



Abhishek Bachchan joins Jury members to felicitate ‘Green Heroes’ of western India at U.S. Consulate Film Award Ceremony

Mumbai, April 25, 2017: Ace actor Mr Abhishek Bachchan joined U.S. Consul General Thomas L. Vajda, Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General TERI and Jury members to felicitate “Green Heroes” of western India who were showcased in short films highlighting the grassroots environmental work that the heroes are doing in their local communities. The Green Heroes Workshop and Festival was organized by the U.S. Consulate General, Mumbai in partnership with The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Awards were given to the top three rated films: “Paanch Pattiyon ka Mantra” about an organic farming project in Dewas, “Tale of a Doctor” about watershed management in Pune, and “The Birdman of Chora” about preserving the mangroves of Goa.

As part of this effort, last fall TERI identified Green Heroes in the five western Indian states of Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra and paired the heroes with up-and-coming filmmakers to create films of less than five minutes documenting their good works. To support this creative venture, TERI organized film workshops in the cities of Ahmedabad, Indore, Mumbai, Panjim and Pune. The program resulted in the submission of 22 insightful and heart-warming short films about Green Heroes who are working in diverse environmental fields such as forest and water conservation, composting, wildlife protection, waste management and clean energy. The ten best films from among these were short-listed and screened at the April 25 award ceremony, and the top three were selected by a **jury panel that included Shyam Benegal, TV anchor Ravish Kumar, well-known media figure Sabbas Joseph, TERI’s Communication Advisor Pankaj Saxena and the U.S. Consulate Cultural Affairs Officer.**

“As my very green-minded daughters often remind me, we are incredibly fortunate to have this beautiful planet as our home. Yet our growth and development have seriously taxed our planet’s resources, and we need to work together to find sustainable ways forward,” said **Consul General Vajda**. “As a big step in that direction, I’m honoured to help showcase the inspiring work being done by Green Heroes across Western India. I truly believe that the unsung heroes featured in our films deserve a tremendous amount of recognition, appreciation, and support for the great work they are doing to help India grow and prosper sustainably.”

“I am privileged today to honor these Green heroes armed with short films out to preserve Mother Earth. These films underscore that each one of us need to be aware about our



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collective responsibility toward preserving and protecting our environment and ecology,” said **Mr. Abhishek Bachchan**. “Being in this field, I know how powerful films are when backed with strong messaging. I hope these films help create greater awareness and broader engagement for greener and cleaner environment.”

Speaking at the event, **Dr. Ajay Mathur, Director General, TERI** said, “By training the next generation of documentary filmmakers to make films on Green Heroes, we hope to generate broader support for local initiatives to protect the environment. This has been a very satisfying experience for us - both in terms of finding people at the grassroots who are providing solutions to many of our environmental problems, and in discovering great storytellers to share the stories of these Green Heroes with the world.”

In a video message, **Mr Suresh Prabhu, Hon’ble Minister for Railways, Government of India**, said, “Making India and the world green is one sure way of addressing climate change. To do that we need many interventions, one of which is champions who people can emulate and whose examples can be replicated in many forms. This is a very good beginning, and therefore I wish all the best to TERI, which has been doing commendable for decades. I congratulate all the Green Heroes.”

About TERI

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) is a leading think tank dedicated to conducting research for sustainable development of India and the Global South. TERI was established in 1974 as an information centre on energy issues. Over the decades, it has made a mark as a research institute, whose policy and technology solutions have transformed people's lives and the environment.

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About the winning entries:

Paanch Pattiyon Ka Mantra- Best Film

Green Hero - Samaj Pragati Sahyog



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A film by Aajad Singh Khichi and Iqbal Hussain - Working for over two decades, Samaj Pragati Sahyog has been transforming the lives of thousands of small and marginal farmers by helping them to adopt low-input, self-reliant, and sustainable agriculture. 'Paanch Pattiyon Ka Mantra' focuses on Sumanbai Goyal, one such farmer who makes a potion derived from five kinds of leaves that naturally repels pests. This has helped her in earning extra income.

Lamkani: A Tale of a Doctor - First Runner Up

Green Hero: Dr Dhananjay Newadkar

A film by Gandhar Parkhi and Anoop Jaipurkar - Lamkani, a drought-prone village in Dhule, has turned into flourishing grassland that supplies fodder and milk to neighbouring villages, thanks to the efforts led by Dr Dhananjay Newadkar, who began an awareness drive and motivated the villagers to volunteer labour to conserve soil and rainwater.

The Birdman of Chorão - Second Runner Up

Green Hero - Uday Mandrekar

A film by Shashank Bhosale, Anderson Mascarenhas and Rohini Shetkar - Uday Mandrekar, a boatman, is now known as the Birdman of Chorão, an island of Goa, for his in-depth knowledge of local avian life and his undying zeal to clean and protect the mangroves. He sensitizes visitors and his fellow villagers to value the natural heritage of Chorão.

Green Soil - Special Jury Mention

Green Hero - Sunil and Priya Bhide

A film by Keerthi Raj B S, Vivek Kannadi and Danish Kaur Pannu - 'Green Soil' is the story of how Sunil and Priya Bhide turned their sixth-floor terrace into a mini-garbage treatment plant. Driven by passion and responsibility, they make their own soil from biodegradable waste and grow 100 plant varieties, including papayas and bananas on their sixth-floor terrace in Pune.