

# AROUND THE WORLD

# IN 30 MINUTES



A knowledge session that is becoming much anticipated at IIFTC Conclave where we travelled to 6 countries and 3 continents in 30 minutes. IIFTC deep dived into the fascinating and chaotic world of Line Producers, the back bone of any production. Our moderator, an acclaimed producer himself, Aashish Singh spoke with six leading Line Producers from six countries to get their insights on how they can assist Indian filmmakers in planning and executing foreign shoots.

**Moderator : Aashish Singh, Producer - Red Chillies**

Known for: Ponnin Selvan:2 (2023), Ponnin Selvan: 1 (2022), Tiger Zinda Hai (2017), Sultan (2016), Dhoom 3 (2013), Ek Tha Tiger (2012), Jab Tak Hai Jaan (2012), Band Baaja Baarat (2010), Chak de India (2007), Dhoom 2 (2006)

**Aashish Singh :** Magdi, you represent some very exotic countries like Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, where Hollywood has shot a lot with desert being a common factor. If an Indian producer reaches out to you to shoot in a desert, which one will you recommend and why?

**Magdi Omar - Producer, Bedouin Films (Morocco / Jordan / Egypt) :** So deserts are not all the same. There are dunes, rocky deserts, white deserts. So we usually ask for references of what the director has in mind. We also suggest depending on different variables such as what is logistically easier or how many days are required for the production or how far they want to be from the desert etc.

**Aashish Singh :** Also can you tell us a little more about Egypt, beyond the Great Pyramids?

**Magdi Omar :** Egypt is more than just the pyramids. Egypt is on the Mediterranean as well as the Red sea. There is Nubia in the south which is like African Egypt. There is Cairo, which is Islamic Egypt. So it's very diverse. The Government created the film commission a couple of years ago as a one stop shop for everything you need. Now, the process for approval takes a week as you go to only one entity.

**Aashish Singh :** Hi Nobert, Canary Islands is one of the most beautiful spots in the world. 'Fast & Furious' and a lot of Hollywood movies have been shot over there. I believe, very small islands but really film friendly right?

**Norbert Schilling - Producer, Film Canary Islands (Spain / Morocco) :** I learnt today, that some of our colleagues don't know where the Canary Islands are, so we form a fantastic tax rebate triangle with

Morocco and Southern Spain. Tenerife is the biggest of the Canary Islands, which I can compare Mauritius in terms of its size about 2000 sq. km. with one million habitants and a rich history of filmmaking from the fifties.

**Aashish Singh :** JP, we know that you have done a lot of work in Italy and Switzerland which is expensive. So I can understand a film like 'War' going to Italy and Switzerland but how do you manage the different industries like Tamil, Telugu or a small Kannada or Bengali film which may not have the budget? Also how do you manage the cultures of these different industries from India in Italy and Switzerland?

**JP Rengarajan (JP) - CEO, All Around Globe (Italy / Switzerland) :** Everybody has a dream to achieve but our requirement has to be based on the money available. We have done projects with eighteen people crew

and also with hundred and eighty people crew. So you have to tell your producer or the director what can be achieved and what is not possible. Don't feel shy about it.

You also have to adapt to the requirements of the project. For e.g. In Switzerland you pay three times more for drivers, so I bring in my drivers from Italy or Portugal. Most importantly irrespective of the budget, one must put in an effort to save, as they say 'money saved is money earned'.

**Aashish Singh :** Emin, Azerbaijan is a destination which Indians didn't know much about till about four five years and it doesn't have a rebate. So my question to you is that without a rebate how you have been able to shoot more than forty Indian films?

**Emin Guliyev - Producer, Film Bridge Azerbaijan (Azerbaijan) :** Forty One! (Chuckles) Azerbaijan is a fresh upcoming film location for the Indians and the prices are very comfortable.

**Aashish Singh :** Forty one ! Fantastic ! Can you share a little bit about your last experience, the big Tamil film you shot with Lyca Productions?

**Emin Guliyev :** Our last project was with the Tamil superstar, Ajit Kumar and they shot in Azerbaijan for ninety seven days without rebate for a good cost. That's possible because our culture ministry also is very interested to bring

more projects to Azerbaijan and they are helping all the producers who are working with the foreigners.

**Aashish Singh :** Wanda, Slovakia, again wonderful country but Indians probably don't know much about it but it's coming in the radar of the producers. What is very exciting and which I learnt very recently is that there is a rebate on above the line and below the line costs in this country and that is a huge saving for the producer. Can you elaborate a little bit more?

**Wanda Adamik Hrycova - Producer, Wandal Productions (Slovakia) :** Yes, Slovakia is becoming very popular for shooting. We have Americans, Netflix, Amazon, the Nordic televisions shooting there and the reason is the cash rebate. It's very easy without a complicated approval process. In order to register you only need synopsis and the budget number. The application process is very easy and the only condition is the minimal spent which is 100,000 euros for film and 300,000 euros for the TV series. Also for a longer project, you can claim rebate number of times during the whole process.

**Aashish Singh :** Yeah, it sounds great. What any producer really wants is to shoot in a country that's not expensive but still has beautiful locations and at the same time save money.

**Wanda Adamik Hrycova :** Yes we are

part of East Europe so our labour is about 40% cheaper compared to Western Europe. Another unique thing about Slovakia is that our capital Bratislava is just sixty kilometres from Vienna airport which has connections all over the world. Bratislava is very easily reachable to Prague, as well as Budapest, within three hours' drive. So basically with a crew based in Slovakia, accessing Slovakia cash rebate, you can even manage one day or two day shoots in Prague, Vienna or Budapest.

**Aashish Singh :** Esen, Kyrgyzstan is a beautiful place. I have not been to your country but I remember seeing it in 'Torbaaz' on Netflix and the locations were stunning and not very expensive. Kyrgyzstan has also been cheated for Afghanistan many times. Can you talk about it a little?

**Esen Rysbekov - Co-founder, Central Asian Films (Kyrgyzstan) :** Let me tell about Kyrgyzstan. We are Asian looking, Russian speaking, Muslim country where mountains are like my hat (shows off his hat to the audience). Many times, our country is used as Afghanistan but we also have many lakes, the Soviet era buildings, old factories etc. but we also have new high buildings. Kyrgyzstan is a very multi-cultural country where we have the Afghan community, we have Russians, we have Chinese and we have so many Indian students. Also in terms of equipment and crew we can give a better price than even India.