Embassy of India,
Tashkent

Press Release

2nd Indian Film Festival
'Sashakt Nari – Celebrating Womanhood'

The Embassy of India supported by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and in collaboration with the Cinematography Agency of Uzbekistan (CAU) is organizing the 2nd edition of the Indian Film Festival 'Sashakt Nari – Celebrating Womanhood' from 12–15 March 2026 at Panorama Cinema Palace. The festival will showcase a selection of women-centric Indian films, including Dangal, Dear Zindagi, Tanvi The Great, Tanu Weds Manu, and Kathal celebrating the strength, resilience, and achievements of women through cinema.

The first edition of the festival was held in cooperation with the Cinematography Agency of Uzbekistan (CAU) in March 2025, showcasing five women-centric films. The festival featured prominent Indian actors Shri Abhishek Bachchan, Ms. Saiyami Kher, and filmmakers Shri R. Balki and Ms. Gauri Shinde, alongside prominent Uzbek dignitaries, cultural figures and women leaders.

The inaugural ceremony of the 2nd edition of the Indian Film Festival held on March 12, 2026 brought in prominent film personalities from India and Uzbekistan, members of the diplomatic community, representatives of government institutions, cultural figures, media, and Wrestling Federation.

In her remarks, Ambassador Ms. Smita Pant highlighted the strong cultural ties between India and Uzbekistan and underscored cinema's role in fostering understanding and dialogue. She expressed that the films would inspire reflection and honest conversations on women's rights, needs, and role in society. Director of CAU, Mr. Shukhratulla Rizayev expressed interest in strengthening cooperation with India's film industry. He further noted the potential for greater exchanges in the field of cinema, including opportunities for filming in Uzbekistan.

The ceremony also featured a panel discussion titled *"Women Influencing and Transforming Social Narratives and Perspectives through Cinema."* The discussion brought together Ms. Ra'no Shodieva, renowned actress; Ms. Zebo Navruzova, Film Director and Actress; Mr. Umesh Mehra,

film director; and Ms. Farida Jumaviya, actress. The discussion highlighted the transformative role of women in shaping narratives in cinema and the broader impact of films in advancing conversations on gender equality and social change.

Congratulatory video messages from acclaimed Indian actor Mr. Aamir Khan and woman film maker Ms. Gauri Shinde were also screened during the event. The cultural segment featured performances inspired by Indian cinema, presented by Ms. Dhani Gupta, Kathak Teacher at the Lal Bahadur Shastri Centre for Indian Culture, the renowned Havas Guruhi group, and the Bollywood Battle dance troupe.

The Film Festival will kick off with the opening screening of popular movie on women wrestling, Dangal on 13 March at Panorama Cinema Palace and will conclude on 15 March 2026. The detailed screening schedule is appended to this press release. Entry to all screenings is free and open to the public.

Screening Schedule

13 March 2026

1430 hrs — Dangal (with Uzbek and English subtitles)

14 March 2026

1100 hrs — Dear Zindagi (with Uzbek and English subtitles)
1500 hrs — Tanvi The Great (with Uzbek and English subtitles)

15 March 2026

1100 hrs — Kathal (with Uzbek and English subtitles)
1500 hrs — Tanu Weds Manu (with Uzbek and English subtitles)

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