IFFI 2026 celebrates Malayalam cinema, recalls Prem Nazir's legacy and spotlights new-generation filmmakers

> Sarvam Maya, Ottanjaavalmaram and Ajayante Maranam: Oru Case Study among Malayalam films featured
>
> Basil Joseph and K. S. Chithra to participate in special festival sessions

Goa, 15 November 2026

From the enduring legacy of ‘evergreen romantic hero’ Prem Nazir to the contemporary storytelling of a new generation of filmmakers, the 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is bringing the richness and diversity of Malayalam cinema into focus in Goa.

A special attraction for Malayali cinema enthusiasts will be the centenary celebrations featuring *Thulabharam*, a film associated with legendary Malayalam actor Prem Nazir. The screening forms part of IFFI's wider celebration of the centenaries of distinguished personalities of Indian cinema, offering audiences an opportunity to revisit films and performances that have left an indelible mark on the country's cinematic history.

Contemporary Malayalam cinema finds representation through *Sarvam Maya*, directed by Akhil Sathyan and featuring Nivin Pauly, Aju Varghese, Riya Shibu and Priety Mukundan. Selected for the Indian Panorama feature-film section, the supernatural drama explores faith, love and self-discovery through the story of Prabhendu, an atheist musician who finds himself drawn into an unusual relationship with the spirit of a young woman.



The New Horizon section of Indian Panorama also features Malayalam films *Ottanjaavalmaram (A Lone Jamun Tree)*, directed by Shruthi Sharanyam, and *Ajayante Maranam: Oru Case Study*, directed by Sreehari Haridas. The festival's non-feature selection includes *Switch Off*, an 11-minute Malayalam short film directed by Sandeep Francis. Adding to the Malayalam presence, *Half*, directed by Samjad, a filmmaker from Keralam, will be screened under the Gala Premieres section. Together, these selections reflect the diversity of themes and storytelling approaches that characterise Malayalam cinema.





Malayalam film personalities will also take centre stage in the festival's special interactions and sessions. Filmmmaker and actor Basil Joseph will participate in an 'In Conversation' session titled *The Epic Genres – Mythologies, Superheroes & New Worlds*, exploring the evolving landscape of epic storytelling in cinema. Acclaimed playback singer and 'Melody Queen' K. S. Chithra will lead a retrospective session paying tribute to evergreen singing legends Asha Bhosle and S. Janaki.

The 57th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is all set to commence in Goa from 20 to 28 November 2026, under the theme “Stories without Borders”. The festival will bring together films, filmmakers and cinema enthusiasts from India and across the world on a common platform, fostering cultural exchange and celebrating the universal language of cinema.

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