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The IFFK's Open Forum held on Monday deviated considerably from the original topic of discussion 'Cinema from ethnic society' with most of the speakers having little to contribute to the topic.

While both Nedzad Begovic from Bosnia and Greek film-maker Dimitris Apostolou brushed aside prospects of ethnic films in their respective countries, jury chairman Jafar Panahi seemed to have least interest in the topic.

The Iranian film-maker looked visibly disturbed and unlike his usual self arrived half an hour late for the programme. About half an hour back my daughter called me and cried over the phone.

She was under detention for 10 hours for wearing a dress that was centimetres above the stipulated length, the acclaimed film-maker said.

However, Panahi didn't let the news affect his duty at the festival. I can cancel my visit here and rush to my daughter. Or, I could stay here and keep this incident in my intellect and reproduce this as a film. It is experiences like these that enrich films, he said.

Begovic shared the same sentiment saying that he himself did not think in terms of ethnic lines, but merely tried to capture his experiences on camera. I don't feel comfortable making an ethnic

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film. I want to make films that say the stories of ordinary people, he said.

Programmer Gonal Domes Collins was the only participant who spoke on ethnic films in Turkey. For a long time, Turkish cinema ignored the ethnic minorities like the Kurds.



There were times when Kurds acted in films without revealing that they were Kurds and instead said they were Turks from the mountain.

However, now the situation has changed. We have non-Kurdish film-makers like Yesim Ustaoglu and Handan Ipeki making films on Kurds in Turkey and their problems, Gonal said.

I am not really sure how far Greek cinema has gone with respect to ethnicity. In our country, culture and social situations form common themes for films, said Dimitris Apostolou.

Earlier, Demetris released a book on Charlie Chaplin edited by P. Ajith Kumar and published by Black Books by handing over the first copy to Gonal.

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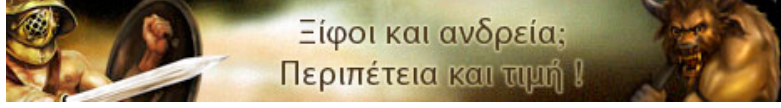
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