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LATEST: Simi visits The British Broadcasting Corporation_



On 22nd April 2010 I, Simi Khagram, a pupil of St. Helens toured the BBC News centre with family friend Rickin Majithia, a News Broadcast Journalist.

I learnt a lot from the experience, from the news room vocabulary, to what a green room is. The BBC news studios are on several floors, crammed full of fast moving journalists – to gather news, guests – to interview, producers – to make decisions, correspondents – live at the scene, and even well known presenters, such as Sonali Shah.

I found out that my dream job, Journalism, is “one of the most time conscious and stressful jobs on earth. When a bomb goes off somewhere in the world or a Tsunami strikes; you have to break the news first, your script has to make sense and – most importantly – you have to be 100% right” according to my mentor, Mr. Majithia.

I watched as he edited a clip about a Bishop apologising for abuse scandals, but his work can also include finding interviewees and writing scripts. As the news room is busy, and conversations are flying, Rick reminds me that in news nothing ever stands still, and this single room gives news to millions of people.

Just then he receives “War Games” by Linda Polman, a freebie, and Rick warns me of the dangers of a conflict of interest, and the fact that he must give his honest opinion in a press release of the book, and not be influenced. Then I question him about other perks of journalism and he describes trips to Spain, Hong Kong and Delhi. For him the perks of journalism are getting the story out and travelling the world, but I am well aware that throughout Journalism people find their perks in meeting celebrities, money and by-lines.

However his past is still of great interest, he has written for the Guardian and has worked at ITV, Channel 4 and Sky News, and BBC. He has also lived in Asia, where he worked for CNN, in New Delhi and Hong Kong where he wrote for the South China Morning Post. He explains experience is key in journalism, not your gender, or to an extent even your qualifications (his include university courses in journalism, history, and more). You must be hard working, stand out, push and relentless.

At 12 o'clock I compare the BBC studio to an average office, which would be quiet yet I'm in a room that is buzzing, with shouts about “being close to the wire”, the room is littered with focused conversation and people working together. Around the building, five live radio, BBC news bulletins, and the BBC news channel are filming and broadcasting their pieces. I was lucky enough to visit the breakfast green room and studio, the news studio and the five live radio room.

Nevertheless, I know more important than being aw-struck by rooms I recognise, or seeing presenters, I learnt my dream job, has perks as well as disadvantages, for example everything is done in odd shift work, from 7am -5am, 2pm – Midnight, 9pm to 7am. Yet my opinion and desire of journalism hasn't changed, but been fuelled by this short visit and I hope to visit a Journalist working again, before I become one.

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