**E-CONTENT**

**MJMC,  SEM-IV, PAPER-XIV (CC-402)  
  
 Topic : Press Council & Media**

**Date : 22-01-2020, TIME : 2.00 P.M.-3.00 P.M.**

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**Press Council & Media**

Press Council of India was successful in directing the press in India. Its vigilent watch over the functioning of media make sure that the press is free to function, at the same time deliver its duties responsibly and accurately.

**Certain Landmark Actions**

Since its establishment in 1966, the Council has rendered several momentous adjudications and issued guidelines which may have a lasting impact on the press in the country. The following are some of the important cases in which adjudications have been pronounced.

In the complaint of some Chandigarh journalists against the Chief Minister and the Government of Haryana, the erstwhile Council had to warn the authorities about the use of Council’s coercive powers if they failed to respond to the notices sent by the Council.

The Council initiated suo-motu action against seven papers and after due enquiry, while dropping the cases, it observed that restraint by the Press is necessary during the period when the country is passing through a tense phase resulting from conflict over such sensitive issues as communal riots. The tremendous increase in the number of complaints from 80 in 1979 to 1075 in 1997 is ample proof of the faith expressed by media men and the public alike, in the working, importance and

need for a body like the Council at the helm of the fourth estate. Press Council’s Code of Conduct of Journalists guide the journalistic profession to responsible

reporting.

**Harassment of Newsmen**

For bringing to the fore the unsavory conduct of the authorities by way of articles/news in discharge of their professional duties, the journalists have to often bear the brunt. Manhandling, implication in criminal cases, etc. are some of the methods adopted by the authorities to compel pressmen to toe their line. Similarly, threats to life, property and family of the pressmen are also tactics adopted by vindictive militant outfits and anti-social elements to thwart the journalists in their fearless reporting and when they highlight their misdemeanors. The escalating number of cases of harassment of journalists manifests the failure of endeavors to check such violations of human rights.

The Council adjudicated a total of 18 such matters recently. Of these, the charges were found to be substantiated in two matters, while five stood dismissed on merits. In three others, the Council dropped inquiry when the respondents concerned made or assured adequate amends. Eight complaints were

disposed of for non-prosecution or for the matter having become sub-judice or when no action by the Council was found to be warranted after hearing the parties. The chart that follows makes the position more clear.