

PRESS RELEASE

Speech delivered by **Selvi J Jayalalithaa, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu** at the valedictory of the Indian Cinema Centenary Celebrations held at Chennai on 24.9.2013.

"I am extremely delighted to be here this evening at this grand event. This is a moment of pristine pride for us as we celebrate a 100 glorious years of existence of Indian Cinema and I deem it a privilege to host this event, as the film industry moves on, towards its next centenary. The enchantment and spell of **CINEMA** is undisputed. Through the years, Cinema in India has charted its own course, created history, and touched milestones.

The global community is aware of and accepts the influence and impact of Cinema on Society. Films have a powerful ubiquity within human culture, and have become an indispensable vehicle for culture, education, leisure and propaganda.

Cinema has become the most powerful Mass Medium since the day it was introduced to the world. The Lumiere Brothers who invented the 'Cinematograph' declared that the cinema is an invention without a future. But they have been proved wrong and here we are, celebrating the centenary of the Indian celluloid and looking forward to a promising future. It is indeed amazing to witness the overpowering influence of Cinema which has catapulted it to its current stature with such powerful attributes. To Indians, Cinema is a bond that opens the world that is similar to their own implicitly, but different explicitly.

Indian Cinema has an identity that is very unique. Despite all its peculiarities, Indian Cinema has been a reflection of the socio-economic, political and cultural changes that took place in the Country. The phenomenon of using music as an inescapable, magnetic, charming draw is unique to Indian Cinema. The Indian film industry witnessed the era of the silent cinema with a number of movies produced by filmmakers in Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai. By 1920, film making transformed into a regular industry and the number of films produced increased to 207 in 1931. It was at this time that commercial cinema started gaining popularity among the masses, cutting across economic divides. After the success of the film 'Raja Harishchandra', several filmmakers in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras began making silent films. By the mid 1920s, Chennai became the epicentre for all film related activities. The 1930's saw sweeping technical and stylistic changes and it was also a decade of social protests. Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were the fountainheads of cinema. The 1940s and 50s saw a vibrancy imbued in song and dance, and playback singing became embedded as a permanent factor in Indian movies. Between 1970 to 1990, these two decades witnessed an unprecedented rise in Commercial Cinema. Along with an array of successful regional block-busters, many exemplary movie makers gifted several classics to Indian movie goers. Indian cinema swayed not only this Country but also influenced world cinema. It is believed that V.Shantharam's 'Do Aankhen Barah Haath' in 1957 inspired the Hollywood movie 'The Dirty Dozen' that was released in 1967, and Bimal Roy's 'Madhumathi' in 1958 popularized the theme of reincarnation in the West.

Life in India would not be the same without the exuberance of cinema, song and dance, melodrama, relevant messages – Indian films have it all, be it

episodes from the freedom struggle or present day issues. Of the countless individuals associated with cinema, some are eternally identifiable. Their image and hallmark style are inimitable and the list of such treasures of the Indian Film Industry is infinite. The contributions of film makers, music composers, writers, directors, cinematographers, musicians, playback singers, allied workers, technicians, choreographers, actresses and actors of Indian cinema are etched in the annals of its history.

The Indian film industry made rapid strides in the South, where Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada films were taking South India by storm. Tamil Nadu prides itself in gifting to Indian cinema the first female director, honoured with the title 'Cinema Rani' T.P.Rajalakshmi. On my directions, her birth centenary was celebrated as a Government function recently, to honour the pioneer.

The 1950's and 60's gave a great impetus to the Indian film industry and this period is rightly termed the 'Golden Age' of Indian cinema. This decade witnessed the emergence of one of the most memorable actors of all time – 'Makkal Thilagam' 'Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R', who strode the Tamil film world like a colossus and whose charisma is imprinted indelibly in the hearts of the people of the State.

The Government of Tamil Nadu has firmly stood behind the Tamil film industry offering encouragement and guidance. Whenever I have assumed power as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, I have ensured that the Tamil film industry is given all necessary support and impetus.

Without an audience, there can be no cinema! This sounds so simple, and yet it is so true. Over the 100 years of Indian Cinema, the anonymous moviegoer has been giving the film world his or her patronage, encouragement, support and goodwill. But for the moviegoer, the film industry would cease to exist. It is therefore necessary and imperative that every person associated with the film industry bears in mind and heart that this anonymous but discerning individual - the moviegoer, is the supreme and ultimate judge of them all.

Today, I exhort all those in the film industry - as you reflect on the past and look with hope to the future, you should dream a dream. The dream of a cinema that entertains, that engages, and that endures - a cinema that leaves its imprint as much on our hearts and our conscience as on our minds; an imprint that lasts long after the lights come on - for a lifetime. Cinema is a dream - and a reality that, one hundred years on, is as powerful and as valuable as it has ever been. Your duty is to keep it that way.

I wish the Indian Cinema many more centenaries.

Thank you."

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