

'Authoritarianism, disinformation are challenges young journalists must prepare to face'

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

The democratic functions and values of journalism have come under pressure and, from time to time, they have come under threat and assault, said N. Ram, Director of The Hindu Publishing Group, at an event held at Loyola College, Chennai.

"Some of this has to do with the economics of the news media in the digital age but as significant is the challenge our democratic craft faces from authoritarian rulers. These are challenges that everyone entering the field of professional journalism must prepare to face," said Mr. Ram.

The Loyola College (Autonomous), in association with the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation, has launched a free course for degree-holders aged 20-25.

Hundred students have been enrolled in the first



N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Publishing Group, and other dignitaries during the event in Loyola College on Tuesday. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

batch of the six-month-long Certificate Program in Applied Journalism (CAJ).

Mr. Ram, in his address to the students, said, "Journalism, while being a professional pursuit, is not value neutral. It is premised on such principles as truth-telling, freedom and independence, fairness and justice, humaneness, and working in the public interest, for the social good."

Highlighting the threat of disinformation in today's digital age, Mr. Ram said orchestrated disinforma-

tion seems to be a major political resource for political parties of the right, chauvinistic groups, semi-fascist elements, and in general the practitioners of hate, especially communal hate, for political gain.

Rev. A. Thomas, Principal, Loyola, said the CAJ would help students become extraordinary journalists. Rev. B. Jeyaraj, Secretary; P. Elayaperumal, Project Head, CAJ; and M. Malini, Director, Kaushal Kendra, Loyola, also took part.