

Grassroots communication vital: Irani

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Minister of Information and Broadcasting Smriti Zubin Irani on Saturday stressed on the need to concentrate on developing communication at grassroots. She said an average Indian spends 200 minutes a day on mobile app and 65 per cent of video consumption in the country is only from rural areas and is slated to grow further. In this scenario, the media and entertainment industry should think about what new things can be offered to the consumers, she said.

Speaking at the 69th valedic-



tory session of the Development Journalism Course at Indian Institute of Mass Communication, she announced a scholarship for Rs.25000 in commemoration of Deen Dayal Upadhyay for people of Indian origin who did exemplary work in development journalism. She also awarded certificates to 25 development journalism students from 16 countries. On this occasion she also inaugurated

National Media Faculty Development Centre in IIMC campus. She launched ECHO Newsletter, Samachar Madhyam and Communicator magazines.

Irani said it is an honour to preside over an event which brings journalists of 16 countries under one roof and that one should always continue to learn new things. She said development journalism is an area where there should be more focus.

The minister said times have changed from the time when editor had the last word on the narrative. Now the consumer also decides on the nar-

rative and asks about the source of information. In this age of data exploding from every nook and corner, many would google every piece of information and hence it is important to be credible. Director General of IIMC K G Suresh said that IIMC had trained students from 127 countries so far in the development journalism course and that signifies its importance. He said IIMC is Asia's oldest media research unit and should act as the communication hub and think tank. He said development journalism is a symbol of South South cooperation and journalists attending the course are India's unofficial ambassadors.