

Social media throws up new challenges for PR professionals

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, APRIL 21

With the social media fast usurping the domain of the traditional print and electronic media, the job of public relation (PR) professionals is becoming more challenging with each passing day.

This was the gist of the views expressed by speakers at a discussion on "Emerging Importance of Social Media: Public Relations Perspective" organised by the state chapter of the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) here today.

Veteran journalist PC Lohumi presided over the event. Senior journalist Ravinder Makhaik introduced the subject and presented the overall emerging scenario in detail.

Lohumi said the social media was a double-edged weapon with both positive and negative impacts and the effective strategies had to be put in place to harness its vast potential in a constructive manner for the benefit of society.

"The social media has triggered off an "information explosion" and it is bound to

become a mainstream media in the near future because of its speed and wider reach. It is equally important for the PR practitioners and for making its best use, they must do regular and proper processing of information with accuracy," he added.

Makhaik said the social media had an impact on the traditional media. Many media houses had been forced to close down their print versions and go online. It posed a big challenge as it was unregulated and, thus, vulnerable to spread rumours and disseminate unnecessary

information in various forms.

He also underlined the need for a mechanism to regulate the social media.

Earlier, Chairman of the State Chapter of the PRSI, BD Sharma, in his introductory remarks, said the social media posed challenges and also provided new opportunities to the PR professionals. They would have to remain alert all the time and respond instantly by providing authentic information.