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| **col LOGO outline**  DATE:2-03-2022  Registration number:  **ST. JOSEPH’S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), BANGALORE-27**  V SEMESTER EXAMINATION: OCTOBER 2021  (Examination conducted in March 2022)  **JN 5118: Advanced Journalism (EJP)** |
| **Time: 2 ½ hrs Max Marks- 70**  **Instruction:**   1. This paper is meant for V semester students of BA-EJP course. 2. You are allowed to use a Dictionary. 3. You will lose marks for exceeding the suggested word-limit. 4. This paper contains FOUR pages and THREE sections. |

# Read the following editorial in the Hindu and answer the questions that follow.

In this age of digital storage of information, one is not sure whether it is the power of the search engines or their own stupendous memory that helps readers to remember and recollect information and pose questions. Whatever be the case, the fact remains that the printed word, which has now entered cyberspace, seems to have acquired a much-longer shelf life since Johannes Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press.

Some of the readers wanted to know whether the latest sting involving AIADMK MLAs taking money for switching factional affiliations has changed my opinion on sting journalism. They wanted to know whether, as a Readers’ Editor, I would recommend undercover journalism and deployment of spy cameras for The Hindu.

My reservation against sting journalism goes back to the days when Tehelka ventured into ‘Operation West End’ that looked at murky deals in defence procurement. I am convinced that sting journalism is a lazy substitute to meticulous investigative reporting. It is true that some of the defence deals are murky. However, the investigations that have had some sort of national resonance are the ones that have deployed conventional investigative modes. For instance, the Bofors investigation by this newspaper was a long-haul exercise that involved meticulous documentation, first-hand interviews and, in the words of Columbia Journalism School, “evidence of a qualitatively new, unimpeachable kind”.

The ubiquitous 24x7 news channels do not understand the rigours of serious investigative journalism. The moment they access a sheet of paper coming from officials, they think they have unearthed a scam, and their decibel levels reach a crescendo, only to be lost following the discovery of another sheet of paper, to proclaim another exclusive expose.

In 2008, Aidan White wrote an excellent handbook, To Tell You the Truth, in which he laid down the ground rules for journalism to remain a trustworthy endeavour. “Fierce competition and a lack of regulation have created a dangerously competitive environment in which ethical and professional standards have been sidelined. In broadcasting, for instance, where 40 television news channels compete for viewers in one of the world’s most crowded media markets, ‘sting journalism’ — some might call it voyeurism and entrapment — has come to dominate the news mix,” he wrote about Indian television channels. Now, with numbers of channels going up, the downward spiral in standards seems to be touching a new low.

One of the defences advanced by sting journalists is that the subterfuge is in public interest; hence, it should be accepted as a normal journalistic practice to bring out the truth. I can cite at least ten outstanding investigative reports for each decade since Emergency. For instance, in the mid-1980s, Praful Bidwai explained the huge gap between the claims and reality in the functioning of the Indian nuclear establishment. Unlike the garrulous AIADMK MLAs, the Indian nuclear establishment is known for maintaining its secrecy — remember how the West was hoodwinked about Pokhran-1 in 1974? — and has a powerful legal cover in the form of the Atomic Energy Act, 1962.

The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) had made a claim that nuclear energy had become a major source of energy. Bidwai collected data on the quantum of power purchased from the DAE by various State electricity boards and established that the DAE’s figures were highly overstated. Sucheta Dalal’s investigative stories — which broke the securities scam in 1992, India’s biggest financial scandal until then — still remain a touchstone on how to look at data from the financial institutions. The Saturday special of this newspaper, Ground Zero, is a contemporary version of ethical investigation that is rigorous, fact-checked, and in public interest. The stories are not based on hit-and-run, off-the-cuff, surreptitious recordings of a gullible single source, but involve painstaking suturing together of facts culled from multiple sources that make up our interlocking public.

Lord Leveson’s voluminous report refers to sting journalism as “journalistic dark arts”. Sting journalism may create a buzz, but its logic is never to examine anything in depth but to just skim the surface till it finds a new villain of the day.

**I.A. Answer ALL of the following questions (150 words each) (3x10=30)**

**1.**The writer says, ‘that sting journalism is a lazy substitute to meticulous investigative reporting.’ Do you agree/disagree with this statement? Substantiate with examples.

2. The writer says, “24x7 news channels do not understand the rigours of serious investigative journalism.’ Is this statement accurate? Elaborate

3.Have you followed an investigative story recently? Discuss the nature of investigative reportage, drawing from an investigative story of your choice.

**II. Read the following essay by Janaki Nair and answer the questions that follow.**

Twenty-one years ago, the photographer Clare Arni and I meandered through Murphy Town, shooting images for my exhibition and book on Bangalore. I had eyes only for the physical-material fabric of the place. A working-class neighbourhood, designed in the 1920s by an inspired municipal engineer, Murphy, who wanted to build urban forms that would elevate the then leather workers – Tamil speaking Chuckliars producing saddles and boots for the army – to a higher and more respectable place than they had been assigned in the cruelly divided, hierarchical world of caste.  I had read about the plans for transforming the area called Knoxpet in the archives, and wanted to see for myself how this unique experiment in social engineering had turned out in what came to called Murphy Town.

It was a near idyllic place, dotted with squares rimmed by low, tiled houses, shaded by at least two, sometimes more, capacious raintrees. Lines of washing sometimes crossed the squares, and there were goats and chickens minding their business, but it was a sight for sore eyes, a quiet leafy neighbourhood that workers – and shoemakers at that — could only dream about. We were content to feast our eyes on those visuals. I don’t think I fully realized the social importance of that little miracle that had been wrought in brick and tiles. The exhibition, Beladide Noda, Bengaluru Nagara! was held in three locations in Bangalore in 2000, and the book came out in 2005. They both featured the famous squares of Murphy Town.

Last week, Clare Arni and I revisited Murphy Town. I was dreading the visit, since all one saw from the main road were narrowly built three- and four-storey housing blocks, with not a tile in sight, let alone a square. Had Murphy Town – like the rest of the country — succumbed to the singular logic of a real estate market, value to be understood only as Rspersquarefoot? Had those unlovely ‘tower’ blocks replaced the raintrees?

Entry into the place was not promising, our walk past small homes, fiercely guarded by dogs.  We expected hostility and perhaps even fear, of two clearly very privileged people, armed with an obtrusive camera: what would we want in a place like this? Speaking to them in Tamil, and being frank about the revisit soon put people at ease.

And the people of Murphy Town had some important – and unexpected — lessons for us in these dark times.  The lesson was about being optimistic and finding meaning in small and everyday achievements, even of others. The lesson was about how history is sedimented in this community: not the nation writ small, but the local heroes and why they lent a glow to the faces of young boys. The lesson was about the everydayness of religious acceptance, and tolerance and even pride — in another’s religion.

I was still searching for my squares, and there they were, still with the raintrees, but now very, very cluttered, overgrown and dirty in parts, and now also ringed by fences and multicoloured three or four storeyed homes.  They seemed to meet my pessimistic predictions: here too the rise of a new class of rentiers. Here too, disrespect for public spaces and the common good.

Not quite. Murphy Town 2021 forced to me to look at other kinds of signs and symbols. It made me conscious of what my first visit had more or less ignored: what are the meanings that people make of spaces, meanings that were unanticipated by the planners?  Our first halt was at the verandah of a three storeyed, rather yellow home, with a resplendent alcove of Mary and the Infant Jesus. There were four young people seated at her feet, doing their online classes on phones. Their faces brightened when they saw the camera, their mother justifiably proud not just of her glowing children but of the benevolent Mary: ‘but we are Hindus’ she said, as she moved in to switch on the lights and share the mesmerizing, twinkling, glow around the alcove.

Pride took many other forms as we moved towards Square no 4 . In that square, a hockey match of sorts was in progress, supervised by a coach; some other boys were kicking around a football. There were a few girls, and they all wanted a photograph, through the grills around the square. But most important, they wanted to introduce us to their forward and tell us about their local heroes who had made it to the state and national teams (though they did not provide us with their names). Murphy Town Football Club and Primrose Hockey Club, now refracted into forms of pride, and perhaps some hockey learning as well.

They too played in the shadow of a Mother Mary alcove – this time built with onion domes — on one side and a Mariamman temple on the other, urging us to ‘take care’ (in English) as we left. Hindu, Muslim or Christian? Who knew and who cared? Murphy Town suddenly seemed to be the spirit of an India that still survived, nestling like the cross in the shadow of Ganesha, at another makeshift shrine.

Alongside another square, badly bruised by garbage and unwanted furniture and discarded items, was a row of low houses, outside which lounged young men. They had no doubt had their hair styled at Shiva Narasimha Hair Dressing Center in Murphy Town, nearly all close cropped and then rising to a crown at the top. Their wariness soon melted when we took the pictures of twin girls in front of their homes. Everyone wanted a picture taken.

A young mother brought her two-month old baby for a photograph, an older gent advising her against the ‘cold’. (it was 10 o’clock and a sunny 28 degrees C).

Clare discovered that the murals on the outside wall were only a tantalizing taste of those inside the home, and soon identified the artist: a self taught young man called Arun, who experimented with ‘perspective’ and of course in designing walls and spaces in that area.

I was ashamed, thinking that this is the real ‘brain drain’. Gems of purest ray serene, they wasted their sparkle in the dim small homes of Murphy Town. But that was not how the young men felt;  they took pride in their friend’s talents, and he in turn inscribed their names on his art work. Give and take.

Alongside yet  another square, women peeled garlic in a church, which came to life only on Sundays, maybe. That square was ominously empty, but on we went to the next which enjoined us to ‘Protect Tree’!  That square was edged with the newly rich homes, more twins, and the usual alcoves of Mary and Mariamman. Though there were no Muslim shrines, there were signs of Muslim homes and inhabitants. On one busy street, a pandal has been set up. A newly built (rental no doubt) space was being inaugurated. Muslim cooks threw fistfuls of salt and coriander leaves into a huge vat on the boil on firewood; an adjoining vat had the meat, ready to be combined to feed 200, largely Christian, guests at this house warming.

There was nothing banal, forced or contrived about this living together. We were given a patient lesson in communal living by a rather bare, tall bearded gent, with only a skimpy towel wrapped around his waist: ‘We are one Hindu, one Christian, one Hindu, One Christian, all living together as a happy family’. He also provided a simple explanation for the vertical growth of Murphy Town: ‘As we grow up and taller, our buildings grow with us’. A lesson in civics from an unembarrassed, freshly bathed man. Another pulled the leg of his daughter, claiming she had a very long (inquisitive) nose. This was just a taste of unstoppable good humour we encountered everywhere.  His house faced yet another square, one edge of which had children’s play equipment. Ambedkar had joined the range of shrines at Murphy Town all right, but he took his humble place alongside other deities.

As we turned a corner, a man was throwing a waterproof sheet over a disused autorickshaw. A woman walked past, mocking his action. He loudly proclaimed his humanity: there is someone here who cannot move, I am trying to protect him from the rain etc, is that a bad thing? This people’s court, this affirmation from the passersby was what he wanted, in order  to assure himself of the inherent good in his action.

What do we know of good city form, of the urban fabric that will bring out the best in us, of the public goods such as open spaces that allow for multiple uses, some of them those that we may scorn as unworthy, distasteful, unaesthetic or embarrassing?  We, who only pessimism know?  The everyday optimism of Murphy Town, the gentle iteration of something that has to be celebrated, quietly, everyday, from which book of civics has this been learned?  And what have they unlearned of communalism?

This neighbourhood of hope, not despair, this community of pride, not hate; this too our India. Thank Goddess. And Murphy must have got something right.

**II.A. Answer ANY TWO of the following questions. (200 words each) (2x15=30)**

1.The writer says. “...here too the rise of a new class of rentiers. Here too, disrespect for public spaces and the common good.” This is the writer’s assumption when she returns to the Murphy town neighbourhood. Does she hold on to this idea? What does she learn about neighbourhood today that challenges her notions?

2. All neighbourhoods have stories, what is the story of your neighbourhood?

3.As a student of Journalism, do you find that this essay has lessons for young journalists to learn when the cover stories close to communities. What would those lessons be?

**III. Write a PITCH for a community paper of your choice. Your pitch should include a note on the nature of coverage and why it is useful for the community and THREE headlines for stories that the first issue would carry. Give your community paper a name. (150-200 words) (1X10=10 Marks)**