The Kerala Law Academy Law College Thiruvananthapuram
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36TH KERALA LAW ACADEMY MOOT COURT COMPETITION 2027

Moot Proposition

MOOT PROPOSITION

Association for Freedom of Media v Union of Mondia

1. Mondia is a developing country in Asia having 1.47 billion people. View Point is an independent, progressive Mondian digital news and video media network founded in 2007 by Ramvir Poddan. Being an independent media organization, View Point describes its mission as being "dedicated to covering news from Mondia and beyond, with a particular focus on progressive movements. From 2023 January Mondia witnessed several agitations by different sections of the society including Farmers, Fishermen, Students and migrant labour. View point extended full support to all these agitations.

2. Mondia is divided among 28 states and 8 union territories for a total of 36 subnational entities. Its governance is described in the Constitution as a quasi-federal system that incorporates elements from both federal and unitary forms of government.

3. In April 2024, the Aurora Press, the parent company of View Point received about Rs 8.79 crore from a United States investor named Progressive Media Holdings. In return, the company issued the investor a minority block of shares. The money came through banking channels. It was reported to the Reserve Bank of Mondia.

4. In August 2026, the Mondia Police's Economic Offences Wing registered a first information report against View Point. The complaint had been forwarded by an official in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. It alleged three offences: cheating, criminal breach of trust and criminal conspiracy.

5. Within days, the Enforcement Directorate, the primary agency to investigate crimes under Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 and Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 started action.

6. The homes and offices of reporters, consultants, editors and contributors associated with the organisation View Point were raided under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA – Mondia's primary counter-terrorism law) for allegedly raising funds for terrorist acts and promoting enmity between different groups and criminal conspiracy under the Mondian Penal Code amongst others.

7. According to police 86 journalists were questioned, two arrested and their phones, laptops and devices seized for further examination. The View Point's Head office was sealed. After the series of raids on the homes and offices of several journalists associated with, Ramvir Poddan was arrested.

8. Various Associations of media freedom and human rights organizations strongly protested against the actions taken by the Government against the View Point.

9. Chair of Board at Amnesty International Mondia, said:

"Journalism is not a crime. The View Point raids and the arrest of Ramvir Poddan is the latest attempts by the Mondian government to decimate independent and critical media. Authorities must immediately release Ramvir Poddan and allow him to carry out their work without any reprisals"

10. National Editor's Forum expressed its concern in the following words:

"Raids conducted under sweeping laws such as India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), which makes obtaining bail extraordinarily difficult signal to the broader journalistic community that critical coverage carries extreme legal and personal risk". It can carry the following intentions:

a.Fear of Surveillance:When journalists witness colleagues having their personal and professional lives laid bare through device cloning, they naturally adapt through self-censorship.

b.Suppression of Public Dissemination : Fear prevents critical investigative stories regarding local accountability, state, security, and corruption from ever progressing past the initial draft phase.

c. The Threat: Confiscating the work phones, computing servers, and administrative accounts of entire groups of journalists makes daily reporting impossible.

d.The Impact : Independent digital networks,which already struggle financially, face catastrophic downtime, loss of subscription revenues, and targeted commercial isolation"

11. Apple Valley is a State in Mondia. Vision News is a news channel operated by Vision News Network owned by Vision Broadcasting Corporation (VBC), based at Maloda, capital city of Apple Valley. On 10-9-2026 a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Apple Valley police carried out raids in the early hours of the day at the premises linked to VBC in connection with its probe into alleged financial irregularities for the proposed visit of the Brazilian football team to Apple Valley. In 2023, the then sports minister Remi Chand announced that the State government was partnering with VBC to host the Brazilian football team to play a friendly exhibition match at the Noval Stadium in Maloda at no cost to the public exchequer.

12. The former minister even travelled to Brazil on one occasion to reportedly hold talks with the Brazilian Football Association (BFA) officials and claimed that BFA agreed to send the delegation, to Apple Valley. However, the event failed to materialise.

13. A preliminary inquiry report by the sports department flagged serious charges including GST fraud, lapses in how the government picked the private sponsor, and inflated expenditure bills. A parallel SIT of the State finance department pointed to purported tax evasion amounting to ₹25.78 crore by VBC and submitted a report to the Commissioner of State Goods and Services Tax department.

14. While a team led by assistant commissioner of police (ACP) raided the news channel's headquarters in Maloda, simultaneous searches were carried out at three premises linked to Sanu Nilton, managing director of VBC.

15. Journalists and editorial staff of Vision News said that the police barged into their workspace during the TV broadcast and seized some official and personal cell phones. TV visuals showed the news channel's top editorial staff engaged in verbal arguments with the ACP over the manner of the police raids and the violation of press freedoms. ACP said

"We came here armed with the court's search warrant. We tried to hand over the notice intending to search the administrative offices of the TV channel. But they were not ready to take receipt of the notice. We pleaded with the TV staff to cooperate with our search, but they were unwilling to do so,"

16. Shanu Pattar senior journalist described investigative incident in the following words:

"Journalism is the ability to protect the identity of sources. When law enforcement agencies confiscate smartphones, laptops, and hard drives without immediate judicial filtering, they gain unrestricted access to encrypted messaging apps, email dumps, contact lists, and confidential documents. This compromises whistleblowers, rendering the concept of 'source protection' practically impossible and deterring individuals from exposing corruption or state malpractice.

Raids conducted under sweeping laws such as India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), which makes obtaining bail extraordinarily difficult signal to the broader journalistic community that critical coverage carries extreme legal and personal risk Fear of Surveillance: When journalists witness colleagues having their personal and professional lives laid bare through device cloning, they naturally adapt through self-censorship."

17. Another Senior Journalist of the State, Pulkit Harsh opined that. “Fear prevents critical investigative stories regarding local accountability, State, security, and corruption from ever progressing which hurdles the exercise of constitutional freedoms, the points can be noted as:

a."Hash Value" Deficit : During the Point View operations,press bodies like the Editors Guild of India strongly condemned the fact that many targeted journalists were denied seizure memos or the "hash values" of their digital data. A hash value functions as a unique digital fingerprint. Collecting digital evidence without generating and sharing a hash value immediately at the scene leaves the data highly vulnerable to the potential planting of incriminating files on the device while in State custody.

b. Data manipulation :The unauthorized alteration of legitimate reporting notes will harm the institutional narrative as a result the Economic and Operational Paralysis will happen. For modern newsrooms and freelance journalists, digital devices are not merely storage systems; they are the primary means of production. Confiscating devices without providing temporary clones or rapid return timelines effectively shuts down a journalist's ability to work, communicate, or earn a living. For independent digital platforms operating on thin margins, these seizures cause severe operational disruption and financial strain.”

18. The Maloda district committee of the Apple Valley Union of Working Journalists (KUWJ) condemned the police action, terming it an “infringement on press freedom.”

19. Civil liberties organizations point out a disturbing trend where routine regulatory checks such as tax "surveys," financial audits, or foreign funding compliance reviews are heavily escalated into full-scale counterterrorism investigations. By treating journalists as potential national security threats or enemy agents, the State shifts the burden of proof, forces lengthy pre-trial detentions, and uses the legal process itself as a primary form of punishment.

20. On 5/10/2026 Association for Freedom of Media (AFM), an organization focusing on promoting media freedom through awareness programmes, interventions and

advocacy filed a petition under Art 32 of the Constitution requesting to formulate comprehensive, uniform guidelines for the search, seizure, and collection of digital devices and electronic evidence by investigative agencies. The petition highlighted that arbitrary seizure of phones, laptops, and personal data by law enforcement violates the fundamental right to privacy under Article 21 and protection against self- incrimination under Article 20 of the Constitution.

21. Petitioner argued that investigative agencies hold overly broad, unregulated powers for data extraction without formal procedural safeguards tailored to personal and sensitive digital information. The managing directors of View Point and VBC are active members of AFM. The Union Government in counter to the abovesaid writ petition informed the Supreme Court that investigative bodies would follow the procedures outlined in the 2020 CBI Manual on Digital Evidence as an interim measure while a specialized committee deliberates on formalizing comprehensive guidelines.

22. The Court asked the petitioners to submit concrete arguments regarding the matters in question and address before the court on final hearing. The case is posted to 11/02/2027 for final hearing.

NOTE: The laws of the State of Mondia is in pari materia with the laws of country in Asian Continent, India

D I S C L A I M E R

This proposition is a work of fiction prepared solely for the Kerala Law Academy Moot Court Competition, 2027. All names, characters, entities, places and events are fictitious or used fictitiously, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.