

**Press Information Bureau
Government of India
Ministry of Information & Broadcasting**

05-September-2016 19:00 IST

South African Delegates Discuss the Essence and Challenges of South African Cinema at the BRICS Film Festival

The delegates from South Africa participating in the 1st BRICS Film Festival have expressed the hope that very soon member countries will co-produce films on various interesting topics and enhance bilateral relations. Interacting with the media here today, the delegation said that the talks at the highest level of Governments are progressing well and will soon give final shape to joint cooperation in the field of cinema.

The cast and crew from the competing movies of South Africa in the festival shared their stories, ideas and experiences. Present at the conference were Mr. Sallas de Jager, Director of 'Free State', Mandla Dube, Director along with Lerato Louise Montoedi, Associate Producer of 'Kalushi: The Story of Solomon Mahlangu'. Also accompanying them were Thapelo Mokoena, Actor, 'Mrs. Right Guy' and Paul Egan, Producer of 'Tess'.

Mr. Sallas de Jager said that 'Free State' was shot two years ago and involved people from South Africa and India. It was a privilege for him to write the story, portraying the essence of a forbidden love story. The film represents the relation between parents and children. He noted that working with the Indian crew, including Producer and Editor, was a great learning experience.

'Free State' showcases the story of Jeanette, who is a beautiful open minded law student. During her summer holiday with her father in the Free State, a random act of kindness by an attractive Indian man sparks an unexpected love affair. Secret meetings follow, since it was against the law at the time to have an interracial relationship. As the film progresses, their secret comes out and all hell breaks loose.

Mr. Mandla Dube, reminisced that 'Kalushi' was shot eight years back. It has been screened at various film festivals including Cannes, and loved by the people of Edinburgh, South Africa, Zanzibar and London.

Ms. Lerato Louise added that the idea of making this movie came from a stage play. The movie portrays the story of a young liberator who fought for the country. The story of Solomon relates to the connection of South Africa and India, as the lawyer of Kalushi was an Indian. The film shows the story of Solomon Mahlangu, who is a Mamelodi township schoolboy-hawker. After the events of June 16th joins the military wing of the ANC to fight against the brutal oppression of the Apartheid regime and ends up becoming an icon of South Africa's liberation.

Mr. Thapelo Mokoena said that story of 'Mrs. Right Guy' revolves around a woman. It is one of the only three romantic comedy movies produced by the black community. He added that the film is more than just a struggle story of the past. 'Mrs. Right Guy' is the story of Gugu, a women who rejects love before it can get too close to rock her from a self-imposed exile from love. But, to find bliss with the right guy she must first realize that no man is created equal, and that in love nice guys have staying power.

Mr. Paul Egan, said that the shooting of 'Tess' completed in June 2016 and the audience outside South Africa will witness it for the first time at the BRICS Film Festival. The quality and precision of movies from the other countries screened at BRICS are extremely inspiring and we are learning quite a lot from them, he added.

The conference concluded with hopes of enhancing the cinematic exposure of the BRICS nations with each other.

NCJ/VM