

PRESS RELEASE

BY

JAN ABHIYAAN; BADLE GUJARAT CONDEMNING THE ATTACK ON JOURNALISTS BY GOVERNMENT MACHINERY

Jan Abhiyaan Badle Gujarat, a forum for civil liberties comprising political workers, journalists and human rights activists, the growing tendency to undermine the freedom of the press. It sees the recent raids in Delhi and other cities on the offices of alternate media group Newslick and the subsequent arrests of its chief Prabir Purakayastha and his colleague as part of this continuing pattern and condemns it in no uncertain terms.

Such drastic steps against news and research bodies just for doing their job they are destined to do are draconian and undemocratic, to say the least.

The charges framed against the news group and its founder show the autocratic mindset of the present regime as though espousing the causes of farmers and oppressed minorities are 'anti-national' in nature.

People of Gujarat, irrespective of ideological preferences, reject this misuse of various Central agencies for settling scores with news entities and journalists whose only fault seems to be telling TRUTH to the powers that be.

India's ranking in the World Press Freedom index has already touched the lowest possible mark due to such attacks on freedom to think of journalists and activists who decide to disagree with the government's claims and viewpoints.

The 'Mother of Democracy' must live up to its hard earned reputation by withdrawing the draconian charges against the people merely for disagreement with the powerful.

While conceding that law must take its course if, at all, any crime has been committed against the nation, the JAN ABHIYAAN Badle Gujarat demands that those arrested must be honorably freed immediately even if the frivolous case against them may go on.

Convenor

Suresh Mehta, ex CM and others.