

2-day workshop on peace building begins at IUST

Awantipora, May 22: Two-day workshop on 'Journalism and Peace Building' began in Islamic University and Science and Technology (IUST) on Monday. The workshop is being organised by Kargil Development Project (KDP) and Centre for Law and Development Policy (CLD) in collaboration with Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), IUST.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice chancellor, IUST, Prof Mushtaq A Siddiqi said in a conflict region, journalists should work towards peace building rather than doing sensational journalism, which is common nowadays.

"IUST aspires to produce journalists who can make difference by producing factual and objective stories that can initiate the change on ground," he said.

Deliberating on conflict resolution and peace building, workshop coordinator and Senior Editor, *Greater Kashmir*, Mehmood ur Rashid, said everyone in Kashmir faces conflict in one way or the other, "so everybody has a role to play in peace building".

"War is easy to start, but peace building takes more knowledge, courage and empathy. Thus, there is a need to initiate a process of understanding the root-cause of conflict and creating space for dialogue to bring peace," he said.

Meanwhile, a 15-minute video, '*Danger of Single Story*'—based on a talk by a Nigerian novelist—was screened on the occasion. The video highlighted the issue of presenting only one side of a story in media.

"Single stories build stereotypes, which are hard to break," said Shafat Naseem Ahmad, Executive Director, CLD.

He further said the organisation has extensively worked on peace building measures in Kashmir, which includes cross-LoC trade and cross-LoC education, "through which we connect people to understand each other that can help in minimizing the conflict".

Later, students were divided in groups to identify major problems existing in Kashmir due to conflict. Among various problems identified by the participants, human rights violations emerged as the key issue.

Earlier, welcoming the guests and participants, Head DJMC, Dr Ruheela Hassan, said the purpose of the workshop is to help students identify the problems in the society they live in and come up with solutions.

Faculty members of DJMC were also present in workshop, who also participated in the group discussion.