

Proceedings of seminar on Journalism and Professional Ethics

Society for Professional Ethics & Management, publishers of the “*Journal of Professional Ethics & Management*,” organized a seminar on Journalism and Professional Ethics on 24th February 2010, at the Jain University Conference Hall, JC Road, Bangalore.

Dr.(Justice) Shivaraj V. Patil, Retd. Judge of the Supreme Court of India and former member of Human Rights Commission of India, was the chief guest. Prof.N.S.Ramaswamy, Management Guru and National Professor of India – Management, delivered the keynote address. Speakers included Dr. C.G. Krishnadas Nair, Dr. Ali Khwaja and Dr. Murali Krishna.

Dr.Sundararajan, ViceChancellor, Jain University, welcoming the audience said that journalism is a noble profession and journalists are very important professionals for the effective functioning of democracy and in enlightening the society through reporting and features of happenings around us. They play a very important role in opinion making among the common people and instilling



Justice Shivaraj Patil Inaugurates the Seminar. Prof. N.S. Rmaswamy, Dr. C.G. Krishnadas Nair and Dr. Sundar Rajan are also seen

national pride. By the very nature of their job they have to be skeptical, inquisitive and of questioning nature. But journalists must hold responsibility for the news filed by them.

Dr.C.G.Krishnadas Nair, Chairman, Society for Professional Ethics & Management, said that the Society was founded in 2008, with a number of socially concerned people, to reach out the young minds and kindle passion for professional ethics which should work towards nation building and global peace. The Society aims at reminding every one about the inherent divinity in each one of us. Unlike the earlier days, today there is very little scope under prescribed syllabus, to teach ethics and its real benefit to the individual and the society. We have lot of good teachings from Asia. In the process of civilization and economic growth we have traveled a long way from those values. The aim of the Society is to enable working professionals and future professionals to revisit our values.

Elaborating on the revisit of values and relating it to journalism, Dr. Nair said that in the pre-independence days journalists focused on freedom struggle, exposed wrong doings with the intention of getting them corrected. Today the focus is in developing media business and gaining maximum growth for the concerned media house. That has obviously put true professionalism among a number of journalists, in the back burner. But there is hope. Apart from the few left overs of the value society among senior journalists, there are umpteen number of young and upcoming journalists with positive thinking. To empower them and the younger generation as a whole, we need to invent ourselves and take a journey towards our roots, exposing the cherished values to the growing generation. Journalists are the right professionals to lead the community in this direction.

Dr.(Justice) Shivaraj Patil, inaugurating the seminar said that Professional Ethics & Management h

is a topic very important, relevant, useful, urgent and need of the hour. In the olden days students had moral lessons. Today we don't have any course content addressing ethical and moral values. India has 31 States, 1618 languages, 6400 castes, yet remains as one country. We should be proud that we are all together in spite of these diversities and ours is a great country. Dwelling in depth on Gandhiji's vision of independence and the formation of the Constitution of India, he said that Gandhiji wanted smile in every face. The Indian constitution is one of the best constitutions of the world. The Constituent Assembly took 2 years, 11 months and 17 days to discuss in thread bear each and every aspect of life and governance, guided with the ethos of our ethical and spiritual values. Independent India has plenty of natural and human resources to grow big. To convert the resources to true wealth that will bring smile to every face and ensure a civilized life as envisaged by the Constitution, we need character at every level in the society. We need competent people with character, commitment and compassion to ensure that the spirit of the Constitution is working at all walks of life."

"The Constitution envisages three wings for the governance of the country – the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Media is the fourth estate. The Constitution guarantees freedom of Media. Media is very powerful, but it is important to be useful too. Media should make people aware of the duties of citizens along with their rights. The ethos of ethics will guide every one to be aware of duties while seeking and working for rights. The paramount principle of ethics in journalism is to be truthful. News must be informative to improve or reform and not to destroy. Instead of sensationalizing news, media should sensitize them. Sensitizing has the elements of truthfulness, altruism, objectivity, impartiality, fairness and accountability," he reminded the audience.

Summing up Dr. Shivaraj Patil reminded young professionals that they can play the role of nation builders through positive and purposeful journalism.

Prof. N.S. Ramaswamy who delivered the key note address began his talk praising the journalists. In

his introductory remarks he said "India has produced outstanding journalists in English and Regional languages, who are comparable to the best in the world. Apart from their competence in their field, many of them are men and women of character who observed ethical standards. In fact India's media - electronic, celluloid and print – have achieved world standards in quality, where journalists also play a key role.

Prof. Ramaswamy then lashed out at the tendency of the present media world to blow up socially inconsequential happenings and trivializing positive, development news and views that carry motivating and inspirational powers and therefore important to the society and the nation.

The management guru lamented that though journalism has got into the education system, there is no research on its responsibilities and duties, its impact on society (beneficial or detrimental). Looking at the large number of young audience in front of him, Prof. Ramaswamy said that "from being a mere career, it is possible for journalists to become professionals in order to serve the society. It should be their mission to maintain the unity and culture of the country."

Dr. Ali Khwaja, an educationist, career counselor and Director, Banjara Academy, explained that the profession of journalism has traveled a long way from the Rs. 180/- salary plus suffering days to five digit pay and perqs. era. Journalism as a career gives great opportunity to young professionals to see the world around, the living condition of the common people and be agents of positive changes in social thinking and living. Like in any other profession, journalism too call for commitment and dedication.

Dr. Muralikrishna, a forensic scientist and writer, retired from the Police Dept. as Director of Forensic Lab, explained with case studies, the methods of investigating crimes and arriving at conclusions. Unlike reporting of other news and events, crime reporters must have an investigative mind and go a bit deep into the situation as found and the circumstances, before filing reports," was his advice to the young audience.