

## CITY

P.M. Shirodkar



Veteran cinematographer Dilip Gupta received the Bimal Roy award from thespian Sunil Dutt at a function in Mumbai on Thursday

# Film personalities, buffs salute a genius called Bimal Roy

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MUMBAI: Well-known film personalities joined commoners and connoisseurs of cinema to pay glowing tributes to the late Bimal Roy at a well-attended function in Bandra on Thursday.

Organised by the Bimal Roy memorial committee, the 'house full' show, sponsored by Star Plus, unspooled memories of the Roy era which yielded a rich harvest of classics such as *Do Begaar Zameen*, *Yahudi*, *Madhumati*, *Biraj Bahu*, *Sujaata* and *Bandini*, to name a few.

Noted film-makers Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Basu Bhattacharya, Amol Palekar, actress-turned-sheriff Usha Kiron, Rohini Hattangady, thespian P. Jairaj, lyricist Majrooh Sultanpuri (who wrote the evocative *Jalte hain jiske liye number for Sujaata*) and Prem Dhawan (who penned the haunting song, *Aye mere pyaare watan, aye mere bichhade chaman*, from *Kabuliwala*), Shashikala and super-model Milind Soman, among others, were present at the function.

Noted cinematographer Dilip

Gupta (who wielded the camera for *Yahudi*, *Biraj Bahu* and *Madhumati*) was honoured with a special award for his life-long contribution to cinema. A close colleague of Roy from the latter's New Theatres days in Calcutta, Gupta read out a brief speech, eulogising his friend Bimal-da's qualities both as a film-maker par excellence and a "warm, kind human being".

Thespian Sunil Dutt, who played the male lead opposite Nutan in *Sujaata*, remembered Roy as a director of exceptional calibre. Stating that his role of an outlaw in Mehboob's *Mother India* had made him vulnerable to the possibility of being a "type-cast", Dutt expressed gratitude to Roy for offering him the role of a suave, soft-spoken scholar in *Sujaata*.

Besides raising a Roy memorial, the committee plans to institute annual awards for best cinema, best cinematographer and best funster, the last award being in the memory of the late Asit Sen, the roly-poly comedian whose sparkling wit added dollops of humour to Roy's sedate films.