



PAKISTAN FEDERAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS



Flat No. 20, Block No. 15, Melody House, Civic Centre, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad
Camp Office: 711, Al Hafeez Heights, Gulberg, Lahore
Lahore Tel: +92324 4628796, 321-4358085, www.pfuj.pk

GM Jamali

President

Cell No. 03008250773

E-mail: gmjamali2@gmail.com

Jamil Mirza

Treasurer

Cell No. 03005577382

Rana Muhammad Azeem

Secretary General

Cell No. 0321-4613322, 03331920330

E-mail: ranaazeem1@gmail.com

Mr. Justice Athar Minallah

Honorable Chief Justice,

Islamabad High Court, Islamabad.

Subject: **Implementation of Labour Laws and Media Laws in Pakistan**

Your honor,

Reference to the letter of the Deputy MIT Islamabad High Court dated 14-9-2021 vide # MIT/APP/40-21/Rmd/6616 pl find the following,

Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) represents more than Ten Thousand working journalists from Print, Electronic & Digital media of Pakistan and as an affiliate of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has been strenuously and professionally pursuing its vision, mission, policies and objectives to promote journalism and media industry in the country while safeguarding the genuine concerns, interests and legitimate rights of the journalists, in general. However, this is seriously felt that there is a dearth of adequate and comprehensive legislation in Pakistan providing and ensuring the all-time availability of a conducive and safe environment to all the workers diligently involved in providing various inexorable services in the field of journalism regardless of their ranks and cadres.

Further to the IFJ Secretary Anthony Bellanger' letter dated to highlight the plight of the working journalists and media workers in Pakistan, I humbly submit the following for your kind consideration.

The working journalists and media workers of ever-growing Pakistani media outlets have been facing problems likes of forced job terminations, non-payment of regular monthly wages, cut in monthly wages, job insecurity, personal insecurity, threats and intimidation from different quarters while the issue of impunity has been main issue of concern to be addressed.

During past twenty years, media market in Pakistan has seen exponential changes. At the beginning of the new millennium, there was only newspaper (print media) industry alongside the state-run television and radio (electronic media) in the country. After 2002, there have been a growth in the sector due to opening up of electronic media licensing for

Affiliated with International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)



PAKISTAN FEDERAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS



Flat No. 20, Block No. 15, Melody House, Civic Centre, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad
Camp Office: 711, Al Hafeez Heights, Gulberg, Lahore
Lahore Tel: +92324 4628796, 321-4358085, www.pfuj.pk

GM Jamali

President

Cell No. 03008250773

E-mail: gmjamali2@gmail.com

Jamil Mirza

Treasurer

Cell No. 03005577382

Rana Muhammad Azeem

Secretary General

Cell No. 0321-4613322, 03331920330

E-mail: ranaazeem1@gmail.com

commercial sector. This resulted in massive increase in human resource in the media landscape of the country as well. Back in 2002, there were merely 3,000 working journalists and approximately 25,000 media workers in Pakistan. By 2018, the number of working journalists rose to 18,000 and number of media workers reached to 250,000. This massive human resource growth was mainly due to expansion in the electronic media – television, radio and cable. There is no registration required for online / digital news media platforms in the country. Therefore, status of employees working with the digital / online news media platforms is in question.

There is no adequate mechanism for the protection of employment in case of electronic and social/digital media employees as we have seen in case of newspaper employees. It has been seen that the journalists who speaks against the government or some other powerful institutions have lost their jobs immediately.

There is a need to reform the existing labour laws dealing with print and electronic media to align them to international best practices

According to the data received from ITNE, there were 40474 cases pending before the tribunal prior to 2012. Out of these pending cases, the tribunal has so far decided only 2645 cases. In the meanwhile, during past ten years, the ITNE has received 1265 fresh petitions / applications. Out of these fresh applications, the tribunal has decided 138 cases. In total, the ITNE has decided 2783 cases during past ten years while thousands of cases are pending and waiting for the appointment of the Chairman ITNE.

The spread of covid-19 has made the matters worse and now many journalists are facing salary cuts or no salary at all. If implemented properly, the scope of the wage board should

Affiliated with International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)



PAKISTAN FEDERAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS



Flat No. 20, Block No. 15, Melody House, Civic Centre, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad
Camp Office: 711, Al Hafeez Heights, Gulberg, Lahore
Lahore Tel: +92324 4628796, 321-4358085, www.pfuj.pk

GM Jamali

President

Cell No. 03008250773

E-mail: gmjamali2@gmail.com

Jamil Mirza

Treasurer

Cell No. 03005577382

Rana Muhammad Azeem

Secretary General

Cell No. 0321-4613322, 03331920330

E-mail: ranaazeem1@gmail.com

be extended to electronic and digital media as well, so that the financial security of all the journalists, irrespective of their media affiliation, can be ensured.

So far, there is no registration required for online / digital news media platforms in the country, the status of employees working with the digital / online news media platforms is in question.

The absence of wholesome legislation in Pakistan is one of the major causes for all the work-related misgivings and growing violations against the journalists as a whole as well as lower tiers workers professionally serving in their unique and multifaceted capacities in journalism filed in the country. Therefore, an adequate, well-thought about, comprehensive, remedial, protective and legal regime should be put in place to plan and formulate a comprehensive policy and effective legislation to protect the rights of all involved in the Journalism and Media Sector of Pakistan.

In this behalf, we hereby propose, as under:

1. Journalism Field Labour Force may be considered as a 'specified labour force' to be fallen under a separate, comprehensive and special labour legislation.
2. A Special Journalism Field Labour Force Authority may be set up at all three levels i.e. Federal, Provincial and Local Government. All these authorities must coordinate and work in complete harmony to protect the rights of Journalism Field Labour Force and watch the genuine and legitimate interests of the same and their respective families.
3. The Special Journalism Field Labour Force Authority may implement Journalism Field Labour Force Laws covering various aspects, more particularly mentioned, as under:
 - a. The provision of needed medical facilities, disease diagnostic testing, medicines, surgeries, etc. at all public hospital to the Journalism Field Labour Force including their immediate families on priority basis.
 - b. The provision of quality primary, secondary, college/university and other technical education and skills to the children of Journalism Field Labour Force.
 - c. The special job quota be allocated to Journalism Field Labour Force and their children in all government posts.

Affiliated with International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)



PAKISTAN FEDERAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS



Flat No. 20, Block No. 15, Melody House, Civic Centre, G-6 Markaz, Islamabad
Camp Office: 711, Al Hafeez Heights, Gulberg, Lahore
Lahore Tel: +92324 4628796, 321-4358085, www.pfuj.pk

GM Jamali

President

Cell No. 03008250773

E-mail: gmjamali2@gmail.com

Jamil Mirza

Treasurer

Cell No. 03005577382

Rana Muhammad Azeem

Secretary General

Cell No. 0321-4613322, 03331920330

E-mail: ranaazeem1@gmail.com

- d. The provision of pension and gratuity to the Journalism Field Labour Force and their widows in cases of death.
- e. The provision of all-time complete and foolproof security to the Journalism Field Labour Force and their families keeping in view the commission of heinous crimes against the person and property of the Journalism Field Labour Force.

We trust that your honor will give due consideration in all the interest of Journalism Field Labour Force and protection of their rights and genuine concerns.

Note: A copy of the study done in collaboration with IFJ, **Decent Work in Pakistani Media** "An assessment of Pakistan's labour laws and their impact on media workers – Strategy for a more representative and beneficial legal framework" is attached here with.

Rana Muhammad Azeem

Secretary General PFUJ

Date: October 5, 2021.