

JFA welcomes PCI team to Guwahati



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Nava Thakuria 9 September 2013 10157 views

Journalists' Forum Assam (JFA) has welcome the initiative of the Press Council of India (PCI) to send a sub-committee to Guwahati for interaction with local journalists on the issue of safety to working journalists in Assam. The PCI team is scheduled to meet the journalists on 11 September next between 10:30 am to 1:30 pm in the local circuit house to examine the matters related to safety of journalists in the State.

The JFA argues that the media persons of northeast India, most of them without insurance cover are subjected to numerous threats from insurgents, surrendered militants, anti-insurgent government security agencies and even various so-called social organizations. Amazingly Assam scores highest in the list of casualties among all States in the trouble-torn region.

For records, Assam has lost over 20 editor-journalist-correspondents in the last 25 years. The trend started in 1987 with the killing of Punarmal Agarwala, a local correspondent of The Assam Tribune in Nagaon by militants belonged to the United Liberation Front of Assam. Four years later, the militants targeted a veteran freedom fighter-turned-journalist cum- teacher Kamala Saikia August 9, 1991 in Sivasagar.

The killing of journalists continued as the timber mafia murdered Pabitra Narayan at Sonari in 1995. The same year witnessed the slaughtering of Dipak Swargiary in Goreswar by miscreants. It was followed by the murder of Manik Deuri in Diphu in 1996 by suspected militants of NDFB.

Prominent human rights activist and journalist Parag Kumar Das was killed on May 17, 1996 by the surrendered militants belonged to ULFA. Next year, the unidentified gunmen killed Panja Ali at Kokrajhar in 1997. Nagaon-based local journalist Nurul Haque was murdered in 1998. The ULFA militants again killed a senior correspondent, Ratneswar Sarma Shastri at Barpeta in 1999. Later Dinesh Brahma and Indramohan Hakasam were assassinated in 2003. The timber mafia gunned down Prahlad Gowala in Golaghat in 2006. The year 2007 witnessed the killing of Bodosa Narzary in Kokrajhar. The following year, Mohammad Muslemuddin and Jagajit Saikia were gunned down in Hojai and Kokrajhar respectively. The editor of Aji, Anil Majumdar was shot dead in Guwahati by unidentified in 2009. It was followed by the killings of freelance journalist BP Talukder in Nagaon in 2010 and Raihanul Nayum in 2012.

“Though Assam has recorded highest number of casualties from the media in all these years, not a single perpetrator has been punished till date,” said a statement issued today by the JFA president Barua and its secretary Nava Thakuria adding that working in the conflict ridden Assam still remains a risky job for the uncompromising and committed working journalists.

Nava Thakuria

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BY NAVA THAKURIA

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