

Department of Media Studies

Guest lecture on RTI and Professional Ethics

Date: 11 February 2020

Venue: 801, Audi Block

Time: 9-11 AM

Faculty in charge: Dr Rajesh A

The Department of Media Studies, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) invited an eminent journalist, Ms Akshatha Rao for a guest lecture on February 11, 2020. Ms Akshatha Rao is the Principal Correspondent of the Economic Times and covers policies and politics with a special focus on Karnataka. She has about a decade's work experience in the media. The session laid a foundation on the umpteen ways one could follow to make the most of our right to access information.



Right to Information (RTI) is a fundamental right guaranteed under the Indian Constitution. It attained real time credibility and applicability through the RTI Act 2005. Right to Information provides one access to most of the government records and documents. Ms. Rao enlightened the second year JPEng students with her experience and knowledge on RTI. She informed the students that it could be used as a tool to write interesting news stories and gave a few examples. She also gave the students detailed procedural guidance on how to apply an RTI.



To apply for an RTI, one has to write a letter to the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the concerned department mentioning the details one needs. They should buy a postal information order worth ₹ 10 or a take a DD for the same amount. If one needs a photocopy of a document, an additional pay of ₹ 2/page should be made.

According to the Act, any citizen applying for an RTI should receive a response within 30 days of applying. Sometimes one doesn't get satisfactory answers or the process might take a longer time than expected. During such circumstances, a second appeal is done to the State Information Commission.

After a detailed run through on the process of filing an RTI, the students were divided into groups for an activity. Each group was instructed to come up with three situations where they need certain information and file an RTI for the same. The students were directed to write a letter to obtain the information in the proper format explained earlier during the lecture. Following the activity, the forum was open to questions. This led to an interactive discussion on limitations and exceptions of one's right to access information.

This lecture was an eye opener to all the budding journalists. The session was really inspiring and the students hugely benefited from it.
