

# 'Corporate adventurism weakening news muscles'

HT Correspondent

✉ [reportersdesk@hindustantimes.com](mailto:reportersdesk@hindustantimes.com)

**LUCKNOW:** Change is palpable in media. Corporate houses buying stakes in channels and news-hungry reporters looking for a celebrity in every news—ethics might be the first casualty in this hustle-bustle.

"Issues no longer attract newsmen and gradually the role of the media as the fourth pillar of democracy is getting bleak," said Roop Rekha Verma, former Lucknow University vice-chancellor while addressing a workshop on media capacity building on decentralised district planning on Thursday.

The speakers included Vipul Mudgal, director Inclusive Media For Change, CSDS, New Delhi, Mridula Singh, nodal officer, UN-Govt of India joint programme on convergence, DM Diwakar, director AN Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna, Paranjay Guha Thakurta, TV anchor and former member Press Council of India.



■ Mridula Singh addressing the gathering at the seminar on Thursday.

DEEPAK GUPTA/HT PHOTO

Constructive criticism is an essential part of reporting. But, it should be made clear whether media is helping multi-nationals to reach villagers or carrying the voice of villagers to policymakers, said the speakers.

"One should have a clear idea of the country/region where one is working and policy/tools that really matter for people. One needs to understand if diesel can reach village to run generators for mobile towers why can't it reach the farmer?" asked

Mudgal. Explaining about the role of decentralised district planning, the speakers said it was one such tool that could give deciding power to the people at the grass roots. Taking example of the mid-day meal, Mudgal said, "if food for the scheme was decided at the local level, a decision can easily be taken to include 20% diet of locally grown crops that are rich in nutrition."

Similarly, the right to education might include regional language too.