

Provoking thought on human connections and lives: A review of â??Ayothiâ?•

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One of the main goals of the Drishti Film Club has been to nurture ways of seeing, empathising, and introspecting.

To that effect, the Drishti Film Club, under the Department of Electronic Media and Mass Communication, organized the screening of the movie *Ayothi* (2023) in Lecture Hall III as part of its weekly film screenings on Friday, July 25, 2025.

The film is written and directed by R. Manthira Moorthy; in a bold choice, the debutant filmmaker has crafted a narrative around the themes of unity and compassion, illustrating how love and understanding can bridge divides across language and religion.

The story revolves around Balram, an orthodox Hindu from Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, who is traveling to Rameswaram on a pilgrimage with his wife and children. Mishaps occur throughout the course of the journey, and the narrative revolves around Balram being helped by a stranger.

After the screening, the viewers praised the portrayal of multiple societal issues, like the lack of humanity of the government officials, as they overly complicated the posthumous procedures. Balramâ??s abusive and misogynistic treatment of the women in his family and his intolerance of non-Hindi language speakers were also highlighted. It is his ego and temper, after all, that led to the irreparable damage in the first place. In stark contrast to him was Abdul, shown at the beginning as a hardened street fighter, who was revealed to have an empathetic and soft side as well.



The birds-eye shot of the crematorium worker scrambling to collect all the change from Sonuâ??s broken piggy bank was also praised. It portrayed how poverty forces people into desperate indifference to othersâ?? misery. The audience lauded the realistic depiction of the language barrier and the prejudices that accompany it. The characters were fleshed out, each bringing depth to the story and creating an emotional resonance that lingered long after the credits rolled. The visual language and songs elevated the narrative, immersing the audience in a world where human connection triumphed over adversity.

The audience also noted how the director debunked the belief that doing good deeds always guarantees returns on it. Throughout it all, the strength of Abdul Malikâ??s belief in doing the right thing propelled him forward and made him an icon of hope and idealism. The film thus prevailed over the unity of India and the bonds that connected humanity. *Ayothi* felt like a testament to the power of film to inspire and evoke empathy, reminding us that we are all part of a greater whole.

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