

INDIAN JOURNALISTS UNION (IJU)

(Regd No.4001)

Website: www.indianjournalistsunion.org

President:

Amar Devulapalli

Hyderabad

Mobile: 098480 48536

Email: amardevulapalli@yahoo.com

Secretary-General:

Sabina Inderjit

New Delhi


Mobile: 098100 05349

Email: sabina@infa.in

IJU Slams PCI Chairman's Conduct

Hyderabad/New Delhi, August 25: The Indian Journalists Union and its three nominated Members to the Press Council of India representing media organisations are shocked and gravely troubled at the PCI Chairman Justice (Retd) C K Prasad's blatant violation of the Council rules, plus his actions have not only undermined the credibility of the institution but go against the primary aim of the institution in protecting the freedom of press. Making a note of the Council's affidavit seeking to intervene in a petition filed by Kashmir Times in the Supreme Court challenging the restrictions on media freedom in Jammu & Kashmir since August 5 and urging these be relaxed, the IJU is astounded that the affidavit instead of supporting it, instead argues in favour of the ban in place "in the interest of integrity and sovereignty of the nation." In a statement, IJU President and PCI member, D Amar, Secretary General and IFJ Vice President Sabina Inderjit, and two PCI members B S Jammu and M Majid, said the Chairman should have consulted the Council before approaching the Supreme Court and spared members and the institution of the grave embarrassment it has caused. In fact, they said the Chairman ignored to take note of members' submissions on two other counts. One, when some sitting PCI members along with former members approached him on August 13 to take suo moto notice of the restrictions on the media and two, when working journalists members' of the PCI sought the Council adopt a Resolution calling upon the Union Government and the J&K administration 'to expeditiously restore communication facilities to media offices and to the journalists', at its full meeting held this Thursday August 22. What is of serious concern is that at the meeting, the Chairman did not inform the Council of the affidavit filed in the Supreme Court. This is in clear violation of Rule 8 of The Press Council (Procedure for Conduct of Meetings and Business) Regulation, 1979, which while dealing with the power's of the Chairman to take decisions in urgent matters, state: (1).The Chairman may in his discretion, if urgent action by the Council becomes necessary, take decision and permit the business of the Council to be transacted by an order recorded in writing. And, (2). The papers together with the decision taken by Chairman shall be placed before the next meeting of the Council for confirmation.The IJU said it is incumbent on the PCI Chairman to explain the 'urgency' in filing the affidavit, contrary to the mandate of the Council and in keeping the Council members in the dark by not seeking requisite approval at the meeting held on August 22. The urgency, said the IJU lay instead in reacting to the situation being faced by the media in Kashmir and preserving the freedom of the media. The IJU demanded that the Chairman should recall the affidavit and a fresh affidavit may be filed in conformity with the PCI's declared policy of upholding freedom of press.

Issued for favour of publication/broadcast in your newspaper/news channel



(Y Narender Reddy)

Secretary

President Office: No.5-9-60/B, Desodhdharka Bhavan, Fateh Maidan, Hyderabad-500 001, Telangana, India
Phone: +91-040-23232659 Fax: +91-040-23232660, Email: amardevulapalli@yahoo.com

Secretary-General Office: 5 Central Lane, Bengali Market, New Delhi-110001, Email: sabina@infa.in