

THE DAWN LIT POST

RGU set for Borderland Narratives from March 23

Festival to host 16 filmmakers from the region



RONO HILLS, Mar 20: The Rajiv Gandhi University (RGU) is all set to host, “Borderland Narratives: A Festival of Films from Contemporary Northeast India” from March 23 to 25 next. The festival, which has been conceived with a view to create a platform for filmmakers, academics, activists, and youth from the region to explore issues of heritage, identity, and change from a contemporary perspective will feature 19 films from all the states in the region. It will also host 16 of the filmmakers who will have extended interactions with the audience. The festival is hinged around the central idea that in recent times, there has been a move towards changing the ways of representation of the northeast as not just a repository of traditional heritage. Increasingly, filmmakers and artists are beginning to explore the contemporary face of the communities in the region and we see, in emerging films, the ‘traditional practices’ and ‘ritual performances’ give way to newer ways of looking at society itself, with its emerging realities. Festival Director, Prof S Simon John of the AITS, while releasing the list of the film being screened, said that with so many eminent filmmakers from the region attending the festival, the audience will truly get a taste of cutting edge cinema of the region. “It’s not just viewing the films, but the discussions and interactions that will follow which are important to us at the Festival. The scholars, particularly from the social sciences, will experience how the visual medium is also a key component of how society and culture is being represented,” he said. Films being invited for the festival include multiple-award winning feature films Haobam Paban Kumar’s Loktak Lairembi (Manipur), Sanjib Dey’s Ill

Smoking Barrels (Assam), Dominic Sangma's Ma.Ama (Meghalaya), Karma Takapa's Ralang Road and Dawa Lepcha's Dhokbu (Sikkim), KC Zoherliana's Sulhnu (Mizoram), Tiakimzuk Aier's Nana (Nagaland), Sunil's Kalai's Kwthom Kothoma (Tripura) and Nyago Ete's Orunasol Man and Raja Tok Camdir's Aisa Kyun from Arunachal. The festival also has a lineup of award-winning documentaries and short films that include Chori by Tribeni Rai (Sikkim), Because We Did Not Choose by Wangphran Diengdoh (Meghalaya), Bloody Phanek by Sonia Nephram (Manipur), Songs of the Blue Hills by film-critic and filmmaker Utpal Borpujari, Where We Bled For Our Land by Napoleon RZ Thanga (Mizoram), Haja by Emang Debbarma (Tripura), Songs of the Mist by Kivini Shohe (Nagaland). The Mighty Brahmaputra by Bappa Roy for IGNCA and Those Songs and Lullabies I used To Sing by Kombong Darang for CFEL, RGU will also be screened. Another key feature of the festival is the In-Competition segment called Our Lives, Our Stories for short films of up to 5 minutes. The theme for the competition this year is Vanishing Roots: Art, Culture and Folklore and 6 films have been shortlisted for screening at the festival. The other events at the festival include a workshop on 'Film Research in Archives and the Community' to be conducted by Wangphran Deingdoh, the director of the invited film Because We Did Not Choose. The invited filmmakers will also participate in a panel discussion on Films and The Idea of The New North East. "The thought behind the festival is not just to bring the films to audiences in our state, but also to explore how there are other ways to look at traditional communities," shared Festival Director Moji Riba. Borderland Narratives is really an exploration of that new space where the communities of the region are emerging from the 'museumization' of our cultures to its contemporizing, he added. The festival is being organized under the stewardship of RGU vice-chancellor Prof Saket Kushwaha, and fronted by the Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies of the RGU in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, North East Regional Centre (Guwahati) whose regional director Dr Richa Negi will participate in the festival. The Centre for Endangered Languages (RGU), Department of Mass Communication (RGU), Mishmi Takin Adventure Gears and the Centre for Cultural Research and Documentation (CCRD) are the Festival partners.

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