

INDIA VISIT REPORT

Travel dates:

Left Dhaka- Wednesday, 14 June 2017 via Air India

Returned to Dhaka- Saturday, 17 June 2017 via Air India

Description:

Primary objective of the visit was to find potential mentors and trainers from reputed media institutions for investigative journalism partnership program in Bangladesh. MRDI team also looked-for partners in collaborative and cross-border reporting, avenues to link journalists of the both countries through networking and technical experts on areas like data journalism, data visualizations and developing new tools for investigative reporting.

In the three and half a day visit, MRDI team had the opportunity to meet key members of seven organizations of diverse nature and area. Among them there are two highly respected newspapers, two online media exploring new ways of journalism, a non-profit with huge contribution in fostering right to information, a business entity that supports media with data visualization and also a network of Indian investigative journalists. All the meeting took place in New Delhi, the heart of Indian journalism, except one in Noida area of Uttar Pradesh.

Meetings were successful. Indian journalists and experts, welcomed the Fojo-MRDI initiative and shown keen interest to the priorities of the project. They expressed willingness to visit Bangladesh on any request for development of IJ.

There were commitments of cooperation from them on participating as a trainer/mentor for IJ Partnership though most opted for short term engagement. As all are practicing journalists, they said, it will be tough to engage in long term consultancy.

However, among four media houses, all are interested in collaborative reporting projects. Some of them identified few key areas where journalists from both the countries can work together. They asked for a list of topics for collaboration. Said, if the idea is good, opportunity of collaboration is always open.

There is a support for networking of journalists among the region. Such organizations actually look for 'trustworthy' journalists and networks for cooperation. It is found that, there is scope for institutional support from India to cater the need of data journalism in Bangladesh. They can also support to facilitate use of RTI by journalists under this project.

Recommendations:

- Strengthen networking with Indian investigative journalists
- Finding a mechanism for cross-border stories by engaging reporters of two countries
- Explore the opportunity of internship and identify modalities
- Arrange conference to strengthen ties between journalist the region

- Explore the possibility of a data center in Bangladesh with Data Leads
- Should start with mentorship with more online engagement and limited travel
- Develop a pool of retired/freelance investigative journalists for long term consultancy

The program schedule is enclosed.

India visit
14-17 June 2017

14 June 2017 Wednesday		
Time	Programme	Meeting with
3.00 pm	Meeting with Indian Express	Raj Kamal Jha, Editor in Chief Rakesh Sinha, Executive Editor Ritu Sarin, Editor, Investigation Jai Mazoomdar, Associate Editor Shyamlal Yadav, Senior Editor
5.00 pm	Meeting with Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)	Sanjoy Hazarika, Director, CHRI and CHRI team
15 June 2017 Thursday		
Time	Programme	Meeting with
11.30 am	Meeting with The Telegraph India	Jayonto Roy Chowdhury Senior Editor, Business
4.00 pm	Meeting with The Wire	Sidharth Varadarajan Editor, The Wire
16 June 2017 Friday		
Time	Programme	Meeting with
5.00 pm	Meeting with GoNews24x7	Sidharth Pandey Investigative Journalist
3.00 pm	Meeting with CIJ India	Syed Nazakat, Founder
6.30 pm	Meeting with KBK News Graphics	Vijay Kumar, Managing Editor
8.00 pm	Press minister BD High Commission	Farid Hossain