

'Voices of Teesta' by Minket Lepcha in Woodpecker International Film Festival

Staff Reporter

GANGTOK, August 23: Voices of Teesta – a documentary film by Minket Lepcha from Darjeeling has been shortlisted to be screened at the 4th Woodpecker International Film Festival.

The 41-minute film is among the 12 documentaries and short stories from the Northeast to be showcased in the event to be held from September 15 to 18 at Siri Fort Auditorium in New Delhi. Altogether, 94 films from seven countries and 35 cities have been selected for this year's festival including several National Award

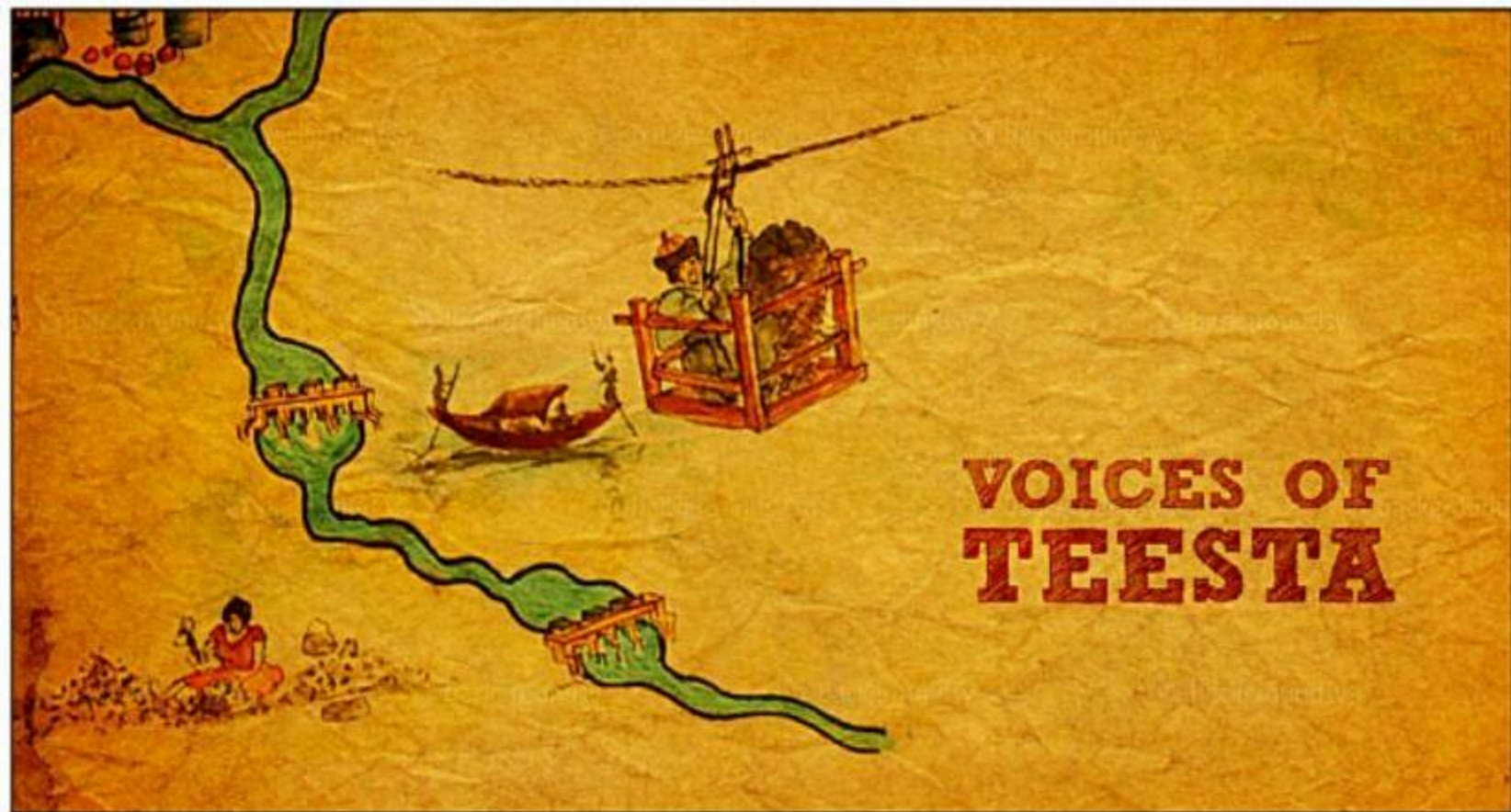
winning films.

"With hydro energy being one of the convenient and available energy sources for the development of any given State, the film tries to understand the relationship between various groups and communities of Sikkim and West Bengal with river Teesta. The film tries to trace the faint and unheard voices of local people who are affected by these developments. It travels from the source of river Teesta till the tip of the plains of North Bengal, traverses through mini and mega hydel projects to capture those naked voices and their bond, angst, adaptation and

reconciliation with river Teesta," said Minket.

The documentary directed by Minket also showcases unique practice and beliefs of mountain communities and significance of the river through their folklore, sacred ritual and scriptures.

"Communities from downstream struggle to balance their faith and religion with such developments and others confess the helpless need of sustaining and adapting to the changing economic patterns and surmounting unemployment. The film eventually ends with a question if Teesta will ever speak for herself," reads the



The cover page of 'Voices of Teesta' documentary.

synopsis of the film.

Minket said, 'it is a prestigious occasion for us to be screened in a forum where diversity comes together. One of the most exciting opportunities is that various

ethnic communities around Teesta will be heard and showcased to a larger audience in pursuit that our connection with nature is understood as much deeper and spiritual. We hope to find similar voices

among a larger audience because somewhere these riverine communities speak a common language all across the world."

The documentary is
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Minket Lepcha.