

# Filming wildlife contributes to conservation, says Bedi



**AT THE LAUNCH:** Children inaugurating the 14th edition of Kirloskar Vasundhara International Film Festival. **RAJIV ARORA**

## ST CORRESPONDENT

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**PUNE:** Explaining how filming wildlife helps contribute to conservation, Filmmaker Vijay Bedi said, "Our first film was on Red Panda. The animal is even more endangered than tigers. However, there was very limited documentation of this animal. Luckily, we successfully made the film. It was the first time that red pandas were recorded mating on video. The film won accolades, and the red panda conservation programme started."

He was speaking at the inauguration of the 14th edition of Kirloskar Vasundhara International Film Festival (KVIFF) at Balgandharva Rangmandir on Friday evening. Bedi, Solapur-based geologist and water warrior Shrinivas Vadagbalkar and the trio of Ladakh's wildlife guards Khenrab Phuntsong, Tashi Tsering and Smanla Tsering were felicitated during the inauguration.

This year, Bedi delivered the Vasundhara Talk on 'Camera, a tool of

## KVIFF AWARDS

- Vijay Bedi: Kirloskar Vasundhara Mitra (Filmmaker)
- Shan E Shan: Kirloskar Vasundhara Mitra (Activist)
- Prof Shrinivas Vadagbalkar (Green Teacher)

conservation'.

Another film by Bedi, "The Secret Life of Frogs", did not just win accolades for its filmmaking, but helped start the conservation of amphibians.

He made yet another film on dancing frogs, kumbhara frogs and purple frogs. "Around half of amphibian species are in decline and a third are endangered. However, we found that only a handful of researchers in India study amphibians. While filming, we recorded some things that nobody had seen or studied before. We are using our film to write a scientific paper. The idea is to try to use this medium to spread the message across,"

Bedi said.

"We need to show people the ugly picture too. We have to show people how the environment has been harmed. We need to start looking into our own greed," he said.

"We are also trying to declare purple frog as the State animal. The idea is to try to use this medium to spread the message across," added Bedi.

Vadagbalkar, who is an expert on groundwater, said the groundwater condition in Maharashtra is very critical. "We need to store each and every drop of rainfall, not just as groundwater, but as stored water in lakes and ponds," he said.

Khenrab Phuntsong emphasised on the importance of community participation.

He said, "People's participation is a must for success of any project in India. Only when you engage the people, who are involved or are directly impacted, you can make a difference."

Atul Kirloskar and Gauri Kirloskar of Kirloskar Group and Virendra Chitraw of KVIFF were also present.