

Lights ! Camera ! Action !



Director Tipendra Mohan taking a walk round the FTE campus

Manohar Khanna/Pune

Tripura Sen, who took over as director of Film and Television Institute of India (FTI) in Pune on November 5, 2005, finds a tangled campus. Classes are in full swing. Students are having *advanced* courses on film—the native texts of French New Wave and Italian Neorealism, the new global Indian cinema, etc. Several students are busy with filmmaking projects. Things seem, well, normal.

But it wasn't like this two years ago. There were turbulent times. Between 1997 and 2003, FTE students went on more than five strikes, in 1996 a committee comprising outside experts, practicing professionals, faculty and students proposed what they called a "revamped syllabus." It provided for increased inputs from visiting professionals and new flexible

and interactive in nature. The proposals were widely appreciated and according to T. Rajwanshi, regional secretary (south) of the Federation of Film Societies of India, it was a much-needed improvement on the online syllabus.

Mohan Agashe, who took over as FTE director in 1997, decided not to implement the "revamped syllabus" but then got on badly with new admissions to the institute as he proposed his own set of "conceptual proposals". Trouble began when he replaced the integrated three-year diploma with three individual courses of a year's duration each and also proposed a plan by which "weak students would be weeded out of the institute."

