Barkha Dutt of Mojo Story will be a Visiting Fellow at the Reuters Institute at Oxford. Her Fellowship will look at the intersection of media, populism, politics, freedom and democracy. Mojo Story has also been selected by YouTube as one of its ‘Sustainability Lab Global Partners’.

Khabar Lahariya partnered with The Human Rights Film Festival Berlin to co-host the Human Rights Forum on Storytelling for the Common Good, a panel series to explore the possibilities and global challenges of storytelling. Khabar Lahariya’s Bureau chief Meera Devi was a speaker at Newslaundry’s annual media conference, The Media Rumble. Her panel explored the changing role of marginalised media and the impact of their news coverage.

The Wire won the International Press Institute’s (IPI) 2021 Free Media Pioneer Award. In its announcement, IPI pointed out that The Wire “deliberately eschewed traditional corporate-and advertiser-driven funding in favour of a non-profit, audience-centered model”. The award recognises media organisations who are “working to ensure freer and more independent media”.

Geetika Mantri, Senior Editor at The News Minute won the #ProjectSIREN Award (Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy, ILS, Pune) for her piece titled ’How the coverage of Sushant Singh’s death was a disservice to mental health reportage’.

The Bastion’s environment-lead, Vaishnavi Rathore, was awarded the GWLON-BehanBox Reporting fellowship for her writing on rights of women on land, forest, and farming in Gujarat. She also won the Prem Bhatia Award 2021, for her writing on environment & development.

The media’s often indifferent, poor and sensationalist coverage of court proceedings and judgements has only led to the creation of a perception that the vaunted judiciary no longer occupies the high pedestal that it once did. The quality of journalism on the justice system has a direct bearing on the level of trust and confidence in our judiciary.

The reporters and journalists who are engaged in the critical task of reporting, analysing and commenting on the courts and their judgement must do so with knowledge, skill and accuracy. The legal journalists need to be oriented to the issues in administering the justice system, the intricacies of the court’s functioning, and the nuances and context of law concerning the court’s judgements.

It is in this context that IPSMF, in association with DAKSH, a civil society organisation that undertakes research aimed at promoting accountability and better governance in India, conducted online workshop on “Justice System Journalism”, exclusively for the Foundation’s grantees. Former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, Justice Madan Lokur, graciously accepted our invitation to lead a session on Judicial Reforms at the Workshop.

The Workshop was attended by 27 journalists from the Foundation’s 21 grantees.

The one-day Workshop, spread across four interactive sessions in the classroom mode, dealt with i) introduction to the Indian legal system, ii) fair and accurate reporting on the justice system, iii) overview of judicial reforms and iv) court reporting in the new normal – challenges and responses.
Brief highlights from the four sessions:

» Structure of Justice System
The first session of the workshop, helmed by Anindita Pattanayak, lawyer, and Harish Narsappa, Co-Founder of DAKSH and senior lawyer, familiarised the participants with:
- Sources of law and the structures of the justice system,
- The importance of factual and accurate reporting,
- The nature of the judicial system – common law legislations,
- Judge-made laws vs written laws,
- The open justice system and,
- The process of trial of criminal cases in India.

» Ethical and Fair reporting
The second session, led by Leah Verghese, a Research Manager at DAKSH, focussed on ‘Ethical and Fair reporting’ of the Justice system and highlighted:
- The role of journalists and media not only as mere ‘reporters’ but as catalysts for change. For instance, the media’s incessant reporting on the fact that the police were still registering cases under Section 66A of the IT Act, which had earlier been struck down by the Supreme Court, forced the Union Home Ministry to issue directions to the police to desist.
- The need for journalists covering the justice system to hone their skills for fair and accurate reporting and analysis. Objective reporting comes out of an understanding of the case, the law and the context.
- The importance for journalists to source information from credible sources – the India Code portal, gazettes, bare judgements – the primary sources, etc.
- Reporters have to ensure that they are not only looking at the latest iteration of law but also ensure that they are abreast of the latest amendments and definition clauses, other than the scope and applicability of the laws.
- Mr Narsappa emphasised that “often, for finding the latest version of the law – you have to dig really deep, especially for data at the level of the states”, for provisions that have been ‘read down’, etc.

» Judicial reform
The third session with former SC Judge Justice Madan Lokur and anchored by Surya Prakash B S, Co-Founder of DAKSH, looked at the urgent need for judicial reforms. Justice Lokur’s insights were:
- Judicial reforms go beyond the mere issue of addressing judicial vacancies.
- They need to be focused on improving the day-to-day efficiency, reducing delays, creating specialised support staff (court managers, for instance), leveraging technology, re-engineering the processes and providing timely and optimum budgeting.
- With the backlog of cases clocking five crores in India, there was a need to iron out the deficiencies of the justice system through more efficient management of existing resources.
- Thinking and planning were needed. A holistic approach where pilot projects are done to ensure it works, and if they do not, they should be in a position to be dispensed with, and another method tried. Implementation is the key.
- To reach a more idealistic ratio of 50 judges to a million population in India, will need immense resources, specialised staff, budgets and space, which is a challenge.
- Yet, there is much that can be done with the existing resources. As much as weeding out colonial laws, the need is to weed out colonial procedures.

» Reporting under the pandemic
This last session was a deliberation on how Covid had reshaped the traditional in-person model of courtroom proceedings and consequently court reporting, as well. While there was the convenience of working remotely from home, the reporters said that they missed the physical hearings because: they also found it difficult to pick up the subtleties – the body language, the court craft – which had earlier enriched their reporting.

As cited earlier, the Workshop was attended by 27 journalists covering the legal beat for around 21 grantees. The general feedback from the participants was that they found the Workshop useful, but would have benefited from more practical on-the-job examples of legal reporting. Yet, it helped them to gain a deeper insight into the functioning of the justice system. The impact of quality reporting of Courts and their judgements and the overall working of the justice system in enhancing the level of trust of the citizens in the judiciary was not lost on the participants.
Mobile – The Next Big Medium of Content Consumption

The Foundation’s Grantees Lead The Way

According to the Reuters Institute’s 2021 Global survey, India has emerged as one of the strongest mobile focussed markets, with 73% of users accessing news through smartphones and only 37% using desktops.

Digital-first news publishers are increasingly focussing on producing mobile-friendly content to reach a wider audience. They are effectively meeting the challenges of a transformed news-consumption ecosystem with a platter of offerings that go beyond text to multimedia content offered on multiple social media platforms - right from Facebook, Twitter or YouTube targeted to Gen X and even to the baby-boomer generation, Instagram and Snapchat - to reach out to Millennials and Gen-Z; and even a LinkedIn to reach out to professionals.

And no longer is the website the first port of call through your desktop alone. The Foundation’s grantees are, in fact, leading the way in making their offerings mobile compatible, launching shows and curating content for their target audience.

Creating a transformed ‘virtual news ecosystem’

The inherent advantage of accessing ‘video on demand’ that the mobile device has over TV is all the more enhanced by the shrillness and biased journalism that many TV channels regress to. The Foundation’s grantees have been instrumental in creating a virtual news ecosystem by offering primetime shows and panel discussions on current issues with completely transparent audience engagement statistics of their YouTube shows when compared with TRPs of primetime television.

Contd. on Page 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Anchor</th>
<th>Video Programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Print</td>
<td>Shekhar Gupta</td>
<td>Cut The Clutter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wire</td>
<td>Arfa Khamun Sherwani</td>
<td>Arfa Ka India - Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karan Thapar</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitali Mukherjee</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Wire Business Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HW News</td>
<td>Sujit Nair</td>
<td>Editorial With Sujit Nair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mojo Story</td>
<td>Barkha Dutt</td>
<td>Mojo Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Law</td>
<td>Taniya Pandey</td>
<td>Courts This Week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With their regular frequency of - YouTube programming, interviews, chats, panel discussions and news round-ups - aired live during primetime, we are witnessing a gradual shift in viewers’ primetime content consumption habits from television to digital/mobile platforms.

Karan Thapar’s weekly video programme The Interview for The Wire and Shekhar Gupta’s Cut The Clutter for ThePrint are just two of the many popular shows that have a loyal viewer base on their respective YouTube Channels.

Barkha Dutt Live a prime-time daily video programme on Mojo Story and Arfa Khanum Sherwani’s news analysis for The Wire-Hindi on current trending issues have built a sizeable and loyal audience base. HW News offers dedicated video shows in English, Hindi and Marathi that simulate the television environment through their news report segments on current events.

In the Tier-3 segment, our regional grantees like Khabar Lahariya is also tapping into this audience base by offering branded video shows like “The Kavita Show”, wherein the editor Kavita Devi takes up a burning current issue and shares her take, effectively engaging the audience.

In the legal space, Live Law offers a weekly video - “Courts this week” which compiles a roundup of important judgements from the High Courts and the Supreme Court, which has a loyal viewer base.

Online media Editors and journalists draw large audiences on YouTube

Alongside the editors and journalists of the Foundation’s grantees, many young independent freelance journalists anchor their primetime shows that keep the audience sensitised and abreast of the current happenings and events in the public space and how it impacts their lives.

Podcasts – Content on the Go

Audio hosting platforms like Spotify, Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts and Castbox are fast becoming the preferred media for podcasts dissemination. Packed with informative and engaging content – podcasts are quickly becoming an effective medium of news consumption on the go. Podcasts also help establish a strong and loyal audience base as they are engaging and interactive.

The mobile-friendly and audio-led nature of the medium makes it easier for the audience to consume on the go - content while commuting, at the gym, lazing at home, etc.

The Foundation’s grantees have also effectively adapted to this medium by offering a diversity of podcasts across topics attracting niche listeners. Think Pragati and Suno India have been pioneers in the public interest and development news space with their podcasts. Suno India’s ‘1 in 20,000’ podcast focuses on the state of rare medical conditions, a critical topic that was missing in the public conversations. This was entity’s one of the flagship Podcasts that helped them gain prominence in the podcast space. Pragati’s ‘Puliyabaazi’ in Hindi and ‘Thale-Harate’ podcast in Kannada cover subjects spanning technology and economics to geopolitics. This is gaining traction among podcast listeners.

Apart from Suno India and Think Pragati, many others have capitalised on the power of podcasts by offering podcasts ranging across a palette of topics spanning current events and issues. The Ken began its fortnightly podcast ‘Unofficial Sources’ in January 2021, which has grossed significant traction.

The India Forum’s podcast ‘TIF Talkies’ focuses on contemporary issues, with the first season looking at the farm issues and the farmer’s protests. Kartavya Sadhana has also expanded into podcasts in February 2021 and has produced eight podcasts in Marathi so far.
In a three-part series, Down To Earth reveals that, not only does India not have a clear labelling system to warn consumers about harmful levels of fat, sugar and salt in processed foods but the provisions have also been diluted at every step in the last seven years.

Article 14 reported a new diktat from the Kashmir government that has made the media's task even more onerous, with broadsheet newspapers being instructed to use only officially sanctioned terminologies, which virtually amounts to newsroom censorship - a throwback to the days of the Emergency. Plus, official press releases are to be carried verbatim, transforming the Kashmiri newspapers into replicas of government handouts.

The Citizen reports on the state of healthcare facilities at Firozabad in UP where children are succumbing to illness and the district hospital is working hard to cope. The coverage gives a deeper insight into the state of healthcare which continues to be a point of concern in the districts and villages of India with scarcity of doctors and hospitals and medicines hitting patients hard.

EastMojo's coverage on Darjeeling, Queen of the Hills, tells the inspiring tale of how this place which even lacks basic health infrastructure scripted a success story in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. The story was well received and showed how sans extensive public health institutions, local communities were coming together to fight and win against the public health crisis.

HW News reports that the proposed delimitation to the Lok Sabha constituencies is skewed against the southern states as they have been relatively successful in containing their populations as compared to the northern states. This comes in light of the Madras High Court’s remark that the reduction of Lok Sabha seats in Tamil Nadu in 1967 from 41 to 39, due to delimitation, was “unfair and unreasonable” and amounted to penalising the states which had successfully taken measures to control its population.

On September 8, The News Minute carried a story “Why Tamil Nadu is the only south state that doesn’t live telecast Assembly proceedings”. It was one of the poll promises of the current ruling party in TN, but for 4 months since they have been in power this was not done. However, the day after the TNM story was published, CM Stalin announced in the assembly that the live telecast of the Assembly will begin with immediate effect.

Saptahik Sadhana reported on the plight of children from the Bahujan community who have been deprived of education during the pandemic.

SC Observer’s article took a close look at the SC collegium’s resolutions to understand the factors that go into appointing SC judges. The report found that the collegium considers the following factors to make appointments: merit, integrity, seniority, regional diversity and social diversity.

Suno India’s podcast gave a detailed picture of how COVID deaths in India have been severely under-counted. In this episode, the hosts spoke with locals from Amreli in Gujarat about the horrors they witnessed in the second wave of COVID and contextualised it with expert opinions on under-reporting of deaths.

Think Pragati’s Puliyabaazi episode on gender discrimination with Mahima Vashisht received significant traction on Twitter and Instagram, and was widely appreciated. The grantees had male listeners writing to them after the episode that they realized how blinkered their vision was on domestic chores, public safety, and women at work.

The Wire broke the story of how at least 300 verified mobiles of ministers, opposition leaders, journalists, lawyers, rights activists and officials in India were surveilled through the use of snooping software Pegasus. The Wire’s findings, part of a global collaborative investigation, revealed the “frightening extent” to which citizens’ privacy and personal liberties were being compromised.
IPSMF Grantees Fund Their Way Through Multiple Revenue Streams

1. **Philanthropic Funding**
   Apart from IPSMF, not many media-focused Philanthropies in India. None to the scale of IPSMF. Grant funding from International Foundations for media in India is not possible without an FCRA certification.
   
2. **Sponsors/Advertisers**
   Corporate Sponsorship based on Reach and Audience profile. Sponsors have no control on the stories produced.
   
3. **Social Media**
   YouTube is increasingly becoming a significant revenue stream both for media organisations as well as Independent journalists.
   
4. **Content Syndication**
   Some explore opportunities for content tie-ups with mainstream media, regional language press. Some journalists also look at repurposing content for OTT platforms.
   
5. **Subscriptions**
   Should your stories be behind a paywall? Always a dilemma as subscriptions limit your reach as well as ad revenues. In India online readers are beginning to value exclusive journalism and are open to subscriptions.
   
6. **Reader Contributions**
   Appeal to readers for Donations - on website, social media platforms, mailers. An important source of revenues for non-profit media. Even ‘for-profit media’ have begun to appeal for reader donations.
   
7. **Crowdfunding**
   To finance special investigative reportage on specific topics, themes or stories, independent media and journalists appeal for funding from well-wishers and readers. Work on the project can commence once assured of desired funding.
   
8. **Membership Models**
   Very much a paid loyalty program. First access to exclusive content. Exclusive access to events, webinars and merchandise. Free entry to paid events. Patreon used by news entities and journalists to get paid for stories.