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Movie-VCD

BAN ON VCD OPEN SALE TIMELY, SAYS INDIAN DIRECTOR

IPOH, Aug 8 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's decision to ban the sale of VCDs and CDs in open places nationwide is a bold and dynamic move that is critical to the survival of the film industry in the world, an acclaimed Indian director said today.

K. Balachandar, one of the biggest names in the South Indian movie industry and amember of the E-Village International Advisory Panel (EVIAP), said this was one of the ways for the industry to continue to survive.

"The VCD piracy is killing our industry. I don't know whether we will survive if this continues...I must congratulate Malaysia for taking this very bold step," said the 72-year-old director who is here for a Tamil film shooting.

He said Malaysia had started the ball rolling to curb VCD piracy as it was the bane of the film industry, especially the Tamil and Hindi films.

"I was very excited when I read in the newspapers about this. This is a nice and noble thing," said Balachandar, the only Indian film representative on the EVIAP which has 10 foreign members.

On Monday, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin announced a blanket ban on such sales, aimed at curbing pornography and piracy.

Balachandar, who made his directorial debut in 1965, had directed films in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi. He is here to shoot song sequences for his 100th film, Parthale Paravasam.

Tamil movies' latest sensation R. Mathavan and actress Sneha are the leading characters in the movie which was shot in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Ipoh, Batu Gajah, Taiping, Bukit Merah and Kuala Kangsar.

On the E-Village or electronic village, Balachandar said it was a scheme with lots of vision and the result could be seen five years and added that development of local talent was one of the main consideration for its success.

"Five years is only a hypothetical answer...you may get it earlier because your are going to draw people from all over the world to the E-Village for education, higher studies, local shootings, co-production...in fact I had offered myself for a local production," he said.

Balachandar said the production would be a Malay movie using local and Indian talents as well as technical experts from India and was in the final stage of scrip-writing.

He said he spoke to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during the EVIAP meeting in April and was fascinated with the prime minister's vision for the country and the film industry in particular.

The E-Village consists of 486 hectares of land on the outskirts of Cyberjaya and will host a hi-tech community with state-of-the-art film studies, and broadcasting, post-production and animation facilities and an academy to hone new talents.

Asked why he chose Malaysia for his film shooting, Balachandar said the country had progressed tremendously and had a lot of beautiful places and scenery.

"It's a beautiful country, especially Perak, and most af all, the people here are very friendly and we also have a large Tamil film following...it's been my intention all this while to have Malaysia as part of my 100th film," he added.

Balachandar said that not only would he promote Malaysia as a film location to his colleagues but he would definitely come back for another shoot in Perak.

-- BERNAMA

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