

## 'Movie icons have bright future in politics'

Veteran actor and Telugu Desam leader Murali Mohan, elected president of Movie Artistes' Association (MAA), said Monday that filmdom is the future of political power.

'The future of politics rests on the shoulders of the film industry. Movie artistes not only serve the masses by providing entertainment but also attend to their life's needs as political leaders. Elections in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and distant USA have proved that matinee idols can occupy the highest political positions in a state or nation,' Mohan said.

Reacting to criticism from non-film politicians against celluloid heroes cashing in on their popularity, Mohan defended the industry with strong words.

'We may belong to different political parties but are united in tinsel town. Though many political parties depend on us for votes and gathering crowds for their meetings, they ridicule matinee idols. Challenges to our power will be met by our winning performances not only in films but in the political arena as well,' Mohan added.

Many in the industry saw the remark as an interesting spar with thespian Chiranjeevi - who launched a political party 'Praja Rajyam' recently in front of a massive crowd in Tirupati and proclaimed himself a contender for the chief minister's position in the next elections.

Significantly, Balakrishna and Junior NTR - son and grandson, respectively, of late Andhra Pradesh chief minister N.T. Ramarao - are slated to campaign for the Telugu Desam Party during the ensuing parliamentary elections.

Mohan defeated his nearest rival Vijaychander by a large margin during the elections held Sunday.

Further, Mohan's entire team swept the polls held Sunday.

Ahuti Prasad, Srikanth and Srihari were elected general secretary and vice presidents, respectively.

Multilingual actress Ramya Krishnan has also found a place in the MAA executive committee.

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