



**THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB OF SOUTH ASIA**

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## **INDIAN MEDIA ORGANISATIONS ASK HONG KONG AUTHORITIES TO STOP USING ANTI-STATE CHARGES AGAINST JOURNALISTS**

The Foreign Correspondents Club of South Asia (FCCSA), the Press Club of India (PCI), the Indian Women's Press Corps (IWPC), the Press Association (PA), and the Law and Society Alliance (LSA) condemn unequivocally the conviction by a Hong Kong court of former Stand News editors Patrick Lam and Chung Pui-kuen on charges of conspiracy to publish seditious publications and calls on authorities to stop using anti-state charges against journalists.

The "guilty"- verdict is a nail in the coffin for press freedom, guaranteed otherwise under Hong Kong's "Basic Law" , which clearly protects the freedom of speech, press, and publication.

By convicting Patrick Lam and Chung Pui-kuen for their pro-democracy views and reports in what is the first incident against any journalist or editor since Hong Kong's handover from Britain to China in 1997 and by freezing the assets of Stand News that has led to its closure, the authorities have exhibited their determination to destroy independent journalism in the city.

We urge the Hong Kong authorities to stop persecuting the media for their critical reporting and respect Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that says "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice".

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