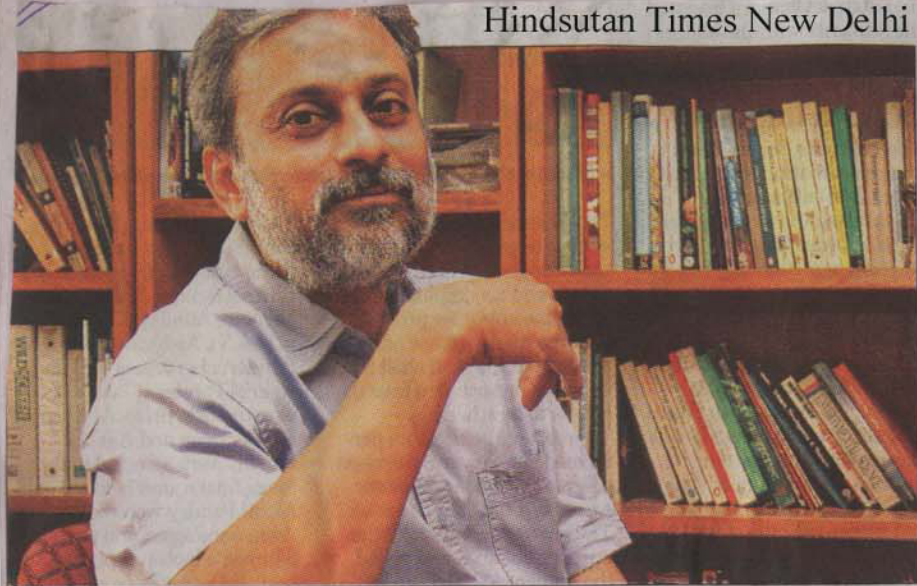


Wildlife documentary maker Krishnendu Bose was always fascinated by the word conservation, so...

# ...He chose the camera over statistics



■ Krishnendu Bose says his heart is in documentary making.

JASJEET PLAHA / HT PHOTO

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**I enjoy when people disagree with me after watching a documentary as it leads to discussion and debate.**

KRISHNENDU BOSE

"Will anyone ever allow people living near the forest areas to discuss the bus rapid transit (BRT) system in Delhi," questions Krishnendu Bose, a documentary maker who loves to capture wildlife and conservation through his lens. Then he answers himself, "No. Then why do only policy makers have the right to decide the fate of the people living near the forest areas?"

Well, Bose was always fascinated with the word conservation, so after completing his masters from the Delhi School of Economics he chose the camera over statistics.

"My heart is in documentary making. It is a personal journey of exploring and understanding and the outcome is incidental," says Bose.

He also considers documentary making a process of unlearning. "We are always taught that cutting trees is bad but by declaring this, it is not possible to sustain in a country like India where

we still depend on wood as a major source of fuel. Hence, cut trees but also plant them," he adds.

Then he remembers an incident while shooting for a documentary film, *Jardhar Diary*, where the local community had conserved a dense forest realising its dependence on it. The documentary won an award at the Earth Vision Environmental Film Festival in Tokyo in 2003.

Bose is trying to explore the various forms of conservation for the last 24 years. And in this journey, many a times, he has just about saved himself from a chasing elephant, from becoming a prey of the tiger and the blow of a rhino.

But then, he says, documenting wildlife can be tedious several times as one cannot predict the animal behaviour.

"There are times when one has to sit on a tree for hours or hide behind a bush. Though one feels like dozing off, one cannot miss the frame that might not happen again," says Bose.

His recent movie, called *Tiger - The Death Chronicles*, is about the future of the tiger in India.

"After interviewing tiger experts, it was clear that it is the low grade governance at the state and central level that has led to the diminishing number of tigers," says Bose.

"The role of a film maker should be to find out the lacuna between politics and policy," he adds.

Though his heart lies in making documentary films, he is quite laid back when it comes to watching documentary films or general films made by others. "I catch films only during the film festivals and the quota for the entire year is complete," chuckles Bose.

According to him, making



films gives a fantastic opportunity, both physically and figuratively, but watching films does not.

At present, he is busy working on two projects, namely *Jungle Gang* and *Cineart 2010*, under a trust called *Earthcare Outreach*. The former is for the children while the latter is by the children.

The former is the first wildlife series for children and

it will have animation as well. The World Wide Fund for Nature is funding it. "Personally, I find children fascinating because of their rich imagination. Unfortunately, they are trapped in a set mindset. The urban children want to ape the West. A child in the rural area wants to become like a Delhi child. So, where is the real child?" asks Bose.

Under the banner of *Earthcare*, Bose and his wife *Madhu-*

*rima*, have produced many serials on science and technology, wildlife and environment, history, politics and culture for the Discovery Channel, British Broadcasting Corporation, National Geographic and Travel and Living.

Bose likes travelling, driving and meeting people and thus considers documentary making the best-suited craft for him.

"But I equally enjoy when people disagree with me after watching a documentary as it leads to discussion and debate," says Bose.

Under *Cineart 2010*, children studying in public schools and underprivileged children in Delhi, Kolkata and a village in Madhya Pradesh will make 10 short films.

"It is an effort to know what children are thinking and let them make the film to say it," says Bose.

"I am privileged to be a part of such fabulous slices of life that I experienced while capturing them. But I am also passionate about writing travelogues and photography," concludes Bose.

## FACT FILE DOCUMENTARIES

- *Elephant : a God in Distress*
- *Whose Water?*
- *Costing the Earth*
- *Cry of the Forest*
- *Documentary of a Yogi*

## AWARDS

- Special Jury Award for *Harvesting Hunger* at Okomedia Environment Film Festival in Freiberg, Germany, in 2000
- Special Jury Award for *Jardhar Diary* at the EarthVision

## Environment Film Festival in Tokyo 2003

- Wildlife Conservation Award for *Tiger - The Death Chronicles* at the *Vatavaran Film Festival 2007*
- The highest award in India for environment filmmaking, *Prithvi Ratna*, in 2009

## SHOWS LINE PRODUCED

- *Land of the Tiger* for the BBC
- *Earth Pulse* on the National Geographic Channel
- *Changemakers* for Discovery Channel
- *Amazing Race* for CBS Network