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Group Apollo starts digital cinema network

By OUR CORRESPONDENT

Mumbai, Nov. 22: Technologies like the Internet, satellite television, MP3 players, video iPods and digital cameras, have brought about a revolution in their respective domains. "Digital cinema is another disruptive technology which will change the DNA of film distribution and exhibition in India. Film studios and production houses will henceforth factor digital cinema into their business plans," said Mr. Anjay Galkwad, CEO and executive director, UFO Moviez, a digital cinema network launched by Value Media Pvt. Ltd. and created by Group Apollo.

After having installed 100 special digital cinema halls in the country, UFO plans to setup 500 additional digital cinema halls with an investment of Rs 80 crores by mid-2006, which would be scaled up to 2,000 halls with an additional investment of Rs 300 crores in the future.

Digital cinema replaces the traditional optical print which uses traditional film projectors using 35 or 70 mm optical prints for screening, with a digital



Three's company: Group Apollo CMD O.S. Kanwar (from left to right), film producer Yash Chopra and Apollo International Ltd MD Raaja Kanwar at a press conference in Mumbai on Tuesday to announce the launch of a revolutionary digital cinema network by UFO Moviez. A photograph by Anshuman Poyrekar

The film is stored on servers inside special digital cinema halls where powerful processors decode the film and project a pure digital picture on the screen. "With the highest level of encryption standards between the server and projector, movie piracy will be curbed. Additionally, film producers can release a film in more than 100 cinema halls simultaneously, doing away with the cost of transportation of optical prints which was a key factor in the delay of releases in B and C class cities," added Mr. Galkwad.