



SHRI VATAVARAN 2006

ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE FILM FESTIVAL

A REPORT

The Second Shri Vatavaran 2006 was organized from January 18-19, 2006 at The Shri Ram School, Mousari Avenue, Phase III, DLF City, Gurgaon. Center for Media Studies (CMS) in collaboration with the Shri Ram School, organized the **Shri Vatavaran 2006** - Environment and Wildlife Film Festival.

Taking further the mission of **Vatavaran** towards spreading awareness and concern for environment and wildlife, Shri Vatavaran was specially targeted at sensitizing the younger sections who would be the pillars of the society in the very near future. Approx. 2000 students from the following schools of Gurgaon participated in the Festival:

- The Shri Ram School – Aravali
- The Shri Ram School – Mousari Avenue
- The Heritage School
- Tagore International School
- Pathways International School
- Scottish High
- Ryan International School

Shri Vatavaran 2006 did not end at the screening of the films only. It attempted to promote a platform on environmental and wildlife concerns. Towards this end, the screenings of the films were followed by Open Forums - interactive discussions between the filmmakers, subject experts and children bringing them on a common platform, to interact and to raise issues affecting the environment and conserving nature. This enabled the students an opportunity to interact with experts on varied issues such as Yamuna, Vultures, Elephants, Biodiversity, e-waste and Urban Wildlife issues.



DAY I

Inaugural Ceremony

The festival commenced with the Inaugural Ceremony on 18 January 2006 at 9.30 am in the school's Auditorium. The Chief Guest of the festival was Mr. Valmik Thapar, Director of Ranthambore Foundation. Ms. Sarita Mathur, Head of The Shri School, Gurgaon gave the welcome address which was followed by lighting of lamp by the Chief Guest, the filmmakers and subject experts present during the ceremony. Ms. Alka Tomar, Festival Director, Vatavaran introduced the concept of Vatavaran to the audience. Ms. Madhu Bhatnagar, Head Environment, Shri Ram School delivered vote of thanks.



Inaugural Ceremony of Shri Vatavaran 2006 Film Festival



Gathering at the Inaugural Ceremony

Festival Screenings

The inaugural ceremony was followed by screening of best of Vatavaran – environment and wildlife films in the Auditorium, which had a seating capacity of 750. The screenings were held for 2 hours from 10 am – 12 pm. The films that were screened on 18 January 2006 were *The Policing Langur* by Ajay and Vijay Bedi, *Cute Bunny* by Dhimant Vyas, *A Second Hand Life* by Nutan Manmohan and *Elephant – God or Destroyer* by Krishnendu Bose. The Film's Director and a Subject Expert were also invited to discuss the issues pertaining to the films. The directors present on the 1st day were Ajay and Vijay Bedi and Nutan Manmohan. Among the Subject Experts present were Dr. Iqbal Malik, Director of NGO, Vatavaran for issues related to langurs, Mr. Ravi Agarwal, Director, Toxics Link for the film *A Second Hand Life* on e-waste. Mr. Vivek Menon Managing Trustee, Wildlife Trust of India was invited to speak on elephants and the man-animal conflict. Each screening was followed by engaging question-answer session with the filmmakers and subject experts.



Workshop

After the screenings there was an interactive one and a half hours workshop exclusively for The Shri Ram School students with renowned wildlife filmmaker and Green Oscar winner Mr. Mike H Pandey on *Films as a Communication Tool* which commenced at 1.00 pm. Mr. Pandey showed an interesting documentary film on environment and marine life shot in Amazon region as part of his workshop and spoke on the web of life and explained how films are a powerful medium of expression and how visual medium has more impact. The workshop also had an interesting question – answer session with the students.

DAY II

Festival Screenings

The films that were screened on the 2nd day of the festival were *The Last Flight* on death of Asiatic Vultures by Nutan Manmohan, *Hitler*, a short public service message on air pollution by Rani Jeyaraj, *Yamuna* on the present state of the Yamuna and the Yamuna Action Plan by Nandan Saxena, *Kanha – Protecting A Paradise* on the role of forest guards in protecting wildlife reserves by Shekar Dattatri and *A Shivalik Monsoon* on 'The Paradise Flycatcher' by Rupin Dang. The directors present for the screening were Ms. Kavita Bahl for the film *Yamuna*. Among the subject experts were Dr. Nita Shah, BNHS - Vulture Advocacy Program for 'vultures' and Mr. Hari Dang, Padma Shri Award for 'bio-diversity' issues.

Dr. Nita Shah explained the importance of vultures in our life and the root cause of decline in the number of vultures which proved to be very informative. Mr. Hari Dang spoke about co-existence of the wildlife and human settlement in the protected areas.



Mr. Hari Dang during the interactive session after the film screening



Workshop

A Workshop on Urban Rural Linkages” was taken by Mr. Prabhakar Rao, a member of Kalpavrisish and a lecturer at the Zakir Hussain College, Delhi. The workshop comprised of screening of films *Tiling – Who are killing Delhi greens?* *Delhi - receding waters* and *Jardhar diary* by Mr. Krishnendu Bose. Mr. Rao spoke about biodiversity issues, the impact of the urban landscape on the rural environment and compare and contrast issues.



Mr. Prabhakar Rao at the workshop on 'Urban Rural Linkages'

MEDIA COVERAGE

The festival was covered by The Headlines Today Channel a division of Aajtak and The Hindu News daily.



A Correspondent of the Headlines Today Channel interviewing the school students

The festival generated a lot of interest amongst the students and there were enthusiastic questions from students after the screenings and workshops. The festival provoked a debate amongst students by sensitizing them to pressing issues of the present time.