

## **IUST holds workshop on Role of Media in Disaster Preparedness**

Awantipora, April 21: A day-long workshop on 'Disaster Preparedness and Role of Media' was held at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) here on Thursday. The workshop was organized by Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), IUST, in collaboration with Human Welfare Voluntary Organization and Centre for Law and Development Policy.

The workshop was attended by students and faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication. The resource persons for the workshop include Dr. G.M.Dar (faculty member, IMPA), Mehmood-ur-Rashid (Snr. Editor, Greater Kashmir), Dr. Ruheela Hassan (I/C Head, DJMC), Peerzada Ashiq (Journalist, The Hindu), Ms. Shazia Yousuf (IUST) Mr. Ishfaq Mattoo (JKASW), Shafat N Ahmad (CLDP) and Dr. Fozia Qazi (IUST).

This workshop was aimed to sensitize the budding journalists towards the disaster preparedness and enhance their capabilities to contribute positively in managing and mitigating the impact of the natural and human-induced disasters at their levels. ;

To cushion the effects of this disasters there is need for Journalists to use the barrel of the pen and camera to push the policy makers to "developmentize" disaster risk management. There is greater need for journalists to be more proactive in reporting on disasters as their role is not limited to post- disaster scenarios and also in pre-disaster times, said Dr. Ruheela Hassan.

Journalists needs to be trained regularly on disaster preparedness to enhance their understanding of the key disaster terms and scope of the hazards and this workshop was one such step in that direction, she added

The power-point presentations by the resource persons were followed by the panel discussion and question answer session wherein the journalist panelists enlightened the students with their experiences of handing the recent disasters in the state and advised the students to be equipped with the necessary knowledge about the disaster scenario so that they can report about the disasters from all perspectives be it gender, economy, social issues, vulnerability, response, health care, security, privacy and any other such issue.

On the occasion Dr. G.M Dar, Associate Professor, IMPA said "Disasters effect the lives of people directly as well as indirectly. 'Not a single person remains unaffected by the disasters. They not only cause loss of life & shelter but also creates lack of food, increase in diseases, and disturb socio-economic activities."

Different issues were discussed during the day long workshop. Issues like conflict and disaster, the type of media reportage and other thing were discussed during the workshop.

Mehmood ur Rasheed said that the disaster and conflict are inter-related. "when a disaster hits a state that is hit by other conflict, the political perspectives influences

important issues. Discussing the relevance of theories in proactive, he said that a journalist reporting disaster should not be “I-it but it should be I-thou.”

Sharing his experience of 2014 floods Journalist and civil society member, Peerzada Ashiq said, “We need to keep hope afloat while reporting a disaster instead of focusing more on numbers and figures.”

On the occasion the panelists hailed the efforts of the local media in highlighting the sacrifice of locals during the rescue operations. The panelists however said there are certain things which go unreported.

“There are certain things like gender issues which need to be reported in media. Women particularly face enormous problems during the disasters which however go unheard keeping in view the patriarchal and conservative setup of our society,” said, Shazia Yousuf, Assistant Professor, DJMC, IUST.