

TOP PICKS



Badhai Do

Somalika Chhabra

Harshvardhan Kulkarni's *Badhai Do* is just another Hindi film with a take on the issues faced by the LGBTQIA+ community in India. While the lead actors put on spectacular performances, the film is overpacked with so many elements that make it seem like a desperate attempt to impress. Although *Badhai Do* is pleasantly surprising with the delivery of some beautiful dialogues by the actors, yet the film somehow fails to convey a collective emotion as such.



Sony LinkBuds

Akshat Bhatnagar

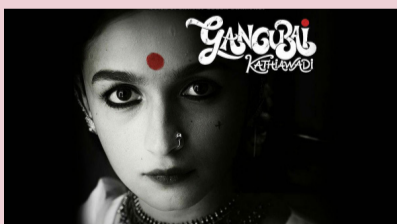
Sony has just announced a new pair of wireless earphones, called the LinkBuds. Instead using traditional disc shaped drivers that have been exclusively used for the past several years, these earbuds use an innovative new technology with ring shaped drivers that have a hole in the middle. This allows them to sit around the ear canal without covering it. Due to this open form factor, it is able to deliver unmatched comfort and transparency along with great sound.



Manasanamaha

Vijayhardik Joysula

Manasanamaha is a romantic short film that explores how memories shape our perspective. The short film has a simple plot. It is the story of a young man (Surya) who reminisces about his three relationships. Narrated through Surya's point of view it is an allegoric reflection of his relationships with the girls who resemble the different seasons—Chaitra (summer), Varsha (monsoon) and Seeta (winter). With 53 awards in its kitty, *Manasanamaha* is in the fray for an Oscar in the Live Action Short Film category.



Gangubai

Aadhya Venkatesh

The 2 hours 32 minutes long, Alia Bhatt starrer film *Gangubai Kathiawadi* is a true Sanjay Leela Bhansali film. Exploring the life of Ganga (later Gangu), the grandiose sets recreate the magic of Gujarat in Kamathipura (Mumbai). The beautifully choreographed songs match emotions and actions to beats, making it a spectacle for the big screen.

Fighting a crisis, building capacity too

India charts growth path through 'Neighborhood First' policy

Vijayhardik Joysula

If the Asia Economic Dialogue were a book, Union Ministers Dr S Jaishankar and Nirmala Sitharaman would have been its bookends. At the conference, they spelt out India's policy roadmap in the post-pandemic world. They talked about the experience of India on handling the pandemic and how it shapes the vision for the future.

Hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the Pune International Centre, the three-day geo-economics conference held its sixth edition from the Feb 23 to 15, as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

The tone for the conference was set at the outset – at the inaugural panel moderated by Ambassador Gautam Bambawale, the former Indian ambassador to China, Pakistan and Bhutan, and professor at the Symbiosis International University.

For 2022, the theme of the Asia Economic Dialogue was "Resilient Global Growth in a Post-Pandemic Growth". The panels at the conference focused on the impact of the pandemic on the economy and public health. Various policy makers, industrialists and domain experts shared their experience for charting a future course. The panel focused on the topic – international cooperation for resilient global growth.

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar was a member on the panel. He shared the screen with Sri Lankan health minister Dr Rambukwella and Bhutanese finance minister Lyonpo Namgay.

A common thread tied the thoughts of the ministers on the impact of the pandemic on public health and economy.

The assessment of all three was that their countries had to build public health ca-



Speakers at the Asia Economic Dialogue (clockwise from top left) former ambassador and Symbiosis International University Professor Gautam Bambawale, Sri Lankan health minister Dr Rambukwella, Union Minister for External Affairs Dr S Jaishankar and Bhutanese finance minister Lyonpo Namgay.

capacity while battling the pandemic. Parallely, they ensured financial security of the citizens through public welfare schemes. In the Indian context, Dr Jaishankar said, "To manage the crisis while building capability, and building capability on the run is a difficult thing to do. And we were literally building from scratch."

In the first wave, India built capacity to manufacture N-95 masks and PPE kits. During the second wave India set up oxygen plants and make ventilators.

The other pillar of India's pandemic response was leveraging digital expertise. India made use of 'India Stack' to create the Co-Win portal for its vaccination program. To make it a success, Indian pharmaceutical sector manufactured vaccines locally.

In the latter half of the discussion, the emphasis was on co-operation. Dr Jaishankar identified vaccines, medicines, digital know-how as areas of cooperation. The minister reaffirmed India's commitment to the sub-continent through the

Neighbourhood First policy.

He added India looked to play a more proactive role in the region. The foreign policy would move beyond providing lines of credit and look at investments. Dr Jaishankar presented the geopolitics of the issue through his thoughts.

The economic plan envisions India as a developed nation by 2047. 'India at 100' was a constant theme through her address. Ms. Sitharaman said, "India's approach to economic recovery would on three pillars – transition to green energy, good infrastructure and health and education".

Putting human capital as the centre of the future policy roadmap Ms. Sitharaman said, "Better living will need urban facilities in rural areas. Rural goodness and wellness in urban areas." Her address touched upon all the talking points of the conference. Digital education, financial education and inclusion and better public health capacity formed the way forward for resilient global growth.

SCMC alumnae create impactful nature films

Hannah Sarasu John

Wildlife documentary film-making has long been bestowed with the primary motivation of promoting awareness about natural systems and endangered species.

From the SCMC Batch of 2019, Akansha Tiwari has done exceptional work in the field of wildlife documentary filmmaking. She produced her crowd-funded film 'Tangled Seas' which examined the disastrous effects of discarded fishing nets. These plastic fishing nets, commonly called 'ghost nets', make up a significant portion of marine waste pollution and harm the marine ecosystem. Akansha made the film after interacting with the village heads of areas deeply affected by the phenomenon. Her film created awareness and began impact campaigns that could provide solutions and educate the fishermen and divers who are the major stakeholders.

Alongside the film, Akansha also set up impact campaigns such as Ban the Butt, a marine clean-up campaign across different states. The campaign included online activities, webinars along with an active petition to raise money for research and rescue activities.

Similarly, the 2018 film, the Firefox Guardian was a short film as part of SCMC alumna - Gunjan Menon's master's degree from the University of West of England. It went on to win numerous awards including a BAFTA for its human-interest story surrounding the conservation of red pandas and the red panda conservation net-



Gunjan Menon

work. The film revolves around Menuka Bhatrai, the first female forest guardian from the Red Panda Network in Nepal who has devoted her life towards the conservation of saving endangered species.

However, just making a film wasn't enough. Gunjan wanted to create an impact campaign that create awareness



Akansha Tiwari

around these species as well as help fund the conservation groups engaged in the cause. The Firefox Guardian is an amazing example with the impact campaign being conducted in schools and colleges and allowing for crowd-funding opportunities which contribute to the research surrounding red panda conservation. The impact campaign also extended with working with various groups and anti-poaching organizations to produce campaign films to educate viewers on more contemporary issues affecting red pandas.

Seeing a dearth in the availability of impact campaign planners, Gunjan set up an organization called 'Beyond Premiers' that assists filmmakers in planning impact campaigns that allow their film's impact to become more tangible and provide them with the necessary connections.