

Department of Communication Studies

12th Media Seminar on Growing Trend of Fake News in India

Over the last few years media has been witnessing a growing trend of fake news. Fake news is no longer restricted to any one idea, thought, individual, event or geographical location. In the current scenario it is becoming increasingly difficult for the receiver of news to distinguish or identify between the evidence based news and fake news. There is also growing evidence that fake news does have the power to influence in shaping of public opinion and therefore makes the people vulnerable, an easy target for emotional outburst leading to chaos and even violence in some situations. It may also seem to be a trivial issue to some to sway public opinion and influence the democratic process through circulation of fake news where the news is customized and presented as per the wish/choice of the sender.

For students of Journalism and Mass communication, it is important to know about the skill sets required to navigate through media to spot fake news. This seminar attempts to discuss and debate over the rising / growing trend of fake news phenomenon or just ignore it as transient which will fade away with the passage of time.

The seminar started with invoking the blessings of Ma Saraswati by lighting the ceremonial lamp and Vandana by students. Dr Ravi K Char, Director, JIMS, welcomed the gathering by throwing light on the concept of seminar. The seminar was being organized to find solutions of the practical problems faced by academicians and professionals.

Mr. Hridayesh Joshi, Senior Journalist, NDTV discussed the issue of News vs Fake News in India. He cited many examples of fake news in mainstream media as various national governments are using it to cover up their misgovernance.





While talking on 'How to identify Fake News' Dr. Sarvapriya Sangwan, Journalist, BBC discussed the issues of insecurities, perceptions and conditioning. She said, 'Fake news play with the emotions. People use unreliable sources, unverified news, photoshoped images and unverified news.'

Dr. Anand Pradhan, Associate Professor, IIMC, enlightened the gathering about 'Sociology and Economics of Fake News'. He quoted Pew research Centre's findings that in 70% of the people believed mainstream media in 1970s whereas in last decade only 30% believed this media. There is a structural compulsion on corporate media is to lie.



'Social Media and Fake News' was well communicated by Mr Sanu Nair,, he said the term 'fake news' originated in 2012. While talking about its threat on society, he said that it is very divisive in nature and it distracts audience from real issues and it instills a sense of fake pride.

The seminar concluded with 'votes of Thanks by Dr. Neeru Johri, Head, Department of Communication Studies.