



NHRC, India presents awards to the seven winners of its human rights Short Film Competition 2025

NHRC Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian says human rights films reflect India's diversity

Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi underscores cinema's role in promoting and protecting human rights

Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani says young filmmakers have the potential to become torchbearers of human rights awareness

Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal traces NHRC's Short Film Competition evolving as a major outreach initiative for promoting human rights

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The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) today organised an award ceremony at its premises in New Delhi to felicitate the seven winners of its human rights Short Film Competition 2025. Addressing the gathering, NHRC, India Chairperson, Justice V. Ramasubramanian congratulated the winners and lauded their passion for filmmaking. He highlighted the impact of audio-visual content, describing it as a powerful medium that appeals to the subconscious mind. Noting that entries were received in 24 Indian languages from across the country, he said that the diversity of films reflected the Commission's national character. NHRC Members, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi and Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal, Director General (Investigation) Smt. Anupama Nilekar Chandra and other senior officers were present.



Justice Ramasubramanian noted that since its inception in 2015, the competition has seen growing participation each year, reflecting increasing public engagement with human rights issues. He expressed optimism that the trend would continue, with more people using creative platforms to highlight social concerns.



In his remarks, NHRC Member, Justice (Dr.) Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi emphasised that all seven winning films conveyed distinct messages and underscored cinema's role in promoting and protecting human rights. He particularly praised the documentary '*The Dusk of Life*' and the short film '*Rani*' for their sensitive portrayal of marginalised lives.

NHRC Member, Smt. Vijaya Bharathi Sayani described filmmaking as a powerful tool for advocacy, saying the films challenge stereotypes, break societal barriers and inspire action. She added that young filmmakers have the potential to become torchbearers of human rights awareness.



Earlier, Secretary General, Shri Bharat Lal provided an overview of the competition's growth. He said that while 303 entries were received in 2024, the number rose to 526 in 2025, of which 438 qualified for jury evaluation through a rigorous three-stage selection process. He said that the competition has evolved as a major outreach initiative for promoting human rights.



The winners were announced by Joint Secretary, Smt. Saidingpuii Chhakchhuak. The first prize of Rs 2 lakh, along with a trophy and certificate, was awarded to the film 'Rani' by Ms. Sarika Jain. The Hindi film with subtitles in English explores class divisions and the struggles of women domestic workers.



The second prize of Rs 1.5 lakh went to *'Meanwhile She..'* by Shri Amal S., a film in Malayalam with subtitles in English, which addresses the disproportionate burdens faced by working women amid gender stereotypes and domestic violence.

The third prize of Rs 1 lakh was awarded to *'The Delivery'* by Sai Shashank Tati from Tamil Nadu. The Tamil film highlights the challenges faced by gig workers, including job insecurity and lack of social protection.

Four films received a Special Mention, each carrying a cash award of Rs 50,000: *'Malati'* by Falguni Bhakta, *'Second Chance'* by Ravi Karnwal, *'Dusk of Life'* by Damodar D. Pawar and *'Bhagyashree'* by Manoj AppasoJanwekar. These films addressed themes ranging from tribal education and prison reforms to elderly resilience and the rights of widows in rural India.



The award-winning filmmakers also shared insights into their creative process during the event. All the awarded films will be made available on the Commission's website and can be used by government bodies, academic institutions and civil society organisations to promote human rights awareness.

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