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**References:** Lennart Bourin, Talent Coach, CNN  
917-882-5689, [Lennart.Bourin@turner.com](mailto:Lennart.Bourin@turner.com)  
Course Taught: Video

John Bennet, Senior Editor, New Yorker  
914-216-3722, [John\\_Bennet@newyorker.com](mailto:John_Bennet@newyorker.com)  
Course Taught: Art of Profile (Written Module)

To,

**Al Jazeera/Columbia J-School Fellowship Committee**

I am a television journalist with an experience of 7 years working in India's premier English general news channel, CNN-IBN with both on-field as well as backroom expertise in editorial and production.

In a vastly changing world of television, the notion of competition is changing everyday. News channels are not just competing with each other but also more crucially scrambling for viewers attention and loyalty by having to reinvent themselves constantly in the face of fast evolving digital world. The idea of a television reporter is no longer what it used to be even a year ago and that's why I came to Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism aided by the prestigious Fulbright scholarship.

In the last seven months I have trained myself as a multimedia journalist by learning the basics of HTML, CSS, aggregation and digital news design along with extensive camera training. I believe that these skills are important to acquire to function in a modern television newsroom, which is willing to make the unavoidable and irreversible online transition. Al Jazeera English like other legacy brands across the world has been trying to achieve just that. I have covered politics, conflict, disaster and general news stories apart from anchoring and producing special shows from one of the politically volatile regions of India, West Bengal and North-East India. I believe my experience as a reporter from India with my insight into its politics and society, along with the newly acquired skills make me a fit candidate who has the right perspective, training and approach to serve the idea of news and its consumption in an international newsroom as it should exist in 2014, a candidate who has no fear to reinvent herself to stay competitive.

As a student reporter in Columbia, I have extensively reported on the issue of LGBT asylum from Russia and Nigeria which have been featured as blog posts in Huffington Post, but as a journalist I really wish I saw more stories coming from Africa given the serious implications of anti-gay laws in Uganda and Nigeria as we have seen during the relentless coverage of similar crackdown in Russia during the Sochi Olympics. As a reporter I would aim for a detailed and consistent coverage from these countries and the plight of the LGBT community through a series of personal accounts showing the anxiety and desperation that might lead many to seek asylum in Europe and America.

I am a journalist who is committed to the idea of news, which is unbiased and factual and most importantly serves public interest. I sincerely believe that the fellowship will help me serve that purpose and I will be grateful for that opportunity. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm Regards,

Priyanka Gupta

## **PRIYANKA GUPTA, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM**

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

(Clips available: <http://priyankaguptajournalist.wordpress.com/> )

#### **CNN-IBN, New Delhi & Kolkata (June 2007- Present)**

- Principal Correspondent, Kolkata (2011-2013): Worked as the Principal correspondent in the Kolkata bureau of CNN-IBN, a 24-hour English news channel and a CNN affiliate in India. Covered breaking news and enterprise stories throughout West Bengal and parts of North-East for major stories. Covered hard news including disasters, political and communal violence, insurgency, riots, elections and enterprise feature stories. Frequently reported live from the field for news bulletins, produced and directed camera crews, also wrote and narrated pieces for news packages. Anchored and produced half - hour specials and contributed several capsules for award winning shows.

(Complete work profile : <http://bit.ly/1fCsAIC> )

- Associate Producer, New Delhi: Worked as a News Producer for three years at the CNN-IBN headquarters in New Delhi. Produced prime-time news bulletins including rolling election coverage and budget specials.

- Output Desk Editor: Worked as a desk editor for a year in 2007, involved in writing television scripts and video editing on Avid.

- Anchoring: Anchored weather bulletins for a year. Also anchored web capsules for CNNIBN.

- Internships: Network 18, TV Today network in TV, Radio and marketing divisions

### **EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS:**

#### **Masters of Science candidate on Fulbright scholarship at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, New York:**

A multi-media journalist with specialized digital skills and training in television, radio and photography. Reported on homeless prostitutes at Hunts Point, New York, New York City Public Housing and Gay Russian Refugees in New York City which was published in Huffington Post (<http://huff.to/1hvlj4G> , <http://huff.to/NZ0Yey> )

#### **Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts with Honors-in-class in English Literature from Jadavpur University, Kolkata**

- Selected for the prestigious Sarai-CSDS (Centre for Development of Social Sciences) student stipend award 2007 for city-based research.

### **SKILLS:**

Multimedia: HTML, CSS, News Design, Aggregation, Avid, Adobe Premier, Audition and Lightroom

Video proficiency with shooting on Canon C100

**CLIP 1:**

Stateless people at the Indo-Bangladesh Border

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/people-stateless-at-indiabangladesh-border/193462-3.html>

This is a story that is very close to my heart for it presented a unique challenge I had not encountered before on the field. My video journalist and I were threatened to be abducted by desperate old men and women of the villages we covered who wanted the government of India and Bangladesh to finally pay attention to them and they thought the only way they could do it is by kidnapping reporters from mainstream, prominent news outlet.

To me it was profoundly sad more than dangerous. As a reporter who reported, scripted and produced the story along with a video journalist and video editor, I was driven further to try to do justice to my subjects and bring their sufferings to light with detailed and diligent reporting.

**CLIP 2:**

First Hindu Chaplain of Columbia University

<https://vimeo.com/85909008>

The content of the story is very simple but this is the first time I attempted a non-narrated piece, which was shot, edited and reported by me as one of the first pieces in my advanced video storytelling class in Columbia Journalism School. As a television reporter back in India, I have never had to operate a camera and had no technical knowledge of filming with one. Even though I have reported on stories with better and more complex content, this story gives a sense of my proficiency with the camera and editing on Adobe Premier.