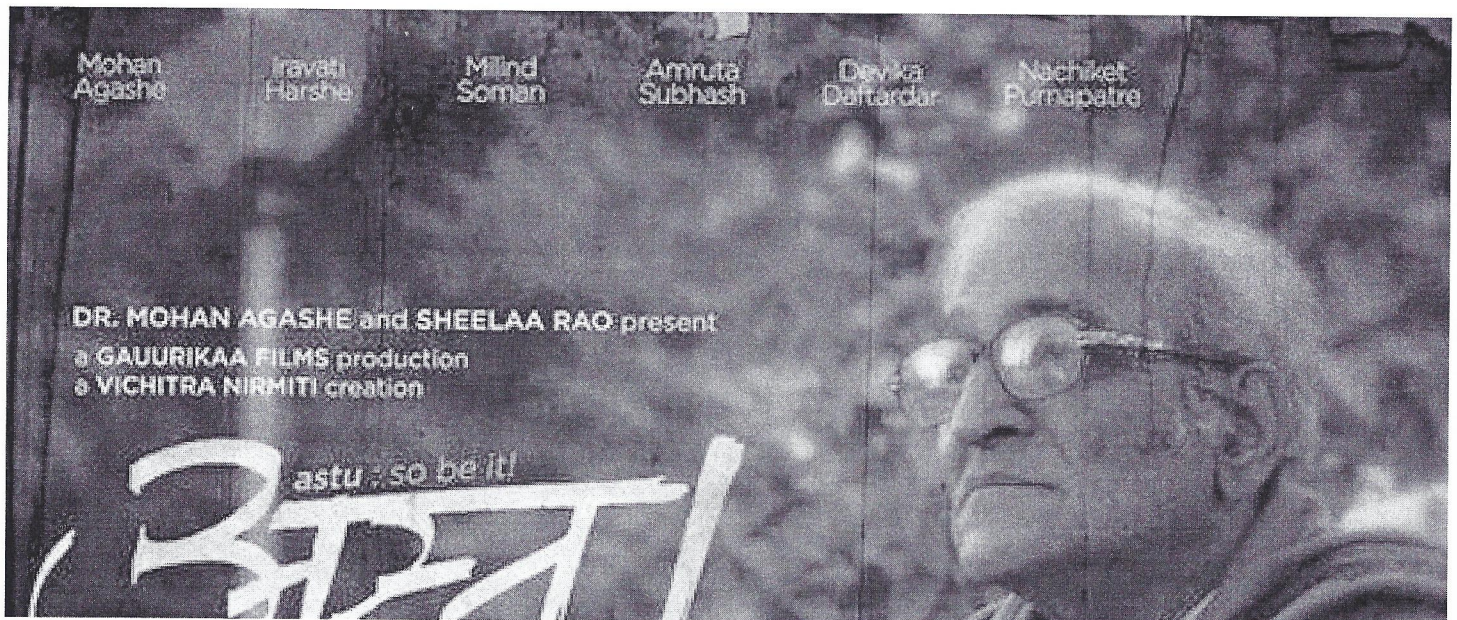


New Delhi hosts a unique film festival to create awareness about healthy ageing

Film Festival for Generations: Reimagining Ageing is being held at the India International Centre, New Delhi from 24-26 September.

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SUKHPREET KAHLON

Film Festival for Generations: Reimagining Ageing is a unique film festival, aimed at promoting the idea of healthy and active ageing and improving the quality of life for older people. By creating a cultural event around the idea of ageing, the festival is aimed at making a space for an exchange of ideas between the generations, so as to learn from each other.

The European Festival of Generations, organised by the Institute of Gerontology, Heidelberg University, is in its ninth year and has become the largest film festival in Europe focusing on the

elderly with countries like Portugal, Great Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands joining in.

Speaking at a press conference on the inaugural day, world renowned gerontologist, professor Andreas Kruse spoke about the key motivation for the festival being the desire to give an impetus to inter-generational exchange. Talking about the way in which the film festival became a part of creating awareness, he spoke about the importance of not just viewing films but also discussing them so as to engage with some of the concerns raised.

He also described his deep admiration for India saying, "I think we can learn a lot from India," stressing that a highly differentiated cultural background was crucial to understand older people's problems as well as potentials.

TP Madhukumar, deputy secretary (ageing), ministry of social justice and empowerment, spoke about the ministry's involvement and interest in the festival, focusing on cinema's role. "Film is a unique media which has profound effect on the psyche of viewers," he said, adding that films had tremendous potential in forming or destroying values and thus were a powerful way of relaying awareness.

Venkatesh Shrinivasan, assistant representative, UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) shared some data about the increasing number of ageing populations in India and described the ways in which several initiatives — a mix of the technical and the social had been introduced. Focusing on the Film Festival for Generations, he said, "Film as a media is a way to generate discussion, so we can prepare ourselves for the future."

Head of Science Section at the German Embassy, New Delhi, Stephan Lanzinger observed, "Each of us is affected by ageing at a personal level" and drew attention to the challenges associated with an ageing population, while emphasizing the need for technological and social innovations to come together.

Prof. Kruse shared his happiness at the active involvement of the embassy in the project and wrapped up the session by highlighting the bond between India and Germany, a bond that enables one to share insight, results, knowledge with other countries. He also spoke about the similarities in the vulnerability of old age and the necessity of the strong participation of older people, saying that it was important, "Not to neglect vulnerability but to make a strong contribution of older people in society."

The festival screened a package of films from Germany and India including David Sieveking's Vergiss Mein Nicht (Forget Me Not, 2012), the recipient of the Critics Week Award, Locarno International Film; multi award winning film Mukti Bhawan by Shubhashish Bhutiani, and Sumitra Bhave and Sunil Sukthankar's film Astu! [2013], amongst others.

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MUKTI BHAWAN



ASTU!

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