



ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.

Google News Initiative workshop at IUST



Awantipora, Dec 31: A day long Google News Initiative (GNI) workshop on ‘fact-checking, online verification and digital hygiene’ was organised by the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) for its students here on Monday.

The training was conducted by Google-certified trainer and associate editor of Rising Kashmir, Faisal Yaseen, who is part of this mission to train journalists and journalism students in various tools available to detect fake news and verify news sources.

As the workshop focussed on ‘honing the skills of journalism students’ on verifying misinformation and controlling fake news, Faisal said, “fake news stories actually appeal to the emotions of readers which is why it is easy for people to believe it so these skills will equip you in differentiating between the information, disinformation and misinformation.”

While discussing the real and fake news stories, Faisal added, “to check the authenticity of news, we can use smart keywords, thumbnails and reverse image search. This can help us to check whether the images and videos are real or not.”

Faisal, who has been conducting these workshops for different institutions also gave various tips to the students including ‘using time filter to identify the picture whether it is manipulated or not.’

Workshop coordinator Monisa Qadri highlighted the requirement for ‘incorporation of such hands-on-training in the journalism curriculum’ to better equip students for the challenges ahead and ‘establishing the credibility’. She said, “This workshop was a part of Google’s Initiative in building a network of trained journalists for future who have a nuanced approach towards tackling the challenge of fake news and misinformation. The session trained students in ‘photo verification, video verification, source checking, geolocation that assist a journalist and deliberated on ways to ensure digital hygiene in contemporary times.’”

The journalism students were highly involved during the workshop and expressed desire of joining this initiative of Google. 3rd semester student of DJMC, Zubair Lone said, “we being at the initial stage of our journalistic career are in need of such workshops. This will help us to excel in journalism in future. “Knowing about various techniques like reverse image search and many online tools will help us to cross verify the facts provided even by some authentic source as well.’

The workshop was attended by the first and third semester students of the department and first semester journalism students of B.A Honours (English).