

Talk by Arnab Goswami at the BSE International Convention Centre Hall on 17th July, Thursday, 2014.

Celebrated news television anchor at Times Now, Arnab Goswami, promised to work with Bombay First, asking it to give him concrete issues of mass interest so that he could become the voice of Mumbaikars and help push the envelope. He assured those present that he will collaborate with Bombay First, and three or four big issues impacting Mumbai will be converted into mass campaigns through the network.

On an overcast Thursday evening, just as rains gave citizens a brief respite after a four day spell, people flocked to the BSE Convention Centre to attend the Bombay First Speaker series and hear Arnab Goswami, the guest speaker, speak his heart out.

After a welcome address by Mr. Shishir Joshi, CEO Bombay First, and brief introductory speeches by Mr. Ramadorai, Chairman BSE, Mr. Narinder Nayar, Chairman Bombay First and Mr. Ashish Chauhan, MD & CEO of the BSE, Mr. Arnab Goswami took the floor in his characteristic manner and kept the audience engaged.

When he came to Mumbai in 2003 to set up a new News Channel (terribly disillusioned with the cosy, crony journalism in Delhi), he was actually toying with the idea of giving it up when he was struck with the vibrant positive energy that he experienced while walking down a rainy Marine Drive. Infected by this positivity, he settled down to establishing Times NOW from a small studio in Parel.

Mumbai, he said was a turning point in his career and he owes this city everything.

According to him, Mumbai presents an opportunity to change the work culture in journalism with the peoples' 24x7 work attitude not seen elsewhere in the country. While Mumbai is undoubtedly the country's financial capital, he foresees it to become the media capital of India in the next 7-10 years because this is the only place in, perhaps, the world where he has seen a multicultural and multilingual environment in the TV Newsroom.

Getting down to specifics, he pointed out how the media has evolved over the years from being the voice of the establishment to the voice of the people, a new kind of journalism spawned in Parel, Mumbai. This kind of journalism which was adversarial to the establishment, which provoked, angered, shamed and shocked the audiences, de-intellectualised news stories and gave the ordinary person a platform. Challenging the old rules of journalism, Arnab expressed his opinions while reporting and turning a news story into an experience. This form of journalism has a trickledown effect and has a tremendous social impact.

Laced with humour and interesting anecdotes of how he revealed scam after scam, Arnab said that media empowers people and can make those accountable more accountable. Media is the link between those who are losing out and those who can do something. He says that he can contribute to the growth of this city by making it the Media Capital of the world, a distinct possibility because of its large talent pool of skilled media persons. If the city encourages media organisations to work and operate, it could well become the media capital of the world and the intellectual nerve centre of the country. India has the largest and most vibrant news audience in the world and digital media is the future of newscasting.

With the establishment of a Media city in Mumbai, it would give a chance for Mumbai's talent to find a voice and be the change it wants to be.

In the Q&A session that followed, Arnab was asked if he could focus on corruption in the MCGM so as to push the authorities for better infrastructure. Arnab replied in the positive.

When asked if he encouraged the dog fight that ensues on his show, he admitted that while it was not the format, he didn't discourage it.

Small stories need to become big and big stories need to become small, he reiterated and his aim was to give the poor people a voice.

He was asked if he could take the lead in building national character which seems to be sorely lacking in India, he replied that he would try and make citizens more aware.

He assured the audience that he would try and focus on more positive news but insisted that his debates remained inconclusive because he wanted the audience to come up with their conclusions. Shock, embarrassment and fear act as deterrents to behaviour that is deviant, irresponsible and downright criminal so he will continue to put out stories that impact others because there is a bigger purpose to news reporting than mere reporting.

Arnab Goswami's arrival at the BSE venue was marked with many in the audience queuing up to him for pictures. After the talk, in true BSE tradition reserved for special guests, Arnab posed for photos at the Exchange mascot, The Bull.