

DEBUNK COVID-19 INFODEMIC AND PROVIDE CREDIBLE INFORMATION

April 08 - 21, 2020



MEDIA EMPOWERMENT FOR A DEMOCRATIC SRI LANKA (MEND) PROGRAM

CURRENT STATUS OF COVID-19 IN SRI LANKA

Mohamed Azad, Chief Editor

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the Corona virus outbreak a global public health emergency. At present, this deadly virus has engulfed over 210 countries. Sri Lanka having identified its first infected patient on 27th January who happened to be a Chinese woman was admitted in the hospital and recovered completely. Thereafter, the first infected Sri Lankan within Sri Lanka identified on 11th March 2020 resulted in bringing some restrictions within the country. The government has taken steps to impose police curfew Island-wide to stop the spread of virus further. The restrictions and lock downs affected daily life of citizens. The daily wage earners have lost their income, the government institutions were shut down, arrival and departure at the airport banned, exports and imports have dwindled, private sectors are closed down, tourism is completely disarrayed and small and medium industries are being faced out. The impact of the lock down affected citizens in all the corners of Sri Lanka, equally.

Despite its complex situation, the Health Minister of Sri Lankan Government Hon. Pavithra Wanniarachchi said in a media briefing on 18th April 2020 that Sri Lanka has been able to successfully slow down the spread of the virus.

She said, “We are approaching the end of the critical period on 19th of April, and the Government is taking steps to ease the restrictions from 21st of April”. However, the Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) in a letter warned the Government for their decision to relax the restrictions. Despite this warning, the government has lifted curfew in 19 districts, with restrictions to travel. People were advised to follow safety measures and practices and keep social distancing to avoid the transmission of the disease further. However, Government had to impose curfew island-wide on 23rd April, after finding several Navy personnel from Welisara camp infected with the virus.

On account of the epidemic, many people from various segments of society have experienced severe constraints to their livelihoods, and this has heavily battered the marginalized and low-income communities. It is clear that the crisis is far from over, and Sri Lanka will have to tread slowly and very carefully, given the challenges at hand.

YOUNG MOBILE JOURNALISTS

SDJF, with the support of CMIL, commenced the MediaCorps Watch news magazine program with 20 young journalists from across the country. With continuous appeals through the news magazine and calls with MC fellow members, SDJF is happy to see the motivation and interest generated by the journalists. The news magazine attracted more than 40 journalists, from 20 districts and 11 university students representing Jaffna and Sri Jayawardana pura univesities, in a matter of two weeks. This shows the solidarity of MediaCorps Fellows and their thirst for a platform to report ground voices.



Prabhasha Charithangi - Monaragala



Lasantha Wickramarathna - Puttalam



Ashan Afthar - Kurunegala

THE MEDIACORPS WATCH REPORTING AND ONLINE NEWS MAGAZINE TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT COVID-19

Our years of experience and observation have shown that, due to lack of attention from the mainstream media, the wider audience in Sri Lanka is oblivious to the stories of marginalized communities and rural areas, especially during times of disaster. This makes the rift between the 'voiceless' and others more significant. To ensure that the voice of the voiceless during the present Covid-19 outbreak does not go unheard by the public and the authorities, our passionate MediaCorps Fellows have come forward. Armed with the intricate science and art of making Mojo stories using a simple, yet highly efficient device the smartphone and with special training by the Media Corps, they are reporting from every corner of the country, capturing the stories not caught by the 'big eyes'.

The MediaCorps Watch News Magazine brings stories from around 20 districts of Sri Lanka. An average of 16 stories per day were received from March 23 to April 7, which is an increase from the previous average of 13. This was due to the meticulous efforts of SDJF and CMIL to monitor, support and mentor the Fellows as they went hunting for stories, and in reviewing the stories thus received. Fact verifications and further investigations were carried out to produce the factually most authentic yet heart-warming stories for the online magazine. The program in Tamil and Sinhala languages is now produced on a daily basis; 24 magazines have been produced, telecasted as of April 21 and reached more than 231K viewers in 3 weeks, which is a major achievement. The magazine program is broken into several segments, including situation updates from around the country, **#NoFake** on countering fake news, expert interviews and human interest stories. Elaborated below are the various segments that come under the MediaCorps Watch news magazine with examples.

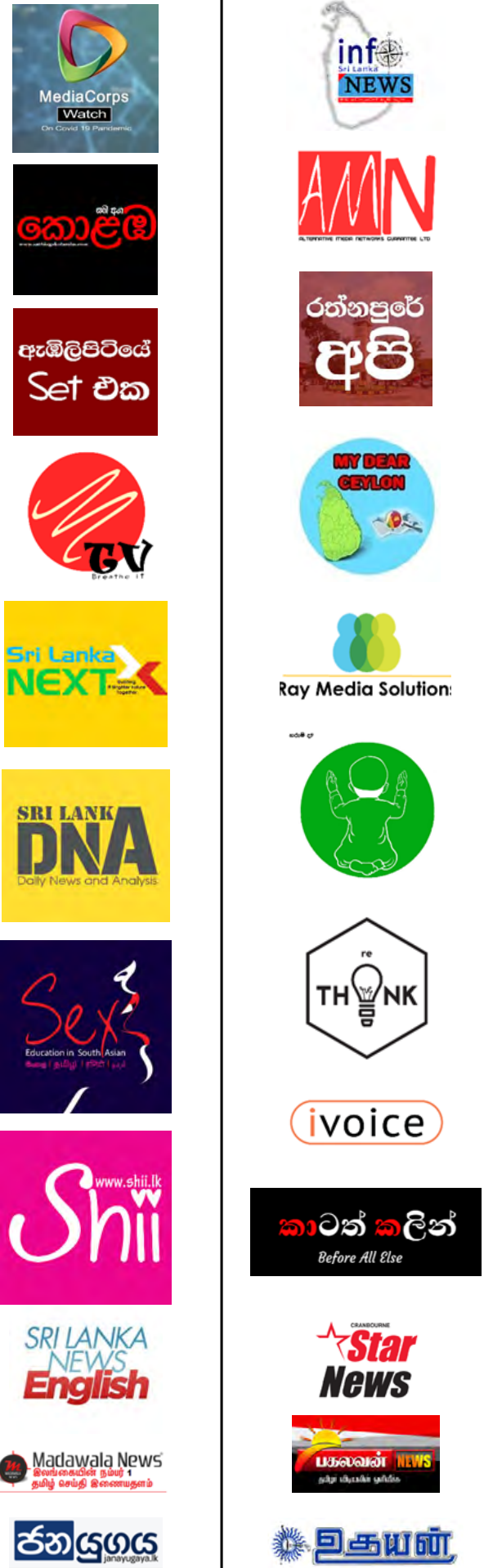
DISSEMINATION

In the wake of reassessing the reach of the MediaCorps Watch news magazine on Covid-19, it was noted that #MediaCorpsWatch has surpassed its coverage beyond other social media platforms. Initially, the episodes were published on UTV and Alternative Media Network Guarantee Ltd. Facebook pages & SDJF social media platforms. However, it was a bit disheartening for us to see lower numbers of views for such powerful stories. Thenceforth, the SDJF team started sharing the stories on different Facebook platforms that published stories with news values. Much sooner than we expected, many news magazines and individual stories were widely shared on other different Facebook pages. Notably, apart from the 22 social media platforms, the news magazine has been disseminated on 4 websites (1 Sinhala website: 'Janayugaya' & 3 Tamil websites: 'Pahalavan', 'Udayan' & 'Madawala News').

On top of this, a different strategy was applied to extract the individual stories created by Fellows from the episodes and more than 25 individual stories were disseminated on Facebook pages. This method was found to be very effective and had a wider reach, since the stories run for short durations of 2-3 minutes. As of April 19, 2020, the evaluations indicate a significant rise of reach on social media platforms, which is 247.3K with more than 1.5K shares on different platforms within a very short span. Moreover, out of the stories which have been received so far, the MediaCorps Editorial Board has selected the 20 best stories to be published on two national TV channels: 'Swarnawahini' & 'TV Derana'.



Social media platforms that disseminated the news magazine



COUNTERING FAKE NEWS

Fake news is not a new phenomenon, yet, has taken a predominant position in digital media and the Internet. At present, the free media has provided a vast space and scope for fake news to exist and perpetuate at ease. The Internet has enabled a whole new way of sharing, publishing and consuming information, bestowing unprecedented powers on its users. However, there is very little accountability or regulations in respect to handling information. Therefore, it has become extremely challenging to figure out the credibility of such news.



Are you a responsible media user?

“A lot of the fake news that is going around is based on rumors and conspiracy. We should not forward anything unless we are extremely certain. People add, “forwarded as received” at the bottom of their WhatsApp message, but that does not relieve us of the responsibility of the harm we are causing.

“It is important to create a culture of critical thinking, especially in the digital age and critical media consumption as well.

“Be cautious when you consume media, even the mainstream and the press. Run double checks, run a Google search and check verified news sources. People these days would do anything to grab your attention, and clicks on the Internet translate into money and other political and economic interests they wish to further. Therefore, we should be cautious when we navigate these media spaces.”

SENEL WANNIARACHCHI

Social Activist | Co-founder of Hashtag Generation



SITUATION UPDATES FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

A major part of the magazine is dedicated to “Around the Country MediaCorps” segment, which gives news updates from various communities in Sri Lanka. The MediaCorps Watch team always strives to include updates from far corners of the country that one cannot hear from mainstream news bulletins. Some examples of such news updates telecasted in the magazine program are detailed below;

- Gowri Sribrunthan, a young journalist from Colombo district, reported about a community in Kotahena area who had not received any relief aid. (Magazine #15)
- Medical authorities travelled from house to house in the outskirts of Vavuniya testing people suspected of having COVID19, reported by P. Kanisiyas, an promising young journalist. (Magazine #17)
- Mohamed Shabeer revealed the possible congestion that could arise in the city of Eheliyagoda when the curfew is lifted in the Ratnapura District. People used to come to Awissawella to buy their rations but with the indefinite curfew in Awissawella, and with possible crowds gathering in Eheliyagoda, Shabeer contacted the Divisional Secretaries of both areas to report on the matter (Magazine #18)
- S. Jenusha brings updates all the way from Mannar (Magazine #19)
- A request from the parents of Sri Lankan students locked down in Bangladesh to return to the country and the response given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was reported by Nirasha Piyawadani (Magazine #20)

EXPERT INTERVIEWS

With the outbreak of Covid-19, fighting with misinformation has become the newest challenge in the coronavirus battle. Half-baked conspiracy theories and bogus stories are surging through many social media platforms and websites. The MediaCorps Team has created the segment called 'Expert Interviews' in order to help the citizens to become aware of important and accurate facts about the Covid-19 problem and how to assist the authorities to manage this unprecedented challenge.

This segment focuses on providing up-to-date information about Covid-19 from experts in the field. The aim of this segment is to create an awareness about facts related to Covid-19 from the view point of experts.

“If you need Coronavirus advice, listen to the experts, not the half-baked or fake news”

YAMINI PERERA, SDJF

A series of expert interviews have been conducted by Fellows with experts in the field focusing on important areas such as the true information about the burial of a dead body that has been infected by Covid-19, true facts about people who are temporarily stuck in Colombo, medical services available in Colombo etc. Given below are a list of expert interviews conducted by Fellows during the period of 26 March - 13 April 2020.




Dr. T Sathyamurthi
Jaffna hospital
Jaffna District | [Magazine #01]




Dr. Haresh Senarathna
Director, Awissawella hospital
Awissawella District | [Magazine #01]



M R Wikramasinghe
Electricity Superintendent
Awissawella District | [Magazine #05]



Saliya Peiris
President's Counsel
Colombo District | [Magazine #07]



Dr. Ruwan Wijemuni
Chief Medical Officer, MC
Colombo District | [Magazine #09]



Moham Wijerathna
Divisional Secretary, Ruwanwella
Awissawella District | [Magazine #11]



Isuru Gamlath
Association of Grama Niladharis'
Awissawella District | [Magazine #14]



Roshan Goonetilleke
The Governor of Western Province
Colombo District | [Magazine #16]



Deshabandu Tennakoon
Senior DIG of Police
Colombo District | [Magazine #16]

INNOVATIONS AMIDST CRISIS

The bright minds of some youth of Sri Lanka have proven that a virus cannot weaken their innovative thinking. Our MediaCorps Fellows reported many stories of innovators in the past two weeks.

- Mohamed Faslan reported about a man producing face shields from recycled items in Kurunegala. He has already donated these shields to the Kurunegala Hospital (Magazine #14)
- Ahallya David reported from Sainthamaruthu, Ampara about a young boy who has invented an automatic hand washing machine. This machine is special because it is powered by solar energy. (Magazine #18)



- The report on a young man from Moratuwa who has invented an automatic hand sanitizer diffuser was sent by Darshan Kaneel. The diffuser utilizes a sensor attached to the bottle, which diffuses sanitizing liquid when one brings one's hands close to it. (Magazine #20)



- A young man from Puttlaam producing safety garments by recycling waste products was reported by Prasad Purnamal. (Magazine #20)



STORIES OF HUMAN INTEREST

MediaCorps Watch believes that human interest stories are the most worthwhile, because they show us that each and every one of us, despite our financial, social or ethnic background, could be equally affected by Covid-19.

- The plight of tuk tuk drivers in Kurunegala and Trincomalee who have not been able to secure an income due to prolonged curfews was reported by Nadee Manikkage and Mohamed Raseem. (Magazine #14)
- A decline in poultry farming due to the lack of poultry feed is leading to a fall in national egg production. Puttalam is the district that produces the most eggs, yet as a high-risk region for the Covid-19, poultry farms are closing, reported Prasad Purnamal. (Magazine #16)
- Visually impaired people have become even more helpless with the spread of COVID-19. The community appeals to viewers to express solidarity towards them and provide them with necessary additional support. This emotional story was captured by Manushi Jayasena in Matara. (Magazine #16)
- Prasad Purnamal sent us a list of people who have offered to provide their services to fight Covid-19. This included a seamstress who sews safety garments for hospitals and a man who has produced a hand washing apparatus operated by pedals replacing the need for hand- touch. (Magazine #18)
- Lasantha Wikramaratne from Mundalama, Puttalam reported a story about a village of blacksmiths who had run out of work and were struggling to eke out a living. (Magazine #20)

- No of stories received: 152
- No of Fellows involved: 51
- No of episodes from April 08-21: 11
- Total episodes aired until April 21: 24
- Number of social media reach: 231K

IMPACTS OF THE PROGRAM

- MediaCorps Watch broadcast the story of a group of construction workers trapped in Dehiwala without any food or other relief aid. Upon seeing the story, a social activist Dr. Pethum Kerner visited the construction site and donated dry rations to them. He also wrote about his experience in his Facebook profile, to which he received many positive comments. His post: <http://tiny.cc/f6canz>
- The same group of people received more relief aid from Manusath Derana, a CSR program by TV Derana as a result of the news magazine.
- When the story of the visually impaired people in Kamburupitiya was published in the MediaCorps Watch Facebook page, a viewer who was moved by the story offered to help and she was immediately connected with them. Link to the post: <http://tiny.cc/r3ygnz>
- The story of a bus driver who voluntarily distributed dry rations around Colombo received an immense reception when viewers widely shared the story and encouraged and congratulated him for his social service. Link to the post: <http://tiny.cc/o5ygnz>

BUILDING CAPACITY OF YOUNG JOURNALISTS

The involvement and potential of the young journalists have been very important in producing the daily magazine program. The regular mentorship and coordination is taking place to address the day-to-day challenges of young journalists.

In addition to this, health tips, Do's and Don'ts are regularly communicated to MC Fellow members via a designated WhatsApp group. As a part of this continuous capacity-building process, SDJF organized a virtual meeting with the MC Fellows on the April 19. Thirty-one fellows out of 51 who sent news participated in the meeting along with seven SDJF staff members.

The purpose of the meeting was to re-frame the stories focusing on the latest post Covid-19 period, since the government intends to gradually relax curfew from April 20 with requests to government and private sectors to start their work. Nirasha Piyawadani from CMIL explains how MC Fellows should report their stories in the post Covid-19 world, and Mohamed Azad from SDJF, also guided and explained how to cover the stories. In addition to this, an opportunity was given to the MC Fellows to discuss practical challenges and how to seek rapid remedies.



TYPE OF STORIES FROM APRIL 08-21

NEWS UPDATES 37

EXPERT INTERVIEWS 10

NO-FAKE NEWS 02

MOJO STORIES 45

TOTAL 94

FACILITATION OF REPORTING

Due to the prolonged curfews, MediaCorps Fellows were constrained in collecting information on the Covid-19 outbreak. As a step to overcome these challenges, SDJF has issued request letters & official ID cards for all selected MediaCorps Fellows in order to facilitate their mobility during the curfew period. The request letters & official identity cards could be presented to the police station & permission for reporting purposes could be obtained. In the meantime, SDJF created a WhatsApp group under the name "Covid-19 Updates" to inform all updated facts on Covid-19 to MC Fellows. In addition, most of the Fellows are professional journalists, thus they have their own official media identity cards. These facilities were quite helpful for the Fellows to overcome challenges and report untold stories on the Covid-19 outbreak.



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2020.04.16

සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

Covid-19 වැළැක්වීම සඳහා අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

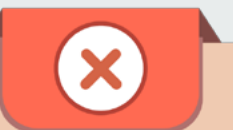
සමාජ මාධ්‍යය මගින් විකේන්ද්‍රීකරණය වීම සහ ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස ප්‍රවර්ධනය වීම සඳහා අපි කැපවීමක් පෙන්වමු. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි. අපගේ අරමුණ වන්නේ සමාජයේ විවිධ කොටස්වලින් එකතු වී සිටින අයගේ අදහස්, අත්දැකීම් සහ අත්පිටි ක්‍රියා මාර්ග පිළිබඳව ප්‍රජාතන්ත්‍රවාදී මාධ්‍යයක් ලෙස සේවය කිරීමයි.

TIPS FOR MEDIACORPS FELLOWS



Do's

1. Always do the Fact checking and verification.
2. Always get authentic information. (get it from official sources)
3. Be neutral when reporting. (get the views from both end)
4. Follow the ethics of journalism when using pictures, videos, names in your story.
5. Do research and deep investigation/data collection.
6. Be safe and take necessary precaution when you are reporting.
7. Wear a face mask all the time. Use gloves when you use your equipment.
8. Always keep a sanitizer with you.
9. Keep your official identity card all the time.
10. Keep free space in your smartphone or keep extra memory card.
11. Keep your phone 100% charged when you are in the field. Or use power banks
12. Preferably use a separate phone to make calls.
13. Always use an external microphone or hands free when taking interviews.
14. Wear the ID card all the time with a branded T-shirt.



Don'ts

1. Take any risk to your health. Your health condition is 1000 times important than a story.
2. Be a story for others. Always act as professional.
3. Do not enter into crowded areas. Always keep at least one meter distance.
4. Do not cover any crisis situation that endanger you.
5. Use un authentic information in your story.
6. Use the picture of children, victims, in your story directly.
7. Violate any laws in the country. Always act according to the laws.

EXPERIENCE SHARING ON REPORTING ON COVID 19 BY MC FELLOWS

Journalists around Sri Lanka are investigating many angles of the coronavirus epidemic. It was interesting to view more than 100 MediaCorps Fellows who were trained under the MediaCorps Fellowship Program, have produced insightful stories related to Covid-19. As the Corona Virus epidemic unfolds, the constant stream of news has become overwhelming to the journalists. It has resulted in an impressive coverage, which has slipped off from mainstream media.

Different stories produced by MediaCorps Fellows with regard to the epidemic have become a valuable resource for news about Covid-19. The purpose of introducing this segment is to allow the Fellows to share their experiences on Covid-19 reporting and the challenges they faced while reporting their story. Therefore, we have selected 6 Fellows representing 6 districts (depending on low and high-risk areas of the epidemic) to relate their experience about Covid-19 reporting.



Prasad Purnamal

Senior Journalist

He currently works as a local & international press correspondent

“Being in high risk area, the knowledge of producing a story using the smartphone was really helpful for me. Often during a crisis situation people are reluctant to express their views when they see huge devices & camera equipment but this time, I could cover many stories with only a smartphone”

Recalling his reporting experience, Prasad has not experienced any challenges so far, since he possesses a special media pass. It has made his work easier since he could complete many stories within a very short span of time using the tool ‘Mojo’ especially being in a high-risk area. Moreover, Prasad appreciated the constant monitoring of the SDJF team when he was in the field.

He further added, “This simple equipment helped me to produce many stories despite the danger in the area. I’m happy to create awareness among public and am expecting to produce more in future”

Being an undergraduate without much experience of reporting a crisis such as Covid-19, Prabhasha has had the determination to start reporting stories about Covid-19 thinking this will be the best time to experiment her knowledge about reporting.

Her story about a set of doctors in Monaragala who conducted a ‘mobile clinic’ to raise awareness among residents about Covid-19 was actually a promising first attempt.

Prabhasha Charithangi

Dept. of Mass Media & Communication
University of Jayawadanapura



“This is my first ever experience as a working journalist. I got a chance to learn new things and this assessment further inspired me to build a long-term goal of becoming an aspiring investigative journalist.”



Gowri Sribrunthn
Freelance Journalist

“Travelling was a bit restricted since I’m living in a high-risk area”

Gowri who lives in a high-risk area of Colombo has had many restrictions to report her stories until she was provided with the MediaCorps ID. During the period where she had to control her travelling due to the absence of an ID, she did not stop her reporting. She had shifted her focus to report the daily struggles confronted by ordinary people in the neighbourhood of Kotahena.

Her story about the under-paid families from Kotahena and the lamentations of mothers for not being able to buy a packet of milk powder to feed their infants was an impactful story, which had 6K reaches on Facebook.



Manushi Jayasena
Freelance Journalist

Despite the fact that no serious news is found in low risk southern areas, Manushi has aptly captured how the pandemic has indirectly affected different social groups in the country. Her story about the visually impaired persons speaks volumes of the impact on people who need extra attention, which has drifted away with the outbreak of the pandemic. “I was moved when he said now the people are hesitant to hold my hand and to cross the road”

“Although I’m living in a low risk area, we feel the effects of the Covid-19 epidemic both directly and indirectly”



Kuwaldeen Rasool
Freelance Journalist

“I was able to make people aware about the actual situations of Thennekumbura village not far from Kandy City often slipped off by most of the reporters”

Recalling his reporting experience during Covid-19, Rasool had shifted his reporting to a village called **Kotahena** in Kandy since he had no mode of transportation to travel to the main city of Kandy where he could find more cases related to Covid-19. Although he had a valid ID provided by the Media Ministry, the absence of transport facility has been the only challenge he encountered. His story about robbing a pharmacy in Kandy and stealing medicine became a talking point and in the meantime, it was an eye-opener for the authorities to understand the lack of a stable mechanism to deliver essential medicine to residents.



MediaCorps Watch

On Covid 19 Pandemic

The telecasted news magazine and stories can be accessed via the below links.

Magazine #01 http://tiny.cc/fw25lz	Magazine #13 http://tiny.cc/3jzmmz
Magazine #02 http://tiny.cc/5u25lz	Magazine #14 http://tiny.cc/79frmz
Magazine #03 http://tiny.cc/rt25lz	Magazine #15 http://tiny.cc/abgrmz
Magazine #04 http://tiny.cc/cr25lz	Magazine #16 http://tiny.cc/u29tmz
Magazine #05 http://tiny.cc/xo5lz	Magazine #17 http://tiny.cc/fvmwmz
Magazine #06 http://tiny.cc/ger8lz	Magazine #18 http://tiny.cc/1ln0mz
Magazine #07 http://tiny.cc/ob28lz	Magazine #19 http://tiny.cc/78n0mz
Magazine #08 http://tiny.cc/b9ccmz	Magazine #20 http://tiny.cc/wgt9mz
Magazine #09 http://tiny.cc/7hkdmz	Magazine #21 http://tiny.cc/k79bnz
Magazine #10 http://tiny.cc/8kpmmz	Magazine #22 http://tiny.cc/369bnz
Magazine #11 http://tiny.cc/li3hmz	Magazine #24 http://tiny.cc/j99bnz
Magazine #12 http://tiny.cc/antkmz	Magazine #25 http://tiny.cc/ublgnz

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HOW TO JOIN ?

If you are a MediaCorps Fellow, you can join this program simply send your stories to mediacorpwatch@gmail.com or contact
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