**Small Town Film Fest collaborate with Gangtok CMS VATAVARAN**

**Gangtok, March 16, 2015:** Gangtok CMS VATAVARAN screened two award winning films on environment today at Rachna Books, in collaboration with the Small Town Film Fest. The films that were screened include Finland (Wildes Scandinavein) by Oliver Goetz and Smarty Plants by Erna Buffie. Mr Raman Shreshta, Owner of Rachna Books who pioneered the Small Town Film Fest in Gangtok said, “This is a wonderful opportunity for us to witness such a world class films”

Dr Anil Mainra, Principal Secretary, Department of Science, Technology and Climate Change grace the evening as the Chief Guest of the day. Ms Minla Zangmu Lachungpa, Assistant Zoo Conservation Biologist, Himalayan Zoological Park, Gangtok was also present on the occasion. The screening was attended by the locals from Gangtok. Finnland (Wildes Skandinavien) by Oliver Goetz was screened. The film bagged the Best of Festival award at the 7th CMS VATAVARAN in New Delhi last year.

In other film screenings held at Paljor Stadium for the participants of the National Integration Camp. More than 250 youth of Sikkim, Bihar, Meghalaya, Assam, West Bengal and Odisha were present in the screening.

All 250 youth participated in a Biodiversity Quiz held at Paljore Stadium. Ms Minla Zangmu Lachungpa presented the questions. These questions dealt with environment, wildlife and other biodiversity related areas of different states. Quiz was conducted by Mr Sundeep C Srivastav, Head Coordination, CMS VATAVARAN.

Gangtok CMS VATAVARAN International Film festival and forum on environment and wildlife has been organized for the first time in Sikkim, It will conclude today with a prize distribution ceremony and closing ceremony from 3:00- 5:00 pm at Paljor Stadium, for the slogan writing competition and biodiversity quiz that was held today. More than 100 entries were received in Hindi, English and Nepali in the slogan writing competition conducted on March 14, 2015.

The week long film festival that began with a gala inaugural ceremony presided by Hon’ble Minister, Shri Tshering Wangdi Lepcha, had film screenings, panel discussion of biodiversity conservation challenges in Sikkim, filmmaking workshop, felicitation of Green Ambassadors, interaction of students with Green Ambassador Nosang Limboo, nature trail, slogan writing competition, cleaning drive and biodiversity quiz.

The screenings received overwhelming responses from everyone, particularly from students. More than 30 schools from across the state participated in the film festival. Youth from colleges and university attended the screenings and workshop.

Mr Sundeep C Srivastav, Head Coordination CMS VATAVARAN team said he was overwhelmed by the response to this festival in Sikkim. He thanked all those who supported and participated in this six day festival. He was especially grateful for local youth who volunteered at the festival to assist the team of CMS VATAVARAN in making this successful.

The local press also covered the film festival on a daily basis. The film festival has reached out to more than 4000 participants in its endeavour to spread the message of environment awareness among people.

**ABOUT CMS VATAVARAN :** Initiated in the year 2002 by CMS, CMS VATAVARAN – India’s premier environment and wildlife film festival and forum 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 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 organisations and students of all ages and is recognised as a calendar event amongst filmmakers, environment, wildlife and conservation sector. Its unique twin track approach of organising competitive and traveling film festivals and environment forum has positioned it as one of the most prestigious film festivals across the globe. Till date 39 festivals have been organised in 30 cities of India. The travelling festivals are organised in state capitals and other important towns and cities. **www.cmsvatavaran.org**

**For more information, please contact:**

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