

Mukesh Modi Launches IFFA with Grand Ribbon-Cutting by NYC Mayor Eric Adams, Indian Consul General Binaya Pradhan, Hon. Minister Ramdas Athawale, and Prasar Bharati Chairman Navneet Sehgal

New York, June 2, 2025 — The Indie Film Festival Awards (IFFA) kicked off with a grand and star-studded opening ceremony in the heart of Manhattan, celebrating the power of storytelling, global cinema, and cultural unity. The event began with an auspicious prayer by Pandit Shri Jagdish Tripathi, setting a spiritually rich and vibrant tone for the festivities.

The ceremonial ribbon-cutting was graced by some of the most distinguished dignitaries from both the United States and India:

Hon. Mayor of New York City, Eric Adams,
Indian Consul General, Amb. Binaya Pradhan,
Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment (Government of India), Shri Ramdas Athawale, and
Chairman of Prasar Bharati, Mr. Navneet Kumar Sehgal.

Their presence marked a historic moment in bridging cultures through the medium of independent cinema.

A Vision Realized by Founder Mukesh Modi

The emcee of the evening, **Piya Jyoti Kachroo**, warmly welcomed the audience and introduced **IFFA Founder Mr. Mukesh Modi**, who addressed the gathering with enthusiasm and gratitude. Speaking to the media, Mr. Modi shared that the festival received **116 film submissions from over 20 countries, with more than 50 entries officially nominated**. These nominations, selected through **public voting and a dedicated jury panel**, represent the finest in **Feature Films, Short Films, Student Films, Documentaries, and Animation**.

Mr. Modi emphasized that the nominated films would be screened at the **iconic Quad Cinema in Manhattan**, providing an exceptional platform for emerging and established filmmakers from around the globe.

Dignitary Remarks and Recognition

Mayor Eric Adams delivered a heartfelt remark commending Mukesh Modi for bringing such a meaningful international festival to New York City, reinforcing the city's status as a global hub for culture and the arts.

Minister **Ramdas Athawale** lauded the initiative as a remarkable cultural exchange and praised Modi for championing Indian talent on an international stage.

Consul General **Amb. Binaya S. Pradhan** expressed pride that **8 films from India** were among the selections and appreciated the festival's effort in showcasing the diversity of Indian cinema to a global audience.

Mr. Navneet Sehgal, Chairman of Prasar Bharati, extended his appreciation to IFFA for giving him the platform to announce the **launch of the Waves OTT platform**. He encouraged filmmakers to submit their content to the platform, which operates on a **revenue-sharing model**, offering creators new opportunities for global distribution.

Community Support and Opening Films

Prominent figures in the Indian-American and media communities also lent their support and remarks, including **Dr. Dipak Nandi**, **Padma Shri Dr. Sudhir Parikh**, **Mr. Sunil Hali**, and **Dr. Raj Bhayani**. Their presence underscored the festival's strong cultural and philanthropic foundation.

The opening night was attended by over **125 esteemed guests**, including filmmakers, media professionals, diplomats, and community leaders. Guests enjoyed curated drinks and refreshments, creating a welcoming and celebratory ambiance.

Premiere Screenings Begin

The festival officially began with the **opening film "TORN"**, a powerful drama starring **Alfonso Freeman** and **Jordan Alexander**, directed by **Ryen Willam Thomas** and produced by **D Star Entertainment** in association with **Ashwin Films**. The evening continued with the screening of **"Sapne Jinke Ho Gaye Apne"** and a variety of other nominated films.

Gratitude and Acknowledgements

Mukesh Modi concluded the evening by expressing heartfelt thanks to all **sponsors, media partners, volunteers, friends, and family members** whose tireless support made the festival possible.

About IFFA

The **Indie Film Festival Awards (IFFA)** is a global platform that celebrates the creative voices of independent filmmakers from around the world. With a focus on diversity, innovation, and storytelling, IFFA aims to connect cultures and promote cinematic excellence.

For media inquiries, interviews, or passes, please contact:

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