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## Is Climate Change Really on our Minds?

By Express News Service | Published: 16th July 2015 03:59 AM | Last Updated: 16th July 2015 03:59 AM

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Alan Rusbridger talks Global Warming and much, much more | P RAVIKUMAR

CHENNAI: Pointing out that journalists across the world had failed to report issues pertaining to climate change with as much prominence as it deserves, former editor of The Guardian Alan Rusbridger asserted that it was necessary to educate the readers about what he called 'the biggest story in the world'. "This is the only way politicians will be forced to take tough choices to check climate change," he said, delivering a lecture on Climate Change-has journalism failed?, at the Music Academy.



If the readers are not given the proper information, politicians, as is their wont, would not be forced into taking these tough decisions, Rusbridger said. Despite this, he said, few reported environmental issues in detail. He cited the fear of being categorised as alarmist, non-acknowledgment of the seriousness of the issue and the inherent nature of journalists to prefer reporting new and unique events as a few reasons for this.




Through a presentation which included short videos, he also explained The Guardian's campaign against excessive burning of fossil fuel titled 'Keep it in the ground' which forced a reaction from investors pumping money into oil and coal companies. The four month campaign also elicited reactions from an oil company CEO, the climate change minister and Prince Charles himself, Rusbridger revealed, which showed that people were extremely receptive to reportage on environmental issues.

Explaining the difficulties that the news outlet had to face during the campaign, he revealed that the Guardian group itself had invested in fossil fuel companies, but later took a conscious decision to phase these investments out.

Later, Rusbridger also took questions from the members of the audience including former Madras High Court judges, lawyers, eminent scientist M S Swaminathan and engineers. "The 2 degree Celsius increase in temperature would affect the food supplies as well as lead to the migration of a number of people from coastal areas of India," Swaminathan said, while appreciating The Guardian's campaign.

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