



Manipuri Film Andro Dreams opens the Indian Panorama Non-Feature Film Section at 54th IFFI

Happy and honoured to have represented this story: Actor
Laibi Phanjoubam

Andro Dreams tells the story of Manipur's people who are unheard and not represented in other media: Director Meena
Longjam

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A 60 year old Ms. Laibi Phanjoubam runs a handloom and weaving craft shop in a remote village called *Andro* nestled in the northeast state of Manipur. On the face of it, it seems quite an ordinary story. But Ms Laibi Phanjoubam is no ordinary woman. She runs an all-female football club fighting against the entrenched patriarchy, economic hardships and orthodoxy of her ancient village.

Her trail-blazing tale in a small newspaper article is what caught the National Award winning Director Ms. Meena Longjam's eye, which today has been brought on the silver screen as *Andro Dreams*. The documentary is the story of Laibi, an old woman with a spirited soul, and her three decade old, an all girls' football club Andro Mahila Mandal Association Football Club (AMMA-FC). It captures their challenges and struggles with *Nirmala*, their most promising young football player in the spotlight.

The Manipuri Film *Andro Dreams*, a cinematic chronicle of 63 minutes, opened the Non Feature Film Section of the Indian Panorama at 54th IFFI. The avant-gardist documentary is led by a trinity of a female director, producer and cast.



Speaking of the inspiring story of Laibi Phanjouban, the director Longjam elaborated that she is the fourth girl child in her family who was often disregarded by her family. However, despite the odds, she became the first woman in her village to complete matriculate degree and became a primary school teacher. She has established handloom and weaving craft shops in her village.

Laibi Phanjoubam, the protagonist of the film, expressed her happiness on making of this documentary. The movie presents her reality and struggles, which she has been honoured to present to the world.



“It is a story of our people, who are unheard and not represented in other media,” said Longjam in her media interaction organized by PIB at 54th International Film Festival of India, in Goa. She added that her “accidental” directorial ventures are an endeavor to show

the lives of people of Manipur who remain obscured in the main media. “*Andro Dreams* captures the real life of Laibi and the girls of her football club fighting against all odds”, said the director of this passion-fuelled project.

Talking on the genre of documentary film-making, Longjam elaborated that, “making a documentary requires building a relationship with the subject over a long period of time and it cannot be a one-off project.” Meena Longjam is a legend-in-the-making, as she became the first Manipuri woman to win a National Award for her other film “Auto Driver” earlier.

“Women are “silent pillars” of society and I want to bring as many to the forefront as possible and provide them the required opportunities. I want to encourage, motivate and support the incredible talent that has skills but lack the funding”, said Jani Viswanath, the executive producer of *Andro Dreams*, on her motivation to fund such films.

Indian Panorama section at IFFI, that offers an excellent cinematic experience for the film-lovers, opened yesterday with Malayalam film *Aattam* in the Feature section and the Manipuri film *Andro Dreams* in the Non-Feature section. This year 25 Feature Films and 20 Non-Feature films will be showcased at the 54th IFFI which is being held from 20th-28th November, 2023.

The Indian Panorama was introduced in 1978 as part of the IFFI umbrella to promote Indian Films along with India's rich culture and heritage with the help of cinematic art. Since its inception, the Indian Panorama has been completely devoted to showcasing the best Indian films of the year.

Watch the interaction here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_I_hm3kQz0

54th IFFI : Press Conference on the film 'Andro Drea...



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