

PRESS NOTE

First time in its history, Asia's biggest Environmental Film Festival and Forum CMS VATAVARAN is organizing its Awards Jury Meet at Hyderabad from December 19-21, 2021 at the Pragati Green Meadows and Resorts Ltd, Hyderabad.

December 17, 2021, New Delhi: One of the most eminent filmmakers of India, **Mr Shyam Benegal**, who is often regarded as the pioneer of parallel cinemas in India, is heading a 10-member jury for the coveted CMS VATAVARAN Environment & Wildlife Film Festival Awards which is being held from December 19-21, 2021 at Pragati Green Meadows and Resorts in Hyderabad.

Pragati Green Meadows and Resorts is a one-of-its-kind resort in the country - it is a man-made eco-village developed on barren land creating a natural habitat. By following Vedic living practices and Rishi Sanskriti, Pragati Green Meadows and Resorts realized its cherished belief of Live and Let Live which is also very similar to the CMS VATAVARAN's philosophy. In this 85 acres of greenery, full of flora and fauna, the award jury members will be viewing all the **105 films** that have been nominated to select the winners in each category. **A total of 66 National films and 39 International films are competing in 9 different categories.**

The 11th CMS VATAVARAN Jury Committee comprises of jury members from widely divergent sectors and streams including cinema, conservation and media. The jury members include:

- **Dr. Anish Andheria**, President and CEO, Wildlife Conservation Trust.
- **Mr. Ranjan K Panda**, Convenor, Water Initiatives and Combat Climate Change Network.
- **Mr. Vedakumar Manikonda**, Chairman, Deccan Heritage Academy and Forum for a Better Hyderabad.
- **Dr. W G Prasanna Kumar**, Chairman, Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education (MGNCRE).
- **Dr. G.B.K. Rao**, Chairman and Managing Director, PRAGATI GREEN MEADOWS AND RESORTS LTD.
- **Mr. Anand Varadaraj**, Founder, Artistic Director, Bengaluru International Short Film Festival.
- **Ms. Manju Borah**, Eminent Film Director.
- **Mr. P. Raghuvver I.F.S.**, Prl. Chief Conservator of, Forests (Rtd), Telangana State Forest Development Corporation Ltd.
- **Ms. Ratna Chotrani**, Senior Journalist, PTI.
- **Dr. Ch. Sasikala**, Professor & Director, Institute of science and technology, JNT University Hyderabad.

In all, this Jury will decide 20 awards in 9 Indian and International categories. The eminent jury members will also be selecting two Best of the Festival Awards out of the 105 nominees.

Mr Shyam Benegal, who is heading the Award Jury, said, “CMS VATAVARAN is an important endeavour that everyone needs to support. Films are a powerful medium to address important issues to the masses.”

“The uniqueness of this festival is to promote and use meaningful films to connect people to nature and contemporary environment challenges. Aiming at diverse stakeholders, the festival is able to engage on complex environmental issues and inspire conservation efforts at multiple levels. This is the first step to restore and conserve the only planet we have!” said **Dr P N Vasanti**, DG CMS and Festival Director, CMSVATAVARAN.

Nomination Jury: For the first time the Nomination Jury for the 11th CMS VATAVARAN was held virtually from November 12 to 26, 2021. Nomination jury comprised of 29 representatives from various organizations like WWF, IYBN, Department of Science & Technology, JNU, IIT, High Commission of Canada etc. and it was chaired by **Dr V B Mathur**, Chairperson of National Biodiversity Authority, GOI.

In a three-tier selection process, after an initial festival directorate screening, 292 films were submitted to the Nominations Jury, who in five groups (5-7 persons each) watched the various categories of films and selected these nominated films. Now all these Nominations will be seen by the Award Jury to select the coveted CMS VATAVARAN Awards.

Upcoming 11th CMS VATAVARAN: All nominated and awarded films will be screened in the upcoming film festival and forum. The 11th edition has been scheduled to be held from February 10th to 16th, 2022 in hybrid mode for the first time. All full seven days of the festival will have online screenings and programs and will be further supplemented by offline (on-ground) programs on first three days (10, 11 & 12 February 2022).

About CMS VATAVARAN: CMS VATAVARAN is India’s premier environment and wildlife film festival and forum – it is aimed towards enhancing understanding, appreciation and shift in attitudes towards the natural world and to increase space for environmental issues in mass media and evolve a nationwide environment outreach framework. The festival taps into an important motivating factor for audiences everywhere: the emotional draw of connecting with a compelling story or character. The festival reaches out to people from all walks of life including filmmakers, civil society groups, government organizations, environmentalists, researchers, conservationists, policy makers, activists, public and private sector organizations and students of all ages and is recognized as a calendar event amongst filmmakers, environment, wildlife and conservation sector. Its unique twin track approach of organizing competitive and traveling film festivals and environment forum has positioned it as one of the most prestigious film festivals across the globe. Since its inception in 2002, ten competitive and 52 travelling festivals in 41 cities of 25 Indian states have been organized. Website: www.cmsvatavaran.org

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