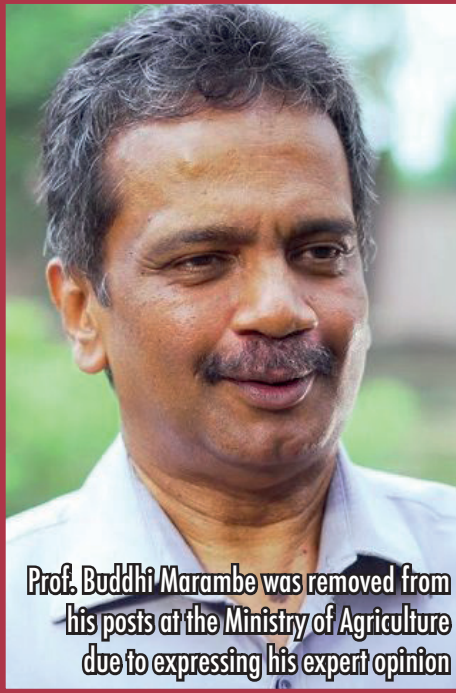


2021

October-November

Issue No. 10 & 11



Prof. Buddhi Marambe was removed from his posts at the Ministry of Agriculture due to expressing his expert opinion



Mahinda Illeperuma, Editor-in-chief of Aruna newspaper, was summoned before the CID



Army soldiers attacked LankaSri journalist of Mullaithivu, Vishwalingam Vishwachandran

This monthly report includes briefs on incidents related to press freedom, follow-up of previous incidents and relevant observations. We have also focused on policy changes relevant to press freedom, and other incidents related to the freedom of expression of journalists and the public. FMM observed 20 violations of the citizens' right to freedom of expression that occurred in October and November 2021 that come under the monitoring scope of FMM. The majority of them were related to the direct and indirect steps taken by the government against the freedom of expression. FMM observed harsh action extended beyond the journalists, affecting public officials and the experts expressing their opinions. Although criminal defamation law has been abolished, persons were summoned to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) based on the complaints lodged by the Ministers and powerful officials, as a trend in the past three months. Some newspaper editors were summoned to the CID in September also. We see the production of poet Ahnaf Jasim before the court is favourable, after continuous detention of him for 18 months without framing charges. However, the police continued to violate his fundamental rights. FMM issued a statement regarding a group of persons who were among protesters attacking the journalists covering the protest.

Incidents reported in October - November

1. A statement by a newspaper editor that was made during a seminar held to celebrate 40 years since the launch of the code of conduct for media created a controversy in the media society.
2. Minister of Media stated that a media code of conduct suitable for the current modern society should be developed through a collective effort.
3. Cabinet approved a proposal by Minister of Media Dullas Alahapperuma to establish a Sri Lanka Institute of Chartered Journalists.

4. Samagi Jana Balavegaya (SJB) MP Champika Ranawaka stated in the parliament that the CID had tapped his Whatsapp calls.
5. Prof. Buddhi Marambe was removed from his posts at the Ministry of Agriculture due to expressing his expert opinion on the 'eco-friendly agriculture policy' of the government.
6. Mahinda Illeperuma, Editor-in-chief of Aruna newspaper, was summoned before the CID to be questioned about the lead news of the newspaper on 23rd October.
7. Permanent People's Tribunal on Killings of Journalists started a trial on the assassinations of three journalists, including Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickramatunga, at The Hague, Netherlands.
8. A fundamental rights petition was filed on behalf of Keerthi Rathnayaka, journalist of Lanka-e-news website, who has been detained for more than three months.
9. Welikada police arrested journalist Siyath Mendis of the New Citizens web media network based on a complaint lodged by the authorities of Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte Municipal Council.
10. In China, a fertiliser manufacturer sent a letter to Sirasa media network warning of legal actions against the defamation caused by news related to a controversial consignment.
11. The Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a letter to all public officials warning of disciplinary action for criticising the government through social media.
12. Writer Ahnaf Jasim, detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for 18 months for publishing a collection of poetry, was produced in court.
13. The committee appointed to review the 1978 No 48 Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act handed over its report to the President.
14. After being detained for 105 days, bail was granted to the five protesters arrested during the protest against the Kotalawela National Defence Academy Act held at Parliament Roundabout.
15. Social activist Chirantha Ranmal Amarasinghe filed a fundamental rights petition in the Supreme Court against arresting him unfairly for expressing opinions through social media.
16. Magistrate of Vavuniya ordered a ban against eight persons preventing organising commemorations of dead and disappeared persons due to the war in the north. The order was later amended.
17. Supreme Court dismissed the fundamental rights petition filed by the secretary of Ceylon Teachers' Union Joseph Stalin against forcibly quarantining him.
18. Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini, the spokesperson for Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the Bishop of Colombo of the Catholic Church, was summoned by the CID regarding a complaint lodged by the head of state intelligence.
19. A group of persons among the protestors attacked journalists reporting a protest held on November 23 against the death of six persons by a boat bridge accident in Kinniya.
20. Army soldiers attacked LankaSri journalist of Mullaithivu, Vishwalingam Vishwachandran, when he was engaged in a reporting duty in Mullivaikkal.

Table No. 01
Total number of incidents reported in October - November 2021

No.	Covered criteria	Number of incidents reported
01	Safety and security	08
02	Legal conditions	09
03	Professionalism	03
	Total	20

Safety and security of journalists

An environment free from physical and mental hazards is essential for press freedom. Also, people must enjoy the freedom of expression through media or any other means without repercussions. Freedom of peacefully meeting, protesting and agitating also included in the freedom of expression. Eight incidents of violation of these freedoms were reported in October-November. Although criminal defamation has been removed from the legal system, such a tendency was observed since September by journalists and editors summoned to the CID based on complaints from politicians and officials. The behaviours were similar to the acts when criminal defamation had been legal. Continuing the tendency, the CID summoned the editor-in-chief and the journalists of Aruna newspaper based on a complaint by the President's Secretary in October. In November, Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini, the spokesperson for Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the Catholic Bishop of Colombo, was summoned by the CID to respond to a complaint lodged by the head of state intelligence. Prof. Buddhi Marambe was removed from his posts at the Ministry of Agriculture due to expressing his expert opinion. The government issued a circular that affected the entire freedom of expression of public officials. These developments can be observed as attempts to suppress press freedom.

Table No. 02
Safety and security of journalists - 08 incidents in October-November 2021

No.	Criterion	Number of reported incidents
01	Attacks	02
02	Psychological influence	06
	Total	08

1. Samagi Jana Balavegaya (SJB) MP Champika Ranawaka stated in the parliament that the CID had tapped his Whatsapp calls.

Making a special statement in the parliament on October 21st, MP Champika Ranawaka said that the CID had tapped his telephone conversations in 2018, violating his parliamentary privileges, and requested the Speaker to summon the relevant officials before the Parliamentary Privileges Committee.

The MP said that the CID officials disclosed the fact while recording a statement from him. MP Ranawaka said that the Director of the CID Prasad Ranasinghe had given the records of the conversations to the relevant officials. He urged to investigate the technology used to tap the Whatsapp calls because special technology was needed for that. He asked what the technology was and how it was acquired. MP Ranawaka also questioned whether the CID had acquired the controversial Pegasus spyware.

Pegasus is spyware developed by Israel-based cybersecurity company NSO Group which can be remotely installed in IOS and Android mobile and other equipment stealthily.

As of 2016, Pegasus could read text messages, track calls, collect passwords, track location, access the target device's microphone and camera, and harvest information from apps (Source: [Wikipedia](#)).

AccessNow organisation handed over a petition signed by civil organisations and various professionals regarding this spyware to the UN Human Rights Council at its 46th session. The petitioners demanded an independent investigation on the surveillance technology, trade, exportation, transfer and use violating human rights. They urged broad action to suspend the illegal spying.

Main Sources: 1. <https://anidda.lk>

2. [Hansard on 21.10.2021](#)

2. Prof. Buddhi Marambe was removed from his posts at the Ministry of Agriculture due to expressing his expert opinion on the 'eco-friendly agriculture policy' of the government.

Prof. Buddhi Marambe was a member of the national committee on state agricultural policy, a member of the operational committee of the project on modernisation of agriculture, and adviser to the programme on participation in small scale agriculture.

The Ministry of Agriculture announced on October 26th that Prof. Marambe had been removed from these posts.

The Ministry accused the professor of criticising the government policy on 'eco-friendly agriculture', mobilising academics, professionals, civil society and the public against it.

Senior Prof. Buddhi Marambe is a leading researcher and professional on organic agriculture. Speaking to the Lankasara website, he responded to the government communique stating that he had only analysed a matter academically. He further said that he had not criticised anything baselessly.

Sources: 1. <https://www.newsfirst.lk>

2. <https://lankasara.com>

3. Mahinda Illeperuma, Editor-in-chief of Aruna newspaper, was summoned before the CID to be questioned about the lead story of the newspaper on 23rd October.

On November 24th, the Weekend Aruna newspaper published lead news as 'Rs. 290 million transferred to a private account to pay for Indian fertiliser due to President's Secretary P.B. Jayasundara's influence.' The President's Secretary complained against the editor of the newspaper Mahinda Illeperuma and he was summoned to the CID on the same day to be questioned about the news story. President's media announced that the story was false and malicious, and the President's Secretary had informed the Inspector General of Police to summon all parties and conduct a broad investigation immediately. The source for the news story was a statement made by People's Liberation Front (JVP) MP Vijitha Herath in the parliament. Many reports were published based on the same source, but only the editor of Aruna newspaper was questioned. On November 9th, speaking in the parliament, MP Vijitha Herath challenged the CID to reveal the report of the investigation.

Sources: 1. <http://sinhala.adaderana.lk>

2. <https://www.newsfirst.lk/sinhala>

4. A fertiliser manufacturer in China sent a letter to Sirasa media network warning of legal actions against the defamation caused by news related to a controversial consignment.

China's Qingdao Seawin Biotech Group Co. Ltd., the owner of the consignment of fertiliser which was rejected by National Plant Quarantine Service due to containing harmful bacteria, sent a letter to Sirasa

media network on November 7, pointing out that they had the legal right to sue the parties that issue false scientific reports as well as the media that give publicity to such reports.

The exporter mentioned in the letter that the false reports saying that a Chinese company had exported organic fertiliser that contained harmful bacteria would mislead people and consumers. It further noted that the reporting had affected fair trade.¹

The letter can be identified as a response to the role of media that reported the direct actions of the state officials and created debate on the matter. The development impeded the parties that had connivance with the deal. On the 7th of November, Qingdao Seawin Biotech Group Co. Ltd sent a Letter of Demand to the National Plant Quarantine Service claiming it had suffered a loss and damage in a sum of US\$ 8 Million due to the negligent conduct of the National Plant Quarantine Service. The letter of demand was seeking payment of US\$ 8 Million within three days from the date.

Sources: 1. <https://www.youtube.com>

2. <https://divaina.lk>

5. The Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs issued a letter to the public officials warning of disciplinary action against those criticising the government through social media.

Additional Secretary Dhammika Muthugala, on behalf of the Secretary of Home Affairs State Ministry, issued a letter warning public servants against criticising the government and its policies on social media.

The letter dated November 5th, stated that the Ministry would take disciplinary action under the Establishment Code against those who bring the Public Service into disrepute by posting social media comments critical of the government and its policies. The letter instructed the District Secretaries to make public servants aware of the matter.

The prominent trade union leaders of the education and health sectors protested against this letter. Human Rights defenders thoroughly criticised a similar letter addressed to the health staff, previously issued by the secretary of the Ministry of Health. They highlighted that the constitution's provisions would override the regulations under the Establishment Code.

Sources: 1. <https://www.lankaviews.com>

2. <https://theleader.lk>

6. Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini, the spokesperson for Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the Bishop of Colombo of the Catholic Church, was summoned by the CID to be questioned about a complaint lodged by the head of state intelligence.

Major General Suresh Salley, Head of State Intelligence, complained to the CID that Rev. Fr. Cyril Gamini, the spokesperson for Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, the Bishop of Colombo of the Catholic Church, had made a statement that insulted him. The priest said that the leading terrorist of the Easter Sunday attack, Saharan, had been on the payroll of state intelligence. Fr. Cyril Gamini was questioned for three days by the CID. He was questioned over eight hours on the first two occasions.

Fr. Cyril Gamini petitioned the Supreme Court demanding not to arrest him, and the Attorney General on behalf of the CID promised before the court not to arrest the priest.

On November 22nd, the third occasion of questioning, Catholic priests protested before CID headquarters, silently showing placards.

Source: <https://www.lankaviews.com>

7. A group of persons among the protestors attacked the journalists who were reporting a protest held on November 23rd against the death of six persons by a boat bridge accident in Kinniya.

The attack occurred near the Buhari junction in Kinniya in the Trincomalee district. The group attacked Abdul Salam Mohammed Yasim, a journalist of Thinakaran newspaper of Lakehouse and robbed his smartphone with reporting data. The victim complained under CIB (1) 10/291 in the Kinniya police station.

At the same time, Shakthi News First reporter H.M. Halaldeen and Thinakaran journalist A.L.M.

Rafaideen were attacked, blocked from reporting and chased away.

FMM issued a statement detailing this incident and urged the government to investigate and bring the culprits to book.

Source: [The statement](#)

8. Army soldiers attacked LankaSri journalist of Mullaithivu, Vishwalingam Vishwachandran, when he was engaged in a reporting duty in Mullivaikkal.

The journalist was videoing the Mullivaikkal name board on the roadside in Mullaithivu district on November 27th. The Army soldiers protested, attacked him and robbed two mobile phones. Police admitted the bleeding journalist into the Mullaithivu hospital. Police arrested three soldiers who assaulted the journalist the next day, but they were freed without being produced in court. Police returned the two mobile phones to the journalist on November 30th, after the injured journalist returned home from the hospital. He said that one of the phones had been severely damaged.

Reports said that journalist Vishwalingam Vishwachandran had been assaulted with a palmyra frond wrapped with barbed wire. On November 30th, Army said issuing a statement that the entire incident had been staged to insult the Army. Vishwalingam Vishwachandran said that he had not been assaulted with a palmyra frond wrapped with barbed wire, but he was attacked by hand and with a club. Further, he was pushed against a barbed-wire fence, and his phones were snatched by force.

Sources:

1. webnewslk.com
2. <https://www.army.lk>
3. <https://www.tamilguardian.com>

Legal conditions

Nine incidents relevant to the legal criterion of press freedom were reported in October and November. Six of them were developments of old incidents. Permanent People's Tribunal on Killings of Journalists started a trial on the assassination of Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickramatunga strengthening the struggle against impunity. Production of poet Ahnaf Jasim before the court is a positive development, after continuous detention of him for 18 months without framing charges. However, the police continued to violate his fundamental rights. Two fundamental rights petitions were filed concerning the violation of the freedom of expression. Although it was symbolically important, one of the crucial petitions was not granted leave to proceed.

Table No. 03
Legal conditions - 09 incidents in October - November 2021

No.	Criterion	Number of incidents reported
01	Legal action	08
02	Proposals for legal reforms	01
03	Immunity related to the crimes against journalists	01
	Total	09

1. Permanent People’s Tribunal on Killings of Journalists started a trial on the assassinations of three journalists, including Sri Lankan journalist Lasantha Wickramatunga at Hague, Netherlands.

The People’s Tribunal on the Murder of Journalists on 2nd November 2021 started hearing the case on the murder of Sunday Leader editor Lasantha Wickramatunga at The Hague. The assassination took place 12 years ago in Sri Lanka.

The People’s Tribunal on the Murder of Journalists, a grassroots level mechanism for justice, will indict the governments of Sri Lanka, Mexico and Syria for failing to deliver justice for the murders of Lasantha Wickrematunge, Miguel Ángel López Velasco, and Nabil Al-Sharbaji.

The hearing was requested by prominent free media associations, Free Press Limited (FPU), Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) and Center for Protecting Journalists (CPJ).

The dates for the hearing of the three assassination cases have been fixed, and the Lasantha Wickramatunga case will be first taken up on January 12th and 13th, 2022.

Source: <https://ptmurderofjournalists.org>

2. Writer Ahnaf Jasim, detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) for 18 months for publishing a poetry collection, was produced in court.

Poet Ahnaf Jasim, detained for 18 months for writing and publishing a poetry collection, was indicted in Puttalam High Court on November 15.

Ahnaf Jasim’s counsel Sanjaya Wilson Jayasekara stated that his client had been detained without a legal detention order for over 18 months by the CID, and

the way the Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Division had framed charges against him was suspicious.

He pointed out that the Attorney General’s Department had failed to fulfil the duty of informing the lawyer representing the suspect about the indictment. The counsel highlighted that the act violated natural justice and fundamental rights. A fundamental rights petition against the arrest of Ahnaf Jasim is to be taken up by the Supreme Court in future.

Source: <http://www.jdslanka.org>

3. The committee appointed to review the 1978 No 48 Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act handed the Report to the President.

The President appointed a cabinet subcommittee to review the 1978 No 48 Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act, and a committee of officials was appointed on 24th June 2021 to submit recommendations to the cabinet subcommittee. The committee chaired by Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, Kamal Gunarathna, handed over the report to the President on November 15th. However, the content of the report is yet to be disclosed.

The European Union pointed out that in February 2019 during the discussions with the government of Sri Lanka it had stated that the PTA should be replaced by new anti-terrorism laws that are in line with international standards. Human Rights Watch also pointed out that the Sri Lanka government should repeal the PTA and introduce laws that respect international human rights obligations.

Source: <https://www.lankadeepa.lk>

4. Bail was granted after 105 days’ detention to the five protesters arrested during the protest against the

Kotalawela National Defence Academy Act held at the Parliament Roundabout.

Koshila Hansamali of Sisujana Movement, Chameera Koswatta, the administrative secretary of Frontline Socialist Party, Amila Sandeepa, the chairman of the student association of Sri Jayawardenapura University, Wasantha Mudalige, the convenor of Inter-university Students' Federation and Heshan Harshana of Rajarata University were arrested for participating in a protest against the Kotalawela Defence University. After 105 days in detention, Kaduwela magistrate court, under the orders of Homagaa High Court, granted bail for the five suspects on November 15th.

Police framed charges against them under the Public Property Act for causing damage worth Rs. 179,000 to public property by burning a cardboard replica of a coffin on the road. They were not granted bail by the magistrate court and had to risk their lives as they were infected with COVID-19 in prison.

Source: <https://www.lankaviews.com>

5. Social activist Chirantha Ranmal Amarasinghe filed a fundamental rights petition in the Supreme Court against arresting him unfairly for expressing opinions through social media.

Software developer Chirantha Ranmal Amarasinghe appealed to the Supreme Court to declare that his fundamental rights had been violated and to return the arrested computers. He further demanded damage of Rs. 10 million. Seven persons, including the Inspector General of Police C.D. Wickramarathna, are respondents to the case.

A group of CID officials entered Chirantha's house on 17th November 2020 and questioned him regarding a post he had published about the cremation of dead bodies of COVID-19 victims. His computer equipment was arrested, and he was asked to report to the CID next day. When he visited the CID, he was arrested and produced before a magistrate who granted him bail.

Source: <https://www.lankaviews.com>

6. A fundamental rights petition was filed on behalf of Keerthi Rathnayaka, journalist of Lanka-e-news website, who has been detained for more than three months.

A fundamental rights petition was filed in the Supreme Court on behalf of Lanka-e-news journalist Keerthi Rathnayaka who has been held by the CID under the PTA for more than three months.

Rathnayaka appealed to the Supreme Court to declare that his fundamental rights had been violated, and Rs. 100 million damage should be granted to him.

SCFR 363/2021 petition was filed in the Supreme Court on 10th November and 20 persons, including the Minister of Public Security Sarath Weerasekara, Secretary to the Ministry Jagath P. Wijeweera, Secretary of the Ministry of Defence Kamal Gunarathna, Inspector General of Police, Senior Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Deshabandu Thennakoon, DIG in charge of CID W. Thilakarathna, Director of CID Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rohan Premarathna, another director of CID SSP Randeniya, Director of Colombo Crime Division SSP Nandana Kumara are the respondents.

7. Welikada police arrested journalist Siyath Mendis of the New Citizens web media network based on a complaint lodged by the authorities of Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte Municipal Council.

Journalist Siyath Mendis of the New Citizens web media network was arrested on November 10th based on a complaint lodged by the authorities of Sri Jayawardenapura Kotte Municipal Council against trespassing. The journalist entered Nawala cemetery to report construction in Nawala cemetery removing memorials. The journalist was produced before the Colombo Fort Magistrate and released on bail.

The report was published on the Voice of Colombo YouTube channel on October 28th. It contained images of the constructions and the opinions of the public and people's representatives. Counsel Rajitha Kodithuwakku appearing for the journalist stated that the arrest of a journalist over reporting for the public good was a violation of his fundamental rights as a journalist.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com>

8. The Magistrate of Vavuniya ordered a ban against eight persons preventing organising commemorations of dead and disappeared persons due to the war in the north. The order was later amended.

Vavuniya police requested Vavuniya magistrate to ban the programmes to commemorate killed members of the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE) under 1979 No. 15 Criminal Procedure Code because they are against national unity. Vavuniya magistrate court issued the injunctions against Tamil National Alliance (TNA) former MP Sivashakthi Anandan and S. Sivamohan, former Provincial Councillor P. Sathyalingam, K. Jayawanitha the

chairman of Association for the Disappeared Persons During War, Gopalakrishnan Rajkumar, the secretary of the association, members of the association Gajan Gajendran, Selvanayagam Aravinthan and Subramaniam Thawabalasingham.

On November 25th, the magistrate considered the appeals by the counsels of the activists and revoked the ban saying commemorating dead persons was a right of the citizens. The magistrate ordered not to display any symbol of a banned organisation.

On November 26th, seven police stations in Mullaithivu district appealed against the revoke of the ban, but the magistrate T. Sarawanabavan rejected them.

Source: 1. <https://www.lankaviews.com>
2. <https://www.tamilguardian.com>

9. The Supreme Court dismissed the fundamental rights petition filed by the secretary of Ceylon Teachers'

Union Joseph Stalin against forcibly quarantining him.

On November 22nd, Supreme Court dismissed the fundamental rights petition filed by the secretary of Ceylon Teachers' Union Joseph Stalin against forcibly quarantining him.

The petitioner stated that he was detained against his will, violating his fundamental rights after being released by Colombo Fort Magistrate Court. Stalin was arrested while engaged in a peaceful protest and appealed to declare that his fundamental rights had been violated by sending him for quarantine by force. However, the Supreme Court bench of judges comprising Justices Priyantha Jayawardana, Shiran Gunarathna and Arjuna Obesekara did not grant leave for the petition to proceed.

Source: <https://www.lankaviews.com>

Professionalism

Professionalism is another criterion considered concerning press freedom. Six potential criteria, i.e., formal education of the journalists, service conditions, use of international guidelines by editors and journalists, self-censorship, professional sovereignty through trade unions and associations and the journalist's understanding about his/her task. A controversial statement by a senior editor denoted a negative representation of this criterion. The statement is contrary to the positive dialogue and the developments related to the media reforms. Meanwhile, the Institute of Chartered Journalists' proposal can be considered a positive development. The Minister of Media further expressed opinions regarding jointly developing a media code of conduct.

Table No. 04
Professionalism - 02 incidents in October - November 2021

No.	Criterion	Number of reported incidents
01	Use of international guidelines by the editorial and the journalists, self-censorship, professional sovereignty through trade unions and associations and the journalist's understanding about his/her duty	02
02	Formal education of the journalists	01
	Total	03

1. A statement by a newspaper editor was made during a seminar held to celebrate 40 years since the launch of the Code of Conduct for Media that created a controversy in the media society.

A seminar held on October 14th to celebrate 40 years since the launch of the Code of Conduct for Media, created a controversy in the media society. Addressing the seminar, editor-in-chief of Sunday Lankadeepa newspaper, Ariyananda Dombagahawatta, stated that he could not see the Sri Lanka Press Council powers to jail a journalist for two years was wrong, although many persons criticise it.

He further said that although he was a member of the Editors’ Guild, of which the stand was abolishing the Press Council law, he would see the correct thing as correct and wrong thing as wrong. Dombagahawatta said that the need for abolishing the Press Council was of few politically motivated persons. Meanwhile, Dombagahawatta refrained from mentioning anything about the Press Complaints Commission, a self-regulatory body created as an alternative for the Press Council. Editors’ Guild represents Press Complaints Commission.

Source: 1. <https://www.youtube.com>
2. <https://anidda.lk>

2. Cabinet approved a proposal by Minister of Media Dallas Alahapperuma to establish a Sri Lanka Institute of Chartered Journalists.

Cabinet approved the proposal by Minister of Media Dallas Alahapperuma to establish a Sri Lanka Institute of Chartered Journalists, a higher education,

research and training academy, to offer training and certification from the certificate level to degrees and post-graduate diplomas.

Minister of Mass Media and Cabinet spokesperson Dallas Alahapperuma stated that the purpose of the institute is to provide practical training to journalists, media managers who are already working in the field of journalism, as well as school children who aspire to enter the field of journalism, and to develop their capabilities, enhance their professionalism, and create a media culture with ethical autonomy.

Source: enbsl.lk

3. Minister of media stated that a media code of conduct suitable for the current modern society should be developed through a collective effort.

Addressing a seminar held on October 14th to celebrate 40 years since the launch of the code of conduct for media, Minister of Mass Media Dullas Alahapperuma said that an advanced media code of conduct suitable for the current modern society should be developed through a collective effort and a healthy dialogue among all stakeholders such as all media forums, media trade unions, Ministry of Mass Media, Information Department and Sri Lanka Press Council. The Minister further said that all stakeholders should act to safeguard the freedom of expression and the principles of democracy.

Source: <https://sinhala.news.lk>

Table No. 05: Incidents reported to FMM from January to November 2021

Covered criterion	January - September 2021		October - November 2021
	New incidents	Developments of the previous incidents	
Security and safety	42	-	08
Legal conditions	40	05	09
Media independence	02	-	-
Trends of press freedom	01	-	-
Structural conditions	09	-	-
Professionalism	-	-	03
Total	94	05	20

[FMM Press Freedom Reports - 2021 from January to September from here](#)

Postscript:

FMM recognises press freedom as a human right based on national and international conventions and judgments. Freedoms of thought, conscience, religion and knowing others' opinion are human rights. On that basis, FMM identifies press freedom as a collection of the following ten components. 1) Freedom of thought 2) Freedom of having opinions 3) Freedom of expression 4) Freedom for meeting peacefully 5) Freedom for information 6) Freedom of audiovisual recording and storing records 7) Freedom of publication 8) press freedom 9) freedom of the electronic media 10) Freedom of the internet.

These freedoms are inter-connected, and blocking one freedom disturbs enjoying all the other freedoms. FMM also emphasises that misuse of these freedoms in an irresponsible and hateful manner is a wrong practice.

These monthly reports are prepared by FMM based on the study and analysis of information available for the organisation. For this analysis, FMM uses criteria selected through seven internationally recognised elements that cover the ten components mentioned above.

Media Freedom Rights Monitoring Desk Supported by Program on Independent Journalism



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