

Address of Ambassador Guðni Bragason at the Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentaries and Animation on 1st June 2022.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is indeed an important moment for us at the Embassy of Iceland in Delhi to be a part of the 17th Mumbai International Film Festival for Documentary, Short and Animation Films which is organized by the Films Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

I like to thank all those who have assisted in this endeavour, specially the curator, Ms. Dhvani Desai, for designing the Iceland movie package and for generously supporting the presentation of four Icelandic animation movies; „Kitchen by Measure“ by Atli Arnarson and Sólrún Ylfa Ingimarsdóttir, „Pride of Strathmoor“ by Einar Baldvin, „Anna and the Moods“ by Gunnar Karlsson and „Yes People“ by Gísli Darri Halldórsson, which was nominated for the Oscar Awards in this genre last year. It is good to know that Icelandic films are welcome in the city of the largest film production in the world.

Film making is relatively young in Iceland, starting in the Seventies, and the same goes for Animation Films. However, Icelanders are proportionately the most avid moviegoers in the world and an average of two live action features films have been made every year. The official Icelandic Film Fund was established to support production, thus making professional film making a reality. Icelandic filmmakers are industrious and creative, and benefit from the establishment of the Icelandic Film Academy in 1992, which is since 2012 is a member of the International Association of Film and Television Schools (CILECT).

Iceland and India are not close neighbours geographically, but in spite of that and the huge difference in population between the two countries, we have many things in common, such as creativity and the love of culture. Our artists, including film makers, seek inspiration in the nature and urban surroundings, as well as the relationship between people. Cinema is one of the most powerful mediums for entertainment and pleasure, as well as social transformation.

The cooperation between our two countries has been growing rapidly, also in the arts, and will continue to do so in the coming years, now that we are overcoming the pandemic. New doors will open and bring new opportunities.

Icelandic cinema is an important part of both Icelandic culture and the economy. It is an important part of our work at the Embassy to promote presentation of

Icelandic culture abroad, along with political cooperation and commercial relations.

Ladies and Gentlemen.

To conclude, I believe that culture is an important tool in diplomacy and thus the best method to create an understanding between nations. Film making is very important in that respect. I wish the festival and participants a great success and enjoy watching.

Thank you.