Eight films from State for fete

Special Correspondent

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: As many as eight films on environment and wildlife from the State will compete for the top honours at the sixth edition of the CMS Vatavaran film festival on environment and wildlife to be held at New Delhi from December 6 to 10.

A 37-member jury headed by scholar and diplomat Abid Hussain has nominated 68 films for the festival. These include 51 Indian and 17 international films. The festival has more than 300 film entries from 27 countries and India.

Across the spectrum

The nominations from Kerala include *The Fall of Jatayu* (English) directed by Siddharth M.P. and Kyrikos Stylianopoulos, *Kaippad- The backwater paddy and fish field* (Malayalam) directed by Babu Kambrath, *The Bird Catcher* (Chithira Kuzhal) (Malayalam) by Majeed Gulistan, *Shelter* (Malayalam) by Raghu Gopalan, *Home - Our Garden of Eden* (English) by Suresh Elamon, *Vrischikathile Aalmaram* (Wind in the Banyan Tree) (Malayalam) by Romy Victoria, Chitra.V.S, Athira I.B, Swathi M.S, Kavya.M, Aswathi.M and Anjali P.M, *A Pestering Journey* (Malayalam, English, Punjabi, Hindi and Tulu) by K.R.Manoj, and *My Home is Green* (non- verbal) by Sajan Sindhu. *The Fall of Jatayu* tells the story of how the vulture king described in the Ramayana and his kind have once again, in modern times, been dealt a cruel blow. From the captive breeding centre for vultures at Pinjore all the way down south to the last stronghold of vultures in Wayanad, the film is a journey through belief, culture, and the struggle of a few dedicated scientists in their attempts to save a dying species.

The films will compete for CMS Vatavaran awards and the Rs.15-lakh cash prize.

Kaippad deals with the ecological importance of backwater marshes in the unique ecosystem of northern Kerala and the traditional, environment-friendly lifestyle followed by the local people. The film charts out the ecological changes and relationships between people and the environment through different seasons.

The Bird Catcher narrates the story of how three children find themselves in the forest. The daring journey together teaches them much about the environment and eventually transforms them into concerned human beings with healthier values.

Shelter tells the story of how a man in search of shelter from the heavy rain eventually outgrows his sanctuary and is again exposed to the vagaries of nature. The film is an attempt to highlight how man's greed for materialistic comforts is destroying the natural world.

Home - Our Garden of Eden reveals the wonders of nature in the backyard of our houses. *Vrischikathile Aalmaram* is an adaptation of the Russian short story *The Oak Tree of Autumn* by Yuri Nagibin. It embodies the message of a spiritual relationship between human beings and nature.

A Pestering Journey deals with two pesticide tragedies in India and their impact on society. *My Home is Green* uses an ant and a caterpillar as characters to highlight the impact of pesticide abuse.

With eight nominations, Kerala is behind Delhi with 21 nominations, followed by Maharashtra (five films) and Karnataka (four films). The nominated films will now compete for the CMS Vatavaran awards in various categories and also for the award money of Rs.15 lakh.

The winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held at New Delhi on December 9.

The film festival will be held at the Convention Centre, opposite to Jantar Mantar, New Delhi.