



Expressions

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WHAT UNLOCK HAS 'IN THE STORE' FOR YOU

Sanjana Saxena

The evident growth in online shopping, especially after COVID-19, is undebatable. From clothes to food, groceries, cleaning supplies and several other items can be bought off the internet today. Borderless e-commerce pretty much cornered the brick-and-mortar shops during the pandemic, given the mitigation measures like social distancing and lockdowns. However, as we slowly move towards normalcy, the comeback of offline stores can be seen turning the tables.

Ritika Tiwari, a student of Lucknow University says, "With unlocks and ease in restrictions, I have circled back to street shops and markets, not worrying about the delivery delays and cyber-crimes. It is true that online shopping remains a safer option given the prevailing scenario of COVID-19. Yet, be it an item I need urgently like medicines or when I just want an excuse to go out of the four walls, I would prefer offline shopping any day."

While convenience and time-saving characteristics of online shopping draw the attention of the masses, a few things remain at bay in this mode. Along the lines of this, Kanak Mishra, a mother of two school-going kids residing in Lucknow says, "One thing that I absolutely missed during this pandemic was bargaining at grocery shopping or places like Love Lane.

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Photo courtesy: Sanjana Saxena



Editor's Desk

Hybrid classes cheer up students, faculty

Tired of online lectures and being glued to laptop screens with hardly any seriousness for nearly 20 months, one could see happiness and thrill on the faces of teachers and friends when they returned to hybrid mode of classes in ASCO corridors.



Except for 5-10 percent day scholars who got an opportunity to visit the campus in February 2021 before the pandemic second wave hit, forcing them back home, those in remote areas had not seen each other for literally one and half years after joining their course.

"Sorry, I cannot recognise you," was the common litany when students wearing masks greeted faculty. These were some of the common scenes since remote students visited their respective institutions across the campus for the first time. "We had been friends on screen or telephone," said Anshu when she met Aakriti, her batchmate, in person. It's great to meet our friends and enjoy the campus atmosphere together, said the students praying that they don't have to go back home if the third wave hits.

Students from remote cities either settled down on the campus hostel or PG accommodation in nearby locations.

Authorities had permitted only those with at least one jab of vaccine to come to the campus. However, majority of them decided to come after getting the second dose too and thus having minimum risk of catching virus.

For the past one-and-a-half year, the entire system of learning from children to the postgraduate level and beyond, had moved online. "I think it overburdened students and their capacity as well as that of the faculty to sit in front of the screen at the other end. The classes went hybrid (both physical & online) while senior batches got an opportunity to conduct their practical (classes) in particular their respective projects for Electronic Media.

"Ironically many day scholars still preferred to continue online, and I can only pity them as they don't realise the importance of physical mode of classes" said CR of bachelor's adding "I think they do not want to come out of their comfort zone and mauj masti".

Students need to realise that there is no substitute to on campus classes because learning is different and if you miss this, you will suffer when you move to industry, the CR said.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

"Amity taught me how to be Jill of all trades"

When in the first semester many of my classmates were asked what do they want to achieve in their lives, most of them had an answer ready, whereas I was still trying to figure out my future goals.



Eight years ago, when I first walked into the halls of Amity School of Communications, I only knew that I was a creative person and I loved to challenge myself by exploring new chapters in life. The first five semesters at ASCO briefed me on the industry which helped me choose my career path and my final semester specialization—Digital Marketing.

After completing under graduation when I decided I want to move to Canada and pursue further studies, I knew I was not just representing myself, but also my university and my country. However, it was the pre-requisites like Digital and Social Media Marketing, Photography or Video editing that I developed at ASCO, which stood me out in a diverse class of multicultural students. Hard skills are one thing that are a must in your resume but Interpersonal and Social skills are what I realized is even more looked upon in North America, which ASCO always paid special attention to. My confidence today is what I gained the most at Amity.

These professional and interpersonal skills helped me secure my first job in Canada at one of the most renowned College in Toronto, Seneca College. Gradually in the past five years, I got to work in multiple agencies, private career colleges, start-ups and small to medium scale manufacturing companies as a marketing specialist/consultant.

My suggestion to any current or prospective student who is lost in the race of winning or being on top, don't lose hope. It's okay to not be ready or uncertain at times. Just keep trying and always remember that you are your only competition.

*Tanya Chadha, BJMC 2013 to 2016
Marketing Specialist, Toronto*

ALUMNI CORNER

What Unlock has ‘In the store’ for you

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Picking out fresh vegetables myself and checking the quality and fabric of products are things I cannot do in online shopping. Due to this lack of touch, I truly cannot enjoy shopping online much less prefer it over offline.”

On the contrary, Prakrit Singh, an interior designer residing in Lucknow says, “There is no denying the fact that majority of us think of online shopping only as a substitute for the time being. However, the benefits of 24/7 online shopping outweigh the cons. From the comfort of home, not worrying about getting ready or tackling the crowd, we can get almost anything delivered to our doorstep with just a few clicks. The amount of time and efforts it saves us is beyond the limitations.”

Talking about food, Ragini Mishra, a student of Babu Banarasi Das University, Lucknow, opines, “There is no replacement of hanging out in the malls with food chains and dazzling stores. No amount of discount offers on online

Instant purchases, privacy concerns, shipping costs and lack of touch are the primary reasons hindering a complete transition towards online shopping

Rajeesh Kharwar | an MBA student

food delivery applications can beat the steamy-hot street food and instantly served delectable at food stalls.”

Albeit, the ease and convenience of online mode are known to all. But offline shops ranging from “Kira-na” stores to shopping centres still have their hats in the ring. As it seems, online and offline both would thrive and co-exist in the near future.

Over
2.14 billion
people worldwide are
expected to buy goods and
services online in 2021
and E-commerce will make
up 22% of global retail
sales by 2023

(Source: Statista)



Hurray, it's finally back to campus

Enthusiasm unplugged: Students and faculty are finally enjoying one-on-one interaction in classroom

Bhargavi Singh

After the blink and miss opening in March earlier this year, schools and colleges across the country decided to open again. While strict Covid protocols are being followed and normal campus life still seems far off, students who were weary of online classes welcomed the decision wholeheartedly.

With Covid cases being under control and majority of students and staff being vaccinated, colleges saw a good turnout after re-opening. As students returned to their institutions; classrooms and corridors lit up with the usual hustle and bustle.

Interaction with peers and teachers provided a much-needed break from the monotonous cycle of online classes and significantly uplifted the mental well-being of students. Akash, a second-year undergraduate student from Lucknow said, "Being able to meet my friends in person and getting to sit together in our classrooms is amazing. It is one of the main reasons why I look forward to attend college everyday".

Apart from the overall happiness of experiencing college life, students

also saw a noticeable increase in their concentration and comprehension abilities which were lacking in virtual mode. Ritika, another undergraduate student from Lucknow, shared her experience of attending offline classes for the first time and said, "We

For a teacher it can't be a better treat to see students in the class

Amit Massey | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

missed out on a lot in the past year and it feels really nice to finally come to campus. One of the main advantages is that there are limited distractions in offline classes and while it will take some more time for us to adjust completely, I am glad to be here".

It is not just the students who are happy to be back, sharing similar sentiments are teachers who were missing the lively classroom atmosphere and chitter-chatter of students. Amit Massey, an Assistant Professor at Amity University Lucknow said, "For a teacher it can't be a better treat to see students in the class. Finally, that happened after a long wait & marathon online classes.

It was totally a refreshing experience when you see your students roaming around in the corridors, enjoying in the canteen and more importantly getting exposure of practical classes, which was not possible in online mode. As a teacher I want students to join in full strength and bring some life to college".

However, this joyous affair comes with its own set of challenges. As the fear of a third wave looms on the country, many, especially out-station students, are skeptical of returning to their colleges. Divyanshi, an undergraduate student at Delhi University said, "In March I rented a PG accommodation but I had to return within two weeks because of the second wave and I'm scared it might happen this time too." The option of hybrid classes is a saviour for many who don't want to take chances and have opted for online classes.

With vaccination doses being administered on a large scale and a simultaneous increase in Covid cases in a few states, the future remains disputable. The main question that remains in the hearts of students is whether their happiness will be short-lived or will it survive the treacherous wave of Covid-19.

Photo courtesy: Bhargavi Singh



'A new journey, a new experience'

Drishti Vanaik

With excitement and elation in heart the new post-graduation and under-graduation batches of 2021 embarked upon a new journey into college life with the Orientation programme that put to rest several doubts ranging from: "Will we be able to get accustomed to the new environment?" to "Am I even going for the right course?"

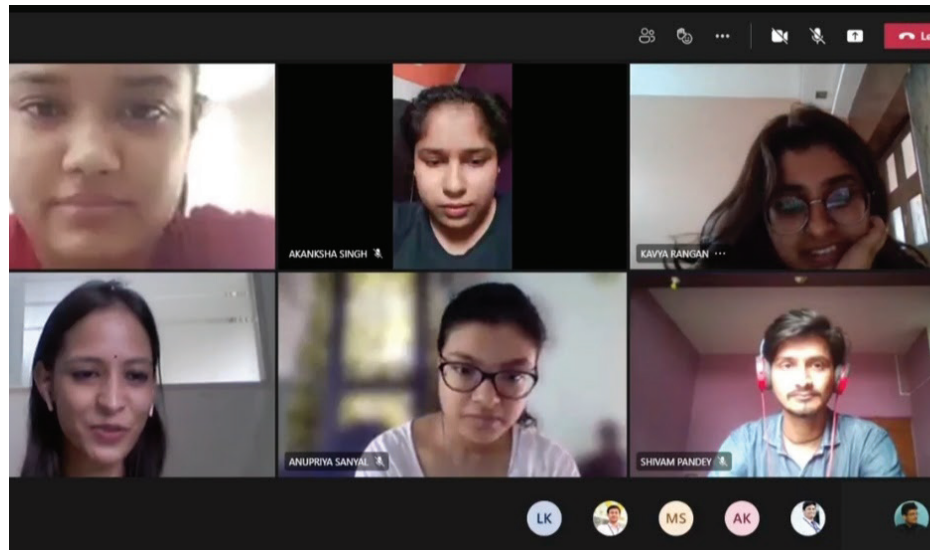
The programme provided freshers right insight and knowledge of the course-curriculum, with the help of both the institute-level and university level briefings.

ORIENTATION 2021

When asked, about the orientation programme, Priyanshi Pandey, 1st year student of Masters' in Advertising and Marketing Management MA(A&MM), delightfully quipped, "The online orientation program was very well-planned, scheduled and amazingly executed. I was a bit anxious at the start, but the great teaching and overall environment certainly extracted that nervousness out of me".

Moreover, another PG fresher Akansha Singh added, "The orientation as a whole was very valuable in giving an insight into the expectations from the course. It made me feel much calmer and allowed me to be a lot more familiar with where I am going to be". Not only the post-graduation students expressed their feelings and provided the feedback, but the under-graduates were also not behind.

Nandini Chaturvedi, 1st year student of Bachelors' in Journalism and Mass Communication, BA(-J&MC) said, "The orientation programme was absolutely enlightening. I felt happy to be starting with



this new journey and as the orientation programme began, I thought this is it, this is where my new life begins."

Agreeing with his batchmates, Raghav Gupta, too chipped in, "It was a well-informed programme with some fun and frolic moments.

"In the beginning, I was extremely nervous, but my faculties and seniors were kind and cooperative, so it boosted my confidence level"

Utkarsh Yadav | UG STUDENT

The orientation helped summarize what I expected from the course. It gave me a sense of hope and peace

Akansha Singh | PG STUDENT

The time to shine sessions with seniors were my favourite. It gave us a chance to get acquainted with them and at the same time provided us relief from the day-long sessions".

Lastly, adding to the feedback was another fresher Soghra Fatima who gleefully shared her experience. "So many fun activities were organised, which helped break the ice with our batchmates. It was worth attending, and I have to say that the orientation programme undoubtedly bridges the gap between students and faculty members, as we get to communicate in an amiable manner".

The experience was summed up by new students Aman Kumar and Utkarsh Shukla aptly. "For us it was a special journey, which started with the fear of "Yaar kya hoga" to "Yaar kaise hoga". On the first day, we kept thinking about what if we are unable to answer in class or what if we are unable to showcase our talents, but now all we can say is that we are enjoying the best of time with all new friends and faculty. It has boosted our confidence level".

The orientation programme 2021, for both the PG and UG students, certainly was successful in conveying the essential information and at the same time, making the process more recognizable with the students. It swept away all the confusions and qualms and rightly proved the quote, "The beginning is the most important part of the work", by Plato.

Sharing, caring and creativity can alleviate pandemic blues: Experts

Sanjana Saxena

The impact of the global pandemic has been debilitating for people of all walks of life. It has been more so for countless young minds who are at a crossroad about their career and trajectories in an utterly distorted 'new normal'. Amidst such mayhem, need of the hour is multi-dimensional guidance for students, entailing both information and resolution from experts in the field.

pact on Young Minds: Crisis, Loss and Isolation' for students on September 3, 2021, on ZOOM platform. Esteemed panellists discussed about the professional, psychological and economic impact of the pandemic for a 360-degree view of the 'new normal' and showed the ropes to students of how to beat the prevailing odds.

Digital media, amidst the pandemic, has played an astounding role in bringing to the fore challenges faced by people in these trying times and people lending a helping hand in any possible way to those in need. Commenting on this, UNICEF official Ruth L. Leano, chief of field office, UNICEF, Uttar Pradesh, emphasised on the importance of empathising with others. "There are so many creative ways to tell our stories today. From short videos to podcasts to graphics in addition to the traditional photographs and write-ups; there is a wealth of formats to choose from", added Ruth while advising young minds to lay the foundation of



To get an insight into this issue, Amity School of Communication (ASCO), Lucknow, in partnership with Unicef Uttar Pradesh organized a Virtual Panel Discussion, 'COVID 19 and its Im-

a broader perspective by sharing moving stories to sensitize the masses and seek solutions and answers.

Another panellist Augustine Veliath, founder-director, Asian Center for Entertainment Education Former Com-



munications Specialist, UNICEF, elucidated that the young people are no less than the brightest minds and organisations. Augustine advice to students was, “Everyone should think about the pain that they can take away from people, a pain to which you will dedicate yourself and work to eradicate it.” He further reinstated that one does not need to look for a job but become a communication enterprise, design one’s own “Sankatmochan Chalisa”, tap into multiple intelligence and take charge to make oneself useful in the present dynamic world.

It is only by seeking emerging avenues and comprehending the multi-dimensional aspects of the current times that we would build ourselves back and come out stronger, he further said.

Addressing the sensitive topic of psychological impact of COVID-19, panellist Dr Pragyan Dangwal, faculty, Amity Institute of Behavioral & Allied Sciences, Amity University Lucknow Campus, said, “Pandemic made our lives go all topsy-turvy. It has had a global impact on both physical and mental health of people and there are both visible and invisible losses that need to be looked at both individual as well as community level.” It is true that these times require us to religiously practise the skills of compassion, gratitude and resilience instead of worry-

ing about what is not in our hands.

As the discussion unfolded, Sangeetha Rajeev, communications consultant, World Bank India, threw a light on the economic impact of the global pandemic. Establishing the correlation between money and well-being, she said the impact of pandemic on young people is systematic, deep and disproportionate and particularly hard on young women and youth in lower-income countries.

She elaborated, “The financial stress and economic uncertainty is a given but as a human race we are resilient to find ways to put ourselves back in the arena.

Statistics suggest that the global economy is set to expand to 5.6 percent in 2021-its strongest in 80 years

and that is something to look forward.” Sangeetha further opined that the investors are afraid to invest in a population that is not vaccinated so the quicker we vaccinate, the better for our country’s economy.

The panel discussion thus concluded with lots of learnings, giving a whole new perspective to young minds and adults alike who would try to manifest a positive outlook by writing their very own “Sankatmochan Chalisa” with the right ingredients of determination and hope.

Unicef Panel Discussion

It's pawsome! Of furry pals & 'tail'(s) of joy

Anjali Singh

With change in time, culture, and lifestyle, the biggest growth has been observed in the pet industry i.e., the increased phenomena of pet keeping. Today, keeping a pet is not limited to just adopting an animal from a shelter and providing a home but it is much more geared towards treating pets as members of the family, a companion to share the joyful moments of life.

How can anyone forget the isolation period of Covid-19? This was a time when pets seemed a boon to those who lived alone and were unable to visit their families. Karthikey Awasthi, a 30-year-old working professional in Delhi, shared his experience about being with his cat, Lily during the first phase of lockdown as he could not visit his hometown Patna. "Lily was such a constant companion in those days. Playing and spending time with her helped me not only to cope up with work pressure but also stay away from depression and the negativities of that period", he said.

"My pets have taught me the meaning of love and happiness in a

Photo courtesy: Anjali Singh



different way. I have four dogs and I am deeply fond of them. They provide me so much delight. No one can ever make me such happy and please me as much as they do. I am proud to be their parent", mentions Divyanshi Tiwari, a college-going student.

The evolvement of Indian societies into urbanization, families becoming nuclear with a single child and people deciding to get married later in life are some of the major factors for this upsurge in pet keeping. Some individuals around us are doing pet parenting for the stray dogs by feeding them, looking af-

My cat Lily was such a constant companion in those days. Playing and spending time with her helped me not only to cope up with work pressure but also stay away from depression and the negativities of the lockdown period

Karthikey Awasthi | WORKING PROFESSIONAL

ter them, and have made it a part of their daily routines.

"My day is incomplete without feeding and petting my street dogs. When I am out of home, I keep asking my family whether the dogs are fine or not. I cannot think of a day when I can be away from them as they are my happiness. They make me smile whenever I cry or feel sad. I operate Instagram pages for my pet and stray dogs because I believe everyone needs to see that these pets are living with grace and how we have shaped their lives as individuals", said Aakarshita Srivastava, a journalism student while expressing her love and concern for pets.

As of now, pet-keeping is in trend. People prefer pets to be with them as their partners most of the time. They fill in the empty spaces. People have understood that pets are not just animals to feed but they are treasure trove of happiness. Even the hashtags, posts, and reels of adorable pets trending on social media platforms these days, show an interesting side of love for pets. And, in the end, these pets fulfil an emotional connection that we as humans can relate to.



Online platform: Boost to music industry

Photo courtesy: Riddhima Srivastava

Covid fallout:
Musicians not only performed but also started virtual classes to connect with people

Riddhima Srivastava

Music industry has always been about live performances, concerts, and play-back music but after Covid-induced lockdowns it came to a prolonged pause. The cancellation of several live music events hit many artists especially in 2020, however, soon the industry bounced back via on-line forum.

Digital platforms acted as saviour during these tough times. A major advantage of these platforms was connecting people from across the globe. Platforms like Facebook Live, Youtube and Zoom became common for online programmes. Ministry of Culture, India organised 'Azadi ka Amrit Mohatsav' celebrating 75 years of India's Independence, which contained a series of online cultural programmes.

"It is difficult to organise a live show with artists from all over the world but connecting people online is a much easier way" said Pt. Prosenjit Deogharia, who started a series of events 'Journey of Music by

Online ticket booking websites like Book My Show flourished a lot during this time because of paid online concerts



Pratishtha Music Academy, Toronto' in the beginning of the lockdown and is still continuing it. He has connected artists from different countries through this show.

Even artists like Shankar Mahadevan and Kaushiki Chakrobarty performed online shows open for all and several exclusive paid events. They had also started online classes to take their art to common people.

Sangeet Kala Sansthan, Lucknow organised a 24-hour Facebook Live Classical Music event on 'Bada

Mangal', wherein artists from Italy, America and many other places joined the platform.

Online ticket booking websites like Book My Show flourished a lot during this time because of paid online concerts. It has always been told that classical music can only be learned through Guru-Shishya parampara but during these times it also shifted to online mode of teaching and distance learning became common.

For nought it is said that where there is a will, there is way. Covid ushered in a whole new era of digitalisation providing easier accessibility for all even in the field of performing arts.

Athletes' (para)mount efforts hit bullseye!

Rinil Srivastava

Photo courtesy: Rinil Srivastava

Disability shouldn't be an obstacle to success & it is very well proved by our Indian para-athletes at paralympics, a powerful platform for changing societal perceptions.

It was a great commencement and stellar performances by athletes', which made others praise and admire them. A total of 54 Indian para-athletes competed in nine different sports disciplines. Out of which, 17 participants made their imprints on the podium, with two para-athletes winning multiple medals. There were 5 gold, 8 silver, and 6 bronze medals among the total of 19 medals won by our Indian para-athletes.

Tokyo Paralympics

Thinking of playing table tennis and that too while being in a wheelchair sounds intimidating right? Polio-diagnosed Bhavinaben Patel competed in a wheelchair & opened India's account on 29th August by winning a silver medal in women's singles Table Tennis at Tokyo Paralympics. On the same day, Nishad Kumar won India's second medal when he secured a silver medal in the men's high jump T47 event. Furthermore, on August 30, Avani Lakhera made a mark in Indian history by becoming the first woman ever to win a gold medal in Shooting with a record of 249.6 at Paralympics & further she went a notch higher by winning bronze on September 3. Yogesh Kathuniya clinched the silver medal by throwing the disc to a distance of 44.38m. It was indeed

a remarkable approach.

With two medals on his side in Javelin Throw- veteran Devendra Jhajhariya this year secured the third medal by pulling off the best throw of 64.35m. Sundar Singh Gurjar brought double joy among Indians by winning bronze in Men's Javelin Throw, coming second behind Jhajhariya. A para-athlete Sumit Antil won gold in the Javelin Throw despite having his leg amputated. Singhraj Adha-

na won two medals, bronze and silver, in shooting and inspired millions. In addition, Mariyappan Thangavelu, Praveen Kumar clinched silver medals & Sharad Kumar won bronze in the High Jump by giving their

best performances at Paralympics. Harvinder Singh won India's first-ever Paralympic archery medal (bronze). The 19-year-old Manish Narwal shot a total of 218.2 in the 50m Pistol SH1 event and won



India's third gold medal at the Tokyo Paralympics 2020.

Speaking more of it, Pramod Bhagat & Krishna Nagar acquired a historic gold medal in badminton and emerged as the best para-shuttlers in the country while Suhas Yathiraj & Manoj Sarkar won silver and bronze medals in badminton, respectively.

"It was unexpected" exclaimed Kritika Sahni, a businesswoman from Bangalore. She adds, "There is so much to learn from them such as defying preconceptions, coming out stronger & not giving up. They are not just athletes; they're superheroes."

Tanishq Saxena, an engineering student residing in Bangalore says, "People with disabilities are less

restricted by their impairments than by the obstacles imposed by society. The Olympics were broad-

The paralympics empower disabled individuals & create a change in society. The Indian para-athletes had done a remarkable job

Poorvi Singh

cast on nearly every sports channel, but when the Paralympics began,

no platform was ready to broadcast their events. This is where we lag. The Indian para-athletes broke down boundaries and showed their worth in the Paralympics."

Poorvi Singh, an entrepreneur residing in Lucknow says, "They deserve a huge applause. The Paralympics empower disabled individuals & create a change in society."

Disabilities don't make anyone weak, instead, they make you stronger. People with disabilities are at odds with society as much as with themselves. Yes, they are not like us, because they are superheroes with extra talents acquired with extra effort. They deserve to be treated with equal respect and paralympics is a great step to bring changes.

Media coverage of celeb funerals: Duty or Insensitivity?

Saumya Agrawal

We have seen media coverage of celebrities' funerals and how crowded it is. While it is the job of media to get glimpses of celebrities' lives to their fans, however, all of us have witnessed renowned personalities struggling to go from one spot to another amidst the crowd of reporters jostling to get a byte or clear picture.

It seems that people have different opinions on this kind of coverage. Recently, various Bollywood celebrities have called out the paparazzi for the 'insensitive' funeral coverage of the late actor Sidharth Shukla. On September 2, 2021, the 40-year-old actor bid farewell to the world due to a heart attack. He was cremated at Oshiwara crematorium where his mother Rita Shukla, sisters, rumoured girlfriend Shehnaaz Kaur Gill accompanied by her brother Shehbaz,

Anushka Sharma, Kriti Sanon, Gauahar Khan, Suyyash Rai, Kiran Manral and Zakir Khan among other celebrities condemned the insensitive coverage of deceased actor Sidharth Shukla

were also present.

The media frenzy was obvious. Expressions reporter Saumya Agrawal spoke to a cross-section of college-going youngsters to gauge their reaction on the matter.

Neha Bora, a post-graduate student of journalism, expressed her views after understanding the con-

cept of media ethics. "When celebrities reach this degree of fame, every aspect of their death that is made public becomes a private spectacle. In an industry driven by clicks and copies sold, the desire to get something for the public, to obtain the narrative, and the audience, seems natural somewhere. We are witnessing the most atrocious instances of insensitive media coverage, and as consumers, we can no longer accept the given information. The only way out I feel as a journalism student is setting stringent media ethics regulations for media companies to understand their limits", she said.

Tarushi Goel, a 23-year-old pursuing LLB said, "There should be more education about the pressures of such reporting and efforts to foster a healthier respect for celebrities should help to reduce the rush for these stories. This would also give celebrities and their families the respect and privacy they deserve." ▶

Similarly, Vaishali Gautam, a student of bachelor's in journalism & mass communication said, "In my opinion, most of us would call out the media for insensitivity, but our hypocrisy lies in the fact that we seek the footage of funerals whenever such news comes. If we consider it wrong, then the mistake has been made by both the presenters and the viewers. As far as the contemporary way of media covering funerals is concerned, no doubt report-

Most of us would call out the media for insensitivity, but our (audience) hypocrisy lies in the fact that we seek the footage of funerals whenever such news comes

Vaishali Gautam | STUDENT

ers need to be more sensitive, and we as an audience also need to be wiser. If we condemn such coverage, we should avoid watching such news and promoting them as well."

When it comes to celebrity faces, from their lunch dates or post-workout sessions to their funerals, the media always leads the way in making it a story. Perhaps a list of do's and don'ts when reporting sensitive issues like this in the education system can help find a better path.

On September 2, 2021, the 40-year-old actor bid farewell to the world due to a heart attack

CHANGING FACE OF FAN CULTURE

Vaishali Gautam

In 1982, the near fatal accidental injury of Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan on the sets of 'Coolie' triggered mass vigils by fans who started going on pilgrimages to pray for his recovery. A crowd surrounding houses of celebrities on their birthdays or other special occasions just to catch a glimpse was common occurrence then. Fast forward to the present day, what has changed with time is the platform fans take to show their support— social media.

Be it a raid on the premises of Actor Sonu Sood or sudden demise of Sidharth Shukla, the intensity of fandom remains the same in India. However, there may be multiple facets to study about the fan culture and the related herd mentality, which has got a revolutionary makeover with the onset of social media. Sharing her views on the same, college student Aditi from Ranchi said, "It is true that as fans, we look up to our stars as inspirations. Thus whatever they do becomes a standard for us. But the problem begins when we stop giving such behavior or action any rational thought."

Adding on to the problems associated with fan culture, Priti Singh, another college student from Ranchi opines about celebrities glamorizing smoking, drinking, and unhealthy mindset. "As fans, we have devotion towards our stars to the extent that we go and watch their movies or work even if we hear criticism about the same. But, it

India has almost 267 million tobacco users at present while more and more Bollywood A-listers associate themselves with such brands in surrogate advertising of their mouth-fresheners and other equivalents

is high time to question whether they consider any ethical responsibility towards their fandom or are we just numbers to them", said Priti, reinstating the wide-ranging impact of celebrities' actions on the society who often submit to the commercially oriented era.

Truly the influence of celebrities and public figures is significant on the society. From fashion to thoughts and even our daily lifestyle can be impacted by our celebrity idols. "It is so evident that we trust our favorite stars blindly and down the road many of them kick-start their political journey. As a result, fans even consider voting for them just because of the fandom without judging whether they can be good leaders or not and this is just the tip of the iceberg", mentions Swati, a class 12 student in Ranchi.

Fandom is not a problem, but with that comes an added responsibility for celebrities and fans who must uphold their individual obligations and morals.

Photo courtesy: Vaishali Gautam

