DJMC organises Webinar on Social Media Audit

Awantipora, June 1: Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Tuesday organised an online workshop for its students and scholars on *Social Audit; Tools and Strategies to Monitor Social Media and Online Content*. The objective of the workshop was to make the students/scholars understand what fake news is, and how to debunk fake news, fake photos, fake videos or fake posts and source check.

The workshop was an initiative under Google News Initiative India Training Network led by DataLeads to support journalists, fact-checkers and media educators across India in their fight against misinformation.

The resource person for the workshop was Archana Kumari, a Google Certified Trainer and faculty member at the Central University of Jammu. Quoting Bill Kovach and Rosenstiel, Ms. Kumari said journalism is not just about writing but about getting it right and having a system in place to fact-test information as one discovers it.

Besides informing the participants about various online tools available to verify the information that appear on social media, she also shared examples of misinformation with the participants. The topics covered during the workshop included Social Media Monitoring, Monitoring Facebook/Twitter/YouTube and Verifying Websites.

She stressed that people need to be aware of *Me-first syndrome,* wherein people want to be the first one to share a big news in his/her group believing that the news needs immediate sharing. "And the only golden rule to fight misinformation is to be careful *and Verify, Verify and Verify."*

She added that the journalists should always use their wisdom, common sense and knowledge to check and verify the facts. "And the knowledge of various fact-checking tools can bring additional advantage," she said.

Introducing the theme of the workshop, Dr. Ruheela Hassan, Incharge Head, DJMC, IUST, said even though misinformation cannot be completely eliminated, media can play a very important role in disseminating the accurate information. She added that such trainings will be greatly helpful for trainee journalists to use the media for mitigating the impact of rumours, misinformation and false information.

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