MUMBAI:

India's ZEE News and its channels in different languages on web & TV tie up with *An Australian Film Initiative* to promote the 2nd Australian Film Festival of India (AFFI) which kicks off on 3rd December 2012in the picturesque town of Dehradun.

Zee News along with India.com claim a traffic of 25 million hits on their group website. The festival will be promoted by Zee Marketing and screened in three cities followed by a 17city tour through the Federation of Film Societies of India and via their Patron Mr. KiranShantaram.

Rohit Kumar – Head of Marketing at Zee News said*" Zee News has always been on the forefront to celebrate meaningful and responsible cinema. We welcome Australian Film Initiative to India and wish them all the best'*

Commenting from the Sydney office of *An Australian Film Initiative***PETER CASTALDI**, the Festival'sFounding Director said,*"Federation of Film Societies of India taking our Australian films to various cities across India is exactly the exposure Aussie cinema needs in India, a film market Australia has yet to tap, we are humbled by the huge response"*

Amara Ujala, a major Hindi language newspaper is also supporting the festival, taking information about Australian cinema and film culture to a loyal following in North India.

Speaking at the end of *Film Bazaar* in Goa, AFFI Founding Director **ANUPAM SHARMA** said, *"The last minute swell of support from India and Australia is so encouraging for all the team working hard with huge ambitions to develop a better understanding of Australian cinema in India and develop stronger links between the two film cultures. The number of people being exposed to information about Australian film culture is mind boggling"* Anupam was a part of one of the biggest Australian delegations sent to the prestigious *Film Bazaar* and *International Film Festival of India* led by Screen Australia and SPAA.

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AFFI is also fully utilising the power of the web in India where half the population of 1.2 billion is under the age of 25. It is using online registration, as well as social media platforms Facebook and Twitter to increase awareness and interest in the festival.

The Festival now also has appointed Mr. KiranShantaram as its Patron in India. *"The Australian Film Festival of India is a wonderful platform for Indo-Australian cinematic exchanges. An initiative of this scale showcasing contemporary Australian cinema and engaging with the Indian audience will go a long way in opening up collaborative opportunities for both countries. It's a pleasure to be associated with an annual event of this calibre growing in footprint each year."*Commented Mr. Shantaram.

The festival program has beenfinalisedand includes a retrospective of BazLuhrman films as well as the first ever documentary on anti-corruption activist, first female IPS officer and revered figure Dr. KiranBedi. She will present the documentary *"Yes Madam Sir"*personally at the screenings.

For further information and festival details including background, session times, online registration and interviews with leading Australians talking about Australia India Film links, can be seen on www.aafilminitiative.org

Destination NSW as a Strategic Partner along with the Australia India Council, UNSW, Screen NSW and Screen Australia supports the festival. Various Indian industry partners including UFO, FICCI and Garhwal Post have also granted generous support.

PETER CASTALDI and ANUPAM SHARMA are available for interview

For further information including interviews please contact Stella Katsaros at NIKSTAR at stella@nikstar.com.au or on 0411 504048

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