

Tamil film body poll acquires political colour

The elections to the Tamil Film Producers' Council (TFPC) acquired political colours Saturday as the two main groups traded charges against each other.

The elections are scheduled for Sunday.

Openly backed by the ruling DMK, director K. Ramanarayanan, incumbent president of the body and a contestant, appealed for votes from all concerned if the Tamil film industry wanted continuance of subsidies from the state government, doyens of tinsel town told IANS.

'The pro-opposition group sponsored by Sun TV wants to control the entertainment business through the back door. But, if it does, it will result in the entire industry losing out on excellent opportunities made available by Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi,' Ramanarayanan was quoted as saying.

The opposition sponsored group backed by Sarath Kumar and led by his wife Raadhika, who is an actress and a media mogul, claimed its rival group was introducing a regional chauvinism element into the elections by keeping out professionals holding posts in other bodies belonging to non-Tamil denominations, said a statement issued by the South Indian Artistes' Association.

'This move will imperil the careers of virtually 70 percent of actors and actresses,' the statement said.

Kumar is the president of SIAA and also heads a political party.

Introduction of a new rule to avoid contests by rivals by Ramanarayanan was struck down by the Madras High Court recently enabling Raadhika group's continuance in the fray as an aspirant for the post of general secretary.

A control over TFPC will accord continuation of film software to a plethora of television channels, film industry insiders said.

Handicapped by the strong arm tactics of the ruling DMK, the Sun Group as well as other opposition owned channels are on the back foot due to non-availability of highly sought after film software.

In an earlier litigation, courts had heard allegations of rigging during last elections that had resulted in the victory of Ramanarayanan.

The High Court has ordered video-coverage to ensure free and fair polls.

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