

Public Polls commence at 2006 event of Indibloggies, the Indian Weblog Awards

Between 13 and 20th Feb 2007 fate of 175 short-listed blogs, battling it out for prizes worth more than INR 1.3 million, would be decided by a public poll.

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It is time again for the battle of the blogs at the **Indibloggies** (<http://www.indibloggies.org>), India's first and foremost blog awards, with the 2006 event entering its last phase, the public poll. **From 13th to 20th February, 2007 the Indian blogosphere would witness the titans of blogdom clash for prizes worth more than Rs 13,00,000 (1.3 Million, ~ \$28000).** During this phase the fate of about 175 blogs, meticulously short listed by a surefooted Jury, will be decided by the public, one with the largest votes will be declared the winner in each category.

This is the fourth year of the Indibloggies award, **organised by Pune-based blogger Debashish Chakrabarty**. The event started with the nomination process for the 2006 event on 26 January 2007. Nominations were accepted across 21 different award categories for Indian blogs from all around the world. The 2006 event received more than 750 nominations, more than double of the figure for last year.

It was a tough as well as enriching experience for the Jury, browsing through the myriad flavours of writing and handpicking the best blogging talents from the subcontinent. **Patrx, founder of popular aggregator Desipundit** (<http://www.desipundit.com>) and part of the Jury for the first time admitted that being a juror is not a bed of roses after all since they are required to stay away from the competition. 'But the exposure to numerous quality blogs that were nominated was far more satisfying,' he added.

In order to nominate their blogs Indibloggies asks bloggers to bookmark them at the popular social bookmarking tool del.icio.us (<http://del.icio.us>). 'It's a way to make the nomination data useful apart from the award itself, bookmarks at del.icio.us are noticed by a wider audience', said Debashish. 'The nominating system has received some flak but for an active Web 2.0 user, it would be a breeze and for others, it gives an incentive to catch on and be included in the rapidly growing group of Time's Person of the Year.' quipped Patrx.

Awards such as the Indibloggies, apart from generating vibes of competition amongst the bloggers, serve a wider purpose of generating awareness about the Indian blogdom, celebrating the unsung bloggers. 'There are thousands of blogs, perhaps several hundred good ones, all serving as watering holes for their own communities. The role of the Indibloggies is to select the best of these watering holes and present it to a much wider audience. Popularity contest apart, it is an excellent opportunity to discover both blogs you will love and blogs you will love to hate.' says **Nitin Pai, author of popular Indiblog The Acorn** (<http://acorn.nationalinterest.in/>), who was also a part of the Jury this year.

Romasha Roy Choudhury, Lead Evangelist of Cyn.in, a Gold Sponsor at Indibloggies 2006, is an avid blogger herself and describes this completely evolutionary development as amazing. "Blogs ignite the power of communication and conversation. We have seen the power of this new media and the speed at which it can grow. What's most important to us is that we at Cynapse (

<http://www.cynapse.com>) are able to provide a platform to enhance and encourage the evolution in the blogosphere." she said. Cyn.in would award their products worth about Rs 12,00,000 to winners in various categories. "Because Indibloggies is a truly Indian competition aimed at encouraging bloggers and evangelizing the media, it was a logical choice to team up with them and extend the reach of these awards even further." Romasha added.

The winner of the IndiBlog of the Year will get a sculpture trophy worth Rs. 15,000 made by another blogger, Delhi-based Arun Verma (<http://www.arunverma.com>).

Prizes worth Rs 13,00,000 have already been committed from various Bloggers and Organisations such as **Cyn.in** (<http://cyn.in>) who are a **Gold sponsor**, Creativegarh, Microsoft, Tehelka (<http://www.tehelka.com>), Sarai-CSDS (<http://www.sarai.net>), Techgoss (<http://www.techgoss.com>), GoHindi (<http://www.gohindi.com>) and Black Panther (<http://www.blackpanther.info>), among others. Prizes in various categories include a copy of **Cyn.in Enterprise Bliki, Windows Vista, Blogjet Blog client, Books, CDs, Publications, Gift certificates, Web hosting package and Sports Apparel** apart from cash-awards.

Debashish feels that the response has been good this year but he thinks Indibloggies needs to reach more bloggers to be able to serve its purpose well, 'the participation is still meek', he opines. Patrix echoes the feelings, 'I would still like to see more participation. It is important to 'break into' niche blog networks that many personal bloggers are a part of. Personal blogging is far more popular and liked so it would be great to have them aboard as well.'

All eyes are now set on the voting process the results of which would be announced by Feb 22, 2007. The polls would continue until 20 Feb 2007, make sure you cast your vote for your favorite blog in time.

For further details, please visit the Indibloggies website at <http://www.indibloggies.org>.

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Indibloggies is an annual blog-award website targeted at Indian Blogs and was started as a parody clique on the Bloggies. The website showcases the best of the Indian blogosphere and awards annually blogs written in English as well as Indicblogs (blogs written in Indian language scripts) authored by Indians and the Indian diaspora.

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You can also visit www.indibloggies.org for more information.