

ANNEXURE IV : LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT

To safeguard freedom of the press and to escape this form of pressure, the AMWJU resolved

- No claim made by unidentified sources/person(s) over the telephone would be entertained. In the event of identification, the editors would decide.
- No press conference called by any individual or organisation without official invitation would be accepted.
- All press releases by any organisation (s) have to be duly signed with the organisation's seal on the letterhead.
- All press releases by any organisation (s) must be issued before 8 pm for morning dailies, 3 pm for eveningers, and 4 pm for cable news channels.
- In the event of conflict/controversies between two or more parties, the views of all parties concerned would be given equal coverage.
- If the arguments and counter-arguments become harmful to the state and could claim human lives, the AMWJU reserved the right to censor the news.
- In the event of an organisation or individual wanting to withdraw a press release before it is printed, the same organisation or individual who signed the press release must approach the editor concerned.
- If any individual/organisation has a grievance (except petty or small matters that may be resolved by the editor) against any newspaper, the concerned individual/organisation should first approach the AMWJU to address the problem.
- All newspaper mediapersons will follow the norms of journalistic conduct as laid down by the Press Council of India (PCI).
- Editors are advised to refrain from sensationalising any news report or indulging in sensationalism.

- Editors will bear the responsibility for mistakes or omissions appearing in their newspaper.
- All editors have the right to censor/delete partly or as a whole any news report or press release or interview or press conference which could create communal tension or lead to group clashes.
- In case of violation of the code of conduct laid down by the AMWJU by any reporter/newspaper, the AMWJU will initiate punitive action against the reporter/newspaper.
- It is the prerogative of an editor to publish or not to publish a news report or press release.
- A newspaper report should not be contradicted by another newspaper in the form of a rejoinder, advertisement or news report. If the need does arise, the version of the newspaper concerned should be taken by the other newspaper before any such publication.
- Press releases of any organisation should be made available to all offices of the press/newspaper/media organisation by the organisation on its own. No press/newspaper/media organisation should be given the responsibility of distributing a press release/s.
- Editors will not entertain any diktat from any quarter to publish or not to publish a news report or press release.

ANNEXURE V :

On August 2, 2007, while mediapersons were sitting in dhama protesting the "bomb gift" to The Sangai Express' editors, the state government passed the following order, which only served to further push the media in Manipur into a corner rather than help them. The order read:

"In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 95 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the Governor of Manipur is pleased to order that any printed material, ie either newspapers or books and any document whether printed or in electronic form, shall be referred to the state government if they contain any material on the following:

- All items directly attributed to unlawful organisations, organised gangs, organisations, terrorists and terrorist-related organisations considered to be subversive and a threat to the integrity of the state and the country.
- Obituary notices for "shradha", "asti sanchai", cremation and burial ceremonies showing that the dead person is a martyr in the struggle for an independent and sovereign state and which may contain the names of known terrorists and terrorist-related organisations or unlawful organisations or organised gangs as the sponsors of the advertisement.
- Publication of threats of any sort by terrorist organisations or unlawful organisations or organised gangs or by a person or group of persons to any person or class of persons.
- Publication of any code of behaviour, dress code or social practice decreed by terrorists or terrorist-related organisations or unlawful organisations or organised gangs.
- Publication of any justification for killings, causing injury, assault, kidnapping, imposition of fines or warnings made by terrorist-related organisations or unlawful organisations or organised gangs or organisations.
- Publication of notices for payment to terrorist-related organisations or unlawful organisations or organised gangs in cash or kind.

- Publication of items in the form of an invitation to unlawful organisations, organised gangs and terrorist-related organisations to settle or solve disputes."

When the media community protested and urged the withdrawal of the order, the state Cabinet met on August 10, 2007, and, instead of a withdrawal, amended the first point with a clause: "Publication of seditious, subversive literature affecting the integrity of the nation."