

THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF JANG AND GEO MIR SHAKIL UR RAHMAN BEHIND BARS TO RESIST CENSORSHIP ON PRESS FREEDOM

In March 2020, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) arrested the Editor-in-Chief of Jang and Geo Group and media tycoon, Mir Shakil ur Rahman, in a property purchase, dating back to 1986. Jang/ Geo media denied any wrongdoings in the deal and submitted all the paperwork proving the legitimacy of the purchase. Attempting to pull Geo off-air, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) forced cable operators to downgrade Geo TV channels to the farther numbers. On March 18, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) ordered the restoration of Geo News to its former channels.

MEDIA HOUSE CLARIFICATION:

"All major allegations — whether 34 years old or recent — against Jang Group have been proven false in the court of law whether in the most prestigious UK court or honorable Pakistan courts, including taking illegal funds from foreign entities, taking funds for political patronage, traitorhood, blasphemy, and tax-related allegations, etc.

Jang Group's newspapers, channels, reporters, editors, and anchors have experienced shutdowns, been shot at, killed, banned, boycotted, but the Group is still standing and its efforts to pursue the truth remain, said the spokesperson."

<http://www.freedomtalk.net/> TAKE:

The incumbents using anti-graft court to target the media houses criticizing the government and resilient voices against the censorship on press freedom.

In July 2020, the Supreme Court of Pakistan raised questions about partiality and unjust functioning of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), targeting only political opponents and activists. The remarks of the top court make the existence of NAB questionable.

Recently, the Herald group (DAWN) group, another resilient media house resisting censorships, filed a petition in the court against the suspension of the government advertisement to financially suppress the media house. In May 2019, a woman, Tayyaba Farooq, had alleged the Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Javed Iqbal of sexual harassment and Geo News aired footage of the leaked a video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYrd1513ZP4>

In November 2018, the Geo News had also reported about the fake degree of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lahore Director General Shahzad Saleem.