

# Even when the going gets tough, just keep pegging away

Yet another journalist has been killed in Tripura, the second in two months. Sudip Datta Bhaumik was allegedly shot by a jawan of the 2nd Tripura State Rifles about 20 km from Agartala. He was a senior journalist with *Syandan Patrika*, a leading Bengali newspaper of the city. On September 20, Shantanu Bhaumik, a reporter of Din-Raat, a local TV cable news channel, was killed while he had gone to cover an incident at Mandai, about 40 km from Agartala. And on September 5, Gauri Lankesh was shot dead in Bengaluru.

In the midst of all the gloom, it's heartening to see journalists plodding along, reporting on subjects and issues that concern all of us. The Press Institute of India and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) present awards to journalists and photojournalists every year for best articles and pictures on a humanitarian subject. This year, the theme was Disability – Triumphs and Challenges.

*Malayala Manorama's* chief reporter in Thiruvananthapuram, Mahesh Guptan, sent in a short series of articles. Titled They Are Also Our Pet Children, the articles threw light on the sad plight of children with neuro disabilities, the issues faced by the children and their families, ineffective implementation of government programmes, lack of treatment facilities, and scope for social support. Second prize-winner T. Ajeesh, *Manorama's* chief sub-editor in Malappuram, Kerala sent in an entry, Life on Wheels, a short, moving series of disabled people fighting the odds and winning. Mini Thomas, special correspondent, *The Week*, Bengaluru, received the third prize for her article, Able to Inspire — a story about how a young woman, after losing her hands in an accident, emerged as a powerful motivational speaker.

The top three winners in the photography category were all from *Hindustan Times*. *HT's* chief photographer in Jaipur had sent in an eye-catching photo-essay on the National Triangular Wheelchair T-20 Cricket Series. The two others, both special photojournalists with the newspaper, had taken some stunning pictures – of 52-year-old Monu, a dwarf, who transforms himself into 'Charlie Mama' at Delhi's India Gate every day at 4 pm, and of

Suyash Jadhav who represented India in the men's 50m butterfly, men's 50m freestyle and men's 200m individual medley at the Rio Paralympic Games. A three-part series on the India Spend website by Swagata Yadavar and Prachi Salve, examining what living with disability in India means, particularly with regard to access to education and employment, was cited for a special award.

It's stories such as these that will help keep the Journalism flag flying high in India and motivate others to raise the bar. Like Gauri Lankesh, Shantanu Bhaumik and Sudip Datta Bhaumik did always – without fear or favour.

According to Dominic Ponsford, writing for *Press Gazette*, the *Financial Times* claims to have exceeded 900000 'paying readers' for the first time. He says, this means digital subscribers must now be well in excess of 700000. The vast majority of digital subscribers (around 500000) are corporate – staff at organisations which have bought company-wide subscriptions. "Never before in our 130-year history have so many people paid to read the *FT*," Ponsford quotes *FT* chief executive John Ridding as saying.

Ian Gibbs writing for *MediaShift*, says "trust arguably transcends simple attention metrics". The strength of trust in mainstream and traditional forms of news is notable, he points out. In fact, printed news magazines are the most trusted news source (72 per cent rate them positively), closely followed by 24-hour TV news, radio bulletins and national newspapers. Conversely, just 33 per cent agreed that social media "provides news I can trust".

Subscriptions have become *The Economist's* biggest income stream in the past seven years. Michael Brunt, chief marketing officer and managing director, Circulation, at the 174-year old title has the mantra: 'Build the audience our advertisers want to reach.' *The Economist* now charges the same for a digital subscription as for a print subscription on the grounds that the reader is paying for the content and not the format.

**Sashi Nair**  
editorpiirind@gmail.com