



Focus on Nature...Focus on Life



vatavaran2005
Environment & Wildlife FILM FESTIVAL
21-24 NOV 2005 | INDIA HABITAT CENTRE | NEW DELHI | INDIA

**“I am amazed that Vatavaran 2005 has attracted 244 films from across the country” -
*Shyam Benegal, Jury Chairperson***

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VATAVARAN 2005: To Know Nature More

India's environment is under threat, her precious bio-diversity is on the verge of extinction, her beautiful rivers polluted and her forests are cut down. And the millions depending upon them are facing a survival crisis. The idea of sustainable development and conservation has bypassed our policy makers. At a time when there is substantial debate in the country on the state of our forests, the rights of tribals and the status and rights of wildlife and tigers in particular, the country's premier and only festival of environment and wildlife films, the Vatavaran film festival, has as its theme this year Forests for Life.

Underscoring the need to be sensitized and responsive to Nature, Vatavaran 2005, the only film festival in the country on environment and wildlife was opened on November 21, 2005 amidst a large community of filmmakers, academicians, environmentalists and policy makers. Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting, inaugurated the festival. In all, Vatavaran 2005 screened 63 films including an Asian Panorama and Retrospective of two British film makers along with a series of events, discussions, workshops, etc. at the four day festival at India Habitat Centre (IHC) from 21 to 24 November 2005.

Workshops on "Corporate Social Responsibility", "e-Waste". "Shifting Trends in Wildlife Film making." and "Underwater Film Making", "Broadcast Journalism and Environment Coverage," attracted large number of participants, including youth, and generated interesting discussions. Representatives from industry also attended these workshops. Vatavaran captured the touching images of environment, flora and wildlife under constant threat. Films screened at Vatavaran reflected people's voice to save our precious natural heritage. These films were shocking, make one think and introspect. The best of India's film talent was assembled at Vatavaran. There were seen by an estimated over 10,000 people over the four days.



Vatavaran 2005 from November 21 to 24 this year organized by **Centre for Media Studies (CMS)** and supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, this was the third Vatavaran festival held in Delhi. A host of eminent persons are associated with the organizing of the festival including Dr. Kasturirangan Member of Parliament and former Chairman, ISRO. Dr Karan Singh philosopher statesman of India chaired the Steering Committee of Vatavaran 2005.

Vatavaran is an initiative of Centre for Media Studies (CMS) towards encouraging young film makers to produce on environment and wildlife issues facing the country and also to convince the television channels to show case these films with equally consistent concerns.

“Vatavaran is a wonderful initiative of CMS towards sensitizing the Indian public at large about environmental issues and highlight the complexities of conservation through the use of the medium of cinema”, observed Shyam Benegal, Chairperson, Vatavaran 2005. I am happy to associate myself with the Vatavaran Film Festival, he added

Speaking about the film festival, Dr. Bhaskar Rao said "Vatavaran assumes importance because it is India's only competitive film festival featuring film screenings, symposia, exhibition, film bazaar, etc. It is also the first time that so many collaborations of this importance have been achieved and the number of entries we have received from filmmakers is very encouraging and shows the popularity Vatavaran enjoys”.

For the first time this year, Vatavaran introduced an Asian Panorama in the non-competitive section of the festival. This showcased films from Asian countries. A Retrospective of two filmmakers from UK was another highlight of Vatavaran 2005. The 13th Congress of the International Federation of Environment Journalists (IFEJ) was also held alongwith Vatavaran 2005. Media persons from different parts of India and abroad participated in this Congress.



Forty-Seven Films Nominated for Vatavaran 2005

A Nomination Jury comprising of 30 members from across the country screened the 244 film entries received in the Competitive Section and forty-seven of them have been nominated. The Competitive Jury is chaired by noted filmmaker Mr. Shyam Benegal and has Dr. Santwana Bardoloi, Mr. Shyamaprasad, Mr. Ram Mohan, Mr. Darryl D'monte, Prof. R. Sukumar and Dr. A J T Johnsing as members. The Awards will be presented to filmmakers on 24 November, the concluding day of Vatavaran 2005.



Vatavaran 2005 Nomination Jury

There were seven competitive categories with award money ranging from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1,50,000. The two new award categories introduced this year were Animation and Student Films. The film entries came from remote parts of the country like Tripura and Sikkim; Delhi tops the list in the number of entries followed by Maharashtra and Kerala.



Mr. Shyam Benegal, Jury Chairperson, Vatavaran 2005 said “considering the fact that there are so few distribution and exhibition channels available for these films in a commercial set up and the enormous difficulties of getting funding, it is wonderful to see such dedication and commitment. It only goes to bolster my belief that no worthwhile development is possible without paying long term and continuing attention to the well being of all living beings and to the environment in which we live”.

Prithvi Ratna Award to Naresh Bedi

Veteran wildlife film producer Naresh Bedi was presented the 2005 Vatavaran Prithvi Ratna Award for “Lifetime Dedication” for the cause of environment and wildlife filming. The award was instituted by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The award has been announced on the eve of the third Vatavaran Environment and Wildlife Film Festival, which begins in New Delhi on November 21, 2005.



Shri Naresh Bedi receiving CMS and UNEP Prithvi Ratna award from Smt. Shiela Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi

This is the second Prithvi Ratna award being given by CMS and UNEP. The first was given to Mike Pandey in the previous Vatavaran in 2003.



CMS Vatavaran Film Fellowships

CMS, has also announced two Film Fellowships, one supported by MoEF and the other by Star to film makers, whose concepts demonstrate originality in terms of topical relevance and technical excellence. The fellowships were granted to documentary film makers for productions that explore “human relations with the natural world” or films that “contribute to a greater understanding of ecological issues”. CMS had an overwhelming response (fifteen applicants) and the selection panel had a very tough time shortlisting only two applicants for these Fellowships. The primary assessment criterion was the applicant’s recent track record and the likely benefit of the proposal to the applicant’s career. Previous video/film production experience was necessary, but exceptionally brilliant proposals from freshers were also considered.

Ajaz Rashid for his proposal title “Their last battle for survival” on impact of dam on tribals in Baramullaha Dist near the India Pak Border and **Prayas Abhinav** for his proposal title “Leaving no trace: cyclists in the city” were awarded this year CMS Vatavaran Film Fellowship (Up to INR 1,00,000 each supported by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India and Star). The fellowship covers production and post production cost of the film.

Indian Films Galore at Vatavaran

The screening of the films led to a lively debate on man nature and conservation in the Open Forum. ‘River Taming Mantras’ by Sanjay Barnela and Vasant Saberwal – *opening film of the festival* threw open the question: ‘Should rivers be tamed?’

Some of the titles that caught the attention of the viewing public included: ‘Vultures: Death Watch’ by Niret Alva and Nikhil J. Alva and ‘Experiment With Truth’ by Amish Srivastava.

Films by well known cameramen like the Alva brothers, Ashish Chandola and Shekar Dattatri, Rupin Dang and Meghnath received as much attention as the foreign films.



The movies that stole the show on the third day were “Development Flows From The Barrel of A Gun” by Biju Toppo and Meghnath, “Bhopal – The Survivor’s Story’ by Rumah Rasaan, ‘Once Upon A Time’ by Pawanpreet Kaur and “Oshobano’ (The Hunt) by Anuj Singh.

Films which the public loved included “Just another Death” by Vilas Kane, “The Policing Langur” by Ajay and Vijay Bedi, “The Jaws of Death” by Gautam Saikia and “In the Forest Hangs a Bridge” by Sanjay Kak.

Open Forums (Nov 21-24, 2005)

This year, festival introduced Open Forum for discussing pertinent issues. In the Open Forum there was discussion on the different aspects of violation of the unwritten laws of peaceful coexistence by human beings. Another significant issue discussed by the film-makers was the length of the films. It was pointed out that the length is never an issue for the audience, but broadcasters find it difficult to slot them in the limited time allotted by channels.



Filmmakers responding to audience



Another major point raised was whether a filmmaker's role ended with raising an issue or whether he needed to provide a solution as well. Many in the audience also said cinema theatres and multiplexes across the country should screen wildlife and environment films.



Filmmakers sharing their experiences – Open Forum

At the Open Forum after the screenings of films there was a thought provoking debate on state violence on the masses, impact of tribal life in Nagaland on nature and the grim reality of life after the Bhopal Gas tragedy of 1984. The major surprise of the day was the participation of Dadasaheb Phalke Award winner Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Vijaya Mule, President, Indian Documentary Producers Association.’ While Vijaya Mule emphasized the need to screen the films shown at Vatavaran to a larger public audience at various places in the country, Adoor
Vatavaran – Environment and Wildlife Film Festival



Gopalakrishnan spoke of the tremendous response to documentaries. He said“ we have to impress upon the government that restrictions should go, there should be no censoring.”

Workshop on Shifting Trends in Wildlife Filmmaking

Lack of funding and broadcasters were seen as the biggest challenge facing wildlife film makers at a workshop on Shifting Trends in Wildlife Filmmaking. The speakers were Naresh Bedi, Mike Panedy, Shekar Dattatri, Harloldo Castro, Richard Brock, Doug Allan and Harriet Nimmo.



Dr. N. Bhaskara Rao, Chairman, Centre for Media Studies welcoming and introducing the speakers

Seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility

There were stimulating discussions on Corporate Social Responsibility. The seminar on CSR for Sustainable Development which took off after the screening of a very poignant films, “Mindless Mining: The Tragedy of Kudremukh” by Shekar Dattatri and had Mr. Arun Varma, Fellow, LEAD, Ms. Harriet Nimmo, Chief Executive, Wildscreen, Mr. Dinesh Agarwal, General Manager, National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Mr. Sachin Joshi, Senior Researcher,



Centre for Social Markets (CSM)) and Mr. Niranjan Khatri, General Manager, Welcomenviron Initiatives, ITC Hotels as speakers.

The seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility highlighted the need to rope in multinationals and other business houses as important stakeholders in environmental governance. Panelists on the seminar shared a variety of instances dealing with Corporate Social Responsibility and stakeholder participation.



Speakers of CSR Seminar

Mr. Sachin Joshi of CSM World, an NGO that assists business houses in being socially responsible said “while we judge the Corporate Responsibility initiatives of companies, more importance needs to be placed on their internal corporate initiatives.”



Electronic waste, the Challenge of the Future

“Electronic waste is going to be a major environmental concern in the years to come” said Mr. Sudhir Sinha of the multinational Moser Baer at a seminar on Electronic Waste held as a part of Vatavaran 2005. The seminar on e-waste – IT Shining started with the screening of two very poignant films, “A second hand life by Nutun Manmohan” and “E-Waste: Bangalore’s challenge” had as speakers Dr. Juergen Bischoff, GTZ-ASEM, Mr. Ravi Agarwal, Toxics Link, Mr. Juergen Porst, Mr. Vinnie Mehta, Manufacturers Association for Information Technology and Mr. Sudhir Sinha, Moser Baer.



At the electronic waste seminar, Mr. Ravi Agarwal of Toxics Link, an NGO that works on waste management at policy and grassroots level, spoke of the need for a legal policy framework for e-waste management and the need for manufacturers to design sustainable technology. Mr. Vinnie Mehta of MAIT, in response, said it was the

shared responsibility of all stakeholders including consumers. He added “We are handicapped in India because we don’t manufacture-- only assemble computers”. Mr. Sudhir Sinha of Moser Baer spoke of the need for corporates to integrate E-Waste management into the Corporate Social Responsibility policies. Mr. Porst, who has been working with pollution control boards in several developing countries, emphasised the need for starting a formal recycling agency.



Felicitation Ceremony

This year, Vatavaran 2005 have arranged for a special evening to honour and celebrate the efforts of the filmmakers who with years of abiding passion and hard work have made a huge difference not only in the country but also in other parts of world. This being a matter of great pride and honour for the film making fraternity and CMS Vatavaran wanted to express the happiness and adulation to their art by honouring them.





CMS Vatavaran facilitated Shri Shyam Bengal, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Dr. S Krishnaswamy , Mike Pandey, Shekar Dattatri Amar Kanwar, Himanshu Malhotra, Nandita Das and Soumya Sen, P. Balan, Ajay Bedi, Vijay Bedi, Richard Brock, Doug Allan, Harriet Nimmo. This was a humble way to acknowledge their association and contribution to Vatavaran over the years.

International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ)

Vatavaran 2005 also marked the opening of a four-day congress by the International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ). The workshop is focusing on “Human – Wildlife Conflicts and Sustainable Development”. Media Persons from different parts of India and abroad participated in this Congress. This is the first time the IFEJ is holding its Congress in India. The IFEJ was formed in Dresden in 1993 and has several associations of environmental journalists from around the world as its members, along with individual journalists. It has since held its annual Congress in Paris (twice), Boston, Budapest, Cebu (Philippines), Sri Lanka, Bogota, Cairo, Germany and St Petersburg.

Availing the opportunity of Vatavaran 2005, journalists specialized in covering environment and wildlife from eight countries met over these four days and deliberated their experience in their



respective countries and appealed to Governments and TV channels to consider more pro-active coverage of these issues.

The opening seminar dealt with “Environment and Media,” Dr. N. Bhaskara Rao, chairman, Centre for Media Studies said that the main objective was to provoke the people to think. He said he fully recognized the power of the electronic media.



International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ) Annual Congress

Referring to the Indian Tiger Conservation practices, Head, Tiger Task Force, Sunita Narain said environment journalists should remain as journalists and not become environmental activists. Responding to Ms. Narain’s statement, “guns, guards and fences have not saved the tigers”, noted environment and wildlife filmmaker, Richard Brock said, “perhaps, DVDs, videos and films could do the job. And they are a softer solution too.” In the panel discussion titled “Tigers



or People Prevail?” the strong sentiment expressed was that the question was not of one or another but of co-existence and cohabitation.

The parallel sessions held by the International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ) started with a panel discussion on improving the quality of environmental reporting on television, chaired by Nalaka Gunawardene, Director and CEO TVE Asia-Pacific. It was felt that the tremendous potential of electronic reporting remained untapped. Other issues discussed were the proportion of environment reports in a 24-hour channel and the need for an ethical code of conduct while reporting on issues concerning nature and wildlife.

Mr. Jim Detjen, Director, Knight Centre for Environmental Journalism, & Dave Poulson, Michigan State University, USA conducted a workshop on *e-Journalism*.

The third and final day of the International Federation of Environmental Journalists congress commenced with an open session on how environmental journalists can help themselves with better networking and access to information that is already available. It was chaired by Mr Darryl D'Monte, chairman IFEJ. Mr Harold Castor, Vice President, Global Awareness Conservation International, spoke of the seven years of the Conservation International's Biodiversity Reporting Awards in four countries of South America. The panel discussion on 'reporting' on environment, science and development was chaired by Nalaka Gunawardene, director and CEO, TVE Asia- Pacific. The panelists were T.V.Padma, SciDev.net, A.S.Paneerselvan, Panos International and T.V.Jayan, Science Editor , Down to Earth.

Participants at the workshop on Broadcast Journalism, chaired by Nalaka Gunawardane included Damandeep Singh, National Geographic Channel--India, A S.Paneerselvan, Panos South Asia and Rakesh Kalshian, also from Panos--South Asia. The workshop included a special screening of the film on “mindless mines—a tragedy of Kudremukh’ by Shekar Dattatri.



VATAVARAN 2005 focuses on British Films/ Asian

Documentary films from Asian countries and a retrospective of noted British filmmaker Richard Brock were also the highlights of Vatavaran 2005.

Retrospective of Richard Brock and Doug Allan

A Retrospective of two film makers from UK Doug Allan and Richard Brock was another highlight of Vatavaran 2005.

In the Richard Brock retrospective, “Crowned Eagles – The Emperor of the Jungle”, “The Wolf Saga” and “Mzee-A Chimp with a Problem” were showcased. Richard Brock is a noted environmental filmmaker from UK and executive producer of the Living Planet Productions.



Richard Brock – interaction with audience

Doug Allan specializes in wildlife and documentary work in extremes - particularly underwater and in the poles. His film “People of the Sea” film on Penguins and their life and “A Boy among Polar Bears” were highly appreciated.



Doug Allan sharing his experiences

Under Water Filming Workshop

Doug Allan who was the principal cameraman for the award winning BBC series “Blue Planet” conducted a workshop on *Underwater Filming* during the Festival.



Under water filming workshop by Doug Allan



The workshop – a 'master class' for young and aspiring filmmakers looked at the key requirements of a successful underwater film, from the initial research and development of the idea, planning of the shoot, and filming on location, using examples from their own filming experiences.

Screening of Wildscreen Films and Presentation of Digital ARKive by Harriet Nimmo, Chief Executive, Wildscreen, UK



The best of Wildscreen award winning film screenings was another special event of the festival. Harriet Nimmo explained about Digital ARKive - the best collection of the world's finest wildlife films, photographs and sound recordings to create vivid, fact-backed, multi-media portraits of plants and animals that are freely available online.



Asian Panorama

The festival, for the first time has gone beyond the Indian boundaries to rope in some of the noted filmmakers of Asia. Some titles were: “Timber To Tibet” by Mohan Mainali, Nepal, “Moving Mountains” by Boyette Rimban, Phillipines, “Saving the Karakorams” by Aisha Khan, Pakistan and “Planet Earth Once” by Miri Urman and Amit Miller from Israel, “Once This Was My Home” by Samina Aslam, Pakistan.

These films underline the fact that people in the Asian countries share a common destiny with similar environmental issues and will help to forge a common platform for better understanding of and concerns. Thirteen films from Nepal, Thailand, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Israel, and Philippines were screened during four days of festival.

UK-CMS Environment Film Fellowships

The British High Commission collaborated with CMS in awarding The UK-CMS Environmental Film Fellowships on Climate Change. Four such Fellowships were awarded to filmmakers who have displayed a commitment to environmental issues through their films and each Fellowship was worth Rs. 6,00,000.



The British High Commissioner in India Mr. Michael Arthur presenting the trophy and citation to Mr. Vijay S Jodha



The selected fellows are **Ms. Geeta Singh, Mr. Vijay S Jodha, Mr. Nila Madhab Panda** and **Mr. Syed Fayaz**. The fellowships were announced at the Award presentation ceremony of Vatavaran 2005 on 24 November 2005 in New Delhi and the British High Commissioner in India Mr. Michael Arthur, gave away these awards. Fifteen short listed applicants made presentation to a selection panel out of a total of 27 applications received for these fellowships.

Inauguration of the Festival, November 21, 2005

Inaugurating the festival, Union minister for Urban Development, Mr. S. Jaipal Reddy said films were the most potent medium both to inform and motivate people about environmental issues and also to put the issues on the national agenda more seriously. 21st century being one of electronic media, it made sense. Well made films can move people to do something about the world they live in, he said.



Shri S. Jaipal Reddy lighting the inaugural lamp of the festival alongwith farmer couple, Ramiah and Janammah



Dr. Pradipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests welcoming the participants and delegates

Welcoming the participants and delegates, Dr. Pradipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, said environmental and wildlife issues needed to be brought into the mainstream with special emphasis on Youth.

In a unique gesture of appreciation, Dr. N Bhaskara Rao, chairman, Centre for Media Studies felicitated a farmer couple, Ramiah and Janammah from Khamam district of Andhra Pradesh, who had contributed to the environment by planting ten million (one crore) trees.

Noted film maker, Budhadeb Dasgupta and head, Tiger Task Force Ms. Sunita Narain were present at the function.

Shekar Dattatri's Monsoon—India's God of life—was the inaugural film of the festival.



Bounty of Awards for Environment & Wildlife Film Makers

Vatavaran 2005 concludes on November 24, 2005 with a bounty of awards to young producers and an appeal to TV channels to feature those films.

“Indian Leopards – The Killing Field” by Praveen Singh bagged the Best of Vatavaran 2005 Festival. “A Second Hand Life” by Nutan Manmohan won the Delhi Chief Minister’s award for the best documentary. “River Taming Mantras” by Sanjay Barnela and Vasant Saberwal won the best award in the Environment category.



The Best of Festival was given a cash prize of Rs.1,50,000/- and a citation. The other awards range from Rs. 50,000/- to Rs. 1,00,000/-. The categories awarded include Public Service Message, Wildlife Conservation, Environment, Student, Animation and Forests for Life. The best documentary awards in forest for life category was supported by Star.



Best documentary award in Wildlife category was given to “The Last Flight” by Nutun Manmohan and “The Policing Langur” by Ajay and Vijay Bedi produced for Public Service Broadcasting Trust. The Award carried a trophy, citation and award money of Rs. 1,00,000 each



2005 Festival Theme: Forest for Life awards was presented to “Invocations to the Mountain Goddess” by Christopher Rego. The Star award was given to best documentary under theme category to “Vikas Bندوق Ki Naal Se” by Biju Toppo and Meghnath. Best Animation film award was bagged by “Irony” by R Sathya Narayanan for Ramanujam Foundation. The award of Rs. 50,000, a trophy and citation was given.

The Award for Best Public Service Message Spot with Rs. 50,000 was won by “Do Your Bit” directed by Anand Thakur and produced by Ogilvy and Mather Advertising Limited for Eco-India. The student category award was given to “Fistful of Steel” by Leena Rani Narzary, Nidhi



Bal Singh and Sabir Haque for A J Kidwai Mass Communication Research Centre (MCRC), Jamia Millia Islamia. The award of Rs. 50,000 was given alongwith Trophy and a citation.



Eight awards worth Rs. 8 lakhs were supported by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Govt. of India.



Vatavaran 2005 awards were given in all to 10 filmmakers in seven categories at a packed India Habitat Centre auditorium by the Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Shri. Namo Narayan Meena and the Chief Minister of Delhi, Smt. Sheila Dikshit, on Thursday, 24 November, 2005.

Vatavaran Trophy



The special Brass trophy of hands holding up earth in a tree form was designed for Vatavaran 2005 festival. The Vatavaran Awards are symbolized theme of the festival – Tree. The Tree is an important symbol in nearly every culture. With its branches reaching into the sky, and roots deep in the earth, it dwell in three words – a link between heaven, the earth and the underworld, united above and below. A tree also bears seeds or fruits, which contain the essence of the trees and this continuous regeneration, is a potent symbol of immortality.

Photography Exhibition

An exhibition of wildlife and environment photography by Thakur Dilip Sing, Bangalore, Kamal Bhatt, Jamnagar, P. Madhavan, Delhi and Dr. V. Ramakantha, Coimbatore on the theme of the festival “Forest for Life” was on simultaneously.



Photography exhibition by Thakur Dilip Sing, Kamal Bhatt, P. Madhavan, and Dr. V. Ramakantha.

Film Bazaar

Vatavaran for the first time introduced Film Bazaar with more than 50 titles on variety of issues. Film Bazaar received phenomenon response, as it was an opportunity for individuals, activists, filmmakers and organizations to procure rare and exciting productions.





CMS Vavaran 2005 Team