

Resolution: 1

Indian Journalists Union (IJU)

7th Plenary

**Com. Kalyan Choudhuri Hall, Image Gardens, Hi-tech city, Hyderabad
26-28th November, 2011**

Resolution on Media Commission

The Indian Journalists Union (IJU) has since long been pressing for the formation of a Media Commission to study the current state of affairs in the media and recommend adequate legislative and other measures to define the roles of all their stake-holders. The ongoing controversy over the proposal to replace the Press Council of India (PCI) with a media council to enforce a code of ethics on or regulate the entire media fully vindicates our demand and shows clearly that any further delay in conceding it will only sharpen such controversies and create more problems for both the print and broadcast media.

The working and service conditions in the media today are virtually unregulated. In spite of the Working Journalists and other Newspaper Employees (Condition of Service) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act. 1955, the employers in the print media have succeeded in depriving large numbers of working journalists of their right to job security and statutorily fixed wages and working conditions. The conditions in the broadcast media are no better. That is why the entire media reflects by and large the voice of only a handful of media barons who have come to usurp the right to freedom of the Press that, in all fairness, should belong to the journalists who are motivated not by any profit motive but by a missionary spirit and are trained to report events objectively and project the voice of people sincerely. It is these conditions that are responsible for the phenomena like “paid news” and the use of mediapersons for alleged commercial liaison purposes.

The situation is already serious and the increasing power of the media could make it a lot worse if urgent steps are not taken to build it into a mighty weapon to defend and strengthen democracy by strengthening the institution of journalists and journalism. This 7th plenary session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU), being held at Hyderabad on November 26-28, 2011, therefore, calls upon the Government to set up a Media Commission and consult representatives of all the stakeholders of the media to frame its terms of reference.

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Resolution on National law to ensure safety and protection of working journalists

This plenary session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU), being held at Hyderabad on November 26-28, 2011, pays homage to the late Jyotirmoy De, who was assassinated at Mumbai on June 11 last because of his fearless and intrepid efforts to expose the city's underworld that naturally earned him many enemies. While offering our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, we once again call upon the Maharashtra Government and police to ensure that full justice is done our late colleague and his family is appropriately compensated for their irreplaceable loss.

While appreciating the Maharashtra State Government's assurance to bring a legislation to provide protection to journalists, we want to emphasise that this is not a problem limited to one city or State but affects the journalists of the entire country, who face threats to their life and limb from not only the underworld but also terrorists and Security forces. An investigative reporter is as insecure in Jammu and Kashmir as in the North-East or Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat or Tamil Nadu.

This plenary session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU), being held at Hyderabad on November 26-28, 2011, therefore, calls upon the Union Government to appreciate the gravity of the situation and sympathetically consider the need to enact a law to ensure safety and protection of working journalists and payment of adequate compensation to their families in case any tragedy befalls them.

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Resolution on Implementation of Wage Board Awards

Although the Union Government has notified the new wage award based on the recommendations of the Majithia Wage Board, with certain corrections the employers have so far been displaying a studied indifference to it and making no moves to implement these. The Union Government, too, has not made any move so far to ensure the implementation of the report. While expressing its serious concern about this deliberate exercise to display indifference to this report, this 7th plenary session of the Indian Journalists Union solemnly declares its firm resolve to fight for the abolition of the contract system and ensure the implementation of the wage award notified by the Union Government on 11th November, 2011.

This session also takes a serious view of the fact that many employers got away with non-implementation of the earlier wage awards, too, because of the apathy displayed by both the Union and State governments to the implementation of these awards. We, therefore, reiterate our demand for the constitution of tripartite committees at the Centre as well as in the States to ensure and oversee the implementation of the new wage award.

Since the non-implementation of the wage award notification does not carry any severe penalty, the employers do not feel any pinch in its non-implementation. This plenary session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU), being held at Hyderabad on November 26-28, 2011, demand that Working Journalists Act of 1955 and other laws be amended appropriately to enhance to heavy fines besides severe punishment.

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Resolution on Mofussil Journalists

Indian Journalists Union 7th Plenary session demands that wage recommendations of G.R. Majithia Wage Board for mofussil journalists be implemented in toto.

Mofussil Journalists who are the life line of newspapers and news agencies, more so in regional and language newspapers, are a most exploited and neglected lot. They are the under dogs. But for them language newspapers are choked for want of news. Despite their indispensability, they have no job security. In all most all the cases mofussil journalists are not given any appointment orders and are left high and dry in case of attacks by unscrupulous elements exposed by the former. Media managements who get most benefited by the toils of mofussil journalists do not come to their rescue. Due to the protracted struggle of Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) the plight of mofussill journalists received some focus and justice Manisana Singh Wage Board, for the first time included them in its recommendations for wage revision. But these recommendations, sadly, have not been implemented by almost all the managements. They don't even accept that a large force of mofussil journalists are working for them.

Justice G.R. Majithia Wage Board recommended a small hike in the wages for mofussil journalists at district level and chose to maintain status quo for journalists working below that level. Indian Journalists Union demands for the implementation of the recommendations. IJU also demands that the government take a serious view of the attacks on mofussil journalists and formulalate a system to fight this unlawful and anarchic trend.

For 7th Plenary Session

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Resolution on Expulsion of Mr. Akhouri from the primary membership of the Union

The 7th Plenary/Delegates Session of the Indian Journalist Union (IJU) meeting at Hyderabad on 26-28 November 2011 viewed seriously the actions of Mr. Suresh Prasad Akhouri which damaged the unity and integrity of the union. It notes that as president of the organization he exceeded the limits of the constitutional provisions and disaffiliated state unions and suspended key office bearers without authority and without following principles of natural justice.

The 7th Plenary/Delegates Session notes that Mr. Akhouri did not care to reply to the show-cause issued to him by the National Executive Committee at its meeting on 5th March 2011 in New Delhi. The NEC considered the disaffiliation of Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) and Tamil Nadu Union of Journalists (TUJ) by Mr. Akhouri by sending a text message on the mobile to the Office-bearers of the respective unions. He also suspended the Secretary-General and the Vice President by similar fashion. The NEC considered his actions as unconstitutional and illegal. The constitution and the rules of business clearly stipulated the procedure for taking disciplinary action against office-bearers by the NEC or National Council. No where in the Constitution of the Union, such power was vested in the President or any other office-bearer, the NEC opined.

The NEC meeting held in Delhi on March 5, 2011 directed the Secretary-General to immediately issue show cause notice to Mr. Akhouri for taking illegal and unconstitutional actions with an aim to break the unity of the organization, personal gain and financial omissions and commissions. It is decided to take suitable decision after receiving his reply to the show-cause notice at the next meeting of the NEC. Accordingly, the Secretary General has issued show-cause notice on 17.03.2011 to Mr. Akhouri. The NEC meeting held on 25th June 2011 in New Delhi and 9th October 2011 & 25th November 2011 in Hyderabad considered the matter. In view of no reply from Mr. Suresh Prasad Akhouri, either orally or in writing and his continuing absence from the National Executive Committee meetings, clearly shows that he has no explanation to offer on the show-cause notice issued to him by the NEC. Hence, the NEC meeting held in Hyderabad on 25th November 2011 was constrained to take the decision to refer the 7th Plenary / Delegates session for the expulsion/removal of Mr. Suresh Prasad Akhouri from the primary membership of Indian Journalists Union (IJU).

The Plenary / Delegates Session after taking into account all the matters and his refusal to reply to the show-cause notice and his continued disruptive activities unanimously decided to remove/expel Mr. Suresh Prasad Akhouri from the primary membership of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU) as his actions endangered the unity and integrity of union and lowered its prestige.

Resolution: 6

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Resolution on constitution of a regional group in the Asian region.

The 7th Plenary/Delegates Session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU) meeting at Hyderabad on 26-28 November 2011 welcomes the decision of the last IFJ World Congress in Cadiz to agree to a motion proposed by the IJU to “open an office in the Indian sub-continent and establish a sub-region there”. It applauds the efforts made by colleagues in Africa and Latin America to establish and consolidate their own continental groups under the aegis of the IFJ constitution, and set up statutory transparent democratic structures, including congresses and elected regional leaderships.

Importantly, it recognizes the complex diversity of a region such as Asia-Pacific and the need to organise affiliates within it in the most practical and efficient way, and directs the National Executive Committee to communicate to the IFJ leadership the view of the IJU Plenary that the Asia Pacific region cannot be run anymore by unelected officers from a single country in an arbitrary and grossly undemocratic manner. At the same time, it should petition sister unions in the subcontinent and elsewhere to seek their help in developing forthwith a model of continental organisation similar to the other IFJ regions (Europe, Africa and Latin America) and ensure the following:

That the regional organization first and foremost, be democratic, transparent and rooted firmly in the aspirations of its member unions, should be led by an elected leadership at a representative regional congress which should act as a parliament for the region, should include writing up a regional constitution, developing working rules and preparing a strategic plan for the region and assign immediate the necessary leadership resources to campaign for this initiative which can only have a tremendous effect on the IJU and Indian journalism.

Resolution: 7

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Resolution on investigation of killing of journalists & compensation

The 7th Plenary Session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU) held at Hyderabad on 26-28 November 2011 expressed deep concern at the slow progress of investigations of killings of journalists in the country. A total 47 journalists have been killed in India since 1992. The investigating agencies have failed in 9 cases out of 10. IJU demands the Government to hand over investigations of all the killings of journalists to CBI to expedite investigations. IJU also demands the government to give adequate compensation to the families of the slain journalists immediately.

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Resolution on police attacks on journalists

The 7th Plenary Session of the Indian Journalists Union (IJU) held at Hyderabad on 26-28 November 2011, condemns CRPF personnel for seriously beating three journalists who were covering a protest in the old city of Srinagar. It is learnt that Shahid Jantray, a photo journalist working for Dainik Bhaskar was detained by the police by the Nowhalla Police Station. Umer Mehraj, a video journalist of Associated Press Television News and Yamar Kabli and showkat Shafi, both freelance photo journalists were hospitalized.

IJU also condemns detention of Sumonda, reporter of Anand Bazar Patrika, who came to Peddapalli from Kolkata to take interviews of relatives of Slain Naxalite leader Kishenji by the Pedapalli Police in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh on November 16.
