

Speaker Profiles

K.S. Dakshina Murthy was a key member of the Editorial team that launched the English language version of the Al-Jazeera news website in 2003. Based in Doha, he wrote extensively on the US invasion of Iraq and West Asian politics. He returned to India in April 2006 to pursue other journalistic and allied interests.

He has a basic degree in Science (BSc), MA in Political Science and an M.Phil in International Politics. Dakshina Murthy, who teaches Covering International News, Political Reporting and Writing for the Web at IJNM, started his career with Sunday Mid-Day in Bangalore in 1983 and went on to work for several media houses, including The Indian Express, The Press Trust of India, Deccan Herald and the Hindustan Times. He briefly returned to Al Jazeera in 2013-14 as India Online Editor for its news website, based in Bangalore. He was also Editorial Consultant/Trainer with The Hindu from 2006-2014 and with Deccan Herald in 2014-15. He writes for several prominent publications in India and abroad and is involved in other media-related work.

He is the author of "The Anopheles Sting", a book of fiction, published in 2013 by Dronequill.

Kanchan Kaur, Dean: A stint at the University of Florida's Institute on Teaching Digital Journalism turned this die-hard print-medium journalist into a believer in the web. She has since driven IJNM's emphasis on Multimedia. IJNM now runs a full-fledged stream in Multimedia, and a course in Convergence; she teaches the latter.

She started life in journalism by reporting the city of Bangalore for various small newspapers. She joined the Indian Express in Delhi for a very brief period before returning to Bangalore to work for the Deccan Herald. She has, in about two decades in journalism, worked, among other newspapers, in The Gulf News, too. She has covered a gamut of topics—from crime to art profiles. As a crime reporter, she was known for digging out the unusual. Her features in the Gulf News' weekly magazine Friday, more often than not, became cover stories.

She has taught, off and on at the Ecumenical Christian Centre's residential programme in journalism, the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore and Mount Carmel College, Bangalore.

At IJNM she teaches students news gathering, reporting and writing skills. She also offers an elective on Covering Arts and Culture in the second semester. She now focuses on news literacy and fact-checking and thinks there is the need to counter the blight of fake news.

Surekha Deepak: With over twelve years of experience in the electronic media, she has worked with both television and films. She was part of the planning and setting up of the various regional language satellite channels launched by Eenadu Television. She has worked with one of the largest film houses in the country, Ramoji Film City in various roles. She has been involved with the planning and execution of two Hollywood films. She was the special effects coordinator for the Kamal Hassan film Hey Ram, which won the National Award for Computer Graphics in 2000. She has also scripted and directed many documentary films and has been associated with various NGOs. She designed and taught the television production course at Sri Sri Centre for Media Studies.

Nagesh Hegde is an Assistant Editor with Prajavani, a leading Kannada daily and a widely respected writer on environmental issues. He has handled important assignments for the newspaper, besides being deputed to cover the Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro. Hegde has a Master's Degree in Environmental Sciences from the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. In fact, he was among the first batch of students to get this degree in India. He was also the first to be appointed as an Assistant Professor to teach Environmental Geoscience in Kumaon University, Nainital. Hegde's work on India's iron ore export was debated in the Indian Parliament just prior to the infamous Emergency. During the heyday of environmental movements in Karnataka, Hegde's writings were cited frequently and many of his articles have become textbook lessons. He has also travelled in the US, UK, Italy, Portugal and Kenya lecturing on environmental issues. He has also worked for popularizing science among rural communities. Hegde has won many literary and environmental awards including the "Outstanding Environmental Journalist" award by the PRSI (Public Relations Society of India) and recently a similar one by the Karnataka Government. At IJNM, Mr Hegde not only teaches Environmental Reporting, but also Rural Reporting and Covering Religious and Social Issues.

Shirish Koyal moved to teaching journalism after a newsroom career that spanned more than 32 years – three decades of them with The Times of India. Starting off as trainee reporter at Nagpur Times immediately after his graduation, he swiftly migrated to the news desk. His first year in the profession was marked by Operation Bluestar, Indira Gandhi's assassination and the Bhopal gas tragedy. These were followed by the anti-Mandal agitation, economic liberalization, the demolition of the Babri Masjid, the serial explosions in Mumbai, other assassinations, a deepening of religious divisions, and the rise of right-wing forces.

Before shifting to Bangalore, Shirish worked on the news desk of Newstime, Hyderabad, for a year and a half. He has tracked the change Bangalore has undergone over the decades. Shirish attended several training programs within India, and covered events in Singapore, South Korea, South Africa and the United States. A senior member of TOI's team of journalists, he became a catalyst whenever the paper underwent change. He believes in keeping things simple and straight. Journalism is among them.