



Grantee News & Recognition

➤ Sunita Narain, Editor of **Down To Earth**, was chosen to be one of the five 'health leaders' who analysed the results of 73 experts polled by TIME magazine in its survey on 'Blueprint for Preventing Another Pandemic'. Based on the survey, the DTE editor also contributed a piece on the link between climate change and public health titled "[Poor People Are at Greater Risk During Pandemics. Climate Change Exacerbates the Problem](#)"



➤ **Khabar Lahariya** was one of the recipients of the [International Women's Media Foundation \(IWMF\) 2021 Courage in Journalism Awards](#). The entity was the only independent news outlet from India to win the award alongside journalists from Peru, Belarus and the United States.



➤ **Sikkim Chronicle** is now part of the Northeast Association for Digital Media and Communication (NADCOM), which is the first association formed by digital news publishing houses of Northeast India. It is also a member of DIGIPUB News India Foundation.



➤ Several episodes of **EPW's** new podcast series on Dr Ambedkar's legacy of multidisciplinary research approach were ranked among the top 10 episodes on Apple India's Science podcast chart.



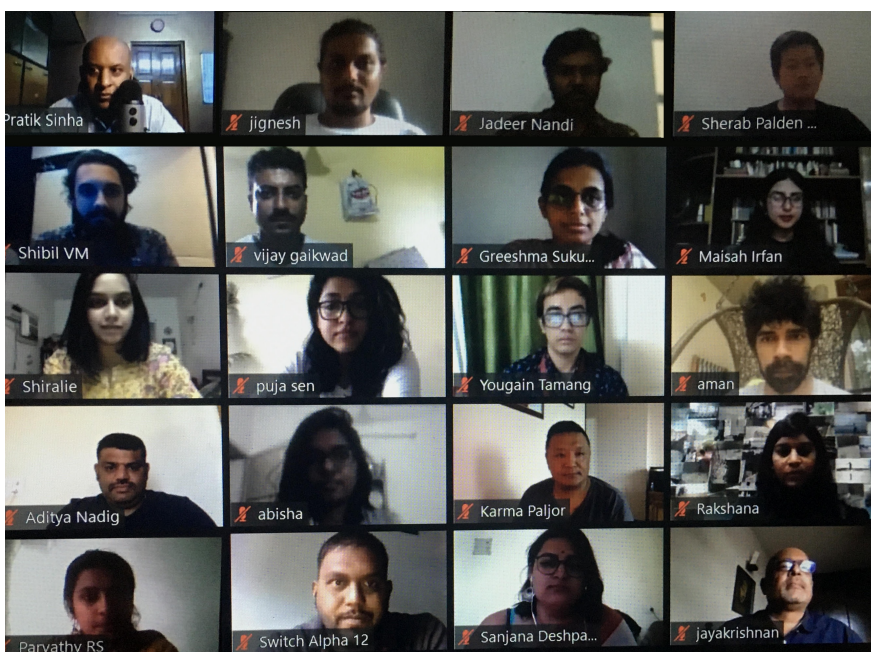
➤ **The Caravan's** contributing writer, Prabhjit Singh, and assistant web editor Arshu John won the prestigious Asian College of Journalism Award for Investigative Journalism in the print/online category for the year 2020. The duo was nominated for their report titled "[Crime and Prejudice: The BJP and Delhi Police's hand in the Delhi violence.](#)"



Battling Fake News

IPSMF-Alt News Workshop on Fact-Checking

While India continues to fight the spread of the novel Coronavirus, which has unleashed a never-before health crisis, what has gripped the country equally is the contagion of fake news. This threatens to distort the citizen's right to credible information, roil the social and political environment and threatens to instigate unwary citizens to take up extreme positions based on viral but unverified rumours and hearsay.



Participants during the IPSMF - Alt News fact-checking workshop on June 24-25, 2021

Specialised organisations and newsrooms, trained in the science and art of recognising and calling out misinformation can play a critical role in combating fake news and correcting factual distortions. "Trust but verify" should be the credo.

The imperative of fact-checking skills for journalists

While specialised institutions have their role, it is as important for journalists and news organisations to acquaint, train and even acquire the technological tools to weed out fake news at its roots. Increasingly, newsrooms equipped with the talent, skills and technological tools are

better positioned to red flag fake news, and even gain a competitive advantage, by being recognised for its credibility, and trust.

The fact-checking workshop

IPSMF in association with fact-checker Alt News organised a two-day Fact-checking workshop on June 24-25, 2021, exclusively for the Foundation's grantees.

Conducted online by Alt News co-founder Pratik Sinha and colleague Jignesh Patel, and attended by 42 journalists from 16 grantee media, the workshop was remarkably intense interactive with vigorous participation. Certificates were awarded to all participants.

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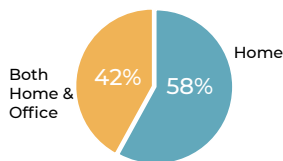
Impact of COVID Second Wave on Grantee Operations

A brief survey amongst IPSMF Grantees conducted during the 1st week of May, 2021

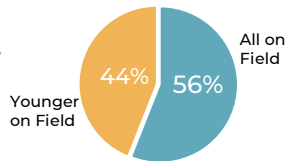
As the second wave of Covid hit the country, the Reporter staff of grantees were on the frontlines. Braving risks, they reported from the ground, informing their readers, keeping the State machinery on their toes, and importantly filtering fact from fiction. **Over 90% (33/36) of Grantees were IMPACTED.**

- ▶ **152** members of the grantee staff were infected. Thankfully all have recovered, except for **1** fatality.
- ▶ Amongst the leadership teams, a significant **15** of the **36** founders (**40%**) caught the virus and have all recovered.
- ▶ Only **3** grantee Organisations remained unaffected.●

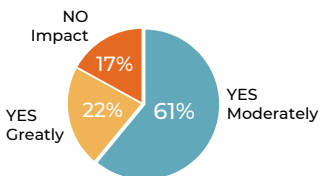
Newsroom –Desk Staff Work From Home OR Office



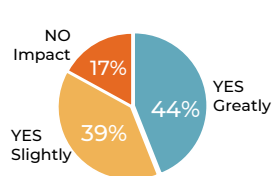
Reporting Staff Risk on Field



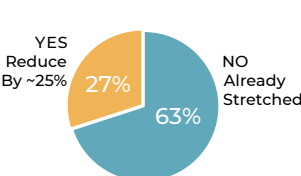
Was News Content Output Impacted?



Was Revenue Generation Impacted? (vs Previous Year)



Would Operational Costs be Reduced?



Khabar Lahariya launches Journalism Academy for Rural Women

Chambal Media, publisher of Khabar Lahariya has launched the Chambal Academy, a training initiative to prepare rural women from the Hindi belt as confident and active digital storytellers.

As part of its pilot phase, the Academy will be training 270 women over the next three months. The rural mobile journalism course, offered by the Academy, was officially launched at the end of June. The objective of this course is to go beyond the technical aspects of

reporting and encourage students to recognise and understand gender, caste and patriarchy in our society, and how it affects the mainstream media narrative. You can watch the audio-visual on the Academy [here](#).

Priya Thuvassery, Executive Producer, Chambal Media, says, "The larger vision of the Chambal Academy is to empower young girls and women in different kinds of skills like journalism, podcast production, digital security and many more that are in the pipeline."●

Grantee News & Recognition

▶ **Feminism in India's** Community Editor, Soumya Mathew was selected for the Swedish Institute Leader Lab programme. The programme is an online leadership course for advocates of gender equality. Two of FIL's campaigns #GBVInMedia and #AbortionMeraHaq (in collaboration with Asia Safe Abortion Partnership) won the Social Media For Empowerment (SM4E) awards organised by the non-profit- Digital Empowerment Foundation.



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India Development Review launched a new, unique-format podcast, On the Contrary (OTC), which features two experts with contrasting views on a topic, in every episode. OTC is among the top one percent of podcasts globally, and was No. 1 on Apple Podcasts 'News Commentary' section for 8 consecutive weeks. Topics include farmer protests, caste discrimination, education, public health response to the pandemic, and informal labour economy. OTC was also featured in 'top podcasts of 2021' lists in [GO India](#) and [Deccan Herald](#), and on [Pretty Progressive](#) as among the top 20 environmental sustainability podcasts in 2021.

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What the Workshop achieved?

Participants received hands-on training on various aspects of addressing / combating mis information. The exercise focused on tools that journalists can use to verify information or images.

Besides, the participants learnt how newsrooms can stay safe online from unauthorised attempts to access data as well as protect their privacy. Exercises on the need for safely and securely archiving web content were also conducted.

Tools to differentiate facts from fiction

The Workshop detailed not only the tools that help in fact-checking but also the methodology to be adopted to assist and refine one's search.

Some aspects of fact-checking and the tools used were:

▶ Reverse Image Search

Reverse Image Search helps to fact-check images from around the world and aids in identifying the first source of an image. Some of the image search tools other than Google Image Search include Bing, TinEye and Yandex. This tool is useful to verify if an image has been used earlier.

▶ Video verification

InVid Project is a video verification platform, which lets users segment a video into keyframes in order to search for the image on Google, Yandex, TinEye, Bing, and Baidu image search tools. It enables journalists and media publishers to quickly and efficiently detect whether the pictures have been used before and in what context, or are indeed doctored.



▶ Advanced Search Tools on Twitter

The advanced search on Twitter can help fine-tune searches, to find the origin of posts and messages circulating on the internet. This includes filters for keywords, dates, locations, languages and using a combination of one or more of these search functions.

▶ Geolocation tools

Geolocation tools are extremely useful for fact-checkers to establish the location of origin of news or claim or detect the manipulated videos and images. Geolocation is also used to establish contact with local authorities or police to verify a piece of information or an image, which sometimes may have little or no information.

▶ The Art of Web Archiving to protect IP

The content of journalists and publishers is precious IP and needs to be protected from distortion or manipulation, and securely archived. However, it also needs to be easy to retrieve when needed for research and reference. The Workshop looked at details on how to use tools like - the **Internet Archive's Wayback Machine and archive.today** – to enable secure archiving and at the same time make it accessible to publishers to monetise their content. ●

Participant's feedback: Training you-can-use

“What I really liked about the Workshop was the hands-on exercises, the resources identified and training we received. This will make EastMojo more equipped to protect its credibility. This is a learning that I would want my team to inculcate.”

Karma Paljor | Co-founder, EastMojo

“I have gone through many fact-checking workshops in the past but this Workshop was way ahead in the learnings and was action-oriented. The exercises conducted were not just enlightening but also fascinating. The workshop has surely empowered us to cater to ethical, credible news and information.”

Yougan Tamang | Co-founder, Sikkim Chronicle

“The sessions comprehensively covered various aspects of digital fact-checking. I think the format used worked out so well including the mini exercises within the formats in real-time.”

Gayeti Singh | Associate Editor, The Citizen

“While we all consume information, we don't necessarily check and verify it. This workshop was an eye-opener and enabled me to understand that misinformation can be rendered harmless if we know how to pick it out. I am glad I had the chance to learn new skills, techniques, and even imbibe the additional sense to spot the difference between truth and lies.”

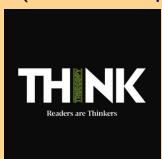
Shiralie Chaturvedi | Digital Head, Mojo Story

“The workshop was an amazing experience and the trainers made it easy to understand and follow. Learning how to fact check has added a plus point, more at a time when misinformation is spreading everywhere. My only regret is the workshop was only for two days!”

Guihiamliu Riamei | Sub-editor, Imphal Free Press

NEW GRANTEES

TrueCopy Think Media (www.truecopythink.media)



TrueCopy Think is a multimedia portal in Malayalam for in-depth discourse that focuses on the marginalised and the subaltern, from polity to society, and science to literature. The publication is known for its deep-researched, long narrative and analytical journalism, which it believes are essential for understanding complex socio-political issues.

TheCitizen (www.thecitizen.in)



Founded in December 2013 by senior journalist Seema Mustafa, TheCitizen is an online publication that covers issues of the citizens at the margins of society, people's movements, foreign & strategic affairs, gender rights, ecology and mental health, through a network of independent journalists and columnists.

HW News (www.hwnews.in)



HW News, helmed by Sujit Nair, is a video-led, sharp, opinionated take on current news, issues and events in English, Hindi and Marathi. It provides a perspective to, and analysis of, important news breaks. It has grown into a niche channel with a cult following and clocked significant traction on the social media platforms.



GRANTEE IMPACT

▶▶ [This brilliantly crafted story](#) by **Asiaville** starkly illustrates the impact of climate change in the Meenakshipuram village in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu. Dilapidated and deserted given the utter scarcity of water, except a lone inhabitant Kandaswamy. The story tells the tale of 'climate refugees' in their own land. A plight that is the future, if the ill-effects of climate change are not rolled back on a war footing.

▶▶ **Down To Earth's** [report on](#) fatalities due to the severe shortage of oxygen in a Covid hospital in Odisha's Nuapada district not only impelled the district administration to act decisively towards saving lives but also inspired the expat Odias in Japan to come to their aid.

▶▶ **Mojo Story** reported on the [plight of a family](#) whose child was due for an immediate surgery at AIIMS, Delhi. However, their efforts to reach the doctors proved futile for over a month which they spent living in a night shelter. After the Mojo Story report, the child was immediately admitted and underwent a surgery in AIIMS.

▶▶ In the villages of Patan taluka of Satara district, the Primary Health Centre is only in name. The building remains locked and medical staff and doctors are

conspicuous by their absence for the last 10 years. Following **Max Maharashtra's** report on the [shocking condition of the health centre](#), the administration was forced to act proactively and they posted medical staff and a doctor at the centre.

▶▶ Following a report by **Khabar Lahariya** about the [lack of water in villages in Banda](#) due to dysfunctional and broken hand pumps, the village secretary repaired all the handpumps in the village. The villagers credit Khabar Lahariya's reportage for this transformation.

▶▶ This story by **Sikkim Chronicle** [intervened to question the distortions](#) in the booking of slots for the Covid vaccination in the state by pointing out the anomalies and the suspicion that government departments were cornering the slots. The report forced the government to change the modalities of the online and made it on a 'first come, first served' basis.

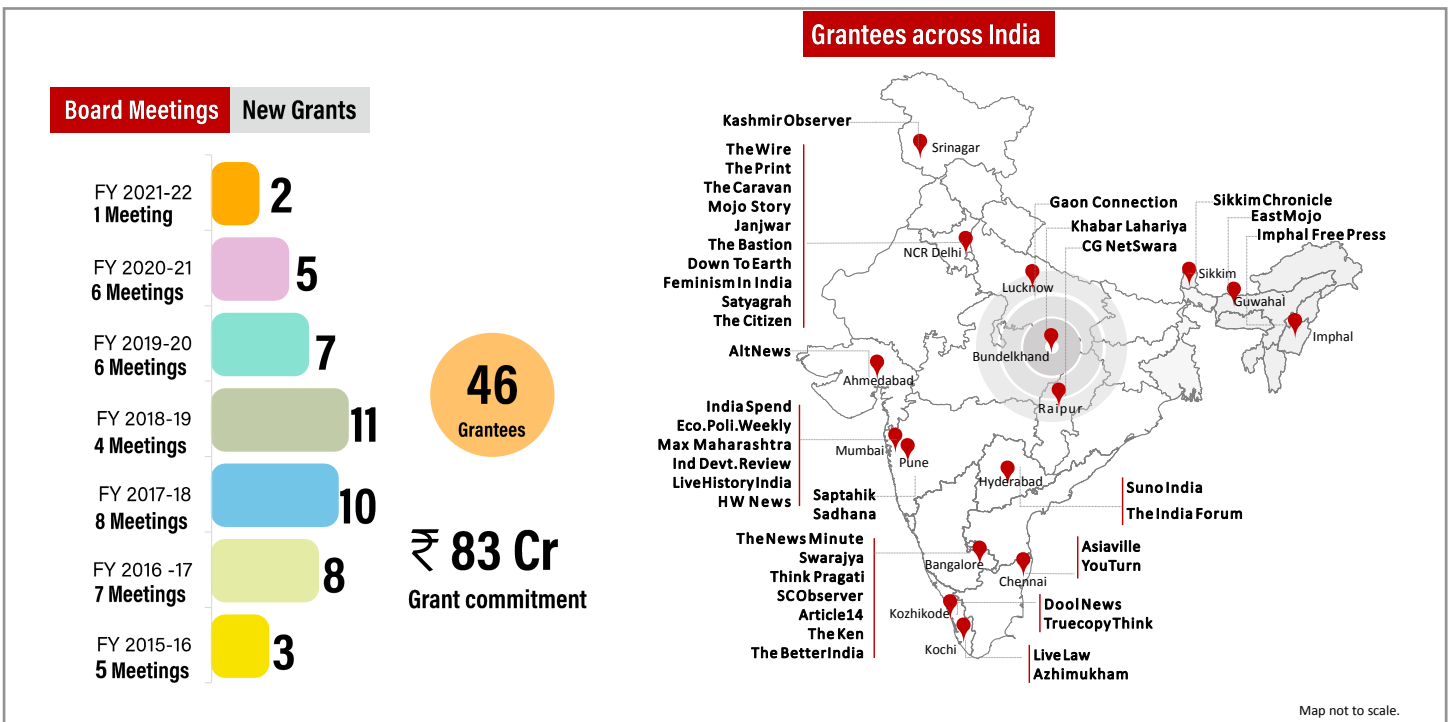
▶▶ **EastMojo** first reported the [alleged sexual assault on an undergraduate student at IIT-Guwahati](#), which would later catch the attention of the national media. The prime accused in the case was arrested, and the Gauhati High Court constituted an investigating team

consisting of three experienced officers, including a woman police officer, to look into the sexual assault case.

▶▶ As the second wave of COVID-19 intensified across the country, many organisations in the social sector started relief efforts to deliver aid to marginalised communities. To support their efforts, **India Development Review** [amplified fundraising campaigns](#) of more than 300 organisations through their website, social media platforms, and newsletters. Several organisations directly attributed funds raised, to their campaigns being amplified by the grantee.

▶▶ Many children have been left orphaned during the COVID-19 pandemic, and there were public calls made by organisations to adopt these children. **Suno India** featured an insightful podcast on the [modalities involved in the adoption of children](#). The episode brought new perspectives and insights into a critical issue at the time of the pandemic.

▶▶ On April 12, **Imphal Free Press** published an exclusive report on the air and noise pollution suffered by the citizens in Imphal due to the increasing number of [illegal stone crushing units](#). This forced the government to act swiftly and [serve notices](#) to seven stone crushing units in Imphal West.



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