

## Grantee News & Recognition

↘ 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 Newsland's annual media conference, [The Media Rumble](#). Her panel explored the changing role of marginalised media and the impact of their news coverage.



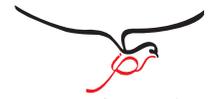
↘ **The Wire** won the International Press Institute's (IPI) 2021 [Free Media Pioneer Award](#). In its announcement, IPI pointed out that **The Wire** "deliberately eschewed traditional corporate-and advertiser-driven funding in favour of a non-profit, audience-centered model". The award recognises 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 [WGWLO-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.



# IPSMFnews

Independent and Public-Spirited Media Foundation

Issue No. 016

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## Reporting the Courts

### IPSMF-DAKSH Workshop on Justice System Journalism

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.



Participants during the IPSMF - DAKSH Workshop on Justice System Journalism, September 24, 2021

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.

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## 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.



**Manu Sebastian**, Managing Editor, [Live Law](#), highlighted the finer points of ‘courtroom’ reporting.

- The need for reporters to understand the background of the case and the relevant laws, catching the nuance and context of oral observations made by judges.
- On the **debate on reporting of oral observations of judges’ remarks** – a dilemma that reporters confront from time to time – the Apex court is of the view that oral observations have public value, and as India follows an ‘open court’ system, it was kosher for reporters to convey them to the larger public without adulterating the context.

### » 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, from the current

21 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 benefitted 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.●

## NEW GRANTEES



[www.theprobe.in](http://www.theprobe.in)

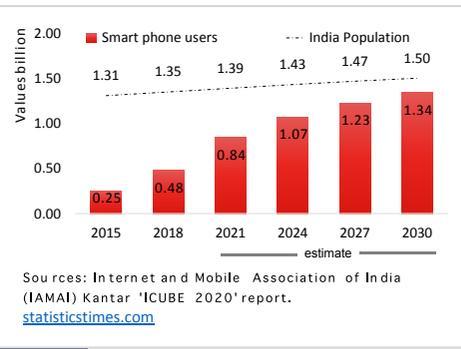
Founded by journalist Prema Sridevi, TheProbe is an independent and video-led digital news media platform that focusses on rigorous research and investigative journalism to create an impact and bring solutions to public issues. It delves into issues and events that have a critical impact on society but do not get the media space they deserve.



# 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.

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Independent Media - Anchored Shows on YouTube		
Media	Anchor	Video Programmes
The Print	Shekhar Gupta	Cut The Clutter
The Wire	Arfa Khanum Sherwani	Arfa Ka India - Commentary
	Karan Thapar	The Interview
HW News	Mitali Mukherjee	The Wire Business Report
	Sujit Nair	Editorial With Sujit Nair
Mojo Story	Barkha Dutt	Mojo Interviews
Live Law	Taniya Pandey	Courts This Week

### Grantee News & Recognition

➤ **The Citizen** began a series of video and podcast shows, including ‘Off Limits’ - a show anchored by its founder Seema Mustafa.

➤ Suno India launched three new shows. **Pride and Prejudice** on issues concerning the LGBTQIA+ community; **Beyond Nation and States** on globalism & international issues; and **Science & Us**.

➤ ‘Puliyabaazi’, Think Pragati’s podcast on public policy, logged 100 episodes in July. The podcast has covered intricate and complex issues, simplifying them without dumbing down.

➤ **EastMojo** was among the six digital newsrooms from India, and 45 across the world, to be selected for **YouTube’s “Sustainability Lab for Digital-First Newsrooms”** programme, which provides support for digital newsrooms to start and expand their video operations.

➤ **YouTurn** contributed to raising funds for **Thiruvannamalai Government Hospital Oxygen Plant** by organising an event ‘**We for O2**’, along with fellow YouTubers. This was under the auspices of the **Tamil Digital Creation Association**, and an amount of more than ₹ 20 lakh was raised in six hours.

➤ **Live History India** launched its subscription service ‘**LHI Circle**’ in July. It provides an opportunity for subscribers to engage with leading experts, get access to special in-depth and curated content.

➤ **The India Forum** featured a six-episode podcast - “**TIF Talkies**”, that covered farmer issues, including the protests.



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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.

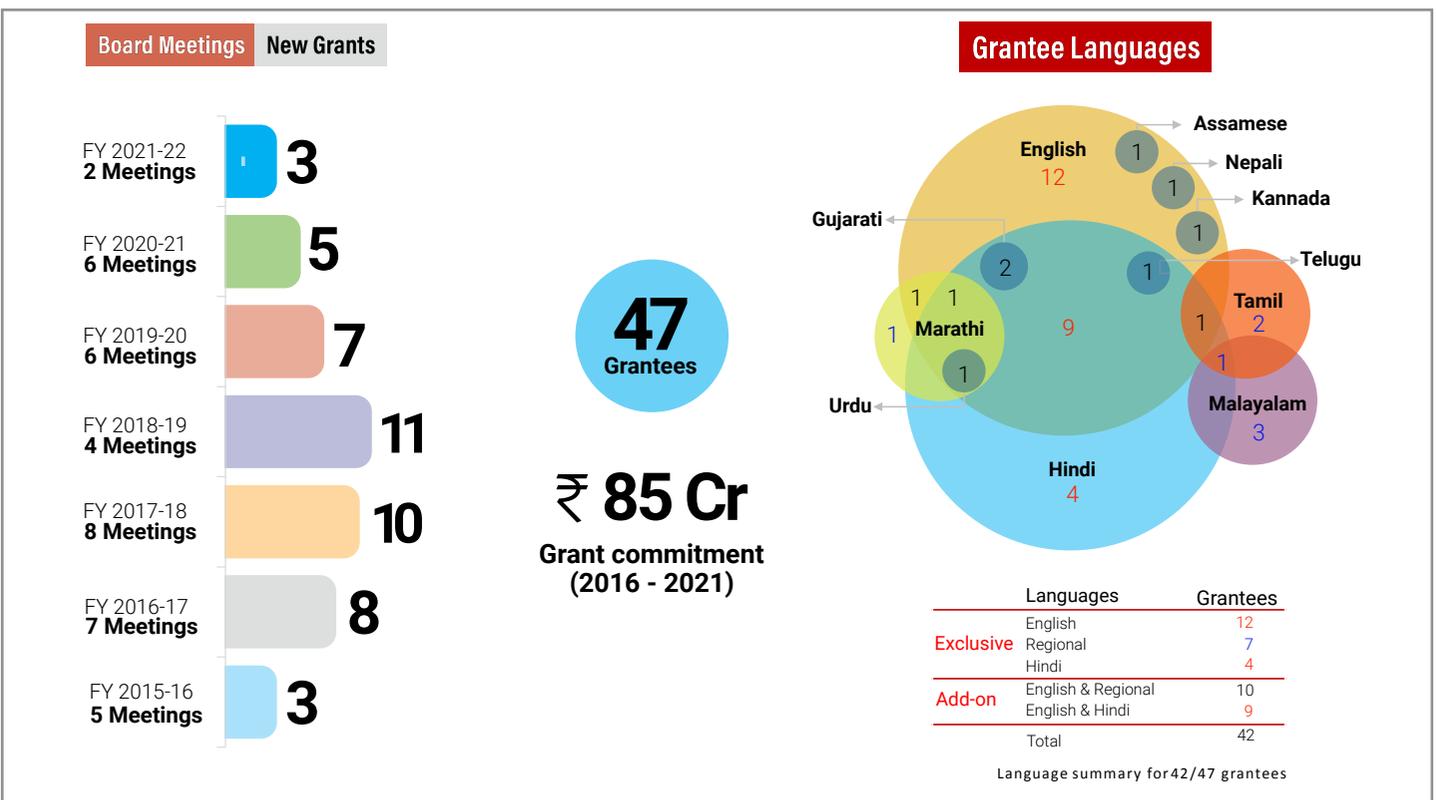
The mobile-friendly and audio-led nature of the medium makes it easier for the audience to consume on the go - content while commuting, at the gym, lazing at home, etc.

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. ●





## GRANTEE IMPACT

▶ 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.

▶ **Imphal Free Press** has consistently [reported](#) on the drug menace in Manipur. [Taking note of the concerning issues](#)

raised through this coverage, Manipur Human Right Commission held a consultation workshop in Imphal on September 30 and also received several complaints against severe forms of alleged human rights violation at drug de-addiction centres in Manipur.

▶ Following **Khabar Lahariya's** [report](#) on how stray cattle were eating away farmers' crops in the Agarhunda village in Chitrakoot district of UP, the administration built a

Gaushala to house close to 600 animals. In another development, the grantee's report ended [a 50-year wait](#) for a home for the residents of Lauri village in Chitrakoot district in MP. Persuaded by the grantee's reports, the administration released funds under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana to build the houses.

▶ At a time when the administration was busy calling foreign investors in the valley, [this story](#) by **Kashmir Observer** told the story of how

young Kashmiri entrepreneurs who were in distress under the disruptions caused by the pandemic. The government responded to the story by assuring that the issues and interest of the native businesses will be addressed expeditiously.

▶ The makeover of the [Jallianwala Bagh memorial](#) has raised hackles on the manner that the refurbishment was carried out. The criticism being that it was given the look of an "amusement park" rather than an edifice that celebrates and commemorates an important episode in our history. **Live History India's** coverage raised questions on the manner in which we interpret history for our future generations.

▶ Poverty, uncertainty of life amidst a pandemic, and the closing of schools, have pushed young girls in Rajasthan into early marriages. **Mojo Story** travelled to a village in the Ajmer Tehsil in Rajasthan to [tell the story of girls](#) who are fighting back and finding their freedom in football.

▶ 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** Puliyaabaazi episode on [gender discrimination](#) with Mahima Vashist received significant traction on Twitter and Instagram, and was widely appreciated. The grantee had male listeners writing to them after the episode that they realised 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.

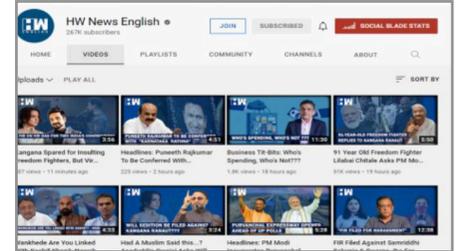
# IPSMF Grantees Fund Their Way Through Multiple Revenue Streams

**Meet the Most Generous Indians**  
 DP ID: EdelGive Huron India Philanthropy List 2020

Rank	Name	Donation	Primary Cause
1	Azim Premji & family	7,904	Education
2	Shiv Nadar & family	795	Education
3	Mukesh Ambani & family	458	Disaster Relief
4	Kumar Mangalam Birla & family	276	Education
5	Anil Agarwal & family	215	Healthcare
6	Ajay Piramal & family	196	Education
7	Nandan Nilekani	159	Sustainable Development
8	Hinduja Brothers	133	Healthcare
9	Caasham Adani & family	88	Education
10	Rohit Bajaj & family	74	Livelihood Enhancement

**FAVOURITED CAUSES 2020**

Category	Amount
Education	₹36 Cr
Healthcare	₹24 Cr
Disaster Relief & Management	₹19 Cr
Rural Transformation	₹17 Cr
Sustainable Environment & Socialability	₹17 Cr
Livelihood Enhancement	₹15 Cr
Societal Platforms	₹15 Cr
Sports for Development	₹15 Cr
Threat Free	₹15 Cr
Water Conservation	₹15 Cr



## 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

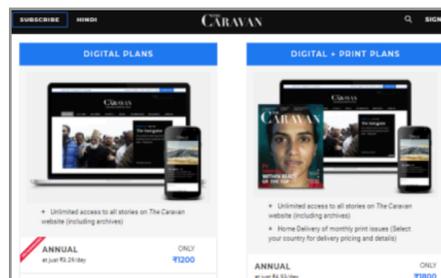
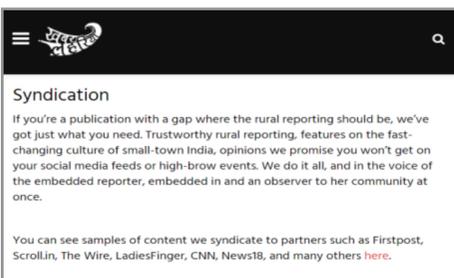
Corporate Sponsorship based on Reach and Audience profile. Sponsors have no control on the stories produced.

Eg: The Print

## 3 Social Media

YouTube is increasingly becoming a significant revenue stream both for media organisations as well as Independent journalists.

Eg: HW News



## 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.

Eg: Khabar Lahariya

## 5 Subscriptions

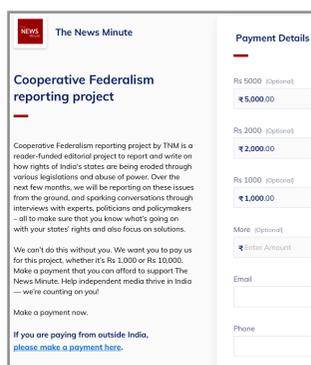
Should your stories be behind a paywall? Always a dilemma as subscriptions limit your reach as well as ad revenues. In India online readers are beginning to value exclusive journalism and are open to subscriptions.

Eg: The Caravan

## 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.

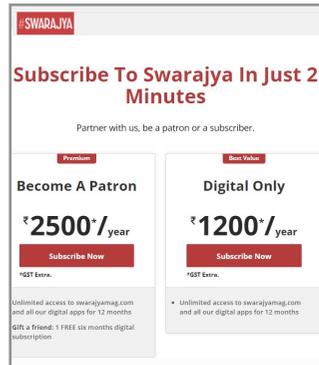
Eg: The Wire



## 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.

Eg: The News Minute



## 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.

Eg: Swarajya