



Jeevika
south asia livelihood documentary competition

*“Life would be much easier without
thousands of regulations, restrictions and
licenses” Swaminathan Aiyar
Speaking at the Inaugural Ceremony*

**20-28 January 2006
New Delhi**

Introduction



“The best of the films make me angry-REALLY ANGRY with the elitism & arbitrariness of laws that seek to create some kind of “suitable” world, irrespective of its impact on lives & livelihood.”
Mohit Satyanand, 2005 Screening Committee Member

Say the word “enterprise”, the people who come to mind are Tatas, Ambanis, Narayan Murthi and Azim Premji. An ordinary person earns his living in different ways. Scrap dealers, elephant mahouts, blacksmith, hawkers, madaris, manhole workers, fisherman, construction labourers, bird catchers, rag pickers, everyone works hard to make a living in this country. Are not these entrepreneurs? They definitely are, but their enterprise has been curtailed by innumerable laws, regulations, religious practices or social systems. This has been the underlying theme of the South-Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival “Jeevika”, which was organised by the Centre for Civil Society, in New Delhi from 20-28 January 2006.

Jeevika is organized with the objective of documenting livelihood issues and is a part of an attempt to bring to focus our policies which have liberalised the sectors from which the middle classes earn their livelihood, but still keep the entry-level professions under licence raj, thus keeping a nation under imposed poverty.



Starting with a search for films that document livelihood, Jeevika in her three years has interrogated and expanded definitions of livelihood. Jeevika has expanded the understanding of public policy, given it a human form with stills, sounds, stories and storytellers, and then gone beyond it.

Jeevika 2005 film makers at the Jeevika South Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival

From 38 entries in 2003, to 65 in 2004 and 85 in 2005, Jeevika have expanded its reach geographically and regionally, the films screened at Jeevika covered diversified range of issues from sex work to dying art forms to manual scavenging to animal rights, aroused interest, made people debate, disagree and even dismiss, but most importantly made the audience aware of and appreciate the struggle for livelihood which defines the sense of identity, and gives us dignity and, in many ways makes our existence possible.

The search for narratives on livelihood in 2005 has taken us through **85 films (34 made by students) from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Serbia.** The stories were told in Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Marathi, Nepali, English, Konkani, Gujarati, Bengali, Telugu, Kurukh, Oriya, and Tamil; in their songs and shrieks; and sometimes even in their silence.

21 shortlisted documentary films were screened all across the capital at India Habitat Centre at more than 25 colleges and schools. In addition to the screening of films, the Jeevika festival offered a two-day workshop on **“Research & Documentary making”** and a Seminar on **“Poverty, Profits & Entrepreneurship”**. It attracted large number of attention from youth, elderly people, various professionals, researchers, documentary makers, policy makers, media, radio channels, members of civil society. **Over 2000 people participated in the Jeevika festival.**

India Habitat Centre, Delhi : January 20-22, 2006

The Jeevika festival began with the premiere of 21 best films at the India Habitat Center from January 20-23, 2006.

Inaugural Ceremony: January 20

The Inaugural Ceremony could not have had a better group of panelists who gave livelihood the justification it deserves as an issue of public policy.



**From Left to right:
Swaminathan Aiyar addressing
the audience, Parth J Shah,
Deependra Singh Hooda &
Rajendra Singh**

On the panel we had eminent personalities including Swaminathan Aiyar (Senior Journalist), Rajendra Singh (Tarun Bharat Sangh, Magsaysay award winner), Deependra Singh Hooda

(Noted Parliamentarian) and Parth J Shah (President, Center for Civil Society)

"Delhi is a city of street hawkers and rickshaw pullers, not bureaucrats. Centre for Civil Society is doing great work in providing a platform in showcasing struggles and sensitising people towards them." **Swaminathan Aiyar**

"I agree we have been slow and that the demand has far outstripped supply. We need to downsize the government and rely more on our abilities. The answer to the questions lies in less government and not more. The business of the government should be to stay out of the business. The policy today should be to 'review, revise and remove'." **Deependra Singh Hooda**

"Large number of day-to-day livelihoods is illegal and criminal because of the license raj." **Rajendra Singh**

Screenings of Films

Audience watches the Jeevika films at India Habitat Center, Delhi on January 22, 2006

All 21 films were screened over the three days and received great round of applause from the audience. Over 250 people came and saw the films that conquered the hearts of many. The screenings were interspersed with discussions with the film makers.



Also screened during the festival were "Till the Bamboo Bends" by Prasantanu Mohapatra, "Jatra Jeevan, Jeevan Yatra" by Kapilas Bhuyan. Three filmmakers had participated in the previous Jeevika Competition and had been provided support for these films by Centre for Civil Society.



The Jeevika festival came alive with the street play created and performed by energetic theatre group of Pravah. They performed the **Nukkad Natak** on the issue of Livelihood. The performance and the message was well appreciated by the viewers.

Various **display stalls** of select development sector organizations to share their work were set up outside the Gulmohar Hall—Kriti Film Club, Magic Lantern Foundation, *The Indian Express*.

Audience speak

"I didn't know that a coolie's (porter's) badge costs him three lakh rupees. The documentaries have really touched a chord." **Kanika Anand, journalism student**

Award Ceremony: January 22, 2006

Jeevika supports and encourages film makers to come with original ideas of capturing livelihood in such a unique and visually creative way.

From Left to Right: Tareque Masood, Kiran Bedi, Gurcharan Das, Kuldip Nayar and Rakesh Sharma

The Award Ceremony was graced by Kiran Bedi (Senior IPS officer) as the Chief Guest, Gurcharan Das (columnist), Rakesh Sharma (Filmmaker, India), Tareque Masood (Filmmaker, Bangladesh) and Kuldip Nayar (Senior Journalist).



Rakesh Sharma and Tareque Masood honored the winners by presenting them with the Jeevika trophy designed and produced by renowned glass artist Vijay Kowshik exclusively for Jeevika.

"THE poor do not need charity, but an enabling environment. Lets give them an opportunity to rise....Delhi is a city of street hawkers and rickshaw pullers, not bureaucrats." **Gurcharan Das**

"Absence of adequate livelihood opportunities leads to crime." **Kiran Bedi**

"Laws need to be removed. Reforms need to be made at the micro-level. Let us give them an opportunity to pursue their profession with dignity." **Kuldip Nayar**

"These are difficult times. Documentary is being threatened by big commercial cinema, like street hawkers, it is getting marginalized. But thanks to the digital revolution, the future of documentary is not so bleak. Documentaries are finding place in commercial theatres." **Tareeq Masood**

"You should be far more masochistic. You should not become tired after making one film; instead you should work with greater vigour. The films should be distributed well. There is no point in making a good film which no one is going to watch." **Rakesh Sharma**



First Prize: Rs 45,000

“One Show Less” by Nayantara C Kotian
(Student Film, Institute: NID-Ahmedabad)

Ms. Nayantara C Kotian on receiving the first prize at Jeevika award ceremony

“One Show Less is a very accomplished film that uses the craft of cinema with finesse. It tells a complex tale in a manner that brought to fore the quirky, funny, engaged and resilient human spirit. It makes its points with sophistication and avoids the pitfalls of documentary. Most importantly, it takes a human look at an institution that has survived at the edges of polite societies, familiar but unknown: the cinema of the poor”. Jury Comments

Second prize: Rs 30,000

“Fight for Survival” by Dakxin Nandlal Bajarange,
(Ahmedabad)

Dakxin Nandlal Bajarange receiving Jeevika Trophy from Rakesh sharma & Tareeq Masood

“Fight for Survival was successful in bringing out very clearly the conflict between sets of activists, between man and nature, and between law and people. The film adds a new twist to the old tale: the inhuman treatment of the madaris by the animal lovers, a brutal act that is criticized even by other animal activists” Jury comments



Third Prize: Rs 20,000

“Treacling Down” by Upali Gamlath (Sri Lanka)

Upali Gamlath addressing the audience after receiving the third prize

“Without using any narration or interviews the filmmaker makes a loud statement indeed, about labour and its lack of value”. Jury comments

Best Student Film: Rs 10,000

Aamchi Kasauti by Rivu Laha (FTII, Pune)

Rivu Laha holding Jeevika trophy with Rakesh sharma & Tareeqe masood

"Aamchi Kasauti dealt with a very novel subject. It was a well-shot and well-constructed film that developed visual text on an unknown facet of Pune life." Jury comments



Special Jury Mention

"Pretty Dyana" by Boris Mitic (Serbia)

"Pretty Dyana celebrates the spirit of life in the face of adversity and tells the story of resilience. It steps away from the usual victim mode and presents the life of gypsies—a community feared and rejected by Serbian society—and paints a picture of humour, passion and zest for life". Jury comments

Audience Award: "Kaagda Peeth: The Crow's Back" by Sagarika Suri, Ipsit Patel, Balaji Rajkumar, Rika Chaudhury

The award was given on the basis of votes given by the Jeevika audience.

Given the need of funding, Jeevika would provide **financial support** to select directors of the short-listed entries for a future film project on a related issue of livelihood. CCS has expanded this support from Rs 1 lac in 2003 to Rs 5 lacs in 2005. Since 2003, three films have been supported with this funding.

Screenings of Films: January 23-28, 2006

To do justice to the great work of the filmmakers, Jeevika films were taken to over 25 colleges and schools in addition to its usual three-day premier at the India Habitat Centre.



Jeevika screenings at colleges & Schools

Over **1300 students** participated in the screenings which were followed by intensive discussions with the film-makers.

The film-makers traveled with the Jeevika team from one college and school to another spreading the message of their films and answering the queries of students who probably had never even heard such stories before.

During screenings of the films at schools, it was observed, that most of the children thought of providing monetary help as the only medium of supporting unprivileged people who are trying to earn their livelihood, they raised question on entertainment taxes, the fight between the animal rights vs human rights, on nature of nomads, their right of earning livelihood, machines used for cleansing manholes. The response was tremendous and the filmmakers enjoyed their every bit while interacting with the school children as well as with youth.

Table 1: Break-up of Youth Audience of Jeevika films

Dates of screenings	Schools/Colleges	Jeevika Audience ¹
Jan-19	Vasant Valley School	180
Jan 20-22	India Habitat centre	233
Jan-23	Ramjas College	45
	Delhi School of Economics	44
Jan-24	Madhubala Institute of Communications & Electronic Media	37
	Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar College	23
	Delhi Law Faculty	50
	Pioneer Institute	49
	Miranda College	60
Jan-25	DPS School, RK Puram	100
	National Institute of Advertisement	11
Jan-27	Ramjas School, RK Puram	160
	Amity University, Noida	40
	Kamla Nehru College	25
	Lady Shriram college for Women	72
	School of Planning & Architecture	20
Jan-28	Sri Aurobindo Mass Communication	34
	Kamla Nehru College	22
	AIIMS	7
	IP College	75
	Kriti Film Club	15
Feb-03	Satyawati College	38
Total		1340

Label1

Research & Documentary Making Workshop: January 27-28, 2006

In collaboration with the Indian Institute of Mass Communication a two-day Research & Documentary Making Workshop was conducted from January 27 & 28. The objective of the workshop was to introduce young people to the basic skills of research and techniques of film making, thereby motivating them to make documentaries on livelihood issues. **59 applications** were received from students of diverse disciplines as well professionals. **43 best applicants** were selected to attend the workshop. The first module was "Researching Reality" conducted by Sushmita Pratihast (Research Associate, CCS).

¹ These numbers were tabulated from the registration sheets at the screening venues.



Through this interactive session, the participants were provided with a roadmap to think systematically and objectively about field research. The second module was focused on documentary-making. Sanjay Barnela (Moving Images) put together an excellent team of resource persons who touched upon various aspects of film-making to help them document their research effectively.

On the second day, the participants came out of the classroom with their cameras to conduct their own research. They shot and edited films on various livelihood issues. The result was three films covering various issues such as children in slums, children begging at red lights and posters at JNU.



Seminar on Poverty, Profits & Entrepreneurship: February 4, 2006

In collaboration with the Faculty of Management Studies, a Seminar on "Poverty, Profits & Entrepreneurship" was organized to explore partnerships between global companies and local entrepreneurs and to look at possible connections between the *Bottom of the Pyramid* and global markets. Over **75 students** of management and other courses attended the seminar. The speakers included Pradeep Kashyap (MART), Sharad Agarwal (Hindustan Latex), Arjun Uppal (ICICI) and William Bissell (FabIndia).



Jeevika Partners

CCS could not have taken Jeevika this far if it had not been for the support and encouragement of many. Jeevika festival partnered this year with:

- India Habitat Center (provided venue for three days)
- *Total TV* (screened the Jeevika festival package in their main news slot and "B4Bollywood" program over five days)
- *The Indian Express* (being the official print partner provided coverage before and after the Festival)
- *Red FM* (provided Jeevika with announcements before the festival)
- *The Campus Paper* (being the youth media partner and mailing the announcement to their youth audience of over 50,000).

Media Coverage

Jeevika 2005 was extensively covered by the electronic and print media such as *Tehelka*, *The Asian Age*, *The Pioneer*, *Times of India*. Apart from this, Jeevika award winning film "One Show Less" was telecasted by NDTV's *Indi-Film Club*.

Media Says.....

The collage features several newspaper clippings and articles:

- Snake charmers were treated as dogs** (Saeed Khan, FILMS | 21 January 2006)
- 21 filmmakers suggest ways to look beyond the obvious** (New Delhi, 24 January 2006)
- 16 THE PIONEER MONDAY JANUARY 23, 2006**
- PEOPLE'S Breakfast** (NAYANTARA KOTIAN)
- Watching films might turn elitist**
- Film on theatre wins docu prize** (Deevika)
- EXPRESS Newsline** (The Indian EXPRESS)
- Screening Schedule** (Deevika)
- VIVA city PEOPLE, SURVIVAL AND DAILY BRE** (Prize-winners at the South Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival speak to Shana Maria Verghis about their subjects)
- मदरियों पर अत्याचार को बयां करता 'फाइट फॉर सरवाइवल'** (The Times of India, Ahmedabad)
- दिल्ली** (अपने लोगों के लिए हम आवाज उठाएंगे 'छात्र')
- Flick on dying cinema hall bags award** (Ahmedabad: It's perhaps the best birthday gift that 'Nayantara Kotian', a student of National Institute of Design (NID) received. Just a day before her birthday on December 21, Kotian was declared an award winner at the Civil Society Awards for Best Short Film)