

The quiet, unassuming BU grad behind India's raucous reform movement

By Thai Theodoro

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

A youth movement challenging Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has a surprising connection to Boston.

Before Abhijeet Dipke became the face of the Cockroach Janta Party, a Generation Z-led movement that mobilized protests across India and demanded accountability from the government, he was a graduate student getting his master's degree in public relations from Boston University's College of Communication.

"My impression of Abhijeet was always somebody who was quite thoughtful, and when he spoke, it was meaningful, and he had impact," said Professor Amy Shanler, whose strategic media relations class Dipke took at BU.

The Cockroach Janta Party, or CJP, grew out of mounting anger over India's education system and other issues.

In May, protests erupted after the government canceled the nationwide NEET-UG medical entrance exam over an alleged paper leak, forcing more than two million students to re-

DIPKE, Page B4



SAUMYA KHANDLWAL/NEW YORK TIMES

In less than two months, Abhijeet Dipke (center) went from an introverted Boston University student to leader of a mass movement.

'I think this whole lesson is that words are incredibly powerful. I hope that is what Abhijeet continues to do.'

CARLA KATH, *taught Abhijeet Dipke at BU*