

Expressions



Volume: I, Issue: IX

September 2020


Virtual work & study Opportunity or Roadblock?

Rahul Mohanto

WE ARE NOW GOING ONLINE! All of us have heard this sentence a few months ago. The moment COVID-19 ensnared the economy, all business houses, schools, colleges, and universities decided to go digital as 'Work from Home' mode gained momentum.

Have you ever thought about why big companies like Facebook and LinkedIn have allowed their employees to work from home and on the other hand, school teachers and professors are desperate to stop virtual learning and resume physical classroom learning? With time, employees slowly silently got acclimatized with 'Work From Home' (WFH) culture and students with online classes that meant working with feasibility and comfort. No annoying morning alarm clocks or no waiting at the bus stand or metro station anymore.

Experts have claimed that many companies will be shift to WFH mode permanently since it is cost-effective, efficient, and ensures pro-

24% 
of Indians have internet facility

15% have an internet connection...

...Out of 66% of the rural population in India

WFH option will empower more women especially mothers, in particular, to join the workforce at their convenience

ductivity gain. Mr Rohit Kapoor, Vice-Chairman & CEO of EXL Service believes that India will accept such practice over a period time as this WFH option will empower more women especially mothers, in particular, to join the workforce at their convenience. This situation calls for a SWOT analysis by business organizations to identify the pros and cons and then decide the right course of action, which is best suited for their employees.

And if we talk about online education then it has failed to live up to

its true potential since in India we don't have a stable internet facility. According to Trek.in, 11% of households have only one device with an internet facility to study. To go by facts, as per the 2017-18 National Sample Survey Report on education it was found that only 24% of Indians have internet facility and out of 66% of the rural population in India, only 15% have an internet connection. Hence online education is not feasible for India now.

Continued on P5

Editor's Desk

Orientation with a difference. Yes! September 2020 saw orientation of Batch 2020 both at Amity School of Communication (ASCO) and other institutions across the Lucknow Campus but this time it was on 'digital platform' because of the pandemic.



Students, faculty and staff were deprived of one-to-one interaction and the usual bonhomie that the seniors would have shared with the juniors in normal condition but it remained in some measure nonetheless.

The AUUP, however, ensured that all the activities were held and witnessed online for the benefit of new students so that they get a feel of the campus, in particular, the facilities, infrastructure and the events both sports and cultural that take place throughout the year.

I extend a warm welcome to ASCOites belonging to both Bachelors' and Post-Graduate programs as they become part of the family now. The September issue of Expressions contains a write up by Sanjana Saxena on the orientation wherein some freshers also share their experiences on joining the institution. The issue carries an interesting piece by Aakarsh Bajpai who has reviewed External Affairs Minister Mr. Jai Shanker's recent book "The Indian Way: Strategies for an uncertain World" published by Harper Collins.

Another feather in the cap was ASCO conducting its first online event 'Radio Awards' in partnership with Fever FM. The event conducted under the guidance of faculty was well coordinated by students' coordinators Shifa Dutt and Siddhartha Chaturvedi along with faculty Alisha Syedain, Rekha Pachauri, Soumen Bhattacharya & Ms. Shweta Wahie which was a resounding success. The event gave a new experience to the students when it came to conduct an event digitally during the pandemic.

For the 'Faculty Corner' column, Arpita Singh shares her experience about a short film on transgender Mangalamukhi, which has international awards.

As usual, ACE photographer and ASCO photography faculty Trilochan S. Kalra, who picks up a different theme every month and occupies the center spread pages, has done an enticing photo feature on 'Pets Meet' with some beautiful clicks.

It is heartening to see the students' involvement in our monthly publication that has given our budding reporters a chance to be published thus adding to their portfolio. Freshers feel free to pitch in as opportunities galore await at ASCO.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

Amity is like my family

The first time I landed in Lucknow was for my admission test to Amity University. I had never thought this city will become an integral part of my life. To me Lucknow means Amity University. I had no acquaintance in the city but now I have a family in Amity.



At Amity I was looking forward to enhancing my personality. Over time, through my post-graduation in Advertising & Marketing Management, I have not only been a part of Amity School of Communication or our ASCO, as we would lovingly call it, but also experienced life to the fullest.

During my journey, our Director Professor Dr. Sanjay M. Johri might have been the HOD for everyone else, but he was my mentor and guardian in

Lucknow. Whether it was college or hostel, he was always there for me. One fascinating thing about ASCO is that they don't go by the book; the interpersonal relationship between teachers and students makes the journey special. The way my teachers would show trust in me made me much more confident.

Mili ma'am has influenced me with her balanced, outgoing and cool personality. Sunaina ma'am's subtle sense of humour is what I admire. She inspired me to make that daring move into the world of advertising. Faculties at ASCO including Faisal Sir, Dushyant Sir, Soumen Sir, Areena ma'am have all contributed towards making me a better professional. Upasana ma'am was one person who became our beautiful friend among all the teachers, and it would be fallacious to not name her.

ASCO gave me opportunities beyond the classroom. I was part of almost all the events during my academic years. Amity has made me self-reliant, confident and organised person and I thank everyone from 'dil se.'

*Samarpita Chakraborty
Brand Associate, Contract India*

ALUMNI CORNER

Bollywood not giving due credit to lyricists

Nitin Kumar

With 'Slumdog Millionaire' ace music composer AR Rehman took Bollywood on International platform as the popular song 'Jai Ho' won both the Oscar and Grammy award for the best original song for a motion picture that year. Just pause and think...how many of you can recall the name of the lyricist who penned it.

Reality bites and how! Even as you start googling the name of the lyricist, here is something to chew on—there were two lyricists Gulzar and Tanvi Shah. While Gulzar wrote the Hindi verses, Tanvi Shah penned English and Spanish verses, which she also sang. The song was adapted by several International artists.

This is the charisma of the legendary lyricists working in our Bollywood industry. They give birth to the soul of the iconic songs that become an integral part of our lives. Ironically, these lyricists do not get due recognition for their valuable work.

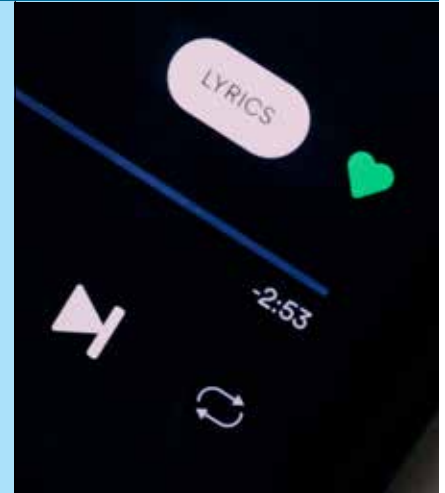
Unlike Hollywood, most productions in Bollywood begin by recording a song. In the 1950s, when Bollywood music first started playing on All India Radio, there was no mention of veteran lyricists. Sahir Ludhianvi, being a lyricist, raised his voice and spearheaded the fight against AIR. His efforts led to a significant change of crediting lyricists every time a song was played by AIR.

Today, the market of the music industry is completely changed with digitization of music distribution being the highlight. This has further worsened the situation for lyricists, leaving them begging for credit on music streaming

IN THE NUTSHELL

■ Today, the market of the music industry is completely changed with the digitization of music distribution being the highlight

■ The reason being the usage of an American-based crediting system. Unlike the Indian context, the singer and the lyricist are considered as a single entity and is credited as 'songwriter' as per this system. The catch is that Indian lyricists end up getting no credit



■ As of 2019, the industry was worth \$300 million and a songwriter receives anywhere from \$100 to \$1000 per song

platforms. The reason being the usage of an American-based crediting system. Unlike the Indian context, the singer and the lyricist are considered as a single entity and is credited as 'songwriter' as per this system. The catch is that Indian lyricists end up getting no credit.

This unfair disregard for the work of lyricists led to a protest. 15 lyricists came together to demand their basic rights of getting due credit via video named 'Title credit de do year'. It was supported by artists like AR Rahman and Asha Bhonsle. Lyricist Swande Kirkire highlighted three albums that omitted the credit of lyricists namely Teesri Kasam (lyricist Shailendra), Lagaan (Javed Akhtar), and Omkara (Gulzar).

Songwriter, music director,

playback singer and the choreographer are four essential elements of the Indian music industry. As of 2019, the industry was worth \$300 million and a songwriter receives anywhere from \$100 to \$1000 per song. If the stars are the backbone of the industry, music is its heartbeat. Today about 7500 songs are written annually in India and their fate depends on the ability of the lyrics reaching to the hearts of listeners. Not getting recognition for this crucial work leaves one disappointed. It is high time lyricists get the credit they rightly deserve else the small voice in our head would feel guilty of enjoying the iconic works of these legends. Incidentally, do you know who penned the lyrics for the classic 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' song from Shahrukh Khan starrer 'Dil Se' that had the entire nation on its toes?



Looking at uncertain global politics ‘The Indian Way’

Aakarsh Bajpai

The world is reeling under an unprecedented pandemic crisis that has brought even the most developed nations on their knees, which coupled with new geo-political equations and a resurgent India has altered the face of International polity. Hence country's External Affairs minister Dr S. Jaishankar's recently released book "The Indian Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World" published by HarperCollins, could not have come at a more apt time focussing on how 'today we are planning no longer for the normal but for the abnormal', with specific focus on India.

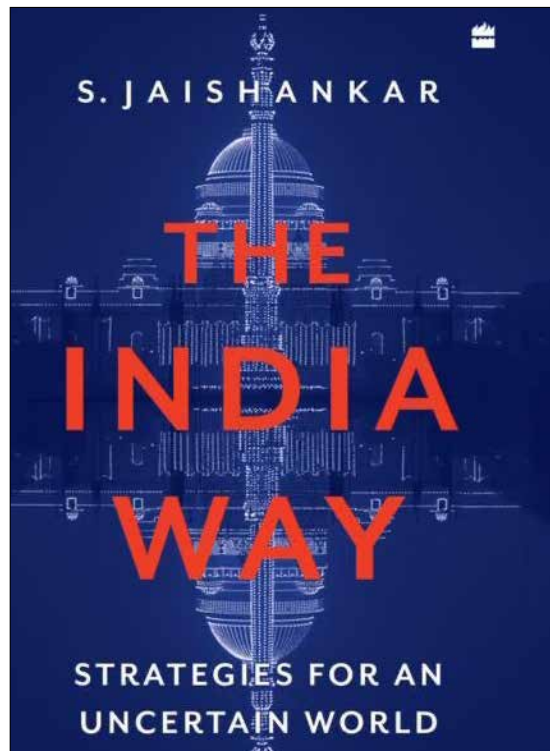
DEBUNKING ASSUMPTIONS

The book clearly states that "Many of the assumptions on which we had operated are now being called into question. We assumed a certain policy from the USA; it is very clear in 4 years that the world cannot count on it. The change in the US interests has stirred up the global balance. Similarly, the reach and capability of the Chinese regime has exceeded that assumption. The assumption of the always growing European Union was broken after Brexit. In the book, Dr S. Jaishankar evidently points out with practical examples that we must move forward leaving our old assumptions behind.

CHANGE IN NATURE OF POWER

During the Cold War era we thought of power with a very strong military connotation then it became in many ways soft power, some economic is-

suues but the book suggests today that trade is one form of power investment, another is connectivity, while the third is technology so the nature of power has changed. Most importantly it makes people understand that the 'world of agreement in a way is over.' It is a normal world of convergences. Even countries, which are close will not agree on everything and even countries with whom you are not close would



agree on some things you can work with them. 'We are moving to a more practical, pragmatic world that includes margins and hedging', as Dr Jaishankar writes.

CHANGING DIPLOMATIC METAPHORS

Dr Jaishankar argues that Indian diplomacy was not much grounded to the core culture of the country and its time for us as a nation to pull out strategically from our roots. He writes in his book, "It is revealing that the standard American intro-

duction to Indian strategic thought does not even refer to Mahabharat, though that epic so deeply influences the average Indian mind". The players of international relations have changed, the balances, the tools, the behaviour and in all of this we have also changed. Our reach, our voice is louder and bigger than before. The book is trying to tell Indians that international affairs, strategy building is not a foreign idea instead it has always been part of our thinking process.

IMAGINING THE INDIAN BRAND

"It may be hard for diplomats to digest but the Indian street has often displayed better instincts than Lutyens' Delhi when it comes to assessing opportunities and risks abroad", writes Dr Jaishankar. Brand India would not like to be known as just a powerful country, but one known for doing the right thing and being there for the rest of the world. 'The India way must not do pure balance of power and politics, not to be transactional and not be self-interested,' said Dr S. Jaishankar at a book launch interview.

The book is all about the big picture in terms of the repositioning of America, the rise of China, Europe after Brexit, where Japan is going, what's happening in the Indian Ocean? It takes up all those issues and presents an Indian perspective to it. It is filled with insights gained by Dr S. Jaishankar over his years of postings in key capitals all over the world. The book would not only be an interesting read for diplomats but also the common man who need to understand the changing global scenario and view it from India's perspective.

'Criticise films but don't ignore message'

Riddhi Bhargava

2020 has shown us a lot of fluctuations in the form of events, controversies, tragedies, pandemic, and most important in creating a new way for us to live. Cinema too faced upheavals during the pandemic but as we all know that the show must go on and so Bollywood moved to OTT platforms.

The transition was smooth, but people became very picky. Three movies predominantly faced a lot of controversies: Chappak, Thappad, and Gunjan Saxena while the first two were released before Covid and third was released online during lockdown. People trolled the movies based on the facts like Deepika attended the college protest against CAA, appropriate age to watch movies like Thappad and negative portrayal of IAF in Gunjan Saxena film. However, what we ignored was the motive behind these stories, which was to portray an individual's right to fight for his/her existence, be treated compassionately and the equality of passion in every person that these movies portrayed.

Chappak intended to express the journey of Laxmi Agarwal, an acid attack survivor fighting for a ban on the sale of acid. Thappad gave us the reason to relook into our lives that if we talk about equality then physical assault is the worst

aspect of it and even a slap cannot be forgiven. Gunjan Saxena film that describes a journey of a lady from an aspiring pilot to nation's pride, a pathway that gave women a place in the army. It dealt with the way Gunjan had to adjust and undergo an intense journey only because of her gender. Cancelling of sortie, humiliating treatment despite being the topper among the posted officer, were few core points that brought our attention towards it.

The dissent seems to be arising from the people who are too comfortable being the oppressors of women or who believe that women have a weaker standing according to Indian culture and heritage due to the kind of environment they have seen while growing up around them. Well, it all seems to be a lack of

perspective and the constraint to thinking liberally. Otherwise, no such extremist approach would have been taken to boycott movies, which highlight something that is harsh or

not addressed enough.

Indian cinema has given women empowerment a special place. They have initiated it by raising the bar by promoting feminism in an innovative and eye-opening format. When we see these facts, a major point that tends to grab attention is that "should these controversies hold a limiting upper hand over these eye-opening movies to reach its due audience?" The answer remains in our choice of action.



Virtual work and study

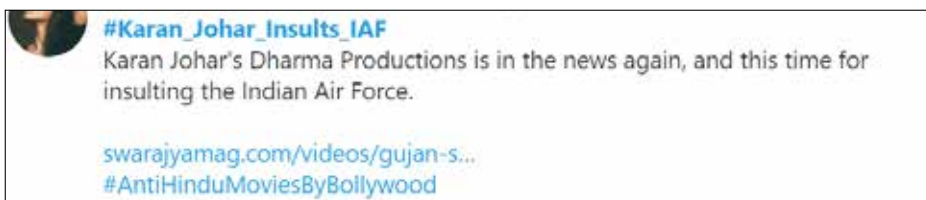
Continued from P1

Even according to a few experts, online education can reduce productivity of students while having a bad impact on their eyes due to constant exposure to computer/laptop/mobile screen. But since every coin has two sides, it may be due to the stigma associated with online higher education where people believe that it doesn't provide 'real degrees.' Such fallacious claims demoralize many students to take up online courses and the same goes for online classes. But we often forget online education eliminates both social and physical borders. Even as stated by EduXpert, the online education market in India was worth \$ 247 million in 2016, which is expected to develop to \$1.96 billion by 2021. That is a compound annual development rate of 52%.

After this lockdown people may change their standpoint about digital education.

Yes, it is the new normal. We have also witnessed a series of virtual events like webinars, online workshops, FB live events, online competitions and not to forget to mention about the online zoom parties. FMI's study on virtual event platforms proclaimed that virtual platforms will surge at an annual growth rate exceeding 20% from 2020-30.

The famous quote by a great technical evangelist Robert Scoble seems to hold good in today's times, "Change is inevitable and the disruption it causes often brings inconvenience for some while giving opportunity for others". Now it is up to you to make the most of the situation or hanker for old days!



Pawsome idea:

PETS' MEET!

Lensman: Trilochan S Kalra

Lockdown for a long period not only irritated people but also pets who could hardly go out with their masters. For dogs especially it was an unusual scene going out with their masters who maintained social distance and hence no 'woof-woof' with their street pals or another furry ball friend being taken for a brief walk by his/her owner!

As a result, one could notice change in their behaviour with some pets becoming more ferocious while others becoming listless. These loving animals had no sense as to why they were 'imprisoned' in homes while their owners seeing the surge in Covid 19 cases wondered what they could do to lift the melancholic mood of their furry friends.

Sensing their plight, Ashok Singh, resident of Rapti Apartment in Gomti Nagar Extension, came up with a novel idea of organizing 'Pets Meet' and then he was joined





by Prakhar, Puneet Gulati, Anand Prakash, Divyambari Saxena and others who decided to assemble at a park with their furry friends and now the chain has been growing .

Though it all started on Saturdays, but now pet owners also come on Sundays. Uno, Simba, Leo, Cooper, Dora, Fluffy, Rex, Jojo, Goofy, Pablo, Bantu, Coco, Shiro and Roko are friends and the way they meet here every weekend in the park it seems they look forward to have fun-time.

Watching the animals enjoying their day out at Ashoka Park near Ganga Apartment is a delight not



only for their master but also passerby. Dog owners also bring water, food & toys for them and many masters run across the park jumping and playing with them.

So, what are you waiting for, join the weekly Pet's Meet with your furry friend and beat the stress!



The inescapable world of YouTube

Adeeba Lari

There is something so powerful about 'moving pictures' that it always entices. Be it Hitler's propaganda movies or the television that attracted hours of viewing; the human brain is always taken back by the magic of videos. Perhaps, this is why when Youtube was 'born,' the entertainment scenario shifted and evolved to new heights.

It went from public viewing of television to a very personal activity on your screens, a change from generic content for the masses to authentically personalised for you. YouTube is a product of the millennia, born in 2005, it is the largest and most popular video distribution platform on the Internet. It has over 4 billion hours worth of video viewers every month, and an estimated 250 hours of video content are viewed every day.

YouTube is responsible for taking the power of a limited broadcaster and giving it to the masses; it gives them the ability to share their content out in the world.

In my family of four, two of them are You-tubers and I am not one of them. It is a product of mass change. It provides a wide platform for sharing your stories, talent, vision with millions of people.

Take Lilly Singh for example. In 2010, she was a depressed Punjabi teen living in Canada and now, in 2020 she is the highest paid You Tuber with over 16 million net worth and 14 million watching her channel every day.

YouTube has not just been a platform for baseless entertain-

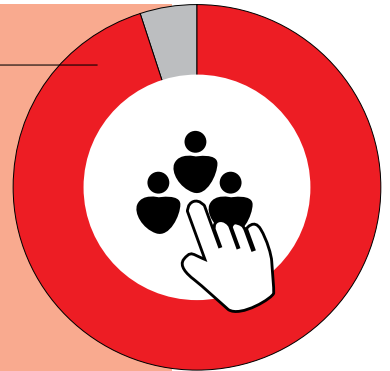
ment but a defining source of change for many youngsters around the world. And maybe this is what excites

everyone about it. That it gives the power to completely change your life in your own hands.

Akshat, a student of Computer Engineering, is seen more with his camera than his books. Ask him what he does and he will coyly reply, You Tubing. It is a hobby for him, one which allows him to follow his passion as well as keeps a tiny hope alive that one day he might be able to make a living out of it. 'If only I have the views', he quips, pointing to his last video.

Ask the people around you, if they you tube. The answer will always be a yes. Either they are out making videos or viewing them, no one is left from the youtube world. My mother has been pestering me to help her edit her videos. With over a 100 subscribers on her first cooking video, she has stepped into the YouTube world.

Users can navigate YouTube in a total of 80 different languages. This covers 95 percent of the Internet population



My brother though 15, tells every relative rather proudly that he is a gamer. And his work place is the multi nation entertainment business; yes You Tube.

Millions of students like Akshat are using YouTube to get their creative juices flowing. Million others like my mother have found it as an outlet to follow their dreams that were left behind. And then there are youngsters like my brother, who unlike him, are already earning huge amounts by simply providing the type of television entertainment television simply can't afford to.

From movie and song reviews to hundreds of recipes; from quirky YouTubers and their crazy lifestyles to 20 new hairstyles; it is all out there. And people are watching. The power of YouTube is undeniable to the extent that even various actors of the silver screen like Alia Bhatt and Kareena Kapoor Khan are now on YouTube with their own channel.

It is a recognised and well sought for career option and not only is a hub for entertainment but also information, marketing and education. With 400 hours of new video content being uploaded on it every minute, it is a medium that is not going anywhere. So it is only appropriate for us to embrace it, and who knows, perhaps you can be the new YouTuber who everyone is watching.



Digital Radio Awards 2020 hits bullseye

Shifa Dutt

The preparations for Radio Awards Season 5, organised by Amity School of Mass Communication (ASCO), started in February 2020. From making announcements, printing banners to getting entries from participants, everything was going great. Then, just like the climax of a dramatic Bollywood movie, the unpredictable happened—Covid, and everything as we know came to a screeching halt.

Just like every other individual entering this new normal, the core team of Radio Awards was also clueless about proceeding with the event. No one knew when this nightmare would end. However, determined people find a way out of the bumpy roads.

After five months in August we decided to conduct this event for the first time 100% online. A fresh programme was planned by remodeling Radio Awards Season 5 to Digital Radio Awards Season 5. It looked like a long shot with a lot of questions and doubts regarding every bit of the event, but we pulled up our socks and dived in it.

With passion and optimism, the core team worked online countering limitations of the online world with the resources at hand for due preparations. On the other hand, the technical team worked day and night to arm themselves against the possible glitches. From students to



faculties, all were at war with the hurdles, taking care of all the jobs digitally.

It was on September 4, 2020 that the hard work paid off. Digital Radio Awards Season 5 was finally happening online on Microsoft Teams platform. The guests Vijay Kriplani and RJ Raghu Raftaar added glitter to the event with their presence. It was indeed a

dream come true from an idea that was just a spark in someone's imagination but nourished well by the Director Prof. Dr. Sanjay Mohan Johri and all the people that became a part of it.

The event started with a welcome session and was followed by the live RJing competition between the top 5 Male and Female RJs that left the audience stunned. Pooja Barry, another guest for the event, threw light on the role of radio as a communication tool

during the Lockdown. The most awaited moment of the event was the announcement of winners that concluded with a vote of thanks. The success of this event was the result of sheer hard work and dedication. Another incident that taught us "No hurdle is higher than your determination."

"It was a great experience, it gave me a much-needed break from the 'new normal' routine," said Anushka Srivastava, a final year student. "It might have been more fun to sit in the audience and experience the energy rather than online but overall, it captured my attention," said Adeeba Lari, another final year student. "It was my first experience of attending an online event, but it was really good and I enjoyed it a lot," said Ishita Singh, a second-year student.

As difficult as online events are to put together because of all the physical restrictions and technical issues, this is what the future beholds as COVID-19 persists. Digital Radio Awards Season 5 is just the beginning of an era of online events not only at ASCO but everywhere.



Digital Radio Awards Season 5 is just the beginning of an era of online events not only at ASCO but everywhere

FRESH(ER) PERSPECTIVE!

Sanjana Saxena

The year 2020 has been a nothing less than a bumpy rollercoaster ride. However, life goes on and so does education and Amity University Lucknow among many other universities around the world, proved this.

After the conduct of online examination of final year students, it was time for the entry of freshers. Being new at a place in the “new normal” can be quite overwhelming. No matter online or offline, going through the orientation program is very crucial for every student.

The preparation for the orientation began as it was to be conducted in the first week of September. The plan was to combine technology with various events while abiding with the regulations imposed due to the pandemic. A dedicated team of faculty and students were picked for handling various tasks. This year it was decided to keep it both informative and balance it with a separate fun activities slot. The orientation program 2020 was planned and prepared for a new learning experience, with a tinge of fun and excitement for one and all.

From *hawan* to the campus tour, everything was in the form of online sessions on platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams. The fun activities slot turned out to be the favourite of freshers because it helped in breaking the ice. Students got a chance to meet their fellow peers, senior students and faculty in a fun and friendly manner. They played games that tested their creativity, promptness and also showcased their talent online. In a nutshell, the freshers started their journey with an enriching and exciting atmosphere.

This year has taught us a lot of things. We learnt to change and adapt with time and make the best of a situation thus underscoring the philosophy that “The show must go on.”

The five day virtual orientation gave us an opportunity to get familiar with the Amity School of Communication (ASCO), the institution we are going to learn and develop ourselves and understand the Amity’s ideals. I wish to become a content writer and chose BJMC because of the variety of subjects it offers. Amity has a holistic approach and offer plethora of opportunities to its students. My faith in my decision strengthened as I interacted with my seniors and a few teachers during the “Time to Shine” activities. The confidence and demeanor of our seniors reflected the exposure and guidance given by Amity. The trust and co-ordination of the teachers with our seniors made me realize that I was in the right hands. By the end of my course I expect to be a confident, grown individual who is industry ready. I can not wait to embark on this journey full of learning and exploring



-Bhargavi

I had attended the orientation program from the third day of Orientation due to late registration. I was a bit nervous because I was late but surprisingly it turned out to be a very supportive program for me. The welcoming session itself revealed the glory and excellence of the way things happen at Amity. The fun activities sessions were truly interesting and taught us to pull up our socks and be ready for competitions in the coming years. My expectations from Amity is to make the most of the opportunities here so that I become a successful professional in future.



-Ankita Bhatt



The freshers’ orientation 2020 was well organized. All the seniors and faculties paid attention to the fact that everyone was included. The information for the everyday activities was given beforehand, which helped us be on time and prepare for the seminars and activities. All the internet connectivity issues were handled well. Overall, I appreciate the team effort by the university to put together an online orientation week successfully. My expectations from Amity would be to learn from the experience and skills of the faculties and to be just as prepared as a student, as I saw my seniors in the sessions.

-Ishita Arora

I would like to thank my faculties and seniors who made this event possible during the pandemic. I thoroughly enjoyed the welcome



session, program & college information session. However, the session that I enjoyed the most was 'Fun Activities' because all of us played games together and came to know each

other. My expectations from Amity is that it would teach me to become the best version of myself. I hope the university reopens soon so that I can meet everyone.

-Saumya Tiwari

The orientation was a tremendous experience. In a span of five days, with the exchange of positive thoughts and knowledge, I understood how I should be approaching my studies and gained clarity about my future journey. The interactive sessions helped me get along with my peers and also know my faculties. I thank Amity University for the fruitful orientation program and I am happy to be an Amitian.



-Ritika Sharma

Although the orientation program was online due to Covid, yet all seniors and teachers made it worth attending. I appreciate the friendliness and positive energy during the sessions. The event I liked the most was the talent hunt as everybody was given a chance to showcase their talents. It also



instilled confidence in me. I hope to hone my skills and develop both personally and professionally at Amity.

-Akanksha Rajpoot

Welcome to digital era of events

Sonia Singh

The uncommon things that became common in 2020: Applying for a job online instead of dropping the resume in a mailbox, ordering food online instead of going to a restaurant, watching the latest movie on Netflix instead of rushing to a multiplex and finally the icing on the cake— attending events online with a live audience.

The latter is the most interesting as events are all about shared experiences, whether its planning, execution or just being an audience. But this global pandemic has made us realise that humans do need a sense of social connection, even if we cannot be physically present at a place; virtual presence can compensate for this.

ASCO organised Digital Radio Awards: Season 5, a first ever digital competition to bring young RJs to the fore. This event became a grand success as there were no geographical barriers, which exist otherwise. The planning, promotion, selection of participants and even live judges watching the performance of participants and giving the judgement on the spot was like a well-oiled machine working in full harmony. The success of this event has opened new doors for industry interactions and bringing affluent industry mentors to a platform, which is convenient and less time consuming (no traveling, one can attend in the comfort of their own office).

Students are being prepared to think out of the box and not be restricted to traditional methods. To go beyond the unthinkable is the new wave of evolution. It goes without saying that being physically present anywhere is a wholesome experience, but it is evident that many tasks can be done online with a strong communication network.

Virtual mode of education is now not an unimaginable aspect. Taking steps forward in this direction, Amity University initiated the induction of new batches through online admissions and orientation sessions. While orientation activities are designed to familiarise freshers with their chosen departments and the e-orientation amped up the game.

Companies across the globe have conducted e-events like group meetings, seminars, concerts, awards, fundraisers and much more. Events like birthday celebrations, marriages, prayer meetings and house parties were also attended by people from their homes. These events have always acted as a glue to hold up the near and dear ones together. Entering the virtual space, it was evident to see a sense belongingness in people while being present online. As per the industry, event planners can now learn to think of a business contingency plan for future keeping in mind the current pandemic.

Teacher's Day: Virtual celebration

Anjali Singh

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge", said Albert Einstein. Being celebrated every year on September 5, Teacher's Day falls on the birthday of former President and Bharat Ratan Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.

The year 2020 has already brought forth some of the biggest challenges in the realm of learning. The teachers have been upfront in adapting to the changes in the wake of Corona Virus. Decades of teaching experience have been subjected to a new virtual ball game. On this Teachers Day, students and teachers expressed their love for the beautiful bond between them in virtual events.

Divya Bansal, a 12th class student sees her class teacher as her

role model. "I usually gave her a handmade card but this year I was unable to do so. We expressed love for our teachers by singing songs virtually. The celebration cannot be inhibited due to the pandemic. Our teachers are putting in hard work to make us understand the concepts easily. The virtual blessings made our efforts successful and the teacher's praises motivated and enhanced our confidence level", she expressed.

"Teachers are the ones who are with us on our way to success and to achieve our targets by doing extreme hard work. They are always the one who support us after our parents, they are our gurus, our role models, and our friends. I credit my achievements to my history teacher, Poonam Sharma. I usually hesitated to take part in competitions as I had stage fear and low self-esteem.

But she is the one who supported me throughout and pushed me to face my fears. Although, this year I was unable to meet her personally, I have sent her gifts online which she appreciated and blessed me just as always", said Charu Mehta, a college-going student.

Sonu Sharma, a Hindi teacher, believes that the pandemic has strengthened the relationship between teachers and students. "COVID has affected all but the challenge of virtual teaching was successfully overcome. My students organized virtual celebrations for all teachers and we were very touched. Being called as role models is a token of honour for us," says Sharma.

As seen from these heart-warming responses, the connection between teachers and students has become stronger in Covid-enforced virtual scenario.

Tale of the third gender

Faculty Corner



Dressed in a colourful saree with garish make up and spouting epithets at passerby who frown and cross the road when they see her, Guddi ji, a eunuch who says, "All we want is respect but this is what we have to live with every day. God has chosen me to be born in this way so that I can complete everyone's marriage, birth celebrations with my blessings as a Mangalamukhi."

Surrounded by her fellow eunuchs Guddi ji narrates the discrimination faced by them during the making of my documentary—Mangalamukhi- Eunuchs Blessings, is an award-winning documentary film set in Uttar Pradesh, which I helmed as DoP. The documentary shows the struggle of transgender community in the society, their sustainability, education, skill-building and the tough battle to survive.

The documentary was made under the fellowship of Change Chitra Program whose aim was to make short documentary films on Social Issue, run by the international media and the human rights NGO of Video Volunteers. Mangalamukhi- Eunuchs blessing won the laurels in My hero Film Festival, under Human Rights category and is Officially selected in LGBTQ Unbordered International Film Festival.

As a journalism student, I was interested in making a documentary on a unique subject. While going through various ideas I came across a research on the transgender community in Uttar Pradesh. It was an eye-opening moment as I came to know that over

66% of the population identified as third gender lived in rural areas with a dismal literacy ratio. This despite the fact that the government had been making efforts to provide support to this community and so I decided to make a documentary getting the details from the horses' mouth and it is here that I met Guddi ji.

When I asked her to narrate the experiences, she looked at me with perplexed eyes as if saying what good will it do but when I urged, she spoke, "Even though the third gender or eunuchs have been given an official status thus granting them equal rights as any citizen of the nation but sadly it is just on paper. Even today we face discrimination at every level."

As I prod further, she laments, "We still can't open bank accounts or take admissions in school or colleges. Leave alone all this we do not even have a separate washroom in public places where we can go without being judged."

The documentary reveals that the only thing they demand from everyone in the film was to consider them as normal and be given equal opportunities as everyone to succeed. "Lack of opportunities' and societal negligence are making us believe in the old superstitions and myths that we are doomed by birth," she rues and shrugs.

- Arpita Singh