

NFDC honours the stars of Sitaare Zameen Par in celebration of Global Accessibility Awareness Day at the National Museum of Indian Cinema

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With the core vision of championing a truly inclusive cinematic ecosystem, the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) successfully hosted a deeply touching interactive panel session and exclusive screening of the sports comedy-drama *Sitaare Zameen Par* at the National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC), Mumbai on Friday (May 29, 2026). The session celebrated Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD), and threw spotlight on five of the film's phenomenal young actors. Moving away from traditional Q&A formats, the session went as a "conversation between hearts." The topic of the panel session was 'Beyond Labels : Our Dreams, Our Stories'



Organized by the Department of Masterclasses and Panel Sessions headed by Ms. Gouri Nair, the session commenced with a video honoring 50 years of NFDC's contribution to Indian cinema. Popularly introduced as the "Zitaarees from Mumbai," the young cast members included - Aroush Datta (Satbir), a brilliant actor and motivational influencer who recently delivered a powerful TEDx talk on community inclusion; Vedant Sharma (Bantu), a multi-talented practitioner of Yoga, dancer, chef, swimmer, and graduate recently recognized by the Influencer Book of World Records as a Rising Influencer, Samvit Desai (Kareem Qureshi), an award-winning open-mic host and global talent recognized for spreading vibrant positivity; Simran Mangeshkar (Golu Khan), the standout female lead of the squad, recognized by the Influencer Book of World Records as the first female differently-abled actor in mainstream Bollywood, and winner of the Best Supporting Actress award at the inaugural INCA Awards 2026; and Aayush Bhansali (Lotus), a trained Kathak and Tap dancer, music enthusiast, and animal lover who swept hearts

by winning the Best Performance in an Ensemble and the Courage in Cinema Award. A touching virtual message was also shared by Rishi Shahani, a real-life cancer survivor and Special Olympics medalist, who, despite a personal emergency, sent a heartwarming video to connect with the audience.



Shri D Ramakrishnan, GM NFDC, joined the young champions on stage for a formal felicitation. Addressing the gathering, he commended the actors for their impact on breaking barriers in mainstream entertainment. The floor was then opened to the audience for a lively dialogue with the stars about their courtside laughs, hobbies, thoughts, on-set challenges, and how they define true inclusion. Each speaker took a moment to share their personal reflections, leaving the audience inspired by their resilience and artistry. "The true takeaway from today's conversation is that we all have a role to play in driving that change for inclusion and inspiration. We need to bring change. We ourselves are the change."

As a powerful concluding note, NFDC extended its deepest gratitude to the families behind the stars. Acknowledging the unwavering love, strength, and belief of the core support teams at home, NFDC felicitated the parents of Simran, Samvit, Aroush, Vedant, and Aayush. The session was followed by an exclusive screening of Sitaare Zameen Par on Friday evening.



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