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THE FOURTH ESTATE

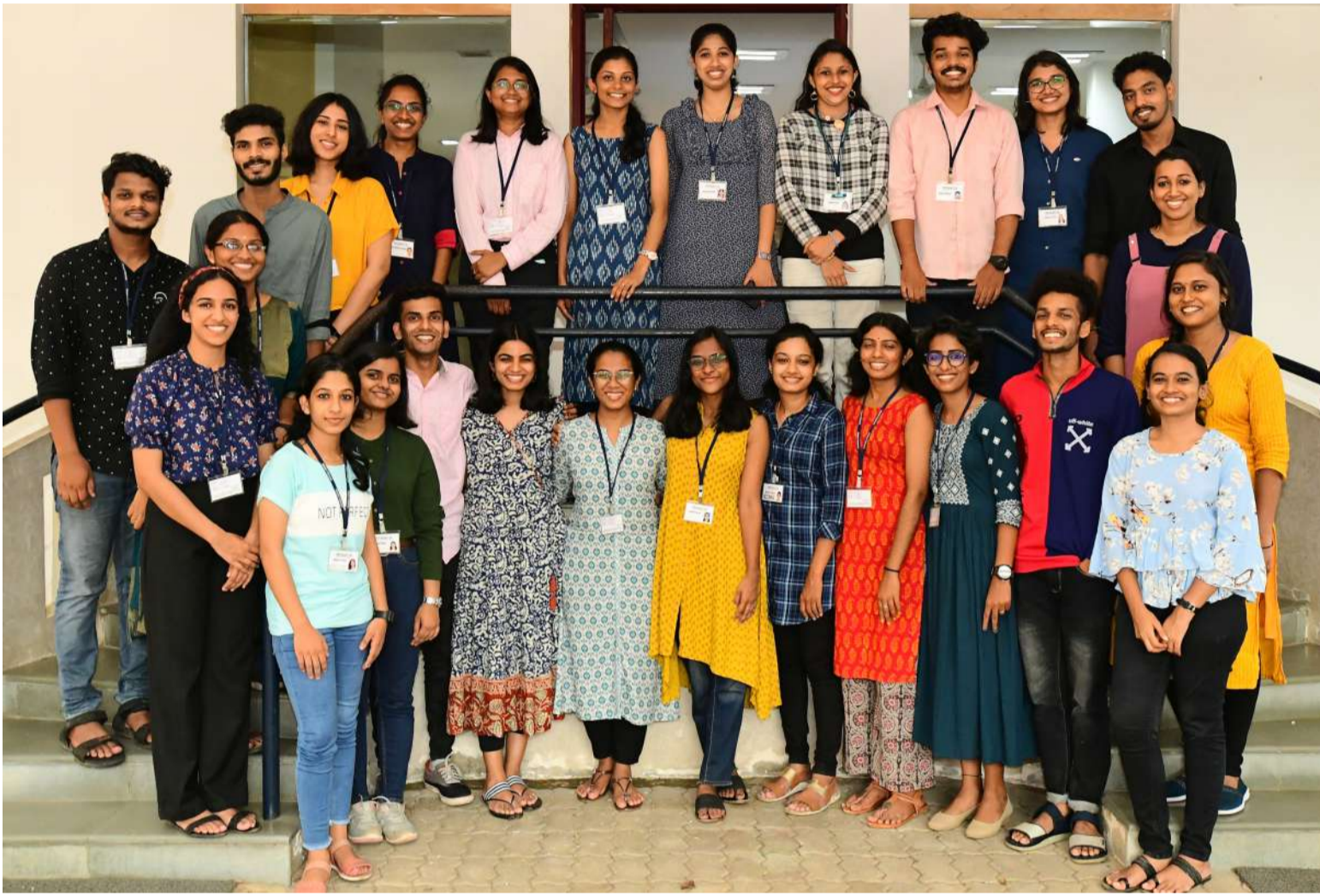
Lab Paper of Manorama School of Communication

KOTTAYAM
2 PAGES

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MASCOM scripts new placement records



The News'makers': Top (L-R) Christine Brills, Ayswarya T S, Akshay Mohan, Manu T Raju, Becky P George, Anjana Therese Antony, M Sai Jahanvi, Pavithra Suresh, Anju Maria John, Aparna Jacob, Jeevan Othara, Ashitha Salus, Abu Philip, Anumol Devassy, Devika S Nair **Bottom (L-R)** Sibina Sunny, Pranjul Singh, Jayson Raju, Amitha Rajkumar, Asha Mary Kuruvilla, Aarati Krishna, Mariam E Sunny, Reshma Ashokan, Elizabeth Abraham, Seno Saju, Malavika S



Asha Mary Kuruvilla

Kottayam: Breaking previous years' recruitment records, nearly all 27 students graduating from the Manorama School of Communication (MASCOM), have been hired by various media houses, international to

regional, well ahead of course culmination.

In its 20th year, this achievement is markedly sweeter given the pandemic's impact on the job market.

While working on the weekly lab journal *The Fourth Estate/ Jalakom* and rolling the bulletin, exclusive stories were covered. Projects such as the Marmala hydroelectric plan and Changanacherry flyover were covered by

the print team. The wasting away of the Mariyapalli Library and Munroe lighthouse near Karimankala Boat Jetty were also covered well by the broadcast team.

Interestingly, a few of the stories covered by the students were taken up by other media houses later. This shot in the arm indicated that training at MASCOM was guiding these young journo on the right track.

Braving unknown waters

Kottayam: While the current batch of MASCOM wrestled with reporting during Covid-19, three students had to bear the additional burden of crossing a language barrier. These girls – from Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Uttarakhand – took the challenge in their stride. "With no clue about the culture, I ended up in Kottayam. What kept me going was my dream of becoming a journalist,"



L-R: M Sai Jahanvi, Pranjul Singh, Manvi Pant

says Pranjul Singh.

The demands of the course pushed M Sai Jahanvi to make conversations that she would not otherwise have made. "Despite my limited

knowledge of Malayalam, MASCOM gave me confidence to step out of my comfort zone," she says.

However, the sheer contentment of completing a story in an alien language fuelled them further. "Despite all the struggles of a North Indian in a typical South Indian town while reporting, today I am truly glad that I took this chance," says Manvi Pant.

Journalism is not content creation, says Johnny Lukose



Becky P George

Kottayam: Johnny Lukose is a household name among Keralites. His sharp questions on his chatshow *Nere Chovve* often brewed conversations and controversies bringing in both vast viewership and many state awards. Formerly a district reporter for *Malayala Manorama*, he rose to become the News Editor of the Malayala Manorama News channel. Talking to *The Fourth Estate*, Lukose reflects on the status quo of the news industry and the impact of media.

Through all these years, what are the three truths of journalism which you never compromise on?

Good research and preparation are always crucial. Giving respect and taking it, and lastly building long-term trust by being fair and accurate.

Nowadays, interviews are reduced to sneak peeks into the personal life of celebrities. Why do we no longer see an opinionated Thilakan or a candid Jagathi Sreekumar in an interview?

Even the 'sneak peeks' may be intentional and more of a promotional exercise than an



opportunity for sincere talk and self-revelation. Since everybody on social media has an opinion, guests tend to be wary of being insensitively audited by the public.

Doomscrolling and news-fatigue are now common among youth. How do we ensure news remains relevant enough to be sought after?

News remains relevant by being consequential, credible and useful. Despite the social media bashing of mainstream media, credible media still has its value. Tie all this in with people's life and experience - news will remain relevant forever.

Even in the days of news fatigue, explanatory journalism is resonating well with young consumers. Journalism is not content creation. It involves a great deal of investigation and analysis.

In today's world, what do you think should set apart a true journalist from commentators with access to digital media?

“
A true journalist must inform, interpret and illuminate.”

Many say balanced, impartial journalism is not possible now. That simply means that they are incapable of doing it or they just don't want to do it.

Respect for facts and consideration for others' points of view are vital in this profession. A true journalist must inform, interpret and illuminate.

Straight from class to career



Akshay Mohan



"My job at CNBC TV-18 is going pretty well. At MASCOM, I learnt to use the NRCS software. Since we use a similar program at our workplace here, I was able to learn quicker than expected, to the surprise of my colleagues!" ~ Christine Brills

Kottayam: The 10-month course at Manorama School of Communication (MASCOM) was not only a learning opportunity but also a stepping stone to an exciting career for some. Four students of the current batch embarked on their professional journey even before they could bid adieu to the fun and frolic of the classroom. Here they share their experiences of how MASCOM helped mould them for the newsrooms outside.

"My work at News18 has been great so far. MASCOM taught me that the most important part of a newsroom is time management which has



helped me in doing my job well. MASCOM has been the best chapter of my life so far, moulding me as a journalist." ~ Pranjul Singh

"Since MASCOM does not sugar-coat its reviews for assignments, I learnt to identify and correct my mistakes quickly. We were trained to face reality. Now that I'm working at Informist Media, I realise



my efforts in MASCOM have really paid off." ~ Anjana Therese Antony

"The training that I undergo here at Malayala Manorama is quite similar to what I learnt at MASCOM. Asking the right questions and looking for the specifics which add depth to a story are easier tasks now because of the guidance I received from MASCOM faculty.



~ Aparna Jacob

Learning to be the fourth estate



Mariam E Sunny

Kottayam: *The Fourth Estate* opens the doors of journalism for a bunch of youngsters from different educational backgrounds. Reminiscing about being an editor for the first time evokes bitter-sweet feelings.

Crying our eyes out at least once before the first edition was inevitable. But seeing our bylines for the first time made it all worthwhile. And eventually we picked up pace, effortlessly laying out the whole paper in an

hour or two and gradually learnt to handle any challenge thrown at us.

An average print student at MASCOM has her work cut out for her. The week starts off with hunting for news stories and getting them approved. Some of these get killed almost instantly while some are (un)fortunate enough to survive till the last minute before being scrapped. The run for ideas seems endless. But, the actual challenge is finding contacts to develop the story and, more importantly, appropriate

quotes from them. Once the stories are filed, the editor and sub-editors perfect them before

placing them presentably. Given only a few days to admire our handiwork, what follows is every editor's nightmare: a review session. The paper gets dissected; each

minute detail closely scrutinised. From "no specifics" to "too many specifics", we often

struggled to strike the right balance. It is the concerted effort of the reporters, sub-editors, and the editor that results in a good edition of *The Fourth Estate*. We learn to be accountable for every word we write and edit, while getting a taste of real-world journalism. Ultimately, it is the indescribable feeling of contentment in doing what we love, as a team, that encourages us to work better every week.



Awards



Christine Ann Brills

Best Student (Broadcast)



Akshay Mohan Best Student



Asha Mary Kuruvilla

Best Student (Print)