

October - December 2006

Green Voice

Quarterly Newsletter

CMS ENVIS

Newsletter on Environment & Media



जहाँ है हरियाली ।
वहाँ है खुशहाली ॥



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CMS ENVIS Centre on Media and environment



CMS Environment

CMS ENVIS CENTRE

The CMS ENVIS Centre is a premiere centre designated by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, to facilitate information dissemination and further the cause of environmental awareness and sensitization. Since its inception, it has come a long way to establish itself as a key resource center, coordinating body and platform for information dissemination on environmental communication, strategies and media related activities.

Today, the Centre reaches out to a large number of people through its various activities. The ENVIS quarterly newsletter, *Green Voice* the gateway of information on environment and media -- is received by more than 1,000 readers, while its daily e-newsletter, *Green Media* (on environmental issues in print media) has a circulation of over 3,000. From time to time, the Centre also undertakes focused studies of 'green space' in print and electronic media, and issues coverage analysis on different contemporary issues. The *Clemenceau* is one such highly acclaimed publication.

CMS ENVIS also collates for its readers impressive databases of more than 12000 'green' news from national and regional dailies, 800 advertising agencies and 2000 audio-visual programmes, thereby facilitating easy access to prominent and relevant media information. The Centre has been an active and dynamic channel for reaching out to people through different communication tools such as newsletters, publications, research studies, case studies and websites, and has striven to build public consensus on and a network for environment conservation.

www.cmsindia.org/cmsenvis

In Black & White

Fest ends in high spirits

Correspondent : M. Ganguly

- From 'meaningful' cinema to interactive sessions

Ranchi, Dec. 10: If the response was anything to go by, the Ranchi festival on wildlife and environmental films, held from December 8 to 10, was quite a success. Organised by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS), New Delhi, the show was well organised and had people from all spheres attending.

"It's easy to raise awareness regarding environmental issues and wildlife through the medium of moving pictures. The response we got here was comparable with that we received in Chennai and Bangalore. In fact, it was better as this was a first of its kind festival here," said Aswini Sinha, the festival manager.

On most days, there were packed halls with special screenings for children and students. Yet another set of regulars were the students of mass communication and environmental studies. What left the organisers pleasantly surprised was the quality of interaction that ensued between the audiences and the filmmakers after each screening. All sorts of questions were raised, from simple to specialised ones, regarding ozone layer, as well as the qualities required in becoming a wildlife filmmaker.

"Some questions were really sharp," said Praveen Singh, an independent filmmaker from Delhi, who attended the festival. CMS also organised the festival to "foster dialogues among parties who have vested interests" in the issues showcased.

A seminar on mining and its impact of the livelihood of tribals was also held on the opening day. Representatives from the government, industry, tribals and activist filmmakers attended the talk. "A beginning has been marked. We must carry this on," said director Meghnath, two of whose films were screened.

"As someone who enjoys meaningful films, I would like to thank the organisers for bringing the works of Naresh Bedi, Nutan Manmohan, Syed Fayaz and Sekar Dattatri," said V. K. Singh, a regular.

Source: The Telegraph, Monday, December 11, 2006

A study centre in the wild

Correspondent: Staff Reporter

Siliguri, Dec. 13: With the serene Murti flowing nearby, call of wild birds, and an occasional trumpet from roaming herds of elephants in Gorumara National Park a few metres away, it could not have been a better choice for a nature study centre.

The first in the forests of north Bengal, the centre was opened today at Murti, 70 km from here.

"Nature lovers from educational institutions, corporate houses or any other association can stay in the tents," said Tapas Das, the divisional forest officer, Wildlife II Division.

"Participants at the camp can follow a forest trail, watch films and documentaries on nature and can even attend classes conducted by foresters and environmentalists. In short, people can enjoy and learn at the same time."

The rate for a 40-member group is Rs 1,600 per head for a four-day-three-night package (inclusive of meals) while for a 20-member group it is Rs 2,000 per head. Nine tents have been pitched in the area.

At Kalipur eco-village, on the northern fringes of Gorumara National Park, the package is a bit different. Four cottages have been erected there, each accommodating three persons.

"The 24-hour stay here includes an elephant ride, tribal dances in the evening and a visit to a nearby watch tower," Das said. The charges here are Rs 2,400 per cottage for three persons and Rs 2,100 per cottage for two persons, which also covers all meals.

State forest minister Ananta Roy also inaugurated the Medla watch tower and the Chukchuki lake today. Both are located a few kilometres from these two sites. "About 35 families of three neighbouring villages will be engaged at Kalipur. Some of them will also cater to tourists in Murti. The revenue earned from these sites will go to the community fund," the minister said.

Source: Deccan Herald, Thursday, December 14, 2006

Wild life study to be promoted in State

Correspondent: **Staff Reporter**

Bhopal: The "Save the Tiger" exhibition 'B with the big cat' was inaugurated on Thursday at the Regional Museum of Natural History by Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Dr. P.B.Gangopadhyay.

During his address Dr Gangopadhyay said that a lot of field work can be incorporated in conservation of the wild life. He further suggested participatory and activity oriented programmes.

He has agreed to provide the wild life related materials like films, CDs from PCCF office for screening in the exhibition. He further suggested the inclusion of the wild life studies in the curriculum, and more eco-tourism oriented programmes. Dr. Ramprasad, I.F.S(Retd) presided over the program.

Dr S.Sethuramalingam , scientist-in-charge briefed the visitors about the exhibition. The exhibition would be for a period of three months. Street plays would also be staged to increase awareness among students. Cat TV, in which students can become breporters would air informative films on the wildlife.

Source: *The Pioneer, Thursday, October 19, 2006*

NatureQuest forum launched in city

Correspondent: **Staff Reporter**

Shekar Dattatri's film 'Monsoon: India's God of Life' follows the southwest monsoon as it hits Kerala coast and travels upwards

HYDERABAD : NatureQuest, a forum to promote conservation awareness was launched in the city on Saturday with the screening of 'Monsoon: India's God of Life', a film made by Shekar Dattatri. The forum which was conceptualised in Chennai three years ago as a collaborative effort between the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, Trust for Environmental Education and Orient Longman had conducted 32 programmes there, so far. Offering a common platform for those interested in environment, it would be organising another programme at Vidyaranya High School, Saifabad on November 25.

Mr.Dattatri's 'Monsoon: India's God of Life', the one-hour screening on Saturday documented how wildlife in the country copes with summer while waiting for the onset of the monsoon. The film follows the southwest monsoon as it hits the coast of Kerala and travels up towards the Himalayas. Mr.Dattatri, the internationally acclaimed film-maker and winner of the Rolex Award for Enterprise, made a brief presentation. In a career spanning 20 years of making natural history and conservation films,he had produced over 20 documentaries.

Source: *The Hindu, Sunday, November 12, 2006*

2 new short films on wildlife

Correspondent: **Staff Reporter**

The Karnataka Forest Department, as part of the 52nd Wildlife Week celebration, released two short films on wildlife here on Tuesday. One of the two films The Great Indian Bustard and Black Bucks in Karnataka, directed by noted environmentalist Suresh Heblkar was screened.

The other film was on the upcoming butterfly park in the Bannerghatta Biological Garden.

Minister for Forest and Environment C Chennigappa released the two films.

Mr Heblkar's film, shot at the Ranebennur Black Buck Sanctuary, traced the issues plaguing the habitat of the Great Indian Bustard and the Black Buck.

Out of 491 identified species of the Great Indian Bustard in India, around 100 are in Karnataka.

According to findings of a survey by biodiversity expert Harish Bhat, habitat loss and predators have led to a drastic decline in the number of Bustards in the Ranebennur sanctuary.

Speaking to reporters later, Mr Heblkar said he had submitted suggestions to the State government to enrich the habitats of the two species

Source: *The Deccan Herald, Wednesday, October 11, 2006*

NGO VIGNETTES



Swechha - We for Change Foundation (SWFC) was launched in the year 2000 as the We for Yamuna campaign. It started with few young students deeply touched by the pitiable state of the river Yamuna, the 'lifeline' of Delhi that catered to almost all the water needs of the city but remained forgotten, ignored and unattended by the masses. 'We for Yamuna' remained as a campaign of youth from the leading colleges of Delhi. Today, with a huge volunteer base, it is one of the strongest voices on Yamuna in Delhi growing eventually into a full-fledged NGO.

The organization emphasizes on a three-pronged approach- Spread awareness, mobilize volunteers and action. For this purpose it has been advocating the cause of holistic environmental development issued through school children, college/university students, mass media, poster campaigns, debates and discussions regarding policy matters.

Even though the core concern has been the deplorable state of river Yamuna, the organization today works towards furthering the cause of environment conservation in a more holistic manner. And for this, it had been using mass media in the most creative and innovative manner. The idea being- Engaging various groups in a positive fashion for the cause of environment through activities like shramdaan, Yamuna walks and Yatras. Thus, communicating to the masses the need for a clean and healthy environment through media, banners, campaigns, and marches, street plays etc. Swechha has been actively engaged in building solidarity

Contact: www.swfc.org.in

ON AIR

The Green Belt Reports

<http://www.tveap.org/news/0812greenbelt.html>



New TV series revisits the Asian Tsunami's environmental lessons Identifies many remaining challenges in managing coral reefs, mangroves and sand dunes across coastal Asia.

On the eve of the Asian Tsunami's second anniversary, an investigative new TV series from TVE Asia Pacific raises these and other pertinent questions. In search of answers, it returns to many locations in South and Southeast Asia battered by the disaster, and talks to a cross section of scientists, activists and local community groups.

The Greenbelt Reports' uses a dozen case studies to emphasize that the only way Asia's remaining coastal greenbelts -- coral reefs, mangroves and sand dunes -- can be saved is by balancing ecosystem conservation with survival needs of local people. The series was filmed in mid 2006 in several coastal locations in India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand - countries that were hardest hit by the Tsunami on 26 December 2004. It comprises a dozen 5 minute video films, each a self contained story, and a half hour documentary that offers a regional overview of the state of greenbelts in Asia. Using compelling images, interview clips and brief narration, each film tells the story of a community, activist group or researchers engaged in saving, restoring or regenerating a coastal greenbelt.

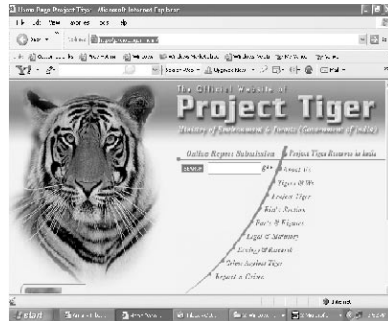
Produced on an editorially independent basis by TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP, www.tveap.org) a regional foundation specialised in communicating sustainable development using TV and video -- the series is available for broadcast, educational and civil society users. It comes free of license fee for all users in developing countries.

For obtaining broadcast masters, please contact TVE Asia Pacific's Distribution Division: sales@tveap.org.

OPEN WINDOWS Theme: *Tiger*

The Official website of Project Tiger

<http://projecttiger.nic.in/>



Project Tiger Scheme has been under implementation since 1973 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Government of India. This is the official website for the Project Tiger Directorate, Ministry of Environment, Government of India. It gives detailed information on the various aspects of the project like the gravity of the situation, facts and figures related to it, the ecological and legal aspects. The website also has an exclusive section for kids which engages children in a stimulating information exchange about tiger.

The Tiger Foundation

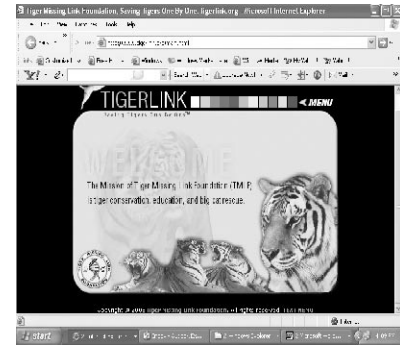
<http://www.tigerfdn.com/>



This website gives an insight about the Tiger Foundation; a Canadian conservation organization exclusively dedicated to the preservation of wild tigers. Here you will have the power to access every available fact, fable, thought and theory regarding *Panthera tigris*, as well as find an effective instrument through which you can directly support those working to prevent the extinction of these magnificent, but critically endangered animals.

Tiger Missing Link Foundation

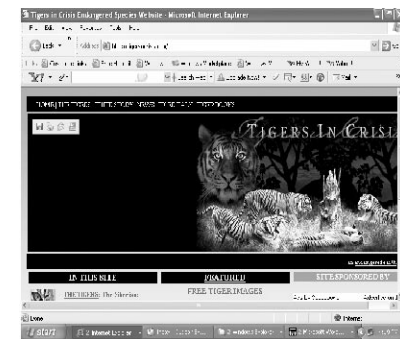
<http://www.tigerlink.org/>



The website is a useful link in getting information about the work done by them and also to get to know the relevant statistics. The website also would be useful to those interested in learning about tiger genetics, conservation and education. One may also find it helpful in terms of getting in touch with useful contacts and referring the reports published by the foundation.

Tigers in Crisis

<http://tigersincrisis.com/>



The website explains why the tiger population is at risk and tells about the efforts people are making to save them. The website contains an extended and updated tiger information; a News Section that focuses on news issues related to tigers; and a Media Center which has image and video clips available for viewing and downloading.

The website also offers an interactive space in form of tiger blog which is used primarily to 'discuss' the issues affecting tigers. Besides this, one can also download free high quality images of tiger.

Northeast of Eden

Darryl D'Monte*

The following copy in a currently running print ad in the 'Incredible India' series being placed by a tour operator sums up our romanticisation of the northeast. It reads: 'Northeast India is the land of Blue Mountains and Green Valleys. Nestled in the Eastern Himalayas, this region is abundant in natural beauty, wildlife, flora and fauna and its colourful (sic) people. A blend of all these makes it the most beautiful Eco-Tourism destination. Once you are here, you'll know why... Come and explore the place at your own pace.' The large, stunning visual is of a narrow suspension bridge perched high up in the canopy of a lush tropical forest, reminiscent of scenes from Sarawak or similar locales. This is one vision of the northeast: virgin forest, untouched by the ravages of modern civilisation. The wildlife sanctuaries of Kaziranga and Manas only confirm these stereotypes, even if the Bodos did decimate many rhinos in the latter, forcing UNESCO to declare it a World Heritage Site in danger.

There is another image, however, which seldom finds its way into the national consciousness, thanks also to the mainstream media. This is of the beleaguered and tousled visage of Irom Chanu Sharmila, the gutsy poet and human rights activist from Manipur who has been on a hunger fast against the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 for the past six years and is now being force-fed through tubes in her nose in New Delhi. Or the rear view of the intrepid eight women who similarly protested against the law in Imphal, in 2004, by stripping completely and bearing a banner across their bare bodies, the text challenging the army to rape them if they had the guts.

Perhaps now that the Chinese government has freshly staked its claim to Arunachal Pradesh, the political establishment will begin treating the northeast with more than the scant attention it has been receiving all these decades.

The saga of the continuing neglect of the region -- now being described as Seven Sisters and One Brother (Sikkim) -- was reinforced by many of the images and discussions at the recent Vatavaran travelling environmental film festival in Guwahati. Although Assam is by far the most integrated of the states, it is sufficiently ensconced in the northeast -- indeed it is

the entry point to it -- to enable it to resonate with several of these themes.

This green film festival is a spillover of the bi-annual competitive competition held in New Delhi by the Centre for Media Studies. By travelling to Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Srinagar and Ranchi this year, it enables many people to view a huge range of excellent documentaries. Since Doordarshan and other television channels have virtually stopped showing such fare, these filmmakers have nowhere else to show their work. Judging by the response, particularly of schoolchildren viewing the films in Guwahati, wildlife and environmental short films have a way of communicating a message directly that other documentaries do not necessarily have.

The images of the Apatani tribes in Arunachal Pradesh were quite different from what's in the tourism brochures. Here were gaunt and weather-beaten tribals going about their occupations, mainly planting paddy in fairly inhospitable terrain. They do not use animal-drawn ploughs, not out of religious sentiment, but more probably due to the undulating terrain and terraced fields that are irrigated by canals that flow by gravity.

This was no lyrical exercise in exotica: the women, at the easternmost extreme of the country, were engaged in the unremitting task of planting each seedling by hand. However, as the commentary underlined, what made their job somewhat less burdensome was that they performed it together. The community effort probably saved them from extreme misery. They lightened their task, on certain occasions, by drinking fermented brew and sharing their meals. When a village burnt down accidentally, people from the surrounding villages got together and helped rebuild the houses within days, also providing food and drink to the people.

Jyoti Prasad Das's long documentary titled *The Green Warriors* detailed how the tribals kept their tryst with nature. It was shot against a backdrop of grey skies and an unrelenting drizzle, ridding the film of any picturesque quality. Moji Riba, a younger filmmaker who hails from Arunachal Pradesh, exhibited a more modern sensibility in his shorter film titled *When the Mist is Lifted*. As an insider, he is able to draw out the contradiction between old and new lifestyles and practices. In remarks after the screening, he spoke about the difficulties of making films in the northeast, and understandably expressed his reluctance to make another film on Arunachal, which has been his staple over the years.

If all documentary filmmakers in the country find it difficult to raise funds for their films, and then find that there is no one to show them to, the predicament of those in the northeast can well be imagined. There is a dearth of media for the region as a whole. For instance, Mizoram acquired a daily newspaper only one year ago.

But all is not doom and gloom. Gautam Bora, the well-known filmmaker, recounted his experiences of showing a documentary in the small town of Jonai in Assam. Jonai is a one-cinema-hall town, and he arrived late for the screening because the roads en route were flooded (a perennial hazard in this state). But the exhibitor was convinced of its merit, and the screening was announced the next morning by the equivalent of a town-crier. A Mithun Chakravarti film running in the theatre was shelved for three days and the 33-minute documentary shown, with the exhibitor offering to split the proceeds. Many in the audience saw the film several times in succession. This only goes to show that, given a chance, people are interested in seeing their own situation on the screen, instead of some outlandish fantasy. It is just lack of exposure that makes people think that realistic films have no market.

Dilip Chandan, editor of the weekly Asom Bani, brought out by the 160-year-old daily, The Assam Tribune, highlighted how the print media too was in a precarious position. In this region, there is an almost perpetual "disturbed area" syndrome; the day before I arrived, ULFA detonated a bomb near Guwahati railway station. On an earlier visit to Assam, nine years ago, I met the activist Sanjoy Ghose in Jorhat and travelled with him to Majuli, the world's biggest river island, smack in the middle of the turbulent Brahmaputra. It was only months before he was tragically abducted and killed by ULFA because of his development work on the island.

Bora cited how he had made a film titled Tale of a River about the dam across the Kopili river, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, built by the North-East Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO). As is now distressingly familiar in a number of cases throughout India, the people who were displaced were never rehabilitated. Instead they are forced to eke out a living by going into the reserved forest to forage for what is known in foresters' jargon as 'minor produce'.

Bora, who has also made feature films, emphasised that he relied on portraying people's experiences in his work. The tussle between development and the

environment is a complex process, all the more so in the northeast.

If there have been controversies over smaller dams in the region, these are just precursors of what may well prove to be major confrontations ahead -- either within the country or between China and India. Everyone is eyeing the hydropower embedded in the mighty Brahmaputra, which is why some 'developers' term the northeast 'the Switzerland of Asia'. The region is also a stepping stone to Southeast Asia, which is a

CMS



CMS is an independent professional forum engaged in research, policy advocacy, advisory services and programme evaluation. CMS endeavors for accountability, responsiveness and transparency in policy making in public systems and services.

Over two decades, CMS has emerged as an interdisciplinary professional body with a wide range of concerns and capability in areas of communication studies, social research, social development, environment, public opinion research, training and performance appraisal. CMS is well known for its survey methodologies and field research, both qualitative and quantitative, including large-scale national studies.

CMS operates through specialized teams of professionals with multidimensional expertise. These teams include **CMS Environment**, **CMS Social**, **CMS Communication**, **CMS Academy** and **CMS Polls**. CMS has set up a **Transparency Studies Unit** and also brings out the *Transparency Review* periodical. The **CMS Academy** is well known for its workshops, seminars, training and orientation programmes for senior functionaries, decision-makers and those in the voluntary sector. The **CMS Media Lab** specializes in tracking news media, while the **CMS ENVIS Centre**, has been active in the field of environment and media. The **CMS VATAVARAN** film festival, initiated in 2001, is yet another well-known endeavour by this Centre.

Over the years, CMS has taken initiatives towards evolving a Citizens' Charter, social auditing, capacity building, transparency in public utilities, electoral reforms, information equity, good governance and campaign strategies. Its recent focus includes tracking RTI operations in the country. CMS initiatives with regard to regulatory frameworks, including for the environment, social sector and media, have also been well received.

growing economic power. This makes the area important for economic and political reasons. This November, the northeast council announced that the central government was going to launch a 'Look East' policy, leading observers to question whether it was going to look beyond the country's borders, but not see the suffering of the region's people.

Bora clarified that he was not a conservationist but had become 'entangled' in the larger issues. Soon after he returned from training in the erstwhile East Germany, he faced the Bodo conflict in his own backyard, as it were. The Bodos lived in villages just outside Guwahati, but have now disappeared from there. They were the aboriginals of the Brahmaputra valley who have been alienated from their own soil and environment. Bora cited how dams like the one across the Subansiri river in Dhemaji district came up 20 years ago but the canals were never built. So the paddy fields continue to be irrigated in the traditional manner by using the slope of the hills.

At the Guwahati festival, a young journalist called Amar Jyoti Borah presented me with a copy of his slim novel *An Insight into the Outburst: The Subansiri Valley Fury*, which is a fictional account of the people's protest against this dam. This tributary of the Brahmaputra literally means 'flowing gold' and contributes a tenth of the mother river's discharge.

Questions of identity, of what image to present of themselves, continue to plague filmmakers from the northeast. Mauleenath Senapati, a young director who has graduated from the Film and Television Institute (FTII) in Pune, put it most succinctly when he said that films dealing with the ethnic strife in districts like Karbi Anglong help filmmakers to define themselves. He cited three films in this connection: one on the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act by Paban Haobam, and two by Bora -- *Sons of Abotani* -- *The Missing* and *Tale of a River*.

Amba Jamir from Nagaland, who runs an NGO called Missing Link in Guwahati, asked to what extent documentaries helped the communities that were featured in them. In answer to a question from the schoolchildren present, Senapati clarified that documentaries -- as against feature films -- put the filmmaker directly in touch with people and there was thus instant communication. Krishnendu Bose from Delhi, who is completing a long documentary on issues involving tigers, cited how he had once taken a film to Warangal in Andhra Pradesh. An enterprising local TV cable operator dubbed the film in Telugu and

showed it to some 2,000 homes. Senapati mentioned how the great filmmaker Ritwik Ghatak, who taught at the FTII, once summed up the essence of filmmaking as being a question of one's attitude. Ghatak elaborated that a filmmaker had to acquire a child-like innocence about a subject and treat it with curiosity and simplicity.

***Darryl D'monte** was Resident Editor of *The Times of India* and *The Indian Express* in Mumbai. He writes a column on environment and development, which is published in several Indian newspapers and websites. His book *Temples or Tombs? Industry Versus Environment* was published in 1985. He is the chairperson of the Forum of Environmental Journalists in India.

Environmental Information System (ENVIS), India

Realizing the importance of environmental information and its dissemination, the Government of India, in December 1982, established an Environmental Information System (ENVIS) as a plan programme. The focus of ENVIS since inception has been on providing environmental information to decision-makers, policy planners, scientists, engineers and research workers all over the country.



Since environment is a broad-ranging, multi-disciplinary subject, a comprehensive information system on environment would necessarily involve effective participation of the institutions / organizations in the country that are actively engaged in work relating to different areas of environment. ENVIS has, therefore, devoted itself to networking with such institutions/organizations. A large number of nodes, known as ENVIS Centres, have been established in the network to cover the broad subject areas of environment, under a Focal Point in the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests.

The Focal Point as well as the ENVIS Centres has been assigned various responsibilities to achieve the long-term and short-term objectives. For this purpose, various services have also been introduced by the Focal Point.

ENVIS, due to its comprehensive network, has been designed as the National Focal Point (NFP) for INFOTERRA, a global environmental information network of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In order to strengthen the information activities of the NFP, ENVIS was designated as the Regional Service Centre (RSC) of INFOTERRA in 1985 for the South Asia Sub-Region countries.

www.envis.nic.in

October - December 2006

MEDIA ANALYSIS

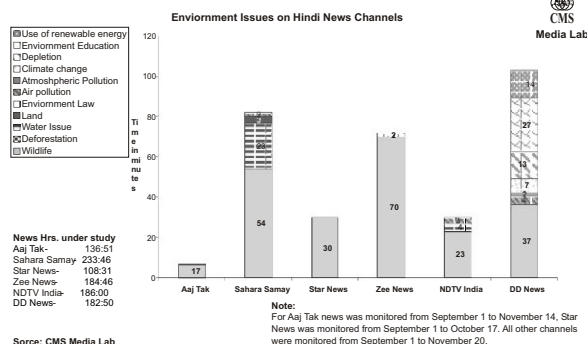
Roughshod to rural issues

Chandra Prabha

(Then) Deputy Director, CMS Media Lab

News channels in competition with entertainment channels and with a large number of channels in its own genre seem to have worked out a formula in newscast to buy viewers time and attention. Increasingly they devote more time to cater to our curiosity for non-news and whet our curiosity for more of such news. They impart little knowledge about issues facing the country or its development. In this way private news channels are redefining news criteria. This is established by high priority accorded to film and celebrity coverage, crime, religion, human interest and cricket that together take up from 79 per cent to 66 per cent of prime time (7 pm to 11pm) newstime on popular Hindi news channels. On Star News and Aaj Tak, the two most viewed channels in Hindi news genre, this content takes about 79% and 76% of newstime respectively.

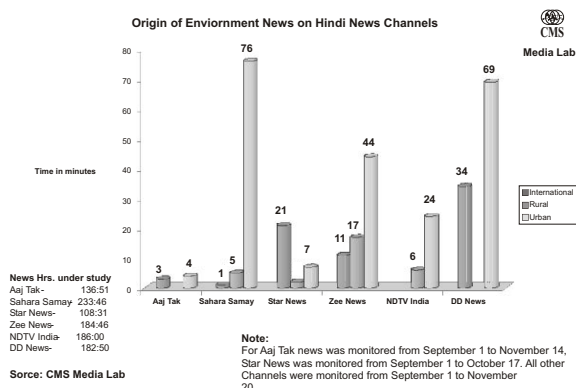
With these issues finding priority and popularity on Hindi news channels, issues of environmental concern that require investigation and follow up remain at the bottom of the pile. In its analysis of Hindi television news from Sept 1 to Nov 20, 2006, Centre For Media Studies found media lacking in raising any significant debate on numerous environmental concerns facing the country. Wildlife trafficking, poaching, hunting, zoos only figured as environmental issues on the media that took less than 0.1 per cent newstime on Aaj Tak and 0.5% on Star News. A similar trend was reflected on other channels. This gives a false impression that all is well with the state of country's environment and compliance of environment laws.



During our study period Doordarshan News, however, recorded marginally higher allocation of time (0.8 per cent of total news hours under study) to environmental issues, and presented diverse issues. Its reports dwelt on depletion and pollution of fresh water, climate change and the need for use of renewable energy.

Following the general trend, environment news has overall urban predominance. Even in environmental coverage news that appeals to the interest of urban population gets coverage. This is reflected in overwhelming coverage of wildlife stories with a focus on recreation. However, the news depicts little of rural India's reality, where people are battling with poverty, non-availability of drinking water, depleted and polluted water, increasing cost of farm productivity and overall decline in the environment. Since state of environment has direct bearing on livelihood in our country's rural areas, there is a need for awareness raising on environmental issues at all levels.

The share of overall rural coverage on channels monitored was 2.6% on Aaj Tak, 8.6% on Sahara Samay, 2.29% on Star News, 4.09% Zee News, 1.63% on NDTV India and 3.3% on DD News. Of this, environmental coverage of rural areas was nil on Aaj Tak and Doordarshan; it was 0.4% on Sahara Samay, 1.34% on Star News, 3.75% on Zee News and 3.29% on NDTV India. It be noted that Sahara Samay and Zee News that comparatively have higher rural coverage among private news channels otherwise, haven't given same priority to rural environment issue, though Sahara Samay shows diversity in overall environment coverage. The portion of newstime devoted to rural environment coverage to total environment newstime was 6.09 per cent on Sahara Samay, 6.6 per cent on Star News, 9.7 per



cent on Zee News and 20 per cent on NDTV. However, in line with the general trend in environment reporting, all rural origin stories on environment were about wildlife. While Star News reported on the sighting of a new type of bird in Arunachal Pradesh, Zee News reported on a case of suspected poaching and killing of 10 Chinkaras in Ujjain's Vikram Vatika; a leopard killing in Dudhwa National Park. During the period, Zee News also reported satellite imagery pictures indicating possibility of large reserve of groundwater in Barmer region of Rajasthan. NDTV reported hunting of black buck in Rohtak, and villagers flouting government order against ban on fishing in Gujarat. Sahara Samay reported only one rural environment story about villagers capturing a trouble making crocodile in rural Lucknow and giving it to the police. This was all there for rural environment coverage in the media.

Compare this with the coverage of environment news from urban areas of the country and from foreign

destinations. On Aaj Tak about 57% of time was given to environment coverage from urban areas; it was 92.68% on Sahara Samay, 23.3% on Star News, 61% on Zee News, 80% on NDTV India and 67% on Doordarshan News. Share of international news was 42.3% on Aaj Tak, 1.21% on Sahara Samay, 70 per cent on Star News, 15.27% on Zee News, 33 per cent on DD News. NDTV did not have any international environment coverage. Clearly, environment coverage from urban and international place gets precedence over rural areas.

Following the trend of past months in this year, DD News gave maximum time of 103 mins for environment coverage. It was followed by Sahara Samay at 82 mins, Zee news 72 mins, NDTV India and Star News at 30 mins each. Aaj Tak's coverage was least at 7 mins. In coverage of issue diversity also Doordarshan News and Sahara Samay offered maximum variety.

CMS ENVIS GREEN MEDIA e-NEWSLETTER

Daily e-newsletter Green Media, an electronic documentation of news and features, which appear in English News dailies in India.

Green Media satisfies information requirements of environmentalists, wild lifers, conservation activists, researchers, media professionals, filmmakers, political activists, NGOs/ scientific organizations, mass communication institutes, lobbyists and advocacy groups in an effective and functional

manner. The newsletter reaches to more than 3000 email boxes every day.

This e-newsletter also facilitates easy organization, maintenance of archival material electronically and quick retrieval of information. Presently, over twenty national dailies in India are documented in Green Media the largest ever-daily compilation on environment and wildlife.

With the click of the mouse, you gain access to all news and features and other updates on environmental issues including environmental management, air pollution, water pollution, noise pollution, ecology, wild life, nature and natural resources conservation, health toxicology, solid and hazardous waste, energy, policy matters etc. These topics are also available in the archives of CMS ENVIS. CMS has established this site to provide access to back files on news and features related to environment, wildlife and conservation issues.

For Subscription email to:
Web Master at webmaster@cmsindia.org



Talk Over

Meet Swati Thyagarajan, senior special correspondent with NDTV, here she speaks with Shalini Sharma about her passion and commitment to Wildlife Conservation through Visual Media.



How did your journey as an environment journalist begin?

I have always been interested in wildlife and environment. Even before I joined television I had an interest in the subject. I did my masters degree in

communication in Jamia and joined TV . At that time ten years ago wildlife was limited to documentaries on foreign channels and occasionally on doordarshan and companies like Miditech had done a wonderful job of bringing it to TV..but yet it was not on main stream news. After i joined NDTV in 1997 , I did several stories on the subject and that helped me gain experience in the field and when NDTV became an independent channel, Dr and Mrs Roy, my bosses gave me the opportunity to do my own show on wildlife as they knew that was my main focus and interest.

Are there any specific issues you feel more drawn to while looking for stories?

Yes, there are ...I am mostly interested in how people and the environment co-exist. To me it is in that confluence and conflict where the answers to all our wildlife management and conservation issues lie.

How was Born wild conceived? How about your experience with it?

I had been doing stories on the Olive Riddley turtles for a long time. I was very concerned with the death of these turtles in large numbers in Orissa. A few years ago i decided to to collect all my material and make a half hour special report on the issue and NDTV put that on air and it did really well. So that sort of gave me the idea that a format like that could work. So when NDTV went independent and Dr Roy gave me the chance to focus on wildlife, that was the format i decided on. Half hour reports on issues that concern our wildlife.

Wasn't it difficult to convince the channel for an exclusive show on environment when it has few takers?

Actually if it had been any other channel it would have been very difficult to convince the people in charge

..but i am lucky in that my bosses are equally concerned about these issues and NDTV is still a channel that will do what is important regardless of how it might be viewed in the market. BORNWILD however has done very well and it has had a huge response and i think we must acknowledge the fact that both national geographic and discovery and animal planet which are primarily wildlife channels do very well here so it is a myth to think that there is not enough viewers for this topic.

Do you see the ripple effect now (with respect to other channels taking such initiatives)?

Yes i do. I mean after all the ripple effect began with me really liking Living on the Edge with miditech.....although what i do is different.....but that had an effect on me and i see more environment news on other channels now and hopefully BORNWILD will only make other channels start their own shows like that.

Environment is often labeled as a drab subject. How do you make your stories interesting and attractive?

Well you need to take out the jargon, reduce the preaching and purely look at the issue and always always make it a story..and get the viewers to relate to the fact that they are part of the environment and its problems. Ofcourse being tv pictures are important so the better your story is visually then ofcourse the more interesting it isand animals always grab attention..so if you can relate an environment issue to people or animals then you usually get the viewers attention.

What difference do you see between broadcast coverage and print coverage of environment issues?

Well primarily print has a bigger advantage in that they do not need as many pictures as we do to tell a story..by no means am i saying that this makes their jobs easier or less important...it is just that they can do more than we can with say just a telephone conversation on an issueprint has also always done more stories that we have. For broadcast we need pictures ...that is the first rule ..so without our pictures..without the interviews there is no way to do the story..then it is also harder to get to some places with something as conspicuous as a camera ..and then premissions etc..people are always alerted to your to your presence making it all tougher ...however i will

say that print journalism has done a very good job with environment in that they have always done a lot of stories ..infact stories like tigers disappearing in sariska and all that were print stories first.

You have recently been awarded Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award for environment reporting in broadcast category. How did you embark on the winning report?

I heard about this village in karnataka where for years pelicans and painted storks came to breed and the villagers treated the birds well and also helped protect them. There is an NGO run by a very dedicated man called manu who works with the villagers to save the birds and keep them safe and to keep them coming back to the village ..and he does it all on his own with no help from the govt and even when lifestyles in the village started to change ..he worked with the villagers and convinced them to keep looking after the birds and to me this was a great story of local communities and conservation and what can be achieved if only people are sensitised and aware and made to feel that they are important and what they are protecting is part of their lives.....isolating communities from the forests and alienating them from their ancestral lands has caused much of the problems in our country with conservation.

And how about the future plans? What sort of programmes are you looking forward to?

Well lets see..hopefully slowly my budgets will get bigger and better and i will be able to do some really involved natural history type documentaries along with highlighting issues of conservation.....make sure that environment gets prime time coverage on news channels and make people understand that today what what with climate change and global warming and unchecked development ...that environment is one of the biggest and most important areas for news to get involved in.

Do you see hope for budding environment journalists?

Absolutely . The more people who express interest in doing the stories ..well the more stories that get done .. then hopefully the more the stories that get published or broadcast.

For further interaction contact: swati@ndtv.com

Swati Thyagarajan is Senior Special Correspondent with NDTV, she has s triple masters degree. She joined NDTV in 1997 as a reporter, her focus and passion has always been Wildlife & Environment.

Facets



Nirmal Ghosh, 45, is the Thailand Correspondent for the leading South East Asian paper The Straits Times. Before leaving India in 1991 for Singapore, Nirmal wrote 'The Jungle Life of India' (Lustre Press, 1991).

Subsequently he wrote 'Indian Wildlife' (Suntree, Singapore, 1992) and the novella 'Lord of the Grassland' (Landmark, Singapore, 1993).

Nirmal is a Trustee of The Corbett Foundation, which works with communities on the periphery of Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttaranchal in north India : a critical tiger, elephant, hog deer, mahseer and gharial habitat. From 2002-2005 he served on the Steering Committee of Project Elephant chaired by India's Minister of Environment and Forests. He was a member of the managing committee of Friends of the Doon from 2000 to 2004. He spends much of his time in the field working on wildlife issues. In December 2005 he chaired a panel discussion on wildlife and the media at the first International Media and Environment Summit at Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo).

A part time musician, he was a founder member of the acclaimed New Delhi-based world music band Ind-Tranzit, and performed the music for the soundtrack of the recently released documentary 'Living with Giants' - a one hour film on elephant conservation in India by Ashish Chandola. Nirmal performed the music with Gautam Ghosh, founder of Ind-Tranzit; co-wrote the script with Ashish Chandola; and presented and narrated the film. 'Living with Giants' won merit awards for Narration and Conservation Message at the 28th International Wildlife Film Festival in Missoula, MO, USA in 2005.

Nirmal has lived and worked in India (until 1991, and from 1999 to 2003), Singapore (1991-1994) and the Philippines (1994-1999) and covered much of Asia as a journalist. He currently lives in Bangkok, Thailand.

Contact: tigerfire@yahoo.com, www.nirmalghosh.com

Green Film Bazaar

With Green Film Bazaar we present exclusive films on a wide range of issues, talking about everything from air to water! Now is the chance to build your own collection of films on environment and wildlife and also submit your film for sale with us. Film bazaar is available online through out the year and filmmakers may add films to the list or purchase films at www.cmsvatavaran.org

The Many Faces of Madness

Amar Kanwar

English, Hindi/18 mins /2002/DVD-Rs. 1000

The film with its images of contemporary ecological destruction in India brings people face to face with the intensity and impact of globalization and industrialization, of commerce and greed, as it travels through images from different parts of Indian, revealing glimpses of traditional water harvesting systems, mining, chemical pollution, community forest protection, displacement, deforestation, biopiracy and ecosystems. In the present context of globalisation, many groups and individuals have used this film across audiences in schools, colleges and NGO's. It is also being used by groups to confront, initiate dialogue and sensitize representatives of governments, industry and those responsible for environmental destruction.

....there is Fire in Your Forest

Krishnendu Bose

English/58 mins/2000 /DVD-Rs. 1000

One of the central issues here is who does the forest belong to? who should it be conserved for? The film is located in Kanha in Madhya Pradesh. Kanha because it's probably the most famous Tiger park in the world and secondly it is also from where the first of the adivasis were relocated in the mid '70s.

The film's central character is a wildlife photojournalist Sanjay Sharma. He, is out on an assignment to Kanha and he meets Anita Pawar who works with the displaced adivasis of Kanha for years. Together with Anita he discovers a new world beyond his. Initially suspicious, Sanjay finally starts seeing the Adivasi perspective and broadens his understanding of

conservation. He interacts with villagers of Mawala on the buffer of Kanha. They have clear felled 100 acres of prime forest for farming, unable to survive the choking off their Nistar (collection of MFP) rights. Sanjay comes back and finishes his report. But his understanding of 'conservation' is now much more inclusive and he tells us the story of Kanha in a flashback.

Nagarhole -Tales from an Indian Jungle

Shekhar Dattari

53 mins/VCD-Rs. 300

'Nagarhole Tales from an Indian Jungle' is a conservation-oriented natural history film that graphically captures the changing seasons of the forest, and the hidden dramas that go on within it.

In God's Own Country

Rajani Mani & Nina Subramani

English/28 mins/2002/VCD-Rs. 400

This is the story of Kasaragode, Kerala, known as 'God's Own Country'. Who are the children of Kasaragode? What is their life like? 'In God's Own Country' tells the story of a community that refuses to leave its ancestral home but instead stays to fight for its basic right to pure air and water.

In the Forest Hangs a Bridge

Sanjay Kak

English subtitles/39 mins /1999/VCD-Rs. 450/ DVD Rs. 550

A film about a thousand foot suspension bridge built by the people of Adi village, an evocation of the tribal community that makes it possible, and a reflection on its strengths - and fragility - of the idea of community. Located deep in the forested hills of the Siang Valley of Arunachal Pradesh, in the northeastern extremity of India, these elegant structures of cane and bamboo are the distinctive mark of the Adi tribe. Sometimes as long as fifteen hundred feet, these bridges have traditionally been built by the community, with bamboo and cane from the forests, and building skills from the village. Their only tool is the dao, tempered steel blade, the size of a machete.



CALL FOR FILMS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Jeevika

South Asia livelihood documentary competition

20-23 July 2007, Delhi

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Jeevika Is the life and livelihood of entry-level professionals like rickshaw pullers, fishermen and mongers car mechanics... And many more unsung warriors battling the license raj across South Asia. Capture their stories and send them in to us.

Prizes Worth **Rs. 2 Lakh**

including support for
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Last date for Entries **31 May 2007**

Entry rules

is open to all filmmakers (professionals & amateur)
Entry in any language with english subtitles

Contact Us

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or call us on +91 11 2653 7456

For entry form, guidelines & film Ideas, visit

www.ccs.in/jeevika



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Environment calendar

January

- 4 - Oil Conservation Week
- 14 - Pongal
- 15 - Oil conservation Fortnight
- 30 - National Cleanliness Day
- 14-30 - Animal Welfare Fortnight

February

- 2 - World Wetlands Day
- 28 - National Science Day

March

- 2-4 - World Sustainable days
- 21 - World Forestry day
- 22 - World Water Day
- 23 - World Meteorological Day

April

- 5 - National Maritime Day
- 7 - World Health Day
- 18 - World Heritage Day
- 22 - World Earth Day
- 30 - No Tobacco Day

May

- 11 - International Migratory Day
- 22 - International Biodiversity Day
- 31 - World No Tobacco Day

June

- 5 - World Environment Day
- 8 - World Ocean Day
- 17 - World Day to combat Desertification

July

- 1 - Vanmahotsav Day
- 11 - World Population day
- 28 - World Nature Conservation Day

August

- 6 - Hiroshima Day

September

- 16 - International Day for Preservation of the Ozone Layer/ World Ozone Day
- 28 - Green Consumer Day

October

- 2-8 - Wild Life Week
- 4 - World Animal welfare Day
- 5 - World Habitat Day
- 13 - International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction

November

- 1 - World Ecology Day
- 6 - International Day for preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Arm Conflict
- 14 - Children's Day In India

December

- 2 - Bhopal Tragedy day/ National Pollution Day
- 11 - International Mountain Day
- 14 - National Day for Biological Biodiversity

International Day for preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Arm Conflict- November 6

On 5 November 2001, the General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict (resolution 56/4). In taking this action, it considered that damage to the environment in times of armed conflict impairs ecosystems and natural resources long after the period of conflict, often extending beyond the limits of national territories and the present generation. The Assembly also recalled the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which emphasized the necessity of working to protect our common environment.

If you are interested in sending us articles, features or any other relevant information please contact us at webmaster@cmsindia.org. Also send your feedback about the newsletter.

Compiled & Edited by:

Alka Tomar
Rohit Singh
Shalini Sharma

Published by



CMS

CMS ENVIS Centre

CMS Environment Team

CMS
RESEARCH HOUSE, Community Centre, Saket,
New Delhi-110 017
P: 91-11-26864020, 26851660; F: 91-11- 26968282
Info@cmsindia.org www.cmsindia.org

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Printed at FCC (rishi.fcc@gmail.com)