



## Press Release

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### **Misinformation threatens Democracies - David Moyer** **Workshop for Urdu Journalist on 'Countering Disinformation' held at MANUU**

#### **Hyderabad:**

“It was imperative for Citizens to be aware of the misinformation eco system and counter it through truthful information. Misinformation threatens democracies across the world, as there is divergence of opinion and no shared understanding of basic facts.” said Mr. David Moyer, Public Affairs Officer, United States Consulate General, Hyderabad today at Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU). He was addressing the inaugural session as the Chief guest of one Day Training Workshop ‘Countering Disinformation for Urdu Journalists’ organized by the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism (MCJ), MANUU in collaboration with Department of MCJ, Osmania University (OU) and US Consulate General, Hyderabad. Prof. Syed Ainul Hasan, Vice Chancellor, MANUU presided over.

Mr. David Moyer said “There is a need to change the nature of discourse in the media towards positive and factual information on the issues relevant to the public.” The workshop will help strengthen democratic foundations by empowering Urdu journalists with fact checking skills and provide reliable news to the public, he added.

Prof. Ainul Hasan urged the media to work to build trust through strengthening digital media literacy and empower individuals to identify, critically analyze and counter disinformation. It is also our responsibility to know whether the information provided is correct or not. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of Independent India and Maulvi Muhammad Baqir, who was the first martyr from Indian journalist community, used journalism as a weapon during freedom struggle, he remembered.

The Guest of Honour Ms. B. Sumathi, IPS, DIG, Women Safety, Govt of Telangana, Hyderabad opined that countering disinformation may be used for the promotion and protection of women rights. Disinformation should not become a pretext to intimidate and harass critical voices, denigrate opponents or obstruct the legitimate activities of human rights, She remarked.

Prof. Stevenson Kohir, Project Coordinator and Head, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, OU outlined various topics of training sessions conducted by noted fact checkers led by Lead Trainer, U Sudhakar Reddy, Md. Abdul Basith, Media Advisor, US consulate General Hyderabad.

Prof. Mohammad Fariyad, Dean & Head, School/Dept. of MCJ delivered the welcome address. Prof. Ehtesham Ahmad Khan, Dept of MCJ proposed vote of thanks. Ms. Uzma Sadaf, B.A Student introduced the Chief Guest. A booklet “Standard Operating Tools” for Urdu Journalists was also released.

The resource persons - Mr. Krishna Sastry Pendyala, Ms. Umam Noor, Mr. Sudhakar Reddy Udumula, and Mr. M. A. Majid provided insights on various aspects pertaining to Countering Disinformation, Visual Content Verification and misinformation.

**(Abid Abdul Wasay)**  
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