

## Monthly Newsletter By Team Ayana Legal

### 3rd May is Press Freedom Day - a reminder to uphold the freedom of expression

#### It is a Fact, in fact

- As per the 2021 Press Freedom Index Norway, Finland and Sweden occupy the first three position i.e. the countries with most free press.

Turkmenistan and North Korea occupying positions 178 and 179 respectively. The Country with the most restricted press is Eritrea, the last position at 180.

India currently occupies position 142.

- Socrates was persecuted for presenting an argument promoting free speech.
- The protection of free speech is seen for the first time in the Magna Carta.



## The Press and Ethics

The press is often remarked as the 4th pillar of Democracy, its importance constantly highlighted by the emphasis placed on the requirement for having an independent press.

The freedom of press is an essential human right as enumerated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948 under Article 19 - *“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, the right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek and receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”* The Constitution of India too recognizes freedom of speech and expression as a Fundamental Right under Article 19.

The recognition of the need to maintain a free press led to the passing of the Press Council of India Act, 1965 for the establishment of the Press Council a watchdog institution to protect freedom of expression and that of the press.

## A Penny for Your Thoughts?

*"Our liberty depends on the the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost."*

- Thomas Jefferson

*"Freedom of conscience, of education, of speech, of assemble are among the very fundamentals of democracy and all of them would be nullified should freedom of the press ever be successfully challenged."*

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

*"A nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people."*

- John F. Kennedy

## Thank You

We hope each of our readers is keeping safe in these unprecedented times. Stay home and stay safe, your health and safety is a priority.

## Press Ethics

The Press Council of India in its Norms of Journalistic Conduct highlight certain principles and ethics that are to be followed by journalists in the conduct of their professions:

A. Accuracy and fairness - to not report inaccurate and baseless materials, all material to be backed by irrefutable facts.

B. Pre-Publication Verification - checking factual accuracy

C. Caution against defamatory writings - require due care, verification and sufficient evidence. Such statements must be for the public good.

D. Government and governmental institutions cannot bring charge of defamation for reports critical of their acts in discharge of their official duties unless established it is false.

E. Headings must not be sensational or provocative

F. The Press shall not interfere in individual privacy unless pertinent to public interest.

G. Special caution to be taken in reports that are likely to stigmatize women.

H. The Press shall not record any conversation without prior consent of the individual or unless necessary for the journalist to defend himself in a legal action.

I. Newspapers should not print conjecture or speculation as a statement of fact.

J. Newspapers should not promote suggestive guilt by association such as naming relatives of convicted individuals.

K. To faithfully report proceedings of Parliament.

L. When there is any factual error that is printed the newspaper must suo-motu publish a correction statement.

M. To eschew the publication of obscene, vulgar and material that glorify social evils and violence

N. Plagiarism is considered an offense against the ethics of journalism.