

## Media Weekly Review/Week 2<sup>nd</sup> of November

During past week, we had various reports on the situation of journalists, media and freedom of speech from different provinces. The details are as below:

### East Zone

Recently, after the increased attacks by IS-K in Nangrahar, the media community is feeling worried in this province. The regional representative of the Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) had a meeting with the provincial head Information & Culture on this issue and emphasized on the safety of journalists and media workers. He also requested the Provincial Director to investigate the cases of violence against the reporters of Pajhwok News Agency and Tolo News that occurred during the month of August as well as the follow up on the case of violence committed against the reporters of Jaaj News and Tolo News during which their equipment were broken. The Director of Information & Culture, once again apologized for these incidents and promised to follow up on these cases. The issue of access to information and the assignment of provincial spokespersons to share information with the media, was also raised in this meeting and the provincial director promised that in a short time, this will happen but for now, he said that the Directorate of Information & Culture helps journalists to access information from any governmental office.

### Central Zone

**Bamyan:** Around 80% of journalists and media workers have lost their jobs in Bamyan. Luckily, Radio Nasim, state radio & television and Bamyan TV have resumed their activities.

**Daikundi:** During the last week, only state radio & television have resumed limited activity. With the fall of regime, around 30 media workers lost their jobs in Daikundi. Five media workers however, resumed their work in state radio and television network. The provincial head of Information & Culture in Daikundi has told the media to begin their programs with the recitation of holy Quran, broadcast Islamic chants between the programs and that all programs should be in accordance with the principles of the IEA.

**Panjshir:** The media situation in Pajshir is dire. Radio Khurasan has stopped its activities and Radio Kachkan is also on the verge of closing down due to financial problems. Most of the media workers who left Pajshir after the fall of this province, have not returned back there due to safety issues and economic problems.

### North

**Balkh:** Limitations on access to information is still an existential problem for journalists in Balkh province. The governmental offices still do not have any spokespersons and provincial authorities are not interested to help journalists with the issue of accessing information. From the total of 11 TV channels and 13 local radio stations of Balkh province, only one TV channel and four radio stations are active. Others are closed due to economic or other problems.

**Faryab:** Local media are still not able to produce programs without the permission from local authorities, so the media in this province are mostly broadcasting Islamic religious content such as speeches and chants. Financial constraints is the major problem with the media outlets in this province as well.

## Northeast

**Kunduz:** The major issue in Kunduz is economic constraints. Non-exemption of taxation penalties for the media outlets which threatens their operations, being one of them. In the last week, no media outlet has reopened/ managed to resume their activities.

**Takhar:** Reports indicate reduction in activities of media houses. Journalists are losing interest for work and this has caused many media outlets to have a weak and intermittent reporting and programming. Except from few media outlets who are active in a limited way ie six hours broadcast on daily basis which is conducted by one or two media personnel; majority of media workers are jobless and a number of them have left their home province.

**Badakhshan:** There are some media outlets who are still active in the province but in accordance to the policy set by IEA for them. Since the fall of Badakhshan, 5 media houses closed down and none of them has resumed activity.

## Southeast

**Logar:** During the past week, neither a media outlet has closed nor the previously closed ones resumed activity. **The AJSC provincial coordinator along with a number of media representatives and local journalists met with the provincial** director of information and culture. In this meeting, the director requested the AJSC provincial coordinator to increase capacity building and safety trainings programs for journalists in Logar and supported AJSC works. Mr. Rafi-ullah Samim, the Director of Information and Culture in Logar, promised to AJSC provincial coordinator that all cases of violence committed against the media workers in Logar will be investigated and followed-up. The local representatives of media in Logar province also emphasized on the need for capacity building and safety training programs by AJSC.

**Paktia:** AJSC provincial coordinator met with the director of information and culture in Paktia and discussed the problems faced by media workers. AJSC provincial coordinator requested the director of information and culture to cooperate with the journalists on issue of access to information. The director of information and culture said that he will coordinate with all governmental offices so that requested information by journalists are provided on a timely manner and in precise and complete order.

He also said that they will conduct training workshops to the officials in both military and civilian governmental offices on how to provide information to the journalists.

The positive point in the past week was meetings between AJSC provincial coordinators and a number of media representatives with IEA officials and their assurance for cooperation and support of the media and journalists.