

## Hyderabad Bengali Film Festival extends scope of culture exchange by introducing Telugu as guest language: 2 Telugu & 8 Bengali films

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**Hyderabad, May 29:** Hyderabad Bengali Film Festival is all set to offer a unique platform for culture exchange, in association with the Government of Telangana and the Federation of Film Societies of India, in its 4th edition between 30th June and 2nd July, 2017, at Prasad Labs (Prasad preview Theatre), Road No. 2, Banjara Hills. This year brings an all new dimension to this popular showcase of critically acclaimed Bengali cinema in the twin cities, as HBFF 2017 is introducing Telugu as its guest language to facilitate and uphold cultural exchange across states and people. Additionally, Feluda, the immortal creation of Satyajit Ray, turns fifty years young this year and HBFF is looking forward to commemorating this occasion in a big way.

Eight Bengali and two Telugu movies have been carefully handpicked for the festival, keeping quality and diversity in mind. Bengali movies to be screened include Buddhadeb Dasgupta's "Tope", Kaushik Ganguly's "Bishorjon", Suman Mukhopadhyay's "Asampto", Atanu Ghosh's "Abby Sen", Suman Ghosh's "Peace Haven" and Mainak Bhaumik's "Bibaho Diaries". Feluda will occupy pride of place with Sandip Ray's "Bombaiyer Bombete" and a documentary by Sagnik Chatterjee celebrating the illustrious journey of Ray's iconic detective.

The theme of the festival this year is culture exchange between Bengali & Telugu, Telangana to be precise, through the cinematic language. Thus 4<sup>th</sup> HBFF is going to introduce Telugu as the Guest language; and will be proudly represented by Tharun Bhascker Dhaassiyam's "Pelli Choopulu" and Rajesh Touchriver's "Naa Bangaru Talli". Both have won multiple national awards and major critical acclaim.

As always, we are extremely privileged to have several luminaries from the Bengali and Telugu film industry joining us. Our guests include such names as Buddhadeb Dasgupta, Sabyasachi Chakraborty, Swastika Mukherjee, Abir Chatterjee, Kaushik Ganguly, Alpana Chakraborty, Mainak Bhaumik, Suman Mukhopadhyay, Atanu Ghosh, Suman Ghosh, Debesh Chatterjee, Arpita Ghosh, Shatarupa Sanyal, Sekhar Das, Sunitha Krishnan, Rajesh Touchriver, Tharun Bhascker, Sohini Dasgupta and many more.

Screenings aside, the audience will be treated to Q&A sessions with actors, directors and producers after every show. A panel discussion on Bengali-Telugu cultural exchange will get a lot of valuable ideas rolling. This year, we are excited about the Federation of Film Societies in India (FFSI) partnering with HBFF to select viewers' and critics' choice award winners across six categories. These awards will be given away on July 2 in a gala award ceremony at Prasad Preview Theater.

Partha Pratim Mallik, the Director of HBFF & the General Secretary of Bengalis in Hyderabad, says: "Cinema is perhaps the most popular form of art in this era. In fact it is a multi-disciplinary art where science & commerce join hands with art. Therefore I think cinema has a important role to play in strengthening national integrity. This year we have picked up the language of cinema to strengthen the

bondage between Bengal and Telangana and are going to present Telugu films to the Bengali diaspora of the twin cities. This will bring an unique opportunity to the people of both communities to know each other in a better way, and to discover the beauty of both the communities.”

“This is much more than screening of few Bengali or Telugu films, but a tribute to Indian language films. In India every year we produce 2000 odd films and more than 80% of them are made in Indian languages, other than Hindi. But unfortunately, these films have a market share of only 35-40% of the annual revenue of Indian film industries as a whole. Which means, many of good Indian language films are not even be able to reach to the desired audiences. That’s where such boutique film festivals should pitch in and help both the audience and film makers interact with each other. HBFF is only trying its bit in that bigger goal,” Partha adds.

**Hyderabad Bengali Film Festival (HBFF, [www.hbff.in](http://www.hbff.in))** is the only curated and competitive Bengali film festival in India and the 3rd of its kind in the world after Singapore and Dubai. It was started in 2013. But within this short span of time HBFF has been well accepted among the film fraternity as well as the people in Hyderabad - Secunderabad. Every year we screen 8 unique and critically acclaimed films and host the actors and directors, arrange for seminar, meet the director sessions to introduce the audience with the flavors of film making. This year we are going to introduce **Telugu as the guest language and will screen Telugu films apart from Bengali**. Every year we invite film makers from different industries, including Telugu film industries. But this year we want to create a more prepared **platform for cultural exchange between Telugu and Bengali**.

**Bengalis in Hyderabad:** This mega event is being presented by Bengalis in Hyderabad society (popularly BiH). Apart from HBFF, the organization boasts of various activities run by its philanthropic, cultural, travel and ladies wings. No matter what one's interest is, BiH has something for everyone. Currently with more than 25000 virtual members, BiH is the largest regional language based community in South East Asia. Founded in 2006, BiH has recently completed a decade and throughout its journey, been blessed with support and help from numerous patrons.