

IIFTC 2026: THE GLOBAL CONFLUENCE OF FILMS AND LOCATIONS



Launch of CinePort Magazine - June 2026 Issue



Mumbai, the city of dreams, once again took centre stage as the global hub for film tourism with the 12th edition of the India International Film Tourism Conclave (IIFTC). Held from 10th to 12th March 2026 at The Westin Garden City, the conclave unfolded with remarkable scale, energy, and international impact.

This year's edition brought together 53 organisations from 21 countries, including Papua New Guinea, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Austria, Kenya, Thailand, and Russia - engaging with 122 companies from Bollywood and regional film industries. The sheer scale and diversity of participation underscored a growing commitment to seamless cross-border collaboration and global production partnerships.

Vijay Krishna Acharya (Victor)

OPENING RED CARPET GALA AND IIFTC TOURISM IMPACT AWARDS

The 8th edition of the IIFTC Tourism Impact Awards celebrated films that have powerfully promoted destinations through storytelling. The red carpet sparkled with stars from Indian cinema and television, alongside international delegates, acclaimed directors, producers, and global influencers. Adding diplomatic flair to the evening, the Consul Generals of Finland and Belarus were among the distinguished guests gracing the maximum city.

A key highlight of the night was the presentation of two Special Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Indian Cinema. proud recipients were Vijay Krishna Acharya (Victor), the visionary director behind the Dhoom franchise, and Khushboo Sundar, a celebrated actress and producer known for her enduring impact both on and off screen.

This year also marked the introduction of the Global Co-production Award, recognising the growing momentum of international collaborations. The inaugural honour was presented to acclaimed director Dr. Biju for "Papa Buka", the first-ever co-production between India and Papua New Guinea.

Other notable winners included Citadel: Honey Bunny (OTT - Hindi), Game Changer (Telugu), The Greatest of All Time (Tamil), Vande Bharat via USA (Gujarati), Hardik Shubhechha (Marathi), Nesippaya (Tamil), Sanju Weds Geetha 2 (Kannada), Ruslaan (Hindi), Rabindra Kabya Rahashya (Bengali), Indian 2 (Tamil), Karam (Malayalam), Viswam (Telugu), and War 2 (Hindi).



Resul Pookutty with Papua New Guinea Delegation

IIFTC CELEBRATES 12 YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL LOCATIONS SHOW



Khushboo Sundar

CINEPORT COVER UNVEILED

The evening wrapped on a high note with the unveiling of the latest edition of CinePort magazine. Filmmaker Vijay Krishna Acharya and veteran actress Khushboo Sundar led the honours, joined on stage by Vinayak Chamadia (IAS), Nandish Sandhu, Pushkar Jog, and Bhuvan Lall. They were joined by international delegates Mikael Svensson, Truls Kontny, and Martino Castellani, alongside Anindya Dasgupta, Convenor, and Harshad Bhagwat, Founder & Director of the IIFTC Conclave - marking a fitting finale to the day's proceedings.

THE LOCATIONS MARKET & TECH PAVILION

Day two and three of the event (11th & 12th) were abuzz with activity, as exhibitors and business delegates from film commissions, production service companies, and technology firms engaged in a series of one-on-one meetings with leading producers and directors from Mumbai and the southern states. These interactions created valuable opportunities to explore potential collaborations and partnerships.

Carrying on the day, representatives from Indian states including Goa, Maharashtra, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and Arunachal Pradesh actively promoted their diverse filming locations. The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting also participated, represented by the official media partner, Waves OTT.

In its second consecutive year, alongside The Locations Market, the IIFTC Conclave also organised the Tech Pavilion - a dynamic showcase of cutting-edge advancements in post-production, CGI, virtual production, and AI-driven location scouting. The pavilion continued to captivate industry delegates, drawing keen interest from professionals eager to explore emerging technologies and innovations shaping the future of filmmaking.

KNOWLEDGE SERIES: POWERED BY IIFTC

Over two dynamic days, the IIFTC Knowledge Series convened leading industry voices to explore evolving trends in film tourism, global production incentives, and emerging technologies shaping the future of cinema.

Day one opened with "All India Round Table - The Producer's Voice", a session aimed at bridging the gap between Indian regional production and global incentives. Moderated by international line producer Jaiprakash Rengarajan, the discussion featured key regional players including Harshit Reddy of Dil Raju Productions, Himanshu Dhanuka of Eskay Movies, and Jomon Jacob of Mankind Cinemas, alongside Jim Shamoon of Blue Sky Films, whose team recently worked on S. S. Rajamouli's upcoming epic Varanasi in Kenya.

The momentum continued with "Tech Talk: Powering the Future of Filmmaking", spotlighting technological advancements transforming production and post-production workflows. Presentations by Nishanthan Niruthan (Cinematron), Faruk Patel (Vault.rent), and Yusuf Shaikh (Janta Cinema) explored innovations reshaping both the craft and business of cinema.

Carrying forward its tradition of insightful discourse, IIFTC once again brought together some of the most seasoned voices in the industry to unpack the wave of mergers and acquisitions reshaping the M&E landscape. The session, Bigger, Bolder, Integrated: India's M&E Transformation Era, featured an impressive panel including Vivek Krishnani (Movieverse Studios), Sunir Khetarpal (Athena E&M), Gayathiri Guliani (Kleos Entertainment Group), and Jamshed Mistry (International Legal Alliance), with Dr. Bhuvan Lall - celebrated author, filmmaker, and entrepreneur - steering the conversation with authority.

Up next was a deep dive into a once-in-a-generation cinematic phenomenon that rewrote the rules of success. Titled Dhurandhar - Anatomy of a Monster Hit, the session brought together key behind-the-scenes contributors Kulthep Narula (Benetone Films, Thailand) and Anand Bhanushali (philmCGI), alongside trade experts Girish Johar (Zee Studios) and Yusuf Shaikh (Janta Cinema). Moderated by international producer and former EUFCN President Truls Kontny, the discussion decoded the frenzy - translating box office hysteria into sharp, measurable insights.

The first day of the Knowledge Series concluded with a fireside chat featuring industry titan Shibasish Sarkar, Group CEO of Reliance Entertainment and President of the Producers Guild of India. Moderated by Mikael Svensson, Head of Southern Sweden Film Commission and an India expert, the session explored a range of topics under the title "Scale, Stream, Survive: The New Economics of Entertainment in India".

The second day began with a Country Showcase presentation by Noelene Taula Wunum, representing the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture of Papua New Guinea. This was followed by a City Showcase session, on Filming in Moscow, presented by Georgy Prokopov, CEO, and Larisa Magkaeva, Head of International Cooperation at Moskino (Moscow Department of Culture).

The next panel discussion, titled "Cinematic India - Location, Incentives and Infrastructure," highlighted key Indian filming destinations. It featured Andaman & Nicobar, represented by Vinayak Chamadia, IAS (Director - Tourism), and Goa, represented by Mrunal Niket Walke, General Manager of the Entertainment Society of Goa. The session was moderated by Yusuf Shaikh of Janta Cinema.

The final panel discussion of the day metaphorically took the audience "Around the World in 30 Minutes".

Moderated by independent media and entertainment consultant Mansi Darbar, the session brought together leading film commissioners from five countries. Panelists included Fanny Heinonen from Film Tampere, Finland, Mikael Svensson from Southern Sweden Film Commission, Philippa Mossman from the New Zealand Film Commission, Rahul Chongtham from the Embassy of Iceland, and Tenzin Gyeltshen from the National Film Commission of Bhutan.

The next session featured an engaging fireside chat, "Building Blockbusters: A Conversation with Aashish Singh", Producer - Red Chillies Entertainment, who has been instrumental in shaping some of contemporary Indian cinema's biggest successes. The conversation was moderated by Larisa Magkaeva from Moskino.

The penultimate session turned the spotlight on Italy with the vibrant showcase "Lights, Camera, Italia", highlighting its rich cinematic legacy and enduring appeal as a global filmmaking destination. A presentation by Martino Castellani of the Italian Trade Agency outlined the country's advantages, while Jacky Bhagnani added star power with a special address. The session concluded with the IIFTC Emerging Global Talent award presented to Anuparna Roy, felicitated for winning Best Director in the Orizzonti section at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival for her debut feature film "Songs of Forgotten Trees".

The grand finale of the 2026 IIFTC Knowledge Series was the fireside chat "The Art of Storytelling" by inimitable Imtiaz Ali, celebrated for his deeply human and emotionally resonant storytelling. In conversation with Dr. Bhuvan Lall, he shared candid insights into his creative journey, inspirations, and perspective on filmmaking in an evolving global landscape, leaving a strong impression on the audience.



Mukesh Rishi, Subhash Ghai, Mathieu Bejot & Dr. Bhuvan lall



Imtiaz Ali



Prithul Kumar, Jt. Sec. MIB



Kabir Bedi

THE VERDICT: A LEGACY CEMENTED

As the conclave drew to a close, a celebratory "12-Year Anniversary" cocktail evening - sponsored by the country in focus, Papua New Guinea - set the stage for a memorable finale. The night marked a significant literary milestone as Subhash Ghai and veteran actor Kabir Bedi came together to unveil Namaste Cannes: India's 75-Year Journey, authored by Bhuvan Lall. Attended by actors Kashmera Shah and Mukesh Rishi, the launch served as a powerful reminder of India's enduring global cinematic footprint.

As India's content industry continues its rapid ascent in the second quarter of the century, the relevance of a platform like IIFTC has never been greater. From the Founder, Harshad Bhagwat's visionary leadership to the expertise of global film commissions and creators, IIFTC 2026 closed on a clear and collective note - this is more than an event; it is a thriving ecosystem.

CELEBRATING THE BEST OF FILMS AND TOURISM AT THE 8TH ANNUAL IIFTC TOURISM IMPACT AWARDS

IIFTC Tourism Impact Award for Cinematic Excellence

01. **Citadel: Honey Bunny** (Web Series - Hindi) by D2R Films | Received by Krishna DK, Director | Presented by Kulthep Narula, COO, Benetone Film, Thailand

02. **Game Changer** (Telugu) by Dil Raju productions | Received By Harshith Reddy, Producer | Presented By Philippa Mossman, Head of International Marketing, New Zealand Film Commission

03. **Vande Bharat via USA** (Gujarati) by Ward Wizard Entertainment | Received by Kalpan Contractor | Presented by Jim Shamoon, MD, Blue Sky Films, Africa & Adriatic

04. **Hardik Shubhechha** (Marathi) by Anand Pandit Motion Pictures & Goosebumps Entertainment | Received by Pushkar Jog, Actor, Director, Producer | Presented by Mikael Svensson, Head South Sweden Film Commission

05. **Nesippaya** (Tamil) by XB Film Creators | Received by Sneha Britto, Producer | Presented by Mikael Svensson, Head South Sweden Film Commission and Actress Kanika Gautam

06. **Sanju Weds Geetha 2** (Kannada) by Pavithra International Movie Makers | Received by Nagasekhar, Director and Chalavadi Kumar, Producer | Presented by Anu Florisse Shanker, MD, HQ7 Studios, Austria & David Knapp, CEO, AV Professionals, Austria

07. **Ruslaan** (Hindi) by Sri Sathya Sai Arts | Received by Radhamohan Kesanapalli, Producer | Presented by Aliaksandr Matsukou, Consul General of Belarus

08. **Rabindra Kabya Rahashya** (Bengali) by Eskay Movies | Received by Himanshu Dhanuka, Producer | Presented by Fanny Heinonen, Program Director, Film Tampere (Finland)

09. **Indian 2** (Tamil) by Lyca Productions | Received by Srihari Manoharan, Producer | Presented by Fanny Heinonen, Program Director, Film Tampere (Finland) and Actor Nandish Sandhu

10. **Karam** (Malayalam) by Merryland Cinemas | Received by Vishak Subramanian, Producer | Presented by Jani Joenniemi, Founder & Program Director, Europe Asia Roundtable Session, Finland and Actress Rupali Suri

11. **Viswam** (Telugu) by Chitralayam Studios & People Media Factory | Received by Venu Donepudi, Co-producer and Nishith Verma, Vice President | Presented by Martino Castellani, Director, Italian Trade Agency

12. **The Greatest of All Time** (Tamil) by AGS Entertainment | Received by Jaiprakash (JP), CEO, All Around Globe | Presented by Georgy Prokopov, CEO, Moskino, Russia

IIFTC Special Award Emerging Global Talent

13. **Anuparna Roy** | Received by Anuparna Roy (The winner of the best director in the Orizzonti (Horizons) Section at the 82nd Venice International Film Festival in 2025) | Presented by Martino Castellani, Italian Trade Commission and Actor, Producer, Jackky Bhagnani

IIFTC Tourism Impact Award for international Co-production

14. **Papa Buka** (Tok Pisin, English) by Nafa Productions, Akshay Parija Productions, Neelam Productions, and Silicon Media | Received by Dr. Biju, Director, Noelene Taula Wunum, Producer and Prakash Bare, Producer | Presented by Vinayak Chamadia, IAS, Director Tourism Andaman Nicobar

IIFTC Special Awards for Outstanding Contribution

15. **Vijay Krishna Acharya** (Victor) | Received by Vijay Krishna Acharya | Presented by Truls Kontny, International Producer and former President of EUFCN and Nordic Film Commission

16. **Kushboo Sundar** | Received by Kushboo Sundar | Presented by Truls Kontny, International Producer and former President of EUFCN and Nordic Film Commission

