

INDIAN JOURNALISTS UNION (IJU)

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IJU Concern Over Raids On NewsClick Journos

New Delhi, 3 October 2023: The Indian Journalists Union expresses grave concern over the police raids at homes of several journalists and writers associated with news and current affairs website *NewsClick* early hours this morning in Delhi, following investigation related to alleged 'terror links' and under the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The IJU additionally is worried that the seizure of laptops and mobile phones of journalists without due process puts their sources of information, which at all costs must be protected at great risk.

The raids undertaken by the Delhi police at 30 premises include those at homes of journalists *NewsClick* editor Prabir Purkayastha, veteran journalist Urmilesh and Paranjay Guha Thakurta, journalist Bhasha Singh, Satyam Tiwari, Aditi Nigam and Sumedha Pal, and writers and contributors Githa Hariharan, Anuradha Raman. The raids are in connection with a case registered against NewsClick on 17 August 2023 and invoking sections of the draconian UAPA, along with sections of IPC-- 153(a) (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony) and 120 (b) (party to a criminal conspiracy other than a criminal conspiracy to commit an offence).

The case was filed days after a *New York Times* investigation alleged that the news portal had received funding from a network pushing Chinese propaganda. The website has been under investigation by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for an alleged fraudulent infusion of foreign funds to the tune of Rs 38.05 crore for three years.

In a statement, IJU President and former member of Press Council of India Geetartha Pathak and Secretary General, Vice President of International Federation of Journalists and President FAPAJ Sabina Inderjit said that the raids seek to intimidate the journalists and media outlets, which are critical of the government and that usage of laws such as UAPA is an attack on freedom of the Press. The IJU said that while due process must apply in any case, the government should not be going on a witch hunt and misusing the laws and enforcement agencies to silence the media. It urged its members and the fraternity to do all to defend press freedom, gravely under threat.

For Publication

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