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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **IMS celebrates National Press Day**

Bhubaneswar: A journalist must provide a balanced account, regardless of their political, social or economic standing. But the very notion of activist-journalist poses threat to professional journalism. An activist tries to influence the debate whereas a journalist helps create an informed debate, said senior journalist and CEO of OdishaLive Nilambar Rath here on Thursday.

Expressing concern over opinion role of journalism that is driven by ideological bias at a seminar on TRP Wars: Battle among News Anchors on Indian Television organised by Institute of Media Studies (IMS) on the occasion of National Press Day, he said for the last one year, a Television Rating Point (TRP)-driven war that had been simmering among the national media networks has started making its way to the surface. Nevertheless, it is being played out daily. Outside the news bulletin format through combative promotional advertisements, and within, mainly in the form of asides, innuendos and pot shots taken by the leading anchors against each other. The battle among the news anchors on Indian Television for the most eyeballs is just getting personal, he said.

Now journalism at a crossroads as it is losing its credibility day by day, though the TRP and GRP of a TV channel depends on quality content, distribution and branding. Digital media will be an alternative medium to air decent voices, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, News Coordinator of ETV Bharat (Odia) Sarada Lahangir said a free and fair media has been an essential pillar of democracy. But instead of being a watchdog of democracy, the mainstream media has become a 'petdog' of the Government. Constructive journalism displaying high standards of professionalism is now a myth.

Senior journalist Satyajit Mishra said now news anchors are mere a teleprompter (TP) reader, while ethical journalism has been taken over by business model of the industry. It is for the members of fourth estate to collectively ensure that objectivity is promoted and sensationalism is curbed. But it is not being practiced, he said.

He also questioned the role of media in covering the suicide of Brunda Sahu in Bargarh, BJP president Amit Shah son's business and NSA Ajit Doval's son Shaurya's think-tank issues.

Director of IMS Prof Upendra Padhi also spoke.