



Reg. No : U/TU No. DRT (B-1) TUA/SR-02/2011

ಜನಲಿಸ್ ಅಸೋಸಿಯೇಷನ್ ಆಫ್ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ
JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OF KARNATAKA

Affiliated to National Union of Journalists (India)
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**An appeal to 'Loha Purush' of our beloved Bharathiya Janata Party
reg: Press Freedom**

Respected Advaniji,

We are your admirers over the last four decades. You have championed the cause of good governance, freedom from fear, freedom from slave-mentality all your life.

A true journalist in you was evident when you became the first non-congress Information and Broadcasting Minister in the first ever Janatha Party Government at the Centre and the reforms you brought in the Governance are worth emulating for anyone who would step into that post. You brought freshness to the media world and gave free hand to the functionaries in the Government media.

The Prasara Bharathi was your own brainchild and you nourished it with your un-partisan and statesmanlike determination. Having fought the tyranny of the Emergency rule of the suppressive Congress Government of Smt. Indira Gandhi, you knew the value of a free press. It was a heavenly joy for us to see the morning newspapers' headline on 23rd June 1977 pronouncing the 42nd amendment to the Constitution of India to never again commit such a cruelty of the draconian rule to suppress the freedom of the people in general and press in particular. We adore you and Vajapayiji, sir, for this enactment in the parliament. We in the press were the beneficiaries of your kind act.

It was in this background that the patriots among the media of this great Country rising to the occasion came together to float a Nationalist Trade Union, the "National Union of Journalists(India) setting aside the existing extra territorial trade unions of the "Card Holders". The Journalists' Association of Karnataka is the State unit of NUJ(I).

When the BJP Government was formed independently after General Elections in 2008, we in the media were overjoyed that the same



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trainees of yours in the Bengaluru Central Jail during the Emergency would be ruling this state ever after. We were hopeful that the values you inculcated in our leaders inducted into rule the state for the first 5 year term.

With the above preamble, please permit us to bring the recent anti-media draconian act of our own BJP government to your kind perusal:

1. The Karnataka Government has withdrawn permission to all journalists, other than a chosen few "accredited" reporters of a handful newspapers and a few more TV channels, to enter Vidhana Soudha, Vikasa Soudha and the State Secretariat from 15th February 2011.

What was the provocation for such a decision? Is there anything to hide from the press? Whither Freedom of Press!

2. Almost simultaneously, the concessional Bus Passes issued to journalists to travel within the limits of Bengaluru City were withdrawn. These passes were initiated by Shri Devaraj Urs as Chief Minister in 1972. These Senior Journalists were not travelling in the city buses at no extra cost to the State exchequer, not even at one litre of diesel extra !

3. Having highest regard for the ruling BJP, we in JAK suggested that it would be pertinent to the Government policy of transparency in administration, as the last 18 months of the incumbent in the present term of its office is "Anushthan Parva" (implementation of the policies already pronounced in their Manifesto and the Budget Speeches), to issue Bus Passes to the Mofussil Journalists to travel in KSRTC buses plying within their Districts. The mofussil journalists would use that to cover the development schemes initiated by our administrators and give a feedback.

4. Even after repeated requests to the Chief Minister/s and Information Minister/s (The incumbent CM is holding both charges) , The Journalists' Association of Karnataka, (Affiliated to NUJ(I) and



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to International Federation of Journalists, Brussels, in turn), has not been represented in the Government nominated bodies like Media Academy, State Accreditation Committee and all other such bodies while its non-functioning counterpart Karnataka Union of Working Journalists is eating the cake in all the Nominations !

Esteemed sir, don't you feel it is the height of injustice? You are our hope.

Yours truly,

Prof. B. Harishchandra Bhat
President, 30/10/2011

Nethrakere Udaya Shankara
Secretary

Copy to:

1) Sri D.V. Sadananda Gowda, Chief Minister, Karnataka.

2) H.N. Anantha Kumar, MP & National Gen Secretary BJP.