

Media Law Clinic  
Quetta – May 1, 2008

Activity Details

A day-long Media Law Clinic was held for journalists in Quetta on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, at Quetta Press Club. The rationale of the law clinic was to identify and address the problems, legal as well as professional, faced or likely to be faced by journalists working in both print and electronic media.

Resource Persons

- 1- Misbah Saboohi
- 2- Aurangzaib Khan

Training Coordinator

Wajih Mirza

Schedule

The training could not be started according to schedule as people started coming to the press club after 11:00 am but later 22 participants turned up and the training went very well. The participants had great interest in the law clinic. The president of the Quetta Press Club – Shahzada Zulfikar – and many others suggested to hold another law clinic in Quetta so that more journalist can participate in it.

Presentations

During the work shop Misbah Saboohi, the media law consultant, presented the multimedia presentation on media laws that directly or indirectly affect the journalists. She briefed the participants about the legal responsibilities of journalists while gathering or reporting news and passing the same information to the public at large.

She clarified that the government puts restrictions on freedom of the press in the name of national security, public order or other legitimate concerns of the state. However public's right to know cannot be curbed if fair, neutral and truthful reporting is done by the journalists. She also explained legal defenses available to journalists in case they find themselves being sued by different parties. It was stressed that code of conduct for the media in PEMRA laws, Defamation ordinance or contempt of court should be interpreted in the light of international best practices prevalent in journalism.

Afterwards Aurangzaib held a discussion on media professionals' ethics while working in the field. He explained that journalists must only report the truth without adulterating the facts on ground. Media can play havoc with people's lives if false facts are printed or broadcasted. The participants also gave took part in the discussion as to how to improve working conditions for the journalists.

Comments by Misbah Suboohi

Overall participation was good and most of the journalists will vocal and were keen to learn about the media laws and how they can protect themselves against the defamation cases.

However, they had some difficulty in understanding the English terms and phrases used during the lecture. But the Urdu terms for these laws are even difficult to understand. There's a need to give them orientation on basic journalism and how the laws are related to media and their day-to-day working.

### Participant's Feedback

In the end all the participants were presented the certificates of participation. They also requested for inter-city workshops so that experiences of different journalists can be mutually exchanged.

Murtaza Baig, Senior News Producer PTV, Quetta:

"I learnt about the media laws, rights, privileges and responsibilities, and feel that the frequency of such workshops should be increased."

Zulfiqar Guramani, reporter KTN Television, Quetta:

"This was all new for me and no one during my 9 years experience told me about such things. Local journalists require more training on media issues."

Rao Muhammad Iqbal, Chief Reporter, Daily Mashriq, Quetta:

"I will congratulate Intermedia for this successful workshop and I believe such workshops can help journalists to improve their reporting techniques. I think that all material related to media laws should be translated into Urdu and local languages."

Saleem Shahid, Bureau Chief, Dawn, Quetta:

"These orientations should also be organized for the owners of the private channels as most of them are unaware of the media laws."

### List of participants

S. No	Name	Organization
1	Shahzada Zulfiqar	Samaa TV , President Press Club Quetta
2	Rashid Chohan	Daily Balochistan Times
3	Murtaza Baig	PTV News
4	Rao Muhammad Iqbal	Daily Mashriq
5	Saleem Shahid	Dawn
6	Amin Ullah Fitrat	Daily Jang
7	Muhammad Kazim	Daily Express
8	Ghalib Baryalai	Geo English
9	M H Rehman	Daily Balochistan Times
10	Yaqoob Tareen	Daily Zaman / PTV Bolan
11	Mati Ullah Achakzai	NNI
12	Ali Akbar	Online
13	Fareed Ullah	Daily Awam
14	Zulfiqar Goramani	KTN NEWS
15	Saif Ul Rehman	News TV One
16	Syed Zubair Shirazi	APP
17	Elia Rehmat Ullah	APP
18	Kalsoom Kakar	Sachal FM 105
19	Rubina Raheem	Sachal FM 105
20	Munir Balooch	Daily Nawa e Watan
21	Zafar Ullah Achakzai	Daily Duniyan
22	Dr. Azeem Bhatti	Daily Atimad