

Journos for Jaiklong's release



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Hantigiri Narzary 4 September 2014 Updated 5 Sept 8291 views

Members of the media fraternity, students' bodies and social activists took part in a two hour sit-in organized by the Kokrajhar Press Club in front of Pragati Bhawan in Kokrajhar Thursday to protest against the dramatic arrest of journalist Jaiklong Brahma. Police arrested Brahma, a Kokrajhar correspondent for News Live on the night of September 2 under suspicion of voluntarily inciting the banned NDFB (S) for committing violence in the region.

Members of the Assam Journalist Union, family members of Brahma, representatives of the All Bodo Students' Union, AASU, ABMSU, Dularai Bodo Harimu Afad, Koch Rajbongsi Yuba Sanmilani, Nerswn NGO, BPPF, BJP Kishan Mancha joined the sit-in covering their mouths with black cloths.

The Kokrajhar Press Club submitted a memorandum to Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi through the Kokrajhar Deputy Commissioner demanding unconditional release of Jaiklong Brahma and to take up the issue of police snooping over the freedom of press.

The memorandum stated that the Kokrajhar Press Club expressed its grave concern over the inquisitiveness of the police on the free exercises of the media and in particular over doubts of harboring information of any likely incident in the district of Kokrajhar.

Journalists of Kokrajhar have been targeted by the police several times and put under their scanner since rising crimes and ineptness of the police come into regular focus in different print, electronic and online media of the state. Brahma faced arrest on the evening of September 2 when police invited him to the police station for a talk. Another TV news reporter Rinoy Basumatary is also under police scanner.

The police team led by the ASP (Security) raided the residence of Jaiklong Brahma at night and picked his laptop and CPU for examination. The police team also went to the residence of Rinoy Basumatary on the same night. Basumatary was not in his rented room at that time.

The district police have been overseeing the freedom of expression of the journalists of late instead of taking effective measures to crack down the militant groups operating in the district. Media persons in the district extend their due support to the district administration in the interest of a peaceful atmosphere in the district but indifferent attitude of the district police personnel prove otherwise.

Ajit Kumar Basumatary, president of the Kokrajhar Press Club alleged that the police did not provide proper medical care to Brahma who suffers from high blood pressure and diabetes thereby taking a toll on him physically and mentally.

“We demand fair treatment of journalists working in the different media houses and immediate unconditional release of Brahma. Police must give up hounding for television journalist Rinoy Basumatary. The administration must take pragmatic steps to hold back police and security personnel from clawing on the freedom of expression of the media. It is important that the media fraternity of other parts of the region do not fall to skirmish and fail to exercise ethical journalism which as a result will only hamper the functioning of the fourth pillar of democracy”, he said.

Hantigiri Narzary

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BY HANTIGIRI NARZARY

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