

Painting the town green

Critically acclaimed films, environment awareness programmes and competitions will mark the upcoming Kirloskar Vasundhara International Film Festival



S Nallamuthu's film 'The Clash of Tigers' will open the fest; and (left) Ahmednagar's Rahibai Soma Popre will receive the Vasundhara Mitra award

Vinutha Mallya
@timesgroup.com

TWEET @ThePuneMirror

From a small exhibition at an industrial expo, the Kirloskar Vasundhara Film Festival (KVIFF) has grown into a full-fledged event on environment and wildlife, recounts Vinendra Chitray, festival director of KVIFF. The festival has now spread to 30 cities across eight states in the country. The 13th edition of KVIFF is set to take off in the city next week, with 161 films from 20 countries, including India. In addition to a number of interests that people in Pune share, there is a special class that cares for the environment, believes Chitray. "The audio-visual medium is a powerful tool for presenting ideas. That is why we chose the format of the film festival," adds Chitray.

The collection of films includes critically acclaimed shorts, documentaries, small-message films and award-winning films, which cover ecological issues, positive initiatives and success stories. They are categorised into 20 sections, one of which features films in Marathi. This year, KVIFF will open with the Indian premier of acclaimed wildlife filmmaker S Nallamuthu's *The Clash of Tigers*, produced for National Geographic Channel. It features the story of a family of Bengal tigers in Ranthambore.

This year's winning entries of the competition section of the film festival will also be screened. They include Kunal Vohra's *Plastic Cow* (first prize), *Green Gold on Fire* by Abdul Rashid Bhat (second prize) and *Searching for Solution — Blue Bulls* by Anil Yadav (third prize). Two films that will receive consolation prizes, *Kam The Crow* by Pune-based director Nivedita Joshi, and *Maghiv* by Anand Kulkarni, will be shown too. Besides these, the best of CMS Vatavaran Film Festival, Woodpecker International Film Festival and Moving Waters Film Festival, as well as award-winning films of Maharashtra Government's environmental film competition will be screened.

Among the list of films is also *Gyand - Queen of De-*

Rahibai Soma Popre, who has created a seed bank of a variety of crops. Of the other awards that will be presented at KVIFF, Chaitram Pawar, a grassroots leader from Dhule's Baripada village will receive the Vasundhara Samman; Dr Madhukar Bachulkar, principal of Vijay Singh Yadav Science College in Peth Wadegaon, Kolhapur, will be given the Green Teacher award; and Nagpur-based journalist Rakhi Chavan will be presented with the Eco Journalist award.

The festival theme, 'No to Plastic, Yes to Earth', has been inspired by UN's call on World Environment Day this year to 'Beat Plastic Pollution', informs Chitray. "We have organised 12 conferences related this theme. One of them is a round-table conference that will discuss the impact of plastics on marine biodiversity, pollution from domestic use, and their effects in health. Another will focus on 'Waste to Wealth', which talks about turning plastic into wealth," he says. One of the highlights during KVIFF is a clutch of films made by students from 16 colleges in the city on the green initiatives undertaken in their campuses as part of KVIFF's college outreach programme in the last three years. "We are trying to bring a change on campuses and these films show how the management, staff and students have worked towards the theme of 'Green College, Clean College'," explains Chitray.

The success stories in zero waste management and curbing water pollution will also be showcased. About 30 films, more than 20 in Marathi, by students of Solapur University's colleges on the theme of water pollution, will be screened.

In addition to films, KVIFF will have talks, demonstrations, an exhibition of more than 100 photographs, a cartoon exhibition; a competition of street plays in which 25 teams from the city's colleges will take part; an Eco Bazaar; and an eco quiz competition. The festival will close with the screening of *Racing Extinction*, a documentary directed by Oscar-winning director Louie Psihoyos, which looks at the extinction of several species caused by human impact on climate.

A three-year action plan for the conservation of Jamnadi will be launched at KVIFF, beginning with a seminar (Jan 4) and a walk from the river's source to Pashan Lake (Jan 6). "This is a start. The story will evolve. We hope that individuals and organisations will get energised," says Chitray. KVIFF is a catalyst that brings together decision makers and common people, he adds. "Our basic aim was



Vinendra Chitray