

Trouble brewing for North-east's pioneer newspaper house



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Nava Thakuria 17 June 2025 138020 views

When hundreds of media workers died of Covid-19 complications across India, a few people thought the corona disaster would also devastate the print media with sharply declined circulation figures resulting in shrinking advertisement revenues. Many established newspaper-publishing groups either closed many of their editions in the post-corona period or drastically reduced the number of employees to cope up with the hard situation. Some newspapers were shut down forever and many owners were compelled to sell their publications. The troubles are now brewing for the oldest media house in north-eastern region after a Dimapur-based English daily recently ceased its publications. The employees, who once proudly introduced themselves as being associated with the Guwahati-based media group, are now crying for regular salaries. The employees union officially stated that they have not received their salaries for more than two months. Moreover many employees including the working journalists, who were retired in the last few years, are still deprived of their due financial benefits under the lawful provisions. One can remember, the salaries of employees in the pioneer media group were never lapsed till last year. But it's yet to be asserted what tempted the management to create the unhealthy situation for months even though the media house was showing profit making balance sheets till the last fiscal year.

The current management has cited the outstanding dues from the State information and public relations directorate to the tune of Rs 6 crores (against the published advertisements in the last few months) that delayed the release of salaries and other benefits to the employees. Now the union representatives appeal to the government for supporting all the media houses with regular payments (against the sanctioned and published advertisements) and if possible allow a higher rate so that the owners can deliver necessary benefits to their employees. They went ahead asking the authorities to direct the government employees, educational institutions and libraries to buy local newspapers regularly. If necessary, the government should allocate a separate fund for the purpose so that the print media of Assam can survive with some dignity. The union representatives had however insisted on diversifying the revenue models, so that the managements need not to depend on government sponsored advertisements only (which often come with some hidden conditions). Meanwhile, social media space was full of unconfirmed reports that the concerned media house is readied for sale. A powerful media group is seemingly interested in buying the entire property along with the newspapers. Some claim that one newspaper in regional language was almost sold to another media group with a deal of around Rs 20 crores. But the concerned management recently made a statement that all this information was false and without merit. It was committed to editorial independence, journalistic integrity, and continued services to its readers, advertisers, and stakeholders. The management also urged all concerned to ignore such speculation and misinformation.

Many observers argue that the prestigious house usually maintains its credibility while disseminating information, editorial viewpoints and other pieces of articles, but in recent times the same principles were compromised. The newspapers under the group openly supported the anti-CAA movement in Assam and gave a huge space to the movement against the centre's initiative to allow the persecuted Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Christian nationals coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh prior to 31 December 2014 for applying for Indian citizenship with relaxed provisions. The chaos engulfed the Brahmaputra valley for weeks where it was reminded that the new citizenship act will dishonor the Assam Accord (signed in 1985 to culminate the six years long Asom Andolan). In another occasion, those newspapers made a series of voluminous reports on a local press club election just ahead of the Covid-19 with little or no credibility. The bias reporting with the intention of character assassinations to a widely known individual simply put their credibility on stake. Even though the present status of the media group is pathetic, it was undoubtedly orchestrated by a section of arrogant employees only, who enjoyed an unlimited social-political power with no or little accountability. Finally they created the disorder where the management probably turned into a reluctant observer.

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Employees' Union

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CHANDMARI, GUWAHATI - 781 003

কর্তব্য সুচাৰুৰূপে সম্পাদন কৰিও মাহৰ পাছত মাহ দৰমহা আদায় নাপালে বৰ্তমান সময়ত কৰ্মীসকল কেনে অসুবিধাৰ সন্মুখীন হ'ব পাৰে, সেয়া সহজে অনুমেয়।

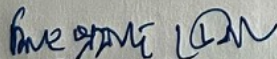
সিংহপুৰুষ বাধাগোবিন্দ বৰুৱাৰ সুযোগ্য সন্তান শ্ৰদ্ধেয় প্ৰফুল্ল গোবিন্দ বৰুৱা ট্ৰিবিউন প্ৰতিষ্ঠানৰ পৰিচালন সঞ্চালক হিচাপে থকাৰ সময়লৈ নানা অভাৱ-অভিযোগ আৰু ঘাত-প্ৰতিঘাতৰ মাজতো কৰ্মীসকলক অন্ততঃ দৰমহা সদায় নিয়মীয়াকৈ আদায় দিয়াৰ পাছত বৰ্তমানৰ মাননীয়া পৰিচালন সঞ্চালিকাৰ কাৰ্যকালত কিয় এনে পৰিস্থিতিৰ উদ্ভৱ হ'ল? তেখেতৰ মতে, ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰে বিজ্ঞাপনৰ ধন আদায় নিদিয়াটোৱেই ইয়াৰ কাৰণ। আজিৰ তাৰিখলৈ ট্ৰিবিউন প্ৰতিষ্ঠানে চৰকাৰৰ পৰা ৬ কোটি টকাৰো অধিক পাবলৈ আছে। চৰকাৰলৈ আমাৰ প্ৰশ্ন— বিজ্ঞাপনৰ ধন আদায় নিদি প্ৰতিষ্ঠানটোৰ কৰ্মী আৰু তেওঁলোকৰ পৰিয়ালক ইমান কষ্ট দিছে কিয়? কৰ্তৃপক্ষকো আমি বাৰে বাৰে অনুৰোধ জনাইছোঁ, কেৱল চৰকাৰী বিজ্ঞাপনৰ ওপৰতে নিৰ্ভৰ নকৰি ৰাজহ বৃদ্ধিৰ হকে তৎকালীন ব্যৱস্থা লওক।

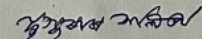
চৰকাৰলৈ আমাৰ আহ্বান— আছাম ট্ৰিবিউনৰ লগতে সকলো বাতৰি কাকত প্ৰতিষ্ঠান তথা সংবাদ মাধ্যমক নিয়মিতভাৱে বিজ্ঞাপনৰ বাবদ পাবলগীয়া ধন সময়মতে আদায় দিয়ক। তদুপৰি বিজ্ঞাপনৰ পৰিমাণ আৰু বিজ্ঞাপনৰ নিৰিখ বৃদ্ধি কৰক। ধ্ৰুপদী ভাষাৰ মৰ্যাদা পোৱা অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশৰ বাবে চৰকাৰে বাতৰি কাকত-আলোচনী আৰু সংবাদ মাধ্যমৰ জৰিয়তে ব্যৱস্থা লওক। চৰকাৰী কৰ্মচাৰীসকলক বাতৰি কাকত ক্ৰয় কৰিবলৈকো দৰমহাৰ সৈতে ধন দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰক। শিক্ষানুষ্ঠান-পুথিভঁৰালসমূহক বাতৰি কাকত-আলোচনী ক্ৰয় কৰাৰ বাবে নিয়মিতভাৱে অনুদান দিয়ক। অসমীয়া ভাষা-সাহিত্যৰ বিকাশৰ স্বার্থত বাতৰি কাকত তথা ছপা মাধ্যমৰ সংকট দূৰীকৰণৰ বাবে চৰকাৰে ক্ষিপ্ৰতাৰে কাৰ্যকৰী ব্যৱস্থা গ্ৰহণ কৰাটো সময়ৰ দাবী। এইক্ষেত্ৰত বিহিত ব্যৱস্থা ল'বলৈ আমি চৰকাৰক আহ্বান জনাইছোঁ।

আছাম ট্ৰিবিউন এমপ্লইজ ইউনিয়নে লগতে এইকথা স্পষ্ট কৰি দিবলৈ বিচাৰে যে ইউনিয়নৰ সকলো সদস্য প্ৰতিষ্ঠানটোৰ প্ৰতি দায়বদ্ধ আৰু ইতিমধ্যে জাতীয় অনুষ্ঠান হিচাপে পৰিগণিত আছাম ট্ৰিবিউন প্ৰতিষ্ঠানৰ উন্নতিকল্পে আটাইয়েই উৎসৰ্গীকৃত। একে সময়তে ইউনিয়ন প্ৰাপ্য অধিকাৰ সম্বন্ধেও সজাগ আৰু সচেতন।

আমি আশা ৰাখিছোঁ— আপোনালোক আটায়ে ইউনিয়নৰ স্থিতি সন্দৰ্ভত অবগত হৈছে। ট্ৰিবিউন প্ৰতিষ্ঠান আৰু ইউনিয়ন সন্দৰ্ভত কিছুমান বিভ্ৰান্তিকৰ তথ্য প্ৰচাৰ হৈছে— আশা ৰাখিছোঁ, এই সংবাদমেলে তেনে বিভ্ৰান্তিৰ ওৰ পেলাব।

আটাইলৈ সংগ্ৰামী অভিনন্দনেৰে—


(শিৱ প্ৰসাদ ডেকা)
সভাপতি


(দুধ্ৰাম কলিতা)
সাধাৰণ সম্পাদক

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