

IUST's media students visit *Kashmir Observer*, *The Hindu* offices

Srinagar, May 15: As part of its Industry Connect initiative, the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), organised an industrial tour to the offices of daily newspaper organisations, *Kashmir Observer* and *The Hindu* here on Thursday.

The objective of the tour was to bridge the gap between academic learning and the practical dynamics of a newsroom. It aimed to familiarise students with real-time newsroom operations, and editorial practices in local and national print media organisations. During the tour, coordinated by Dr. Rabia Noor, Head, DJMC, the students interacted with several senior journalists.

The management of *Kashmir Observer* lauded the initiative and expressed interest in future collaborations to help shape the next generation of journalists. Editor-in-Chief, *Kashmir Observer*, Sajjad Haider, discussed job prospects for media students and encouraged them to learn social media management as well. He underscored the importance of grooming journalists directly from the field.

Managing Editor of the organisation, Bilal Handoo, said student-journalist interactions are necessary, as they tend to “bridge the gap between classroom learning and the industry.” He also suggested organising a dedicated workshop on effective story pitching to further hone students’ skills.

News Editor, Farzana Nisar, advised students to “think out of the box” and encouraged them to move beyond hyperlocal narratives, emphasising the importance of pitching the right stories to the right platforms.

Shahid Ansari, from the administration team, advised students to align their abilities with evolving industry expectations. He said what matters the most is acquiring skills during one’s academic journey and one should be able to foresee what is next after completing education. “You should be industry-ready, so focus on building real and adaptable skills,” he said.

Online Editor, Syed Hamid, said, it is an era of Online Journalism, wherein news breaks every minute, so one has to be quick enough to cover it immediately while ensuring that “only credible news is being covered.”

Other journalists who interacted with students included Syed Burhan, Feature Writer, and Roshan Elahi, Sports Editor.

Chief Designer, Muntazir Yaseen, said even as Artificial Intelligence is everywhere, it cannot beat the human creativity. He added that graphic designing is a potential field to be explored by students.

Students were also given a tour of four major departments of the media house, viz., Editorial (Print and Multimedia), Advertising, Circulation, and Administration.

Later, the team visited the office of *The Hindu* at Press Enclave here. Bureau Chief, Peerzada Ashiq, shared insights on the evolving landscape of journalism. He emphasised the importance of critical reading, deep understanding of issues and cultivating news judgment from early on.

“Read as much as you can; writing will follow. But understanding issues should be your core competence,” he told students.

Students were also encouraged to explore emerging areas like media startups and policy impact reporting. The session also shed light on the newspaper's unique editorial approach. "We don't reduce our reportage to event coverage; instead, we explore trends and contextual developments," he added.

He further said journalism has completely changed over the years. "Even if you join a newspaper organisation, you don't work like traditional journalists; you work round the clock now," he said.

Students expressed their satisfaction over the tour and said they have gained valuable insight into the functioning and workflow of a professional media organisation.