to the Central Government for the honour. "When I look back, it feels as if time has flown, because I love cinema and acting. I would like to take a hundred births as an actor—as Rajinikanth. Thank you very much for your love and affection. This honour belongs to the entire film industry—producers, directors, technicians, distributors, exhibitors, and everyone else," said the legendary actor.



The **Chief Minister of Goa Dr. Pramod Sawant** conveyed the congratulatory message of Honourable Prime Minister, who was in Goa for the 550th-year celebration of the Shree Samsthan Gokarn Partagali Jeevottam Math in Goa, to all the award winners. Dr. Pramod Sawant said that the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam reflects creativity, innovation, technology, storytelling, and cinema. “We are here to celebrate films and the stories that move the world,” he remarked. He added that the evening was not merely the conclusion of a festival, but the culmination of a remarkable gathering of creative minds, artistic brilliance, and global collaborations. Highlighting cinema’s transformative power, he said that films are far more than entertainment—they shape public consciousness, inspire social change, preserve cultural heritage, and foster unity across India’s diverse society. Dr. Sawant noted that today’s content creators are crafting fresh narratives and experimenting with new formats that transcend geographical boundaries. He stated that Goa is IFFI’s permanent venue for years now and added that the Goa Government has made tireless efforts in nurturing the festival into a global cultural landmark.



Addressing the concluding ceremony of IFFI 2025, **Union Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. L. Murugan** highlighted the key innovations of the 56th edition of the festival. He noted that this year's IFFI introduced tableaux and cultural exhibits from various states and production houses across Goa, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage. "Every year, IFFI brings new flavours," he said. Citing the Prime Minister's vision, he shared that the WAVES Summit was held for the first time in Mumbai, with participation from 77 nations and key stakeholders from film, entertainment, media, and creative industries. The MoS also informed that this year's festival celebrated the centenary of legendary film icons including Guru Dutt, Raj Khosla, Ritwik Ghatak, Bhupen Hazarika, P. Bhanumati, Salil Choudhury, and K. Vaikunth, and also felicitated Rajinikanth for completing 50 years in cinema. Dr. L. Murugan added that the WAVES Film Bazaar generated business worth over ₹1,050 crore for emerging filmmakers, while 125 young talents participated in the CMOT program, reflecting IFFI's commitment to nurturing new creators. "For the first time in IFFI's history, 50 films directed by women were screened, reaffirming our focus on empowering women in cinema," he noted. Dr. Murugan highlighted the establishment of the Indian Institute of Creative Technology in Mumbai to further drive innovation at the intersection of creativity and technology.



Speaking on the occasion, **Secretary, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Shri Sanjay Jaju** stated that Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said at the WAVES Summit that this is the time for dawn of the orange economy. I & B Secretary Shri Jaju further said that IFFI 2025 has taken a bold step in that direction—creating opportunities for creators and showcasing Indian talent proudly on the global stage. Shri Jaju also said that Indian Institute of Creative Technology (IICT) will help creators to not only hone up their skills and craft, but also learn the technology which is also an integral part of any creative production. The NFDC campus of IICT has already started functioning, he informed. IICT at Mumbai will be like a hub and spoke model, which will benefit creators around the country, he further added.

The Indian film industry icons remembered the towering personalities who passed away this year, including Dharmendra, Kamini Kaushal, Sulakshana Pandit, Satish Shah, Piyush Pandey, Rishabh Tandon, Govardhan Asrani, Pankaj Dheer, Varinder Singh Ghuman, Zubeen Garg, Bal Karve, Jaswinder Bhalla, Jyoti Chandekar, Ratan Thiyam, B. Saroja Devi, Shefali Jariwala, Partho Ghosh, Vibhu Raghav, Shaji N. Karun, Manoj Kumar, Alok Chatterjee, Shyam Benegal and Zakir Hussain, for their invaluable contributions to Indian cinema.

Iconic film industry personalities Ramesh Sippy, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Abhay Sinha, Omprakash Mehra, Kiran Shantaram were felicitated on the occasion. Festival Director Shekhar Kapur, NFDC MD Shri Prakash Madgum, ESG Goa Chairperson Delilah Lobo, Ravi Kisan, Rishabh Shetty, Ranveer Singh,

Amit Sadd, Niharika Konidela and G.V.Prakash Kumar were present amongst the dignitaries on the occasion.

Through the Ganesh Vandana, traditional dances, remarkable performances by divyang artists, a vivid display of North East India's cultural richness and Karnataka's traditional folk theatre form of Yakshagana and the performance of Manganiyars from Rajasthan, the program highlighted the diversity and vibrancy of Indian heritage.



The presence of Indian Sign Language interpreters at the closing ceremony underscored the inclusive spirit of the festival, which was reflected over the past nine days at the IFFI grounds through numerous divyang-friendly measures.

This year the film festival introduced AI Film Festival and CinemAI Hackathon that provided a platform to encourage creators worldwide to push the boundaries of storytelling using AI-driven tools for scriptwriting, video generation, editing, and production. 56th IFFI also brought forth several masters of cinema and creativity for knowledge enhancing discourses- in-conversations, masterclasses and round tables.

The 56th IFFI, which concluded with a vibrant celebration of cinema, storytelling, and creativity, featuring stellar performances by talented artists and honouring deserving films and personalities, has etched a memorable space in the hearts of cinephiles and the global film community, while also earning a bright spot in the creative economy, highlighting the festival's role in fostering innovation, talent, and artistic enterprise.

Now begins the wait for the next edition of IFFI, which will once again offer a global platform to celebrate cinematic excellence, recognize outstanding talent, and strengthen the creative economy.

For more information, click on:

IFFI Website: <https://www.iffigoa.org/>

PIB's IFFI Microsite: <https://www.pib.gov.in/iffi/56/>

PIB IFFI Wood Broadcast Channel: <https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029VaEiBaML2AU6gnzW0m3F>

X Post Link: https://x.com/PIB_Panaji/status/1991438887512850647?s=20

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