



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION ENCOMPASSES MEDIA FREEDOM

About Media Legal Defence Programme

The Legal Service Institute, managed by CLAP, launched a specialized program for legal defence of Journalists, Media Houses and Bloggers in Court Proceedings when they are subjected to litigation to uphold the Constitutional mandate of Freedom of Speech and Expression, which encompasses media freedom.

The program was started in 2015 as In Defence of Media Freedom Programme which aims at free legal service to journalists, media houses and bloggers to uphold Freedom of Speech and Expression.

Legal Service Institute reaffirms its commitment to Freedom of Speech and Expression as a Human Right and it is also recognized as a Fundamental Right under Chapter III of the Constitution of India. Even the Preamble of the Constitution of India which is the key backbone of Indian democracy alludes the Liberty of Thought and Expression. Article 19(1) (a) of the Constitution of India says that "All citizens have the Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression".

Freedom of Speech and Expression means the right to express one's own convictions and opinions freely by words of mouth, writing, printing, pictures or any other mode. Freedom of speech and expression is a sacred icon in the Constitution.

Objectives of the Program

In the above backdrop the In Defence of Media Freedom Programme has been carried out by Legal Service Institute with the following Objectives:

1. To promote and protect Freedom of Speech and Expression; especially Freedom of Media.
2. To defend Journalists, Media Houses and Bloggers in Court of Law when they face litigation for their work in Public Interest.
3. To create awareness about Freedom of Speech and Expression and to build a culture of respect for human right concerning Freedom of Speech and Expression.

In order to accomplish the above stated objectives, the Legal Service Institute renders litigation support free of cost.

What kind of Legal Support

When Media Houses, Journalists and Bloggers are subjected to litigation or any other legal proceeding or action, the LSI renders legal services of various natures to defend their freedom of speech and expression. The nature of legal services including the following:

- Free Legal Advice in the matter of litigation.
- Litigation Support in Court Proceedings.
- Mediation for amicable resolution of dispute.

As far as possible high quality legal services are arranged pro bono for the Journalists, Media Houses and Bloggers to defend their case in the Court of Law. Senior Lawyers and experienced Advocates with specialization in the field of Civil and Criminal Defamation; Sedition; Contempt of Court; Violation of Parliamentary Privilege; Protection of Sources; Harassment and Torturing of Journalists by Public Officials etc are engaged to conduct the cases in various courts all over India as per requirement. The services include litigation support starting from Courts of origin of cases to appellate courts. The Journalists, Media Houses and Bloggers as the case may also engage a lawyer of their choice. In that case the expenses of the lawyer are covered by Legal Service Institute as per prescribed norm.



Types of Cases

Litigation support through pro bono legal service is rendered broadly in the following nature of cases:


- Civil and Criminal Defamation.
- Sedition.
- Contempt of Court.
- Violation of Parliamentary Privilege.
- Protection of Sources.
- Harassment and Torturing of Journalists by Public Officials.
- Any other Civil and Criminal Cases.

Cases that cannot be considered:

Media Legal Defence Programme of Legal Service Institute would not be able to provide any kind of legal service in the following matters:

- Hate Speech (for inciting hatred and violence).
- Outraging Religious Feelings.
- Personal Cases not coming under the ambit of Media Independence and Freedom.
- News, Articles and Features against the dignity and modesty of women, children, persons with disability, LGBTIQ (Lesbian,





Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer),
Indigenous People and Social Caste
(Caste Group).

How to avail Media Legal Defence

For the purpose of coordination and delivery of legal services, there is a specialised unit operates within Legal Service Institute. Any Journalist, Media House and Bloggers can approach the specialised Unit for support in the matter of litigation against them in the following address:

Litigation Coordinator,
Media Legal Defence Programme
Legal Service Institute,
CLAP

Phone: 0671-2363980, 2365680

Fax: 0671-2363454

Email: mediasupport@clapindia.org

Grant of Support

On receipt of request for litigation support a high level Advisory Committee of Legal Service Institute comprising of Judges, Senior

Lawyers, Senior Journalists and Frontline Human Right Activists takes final decision about the possibility of support to the case. If in the opinion of Advisory Committee it is a fit case for legal defence, Legal Service Institute extends it support pro bono.

About CLAP Legal Service Institute

The Legal Service Institute is managed by CLAP. CLAP is the acronym of Committee for Legal Aid to Poor. It is a registered society established under Societies Registration Act, 1860. The CLAP came into existence in 1982 to strengthen Access to Justice through the provision of legal services of various natures. Broadly, the Legal Service Institute advances Fundamental Human Rights in India through several measures of legal intervention strategies.

Freedom of Expression especially Media Freedom is one of the thematic focus of the organisation for realisation of human right.

The Legal Service Institute of CLAP can be reached in the following address:

Legal Service Institute

CLAP

Bimaladevi Memorial Building,
Plot No. 367, Sector-6,
Markat Nagar,
Cuttack – 753014,
Odisha, India

Phone: 0671-2363980, 2365680,

Fax: 0671-2363454

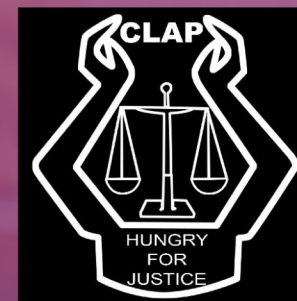
Email: info@clapindia.org,

Website: www.clapindia.org



IN DEFENCE OF MEDIA FREEDOM

*“Without 'freedom of thought',
there can be no such thing as
'wisdom'. And without 'freedom of
speech and expression' there is no
meaning of public 'liberty'.”*



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