

The Increasing Impact of Media Trials in India

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Traditionally India has three pillars of democracy namely the Legislature, the Executive, and the judiciary. However, with the advent of change, there is a fourth pillar joining the list, namely Media. The media has been hailed as a watchdog over democracy because of its ability to accelerate public inquiry into these three areas. The media has been instrumental in enlightening the public on world news. Outstanding journalism always narrows the gap between society and government. In the past, it has been successful in exposing conflicts through offensive activities, secrecy, and investigative journalism. It has raised many social, economic, environmental, legal, and cultural issues.

More recently, however, the media has been criticized for its excessive interference with the judicial process. It has gradually transformed itself into a 'Community Court' or 'Janta Adalat'. When a person is convicted of a crime, the main principle of criminal law treats him or her as innocent until proven guilty. However, the media completely ignored the difference between the accused and the guilty person, and even before the Court realized the public opinion was formed about the accused and he had already been convicted. This media behaviour is called the "Media Test".

TEST OF INTERESTS IN INDIA

The trial is an important process for the justice system to bring justice to the parties involved and to punish the perpetrators. Both the Plaintiff and the Defendant were given a reasonable opportunity to present their dispute before the judgment was rendered. In the Court of Justice, a defendant is found guilty only after all the facts presented to him have been proved beyond a reasonable doubt. Until then it was considered innocent.

Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution of India provides for the right of freedom of speech and expression to its citizens. Freedom of the Media is an important component contained under this article. An important feature of this right is that the general media cannot claim it as they are artificial people and not Indian citizens. However, newspaper editors, executives, journalists are citizens and when they write, publish, or speak in the media they hide the shield of their freedom of speech and expression. That is how the media got involved in the tests known as Media Trials.

WHAT ALL IS INCLUDED?

A media case involves an investigation and reporting to reveal the truth after a particular case. However, it only creates the impression that the media is conducting an independent investigation and concludes that the suspect is guilty. When in reality everything is one-sided, depending on a variety of sources, its sources are rarely questioned. This often conveys false stories and criticism thus greatly affecting the trial. In this process, the personal life of the defendant and the victim is also made public.

MEDIA MONEY MATCHES

"The problem starts when the media becomes the same system of audio control and audio control begins to remove the law!"

-Harish Salve

They were severely criticized for the following reasons:

1. Today all forms of journalism are ignored and violated by the media.
2. The media experiment is stuck in a toxic web of ratings, viewers, revenue, political splendour, anchor prominence, and public bloodshed.
3. It is an attempt to change the Court of Appeal instead of a humiliating trial thus violating the defendant's right to a fair trial.
4. It violates the sanctity of the Department of Justice.
5. If the suspect is not guilty but the media has already said he is guilty, it could be tantamount to discriminating against him and his family members.
6. Often when a witness is brought before the public, it leads to great stress and his or her intimidation to change statements or become hateful.
7. Also, personal information of Respondents and victims is included in a public review, infringing on the right to privacy.
8. The media can influence judges unknowingly or indiscriminately when making decisions.
9. Social media and social media are a deadly combination as any piece of information can be disseminated for a while and is considered a gospel truth without any knowledge of its relevance.

TRIALS CALLED BY MEDIA

There have been many court cases in the past. Other popular cases include:

1. Arushi Talwar Murder Case: The murder case of a 13-year-old child was uninterrupted by the media. The secret of the teenage girl was shattered as more and more false information about her character spread around the world.
2. Pradhyuman Thakur murder case: The body of a 2nd-grade boy was found in a school laundry in Delhi. The driver was initially accused of sexual misconduct but later it emerged that the act was committed by a class 9 boy to postpone the exams. The driver had already been insulted by the media.
3. Sunanda Pushkar Murder Case: The wife of the former Union Minister Mr. Shashi Tharoor was found dead. The media had already said that Mr. Tharoor murdered the end of the trial.
4. Neeraj Grover Murder Case: Neeraj Grover's body was dismembered and burned by Defendant. The case received a major public outcry and sentencing the Respondent. However, one of the news outlets criticized the decision and said the defendant was under pressure.
5. Sheena Bohra murder case: Ms. Indrani Mukherjee, the deceased's mother was accused of crime. His character and life unrelated to the case were brought to the public by the media.

CONCLUSION

The media is a powerful sword of democracy. Today, however, the Indian media has fallen into disrepair because of its mismanagement and unhealthy competition in the media. Balance thought with empathy, confusion and good morals, and balance and zeal. If we continue at the same pace, crimes such as verbal terrorism, apparent excess, and content base will soon mark its realities. It is time for laws to punish those who interfere in the courts. The media has to be very real. "There is no doubt that it guards the public but it should not be a dog guarding blind people leading the community as if they were blind!"