

INDIAN JOURNALISTS UNION (IJU)

(Regd No. 40001)

Website : www.indianjournalistsunion.org

5 Central Lane, Bengali Market, New Delhi - 110001

IJU Condemns Cases Against Journos in UP, Haryana

New Delhi, September 10: The Indian Journalists Union expresses grave concern over journalists being repeatedly harassed and targeted by BJP governments in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Recently, two new fresh cases have been reported—a journalist arrested in UP's Azamgarh district and an FIR lodged against a journalist in Uklana district of Haryana.

In a statement IJU Acting President Geetartha Pathak and Secretary General and IFJ Vice President Sabina Inderjit said that journalists' targeting by governments reveals their intolerance to the truth and curtailment of the citizens' right to be informed. Worse, to cover their misdeeds their administration was implicating journalists instead as revealed in these cases.

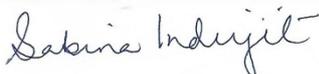
In UP, the Azamgarh police arrested Santosh Jaiswal on Friday last for taking pictures and videos of children mopping floors at Oodupur Primary schools. While Jaiswal is said to have called the police to complain against the school, the latter instead arrested him on charges of "extortion and obstructing public servants from doing their duties." This after school Principal Radhey Shyam Yadav claimed Jaiswal often visited the school, harassed teachers/students, forced the kids to mop the floor so he could take photographs and demanded money from him.

District Magistrate NP Singh, on Monday last ordered an investigation after local journalists met him and explained the police action against Jaiswal was retaliatory as he had shown errors by Phulpur police SHO. The arrest comes a week after an FIR was filed against Pawan Jaiswal for reporting kids in Mirzapur school eating chapatis and salt in their mid-day meal.

Likewise, in Haryana, the Uklana district police filed an FIR on Friday against Anop Kundhu of STV Haryana news, The Voice News for showing wheat spoiled in the open at the centre of the Food & Supplies Department. This follows after the Department's Assistant officer Sanjay Chahal registered a complaint claiming the news to be "false" and that Kundhu was "spoiling the image of the department and the official."

The IJU demanded that the cases against the two journalists be withdrawn and that the media in these States be allowed to carry out their rightful duty without any fear or favour.

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(Sabina Inderjit)
Secretary-General