Private
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Center
CSC Center
STAR RAINBOW
SERVICES
VADAPALANI
8144337349

HELLO MADRAS
hellomadrasdaily@gmail.com
HELLO MIRROR MADRAS
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From ‘Ramayana’ to ‘Suzume’: How Indian cinephiles are embracing Japanese cinema

CHENNAI – 26 Nov, 2026 “I wish more people watched anime in India; I hate that many liken the genre to cartoons meant for children” — this sentiment, expressed by a friend back in 2018, came back to me this weekend as I witnessed first hand the a Chennai audience embraced Japanese cinema. The Chennai edition of The Japan Foundation’s Japanese Film Festival was yet another reminder that Indian audiences are increasingly looking beyond their familiar cinematic borders. The JFF held on the PVR INOX theatre in Express Avenue mall — is evidence that this East Asian wave isn’t stopping anytime soon. Over the years, appetite for Japanese anime has risen in India, with streaming platforms like Netflix and Crunchyroll bringing the world of anime a little closer Arts and Culture (Arts and Cultural Exchange) at The Japan Foundation, New Delhi, believes the shift in consumer behaviour during the COVID-19 lockdown played a major role. “People started watching movies on streaming platforms and eventually



series. They discovered the sheer variety of content out there — not anime, but also newer series made for the next generation