



2022 세계기자대회 World Journalists Conference 2022



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# WORLD JOURNALISTS CONFERENCE 2022

24(Sun) - 26(Tue) April 2022

Conference Book I

Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism  
and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization

언론의 팩트체크와 언론자율규제

Conference Book I





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Hosted by  한국기자협회  
JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OF KOREA

Supported by  Ministry of Culture, Sports  
and Tourism

 한국언론진흥재단  
Korea Press Foundation

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※ 세계기자대회는 정부광고 수수료로 조성된 언론진흥기금으로 시행됩니다.

## Overview



<b>Title</b>	World Journalists Conference 2022
<b>Date</b>	24(Sun) – 26(Tue) April 2022
<b>Venue</b>	International Convention Hall [20F], Korea Press Center
<b>Hosted by</b>	 JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION OF KOREA
<b>Supported by</b>	 Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism  한국언론진흥재단 Korea Press Foundation
<b>Theme</b>	<p>▷ <b>Conference I</b> Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization</p> <p>▷ <b>Conference II</b> A Society Changed by Journalism</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p><b>1. Status of fake news verification and policy inspection in each country</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, journalism has provided precise and quick information and has thus contributed to people's safety. However, unconfirmed reports have also aggravated people's insecurity.</li> <li>- Moreover, fake news has dramatically damaged trust in journalism, thereby reducing its influence. Journalism's intrinsic roles of monitoring, checking, and speaking for the weak, in particular, have deteriorated.</li> <li>- We have prepared today's opportunity to share best practices and effective systems in eradicating fake news as implemented in different countries and listen to policies related to building trust in journalism and self-reflective efforts applied in journalism.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. A Society Changed by Journalism</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A role of journalism is not only to monitor and check authority, but also to care for the underprivileged and nurture a healthy social environment.</li> <li>- We often witness cases wherein one sentence in an article or a photo helps create a better and healthier society.</li> <li>- At today's conference, we will provide the opportunity to present and share the best practices and instances of how certain journalism reporting has transformed entire societies in countries worldwide to boost our morale as journalists.</li> <li>- We hope you discover applicable article topics you may use from the presented best practices to induce specific policies in your respective countries.</li> <li>- We equally hope you discuss a role of journalism in fostering safe and peaceful societies.</li> </ul>

Date	Time	Contents		
4.24 (Sun)	14:00 -	Final Rehearsal & Orientation		
4.25 (Mon)	Moderator : Min-ho Jung (Head of International Relations Department of Journalists Association of Korea, The Korea Times)			
	14:00 - 14:10	Opening	Opening Address	KIM DONG HOON, Journalists Association of Korea, President
			Congratulatory Address	Boo-kyum Kim, Prime Minister
			Congratulatory Address	Ki Yon Kil, Seoul Tourism Organization, President & CEO
	Introduction video of Korea			
	14:10 - 17:00	Conference I	Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization	
			Presentation 1	EunRyung Chong, SNUFactCheckCenter, Director
			Presentation 2	Hyung Joon Ahn, MBC, Journalist
			Presentation 3	Overseas Journalists
	17:10 - 18:00	Group Discussion I		
4.26 (Tue)	Moderator : Min-ho Jung (Head of International Relations Department of Journalists Association of Korea, The Korea Times)			
	13:30 - 14:30	Special Session	Blockchain-Based News Ecosystem	Sonny Kwon, PUBLISH, Inc., CEO
	14:40 - 17:00	Conference II	A Society Changed by Journalism	
			Presentation 1	Min-Kyu Lee, Chung-Ang Univ., Professor
			Presentation 2	Hwan-bong Jung, The Hankyoreh, Reporter
			Presentation 3	Overseas Journalists
17:10 - 18:00	Group Discussion II			

## Opening Address



**KIM DONG HOON**

President

Journalists Association of Korea

### Time for Restore the Trust in Journalism

Welcome to the World Journalists Conference 2022.

I am President Kim Dong Hoon of the Journalists Association of Korea. It is a great pleasure to greet you all in a healthy disposition albeit online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has been continued to spread globally for over two years now.

The Journalists Association of Korea was established in 1964 and is celebrating its 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. It is Korea's largest association of journalists, with about 11,000 members from 199 media companies participating in its activities.

One of the association's five principles is to "help one another and reinforce ties with other journalists globally." Accordingly, our association joined the International Federation of Journalists in 1966 and has since actively participated in the international journalism community. In particular, since 2013, we have been inviting journalists from all over the world to Korea annually to participate in the World Journalists Conference, which is already marking its 10th anniversary this year.

Since the first conference until 2019, journalists worldwide have been invited for seven years to witness the reality within the Korean peninsula as the world's

## Opening Address

only divided nation for them to personally experience and realize the importance of peace. Apart from that, we have discussed the future of journalism at the conference and expanded talks of friendly mutual relations. I proudly share that it is becoming one of the major journalism events worldwide.

However, we have had to hold it online for three years since the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 and its continued spread globally. I regret that we were unable to directly show you the beautiful nature and culture of Korea and the reality of our divided nation, but I am relieved that we have prepared an opportunity to contribute to the development of journalism and share the conditions and concerns of each country despite limiting it online.

Dear journalists,

We all share commonalities even if our country, gender, skin color, and ideologies are different. It is a fact that all journalists are working hard for freedom and peace and disseminate the truth with a warm heart and cold reasoning.

For the online conference this year, we have prepared time to discuss the theme of "Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization" on the first day. As distrust in journalism has accelerated since COVID-19, I anticipate the space given to listen to the efforts made to eradicate "fake news" in each country so that we may jointly introduce and supplement them to realize respectable journalism.

On the second day, we will look into each country's best practices in journalism reporting to reflect on the role of journalism under the theme "A Society Changed by Journalism." I hope this will become an excellent opportunity for you to listen to the speakers and the best practices they propose for you to apply them in your respective countries.

## Opening Address

In this difficult time due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a valuable opportunity has been prepared by online. We are looking forward to your opinions and advice so that everyone gathered here can fulfill their vocation as a journalist who present dreams and hopes to mankind.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your participation in this conference despite your busy schedules, and I hope this serves as a meaningful and rewarding time. I equally hope you will share what you gain from this year's conference with fellow journalists in your respective countries so that trust in journalism may recover.

Once the COVID-19 situation subsides, I would be most pleased to invite you all to Korea to present our splendid traditional culture and the Korean people who love peace.

I wish you good health until we meet again.

Thank you.

■ Congratulatory Address



**Boo-kyum Kim**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea

**The Great Transformation of Civilization, the Role of Journalism**

Honorable journalists at home and abroad, Welcome to the World Journalists Conference. I'm Kim Boo-kyum, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea.

This year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of holding the 'World Journalists Conference' hosted by the Journalists Association of Korea. At this conference, journalists around the world get together and collect their ideas on the issues people are facing every year. For the past two years, under the COVID-19 crisis, we have played a critical role in protecting human life by sharing the quarantine system and experience of each nation. I would like to express my gratitude to president Kim Dong Hoon, from the Journalists Association of Korea, and the staff who have successfully led this conference and given an opportunity to hold this valuable meeting this year as well. In addition, my thanks go to EunRyung Chong, director of the SNUFactCheck Center, Sonny Kwon, CEO of PUBLISH, and Min-kyu Lee, a professor of Chung-Ang University who will give presentations at this conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, it has been over two years since the COVID-19 spread globally.

■ Congratulatory Address

Korea has tided over the crisis of Omicron and slowly recovered its daily life. Through the considerable cooperation of Korean citizens, Korea has passed the COVID-19 crisis with the highest vaccination rate and the lowest fatality rate in the world.

However, COVID-19 has a significantly negative impact on us. This disaster aggravates conflicts and inequality between nations and classes. In addition, people's distrust of journalism keeps growing due to fake news. Preposterous claims or provocative false descriptions about vaccines were excitedly reported to increase online hits, and induced confusion to make the public uneasy. This situation should never happen again. We all need to think about what is the right conduct for the future of our community, and what role should journalism play.

Now, the world faces the Great Transformation of Civilization. I think, first of all, journalism needs to stand up and light up the way to overcome all challenges that may come under the transformation. Thomas Friedman, a world-renowned journalist, said "The biggest challenge we may face will come from fake news through social media, and healthy communities where people connect, protect, and respect each other will lead to changes under the transformation." I hope all the journalists at this conference will make a way to create a 'healthy community'. We need your knowledge to be collected with the spirit of solidarity and cooperation. With that power, let's make a new history for journalism and humankind.

Once again, I would like to congratulate on holding the 10<sup>th</sup> World Journalists Conference, and I look forward to meeting all journalists around the world in beautiful spring of Korea next year.

Thank you.

## Congratulatory Address



**Ki Yon Kil**

President & CEO

Seoul Tourism Organization

### To be an engaging platform for journalists from all around the world

Good afternoon. I'm Ki Yon Kil, the President & CEO of the Seoul Tourism Organization. I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations of the "10<sup>th</sup> World Journalists Conference."

"The World Journalists Conference" not only promotes Korea to the world, but it is a place of celebration where journalists from countries all around the world come together to have in-depth discussions on important global issues.

I sincerely hope that this year's event will serve as an engaging platform for participating journalists, where meaningful discourse can actively take place, while promoting quality development and a sustainable paradigm shift in the global journalism industry.

Amid the gradual change from pandemic to endemic, tourism around the world has started to revive itself. And the Seoul Tourism Organization is in step with this transformation, ready in hand with the active implementation of various Seoul tourism promotions set for this year.

I look forward to seeing everyone next year during the spring time here in Seoul. Thank you.

## Introduction of Journalists Association of Korea

A sentence that records history,

Images that deliver reality of the scene,

Journalists who are passionately seeking the truth as their calling,

And always standing behind them, is the Journalists Association of Korea.

Established on August 17, 1964 based on the consensus of Korean journalists, the Journalists Association of Korea celebrates its 58<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

The association has advocated five principles which are the democratic development of Korea, the improvement of journalists, the protection of freedom of speech, the promotion of friendship amongst the association's members, the achievement of peaceful reunification and homogeneity between North and South Korea, and the strengthening of ties with journalists around the world. The five principles serve as the Association's reason for being and as its ultimate goal.

The Journalists Association of Korea is the nation's biggest media body, boasting a current membership of 199 company members and 11,000 individual journalists. The association delivers 50,000 copies of its weekly paper across the nation to present various key issues and viable alternatives.

Also, the Journalists Association of Korea makes efforts to enhance capabilities of journalists by hosting various forums and seminars under the theme of Journalism and providing reporters with financial support for short- or long-term training programs at domestic graduate schools. We present the annual Korea Journalist Award, which is the most prestigious and long-standing award in Korea's journalism, as well as the Award for Journalist of the Month. These help raise the status of journalism by boosting the morale of journalists and by encouraging the production of high-quality news articles.

### ■ Introduction of Journalists Association of Korea -----

We have recently reinforced the journalist ethics doctrine and launched a committee for its implementation to bolster the ethical consciousness of journalists and we are persevering to eradicate fake news, which has become a global problem. In addition, groups of journalists have gathered to launch “An organization for integrated autonomy of journalism” and forge an ethical journalism culture. We are further working in earnest in collaboration with global journalism organizations to recover trust in journalism.

As such, we donate funds to help the underprivileged, support journalists who donate their talents, and hold essay contests to reinforce journalism’s public role. Furthermore, we also hold soccer competitions with journalists nationwide and cultural site visits each year to strengthen the solidarity and bond of all the association’s members.

Having recognized early on the importance of strengthening the bond with journalists around the world, the Journalists Association of Korea joined the International Federation of Journalists as a full member in 1966. It also interacts regularly with journalists of other nations by exchanging delegates with journalist associations including the All-China Journalists Association in 1993, the Vietnamese Journalists Association in 1994, the Indonesian Journalists Association in 2013, the Confederation of Mongolian Journalists in 2014 and the Association of European Journalists Bulgaria in 2015, the Russian Journalists Association and Delegation of mutual journalists in 2018. The Journalists Association of Korea is also continuously interacting with the US Society of Professional Journalists and Union of Journalists of Uzbekistan.

Regular exchanges with reporters from these countries are role model cases in people-to-people diplomacy beyond conventional diplomacy and greatly contribute to harmony and improvement in bilateral relations.

### ----- Introduction of Journalists Association of Korea ■

Looking forward, we hope to expand our network with more journalists from foreign countries.

In addition, Journalists Association of Korea successfully hosted the IFJ’s general meeting for the first time in Asia back in 2001, as well as the East Asia Journalist Forum in 2003, the Asia Journalist Forum in 2005, and the IFJ’s special general meeting in Seoul and Mt. Geumgang and Gaeseong in North Korea in 2007. We also held a conference with journalists from Korea, China and Vietnam in 2012. We are interacting with international media organizations like the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) for announcing the freedom of speech and the rights of journalists around the world.

The Journalists Association of Korea hopes that the World Journalists Conference serves as a forum for discussions to enhance fellowship with other journalists from various countries globally and creates a conducive environment for journalists to practice their vocation dutifully and rebuild trust in journalism.

Mr. Kim Dong Hoon, the 48<sup>th</sup> president of the Journalists Association of Korea, and the Executive Department are determined to communicate with the public, realize social justice and closely monitor those who have power and authorities with keen eyes. Also, we will demonstrate journalism in which we stand by the less-privileged with warm heart. Furthermore, we will take the lead in the efforts for our members’ rights and welfare as well as our people’s grand unity.

To this end, we will continue to strengthen ties with international outlets and build reliable friendships in the process. And, we will prepare for what lies ahead with constant reform and innovation.

Thank you.

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## Conference I

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**Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism  
and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization**

- Biography
- Presentation Material

## 25(Mon) April 2022



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## Moderator



### Min-ho Jung

Digital Content Editor of The Korea Times  
Head of International Relations Department of  
Journalists Association of Korea

Min-ho Jung is a Digital Content Editor at The Korea Times. Also a Head of International Relations Department at Journalists Association of Korea.



## Speaker



### Elira Canga

OSCE  
Media Project Manager  
Albania

Elira Canga has been working as a journalist and editor of regional and foreign affairs for 11 years. She worked for BBC Bureau in Tirana. Later on she worked as media developer, media project manager and trainer for organizations as OSCE, USAID and British Council.

### Filtering information – a must in nowadays societies

I come from Albania, a very small country in Southeastern Europe, in a region which is famous for the old saying “The Balkans produces much more history than it can consume”.

And yes, it also produces much more news and information that it can consume in a healthy way.

In an era when we get bombarded by information - coming from all platforms and all sides - it is very difficult to absorb all the news we are being thrown at. It is extremely difficult to sift and filter them and identify which is the reliable information and which not.

As journalists, we have few principles which help us assess the information and do the right selection:

## Elira Canga

- Does this news have a source?
- Is it a reliable source?
- Does it have a date and time?
- Why is this information published? Is there an agenda behind?

All these questions help us sift the news, assess and evaluate them and leave aside the information which looks suspicious, is not reliable or is driven by certain interests.

But, do we ask ourselves if public has these questions ready anytime? Does the public really have the tools to identify news and find out which is reliable and which is not? I think not, at least not at the extent we want to.

Here comes the work of the fact-checkers. Verification of facts is not a new concept; this is what journalists each day in their job, in their pursue to find the truth. Nothing new in that, but today we need it more than ever because information comes from different platforms, in different way, with in an incredible speed that could not have been imagined before and that is why is so crucial now to employ it and apply whenever we can.

If I have to bring the experience of my country Albania into this table I would say that I can recall fake news, disinformation, not verified information, but more than that I would recall propaganda news, information which has a political or business agenda and is beautifully packed as news.

Media has been polarized in Albania for a long time and has been following the divide between the two main political camps. But now I see much more propaganda, stories of the government’ successes or initiatives, put in a positive light – told by government itself than independent, impartial news that serves the public interest. Take the political campaigns – especially during the pandemic when meetings of more than small groups of people were not allowed, the electoral campaign was transferred in social media channels with stories told only by the political candidates. On the other side, during

## Elira Canga

elections Albanian media is obliged by the Electoral Code to broadcast the information coming from political parties, not allowing journalists in their meetings or public events.

Albania has a fact-checking service and I had the honor and pleasure to work and contribute in its establishment four years ago - it is call Faktoje - and means "Fact it".

It is doing a great job in terms of getting the information of public institutions or politicians, asking for facts, trying to get other perspectives. And yet institutions take so much time to respond by not responding. This is in the culture of the society itself and takes time to change it towards transparency and accountability. Faktoje has now added more to its efforts: a new rubric names disinformation in times of crisis and focuses on assessing and fact-checking news, photos, videos with regard to war in Ukraine.

I really think this is a public service - sifting the facts from fake and the opinions. Because this is what help citizens understand more, this helps them make decision, make well informed decisions before they vote, before they speak up. And I believe they need more than that.

In my view, what is really needed is media and information literacy for the public - beside turning our attention to factchecking we also need to give them the tools to understand the information - to be able to differentiate facts or truth from misinformation, propaganda, conspiracy theories. Otherwise we will see a very confused, sceptic and disoriented public which might not be able to make the right decision for itself.

## Speaker



### Habib Toumi

Bahrain News Agency  
Media Advisor  
Bahrain

Habib Toumi has been a journalist, columnist, editor and capacity-building trainer for 40 years with a lifelong interest in the changing world of media, media platforms, mass communication and international relations. He has been actively engaged in analyzing and assessing media trends, uses and abuses, misinformation and disinformation in the media at a time when journalism across the globe is shifting to new forms of discussion since the tools of media creation are no longer confined to journalists and are today in everyone's hands. He remains commitment to a renewed focus on the values and principles of journalism in a constantly changing media landscape enriched and complicated at the same time by social media and technology.

### Fact-checking ... A cat and mouse game in a constantly shifting environment of deception

Bahrain: The emergence of a new galaxy of communications marked by dizzying technological advances integrating images, videos, audios and texts in messages and by compelling reports presented as facts disseminated easily across the globe, is re-shaping perspectives, challenging expectations and confusing societies.

## Habib Toumi

For many years, newspapers have operated in basically the same way. However, this traditional way of producing reports and newspapers dramatically changed with the appearance of what has come to be known as citizen journalism.

Smart phones offered ordinary people the possibility to record family gatherings, personal parties, and fun get-togethers and then share them.

As people moved beyond family and friends' occasion, they started to record accidents, public speeches, road accidents, unusual weather conditions, events in their towns and shared them.

The notion of User Generated Content (UGC), and eventually Citizen Journalism, gained a new significance that caught the attention of journalists and mainstream media.

Journalists and media thought they could get and use compelling reports from ordinary people who lived in the area where the event or accident occurred or happened to be there, and started to rely more and more on the public and UGC for on-the-site content.

In the age of highly partisan media platforms, and as witnessed during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and currently by the war in Ukraine, the competition for breaking news and for larger numbers of followers, and the frenzy of sensational and scandalous news articles, features and statements from a wide range of organizations dramatically have expanded into a phenomenon of perturbing potency.

However, those who supply the content or the information often lack the training or the mindset of a journalist and do not convey the details correctly, adequately or honestly.

Often, the content, comments and reports are not based on verifiable facts or are colored by agendas, interests, or political views.

## Habib Toumi

When in their rush to break major stories, or when they get carried away and lose control of their better judgment, journalists accept the reports without suspicion or skepticism, do not check or verify the content and broadcast or print them as they are, they risk dashing into propagating misinformation, disinformation, mal-information, manipulation ...

By falling for erroneous and misleading claims disseminated across the world by fame-seekers, conspiracy theory supporters and pretentious know-it-all users, journalists contribute to chaos and bad journalism and to undermining people's trust in the media.

Many of the news organizations are embarrassed after they discover the stories that they published are false or grossly exaggerated, retract them, offer apologies and at times fire the journalists.

Amazingly, despite the open shaming they suffer, some news organizations continue to be lured by the prospects of breaking news or posting witness videos from "netizens" who do not behave as journalists. Many of them see incidents as opportunities for creativity, inventiveness and money and as a fertile ecosystem for fun, jokes, rumors, allegations, lies and character assassination.

Some of the "creative ideas" and "wild imagination" in making up stories and doctoring pictures for false narratives are driven by malicious intentions that invest in accidents, crises, fear and anxiety, by a distorted sense of play and an aberrant idea of fun, by the opportunity to bring down a political opponent or castigate a party or by the lure of making extra money.

This phenomenon is not new, but it has exacerbated in an unprecedented way, taking advantage of the digital and information technology revolution and the spread of social media.

## Habib Toumi

Advanced technology has made twisting facts and inventing stories a simple and easy undertaking with remarkable results and deep impact. Applications have empowered people to create a fictional world and design fictitious situations that is replacing the real world and superseding the facts on the ground.

The “exponential leap in technology” presumably to make the world a better place is being matched by an abuse of the same technology by misinformation and disinformation to ravage the world.

The terrifying situation has prompted news organizations and the international community to think of the best ways to deal with the misinformation disaster.

There have been calls to involve the state by issuing laws and regulations, but they are not always endorsed by the public for fear any state or legislative action in that regard could result in serious risks to freedom of expression.

As it became clear that a combat by the state against mis- and disinformation might be limited or ineffective and that regulation alone will not solve the huge problem, the idea of setting fact-checking units within media organizations, platforms such as Google, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, and dedicated NGOs has been gaining ground.

Even newspapers that have been covering and reporting news for more than one century have also felt the need to set up a verification unit to dealing with the disinformation disaster.

Stakeholders started pondering the formation of an international association to promote fact-checking and give journalists a platform to exchange views, expertise and tips.

In confronting the tsunami of misinformation, disinformation and misconceptions, fact-checkers, often savvy, smart, and non-partisan people, have a crucial role in

## Habib Toumi

assisting the media and the public discover if a story is false or a photo is misused and in providing factual reports, genuine pictures and authentic videos.

The Fact-Checkers are also strong characters who can withstand criticism when they have to deal with hardcore people who refuse challenges to their views and perceptions.

Another challenge for fact-checkers is to find appropriate ways to promote fact-checking ethics among journalists and to educate young reporters on the importance of verifying content before publishing.

In the fight against misinformation, fact-checkers also need to make sure the community is actively involved with its expert actors – academics, specialists, doctors, scientists, researchers … - in order to boost their credibility and ultimately their effectiveness in asserting discourses and content made upon data and not upon perception.

Today, fact-checking sites are flourishing in several countries, mainly in North America and Europe, and while their numbers are not so high in Africa, Asia and South America, there is action to spread there as well.

The community and foundations can help sites flourish there and elsewhere. They can help them be and remain independent by raising enough funds to sustain them and by having parliaments enact laws that ensure transparency cooperation among the media, fact-check units and leading platforms.

According to reports, scientists say that fact-checking works, but it has limited direct impact modifying beliefs and partisanship, especially in polarized contexts, such as the situation in Ukraine today, and among the groups with deeply ingrained beliefs. Some groups become more forceful in defending their beliefs about an issue than before when they are confronted by arguments that put forward verified information

## Habib Toumi

that contradicts their views.

Yet, hope must be upheld. Even though fact-checking may not convince everyone or change the way people think and what they believe, it promotes good media practices, truth, challenges misinformation and disinformation, takes those who misinform, disinform or manipulate to task and fosters media literacy. It helps makes the Earth a more truthful place.

## Speaker



### Md Tawfique Ali

The Daily Star  
Former Senior Reporter  
Bangladesh

A twenty-year journalism career with The Daily Star, one of the most trusted English-language national dailies, during 2000-2020. Extensively covered urbanization, sustainable development and environmental conservation, urban planning, river conservation, safe building construction, illegal real estate development, urban transportation, disaster management etc.

### Fact-checking vital before any information goes viral

In this era of information revolution that we have seen as a tremendously effective tool for people's democratic empowerment and overall wellbeing, we have got to fight bad information, misinformation and disinformation. Bad information ruin lives, promote hate, damage public health and cripple democracy, lead to confusion, indecision, wrong decision and corrode public trust in professional journalistic work. We understand, consequences of misinformation as abovesaid are too harmful to afford either on part of an individual, a community or a society as a whole.

In today's age of proliferation of digital technology available for transmission of information in overwhelming volumes in an instant, with the billions of people having

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access to powerful digital space, with anyone in a position to develop content and disseminate information in numerous ways, fact-checking of sources of information has become far more crucial than any time before.

Novelist AD Aliwat, author of Alpha and In Limbo, says, "All information is guilty until proven innocent."

The internet makes it easy for billions of people to access information with a few simple keystrokes. However, it also makes it easy to spread false information, which can have disastrous effects on both individuals and society as a whole.

In this context, In February 2020, when the peak of deaths and false news did not yet reach the current proportions, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, World Health Organization Director-General, at the Munich Security Conference, had already realized the impact of false and inaccurate information by saying, "We're not just fighting an epidemic, we're fighting an infodemic."

Therefore, the fact-checking of a piece of information or a claim, political or otherwise, disseminated on either social media digital platforms or news portals or in print through news outlets is vital before it goes viral.

According to Damaso Reyes, founder of Clarify.Media, misinformation is a problem that affects everyone and impacts all lives. Journalists and editors have to talk about it and create tools and support readers by being accurate and transparent. They can't be afraid of calling a lie a lie, no matter who is telling it.

We understand and underscore how essential the fact-checking is in the interest of a democratic system and process anywhere in today's world. Socially responsible serious journalism must be founded on the fact-checked information for the sake of accuracy, transparency, accountability and thereby to earn and retain the public trust in and respect for the professional role journalists play in the process of nation

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building, all around the world.

Fact-checking plays the pivotal role in shedding light on misinformation, in getting the facts right, debunking myths and false news questioning the claims by public figures, and in the way of investigating and offering the reliable facts in greater and collective public interest.

It is important because misinformation can sway your opinion. If we base our actions on false information, we can easily embark on making wrong decisions. These decisions can lead to unintended consequences. If people find out certain news published are fake, it could corrode professional credibility of journalism. Or, the fake news could go viral and leave misleading impact on decision and opinion making of people at large in any society.

Craig Silverman, the award-winning media editor of BuzzFeed News and one of the world's leading experts on online misinformation and fake news, believe that the actors spreading misinformation are of three categories: The first is individual citizens on social media, trolls trying to spread fake news. The second is state actors and state-backed propaganda machines who hire or pay people to spread disinformation on a larger scale. Think of Russia in the 2016 U.S. election or China's 50 cent army. The third is financially driven actors who are making huge amounts of money through advertising revenue on Facebook by spreading false information.

According to Cristina Tard guila, associate director of the International Fact-Checking Network, journalists themselves bore a big responsibility not to uncritically republish misleading claims.

Fact-checking emphasizes that we should remain skeptical for our own survival.

Therefore, in recent years, fact-checking has become more prevalent in journalism. This is reflected in the increasing numbers of fact-checking organisations being

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established internationally. While often considered as a journalistic pursuit aligned to established media outlets, it has also been the focus of work by NGOs, charities, and non-media aligned organisations.

### Misinformation and Disinformation

Misinformation and disinformation are interchangeable terms. Although there are some similarities between misinformation and disinformation, they're not the same. Unlike misinformation, which people spread without knowing it's false, disinformation is false information that people spread with full knowledge of its inaccuracy.

Many people who share misinformation online do not know it's misinformation, and they're not sharing it with malicious or dubious intent. Many people share "fake news" because they find it interesting and relevant to what's going on in the world.

The seemingly innocent act of sharing misinformation can have unintended and pernicious consequences. If news outlets or editorial sites report misinformation without fact-checking it first, misinformation can become fake news. At its worst, fake news undermines democracy. Misinformation can also propel other issues, such as climate change denial or the anti-vaccination movement. The people working to fight misinformation are committed to ensuring that lies don't hurt individuals and society as a whole.

Journalists and writers have control over the content they create, and they have an obligation to ensure the information they report is as accurate and true as possible. Even so, according to the Poynter Institute, a study revealed that eighty percent of journalists have fallen for misinformation online. According to misinformation expert Joan Donovan, journalists and media outlets help amplify misinformation when they cover it. This is why Google released two new tools to help journalists fact-check stories. By only reporting information they know to be true, journalists and writers

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can stop misinformation before it has a chance to spread.

### Status of Fact-checking

A standard Fact-checking method usually involves a pattern of investigating a claim, researching the background and context in which the claim was made, evaluation of the claim with data support or refutation, identifying the false element in the claim and the conclusion on how far the claim is accurate.

Fact-checking has grown dramatically in recent years, fueled by concerns about misleading information circulated on social media – and by populist politicians promoting "alternative facts" and denouncing anything they don't like as "fake news."

Africa Check, Chequeado, and Full Fact argue that much still remains to be done. The next generation of fact-checking, they argue, will need to make fact-checking function at internet scale, be massively collaborative, and work across international borders.

Political fact-checking has existed in the United States for many years, with the establishment of FactCheck.org in 2003 and PolitiFact and The Washington Post Fact-checker in 2007. But since 2012, fact-checking organizations have emerged in dozens of countries, representing a new form of accountability journalism.

Some global notable fact-checking organizations include FactCheck.org from the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania, dedicated to reducing the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. PolitiFact, acquired by the Poynter Institute in 2018, is a nonpartisan site featuring the "truth-o-meter," which assigns levels of truth to political statements. Fair, a national media watchdog group, specializes in critiquing media bias and censorship. Snopes, the original fact-checking and myth-busting site, is an independent organization that fact-checks any story worth checking. Health Feedback is a worldwide network of scientists sorting

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fact from fiction in health and medical media coverage. WHO Myth Busters' primary role is to direct and coordinate international health within the United Nations system and Google Fact Check Tools consist of two tools: Fact Check Explorer and Fact Check Markup. Both tools aim to facilitate the work of fact-checkers, journalists and researchers.

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) at Poynter Institute unites creators and consumers of fact-based reporting at various events throughout the year to promote and uphold the integrity of the universal information ecosystem.

The IFCN is committed to promoting excellence in fact-checking. Nonpartisan and transparent fact-checking can be a powerful instrument of accountability journalism. Conversely, unsourced or biased fact-checking can increase distrust in the media and experts while polluting public understanding. The following document is the result of consultations among fact-checkers from around the world; it offers conscientious practitioners' principles to aspire to in their everyday work.

While 188 fact-checking outlets already operate in more than 60 countries, 82 fact-checking organizations from 58 countries until 2020, signed onto a statement of the IFCN five-principle code.

The code consists of commitments to:

- a) Non-partisanship and fairness
- b) Standards and transparency of sources
- c) Transparency of funding and organization
- d) Standards and transparency of methodology
- e) Open and honest corrections policy

The code is explained as follows.

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Nonpartisanship and Fairness: Fact-checking by applying the uniform standard for every fact check, follow the same process and letting the evidence dictate the conclusions.

Transparency of Sources: All sources in enough detail are offered so the readers are able to verify fact-check findings themselves.

Transparency of Funding and Organization: Transparency of the fact-checkers' funding sources, with an effort funding from other organizations have no influence over the conclusions reached in the reports. Readers can communicate with the checkers.

Transparency of Methodology: Fact-checking methodology of selection, research, writing, editing, publishing and correction is explained.

Open and honest Correction: Correct done clearly and the policy is published.

By signing up to this code of principles, the fact-checking initiatives agree to produce a public report indicating how they have lived up to each of the five principles within a year from their signature, and once a year thereafter. The report will allow readers and others to judge to what extent the fact-checker is respecting the code of principles.

The number of fact-checking organizations around the world and the signatories to the IFCS's code of fact-checking principles is growing. A revised code came into effect in April 2020.

### Fact-checking summits

The IFCN talks is a monthly series that encourages meaningful dialogue between fact-checkers and citizens. Each conversation is designed to inspire learning around a prevalent topic in the fight against global misinformation.

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Global Fact is the world's largest annual fact-checking summit for everyone who stands for truth and transparency in journalism, including fact-checkers, journalists, technologists, policy makers, leaders, educators and the public from more than 55 countries.

In 2020, Global Fact was one of the first major journalism conferences to move online after the Covid pandemic began. More than 1,000 people attended virtually across 16 time zones. The in-person conference has taken place in London, Buenos Aires, Madrid, Rome and Cape Town, where more than 300 participants from 55 countries convened in 2019.

April 2 is International Fact-Checking Day, which was created by the IFCN in 2016 to celebrate and highlight the important work of fact-checkers worldwide. It brings fact-checkers together and advocates for their role in upholding the highest standards in pursuit of the truth.

### Operating media self-regulatory organization

While new media encourages people to speak their minds, democracy still demands independent journalists working to provide reliable and impartial news and analysis. A crucial task of self-regulatory mechanisms is to foster public trust in the media. Media self-regulation cannot succeed in a repressive environment. However, where media freedom is guaranteed, self-regulation can help preserve the independence of media and protect it from government interference.

The most important aspect of running a fact-checking organization / site is the transparency required right from the start. This includes the verification method, the limitations of the person who fact-checks and the financing of the site and its staff. Financing fact-checking is still "the million-dollar question," as fact-checking sites strive to develop sustainability models. Fact-checking work can differ greatly from one country to the next, depending on everything from patterns of social media use

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to lack of resources.

Fact-checkers around the world face shared challenges in terms of identifying misinformation, correcting it, and disseminating their findings. However, certain challenges look very different outside countries in North America and Western Europe, where funding and research into fact-checking has been most concentrated. And such problems are especially difficult in contexts affected by underdevelopment, armed conflict, or authoritarianism.

The Financial Times described Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 2019 campaign as part of a "WhatsApp election", noting that misinformation in India spread unchecked and "beyond the purview of electoral authorities or independent fact-checkers" – something already demonstrated the previous year during Jair Bolsonaro's presidential campaign in Brazil.

Closed groups with encrypted communication can be easy targets for disinformation campaigns, but they can equally be a source of security for people living under repressive governments that tightly control the public sphere. At the same time, they may simply be the most widely used apps in a given area. Visa policy analyst Andy Yee notes that the social media formats most popular in Asia "tend to be 'walled gardens' with closed networks," such as KakaoTalk (South Korea), LINE (Japan, Thailand, Taiwan), and WeChat (China). Regardless of why people use such channels, their increasing prevalence poses difficulties in terms of tackling misinformation. Fact-checkers currently have little choice but to wait for skeptical members of closed groups to report questionable information to them for independent analysis.

Obtaining reliable, authoritative information to debunk misinformation is another challenge that affects even well-funded fact-check organizations in relatively open societies. Not all such information is readily available, and only a fraction of it exists in the form of structured datasets that are easily searchable. However, where

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governance is opaque, corrupt, or simply weak, it can mean that official information for verifying problematic claims is inaccessible or entirely nonexistent. Indeed, as University of Wisconsin Professor of Journalism Lucas Graves writes, "access to data tends to be more limited where fact-checking is needed most, in authoritarian environments with few independent media outlets."

In parts of the Global South, further challenges are often connected with a lack of resources, as a 2018 study of small, independent fact-checkers in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal found. In Bangladesh, self-funded and donor-supported fact-checkers have had to rely on volunteers and been unable to pay for licensed software. Even open source software created by data journalists and civic tech groups elsewhere is of little use when natural language processing tools cannot parse the local language.

And in countries with simmering religious or ethnic tensions, the stakes for fact-checkers are often higher. Misinformation and rumor can be used to whip up hatred of specific groups, as happened in Nigeria in 2018. There, manipulated and decontextualized images disseminated on Facebook were used to incite violence between Muslims and Christians belonging to different ethnic groups. Though Facebook partnered with fact-checking projects in the region to limit the spread of such posts, the platform devoted only very limited resources to these efforts.

Countering misinformation is a major aim of the global fact-checking movement, but in conflict zones subject to information warfare, even independent fact-checkers have felt compelled to openly take sides. In Ukraine, for example, the non-governmental organization StopFake rigorously fact-checks dubiously sourced, manipulated, and falsified information appearing in Russian media about Ukraine.

Independent fact-checkers sometimes evade political pressure by operating from outside the country where their audiences are found. This is the case for FactNameh ("Book of Facts"), a Toronto-based project that verifies claims by Iranian leaders and

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in Iranian media. According to FactNameh's founder, such work would be dangerous, if not impossible, in Iran itself. At the same time, operating from abroad limits both information access and reader interest (since some may distrust it as a "foreign agent").

Fact-checkers working under different, often adverse conditions face special problems that require their own specific solutions. Nevertheless, networking, exchange, and mutual support among fact-checkers remain some of the best means of meeting these challenges.

## Speaker



**Qimin Wu**

Global Times  
Editor in Chief  
China

Qimin Wu is the Editor-in-Chief of Global Times. Previously she was the deputy director of International News Department of the People's Daily, responsible for the commentary section for almost eight years. She used to be a journalist covering the meetings between the Chinese leadership and their counter-parts. Some of her reports are loaded in her anthology Special Reports on high level diplomacy, which was published in 2013. She was a winner of the China News Awards. She holds a MA Degree in International Political Economy of the University of Warwick.

### Spreading the truth, firmly uphold international moral conscience

I am from the Global Times, which is the only newspaper in China that publishes both Chinese and English editions. Today, I am honored to attend the World Journalists Conference 2022.

This is my second attendance at this annual event hosted by the Journalists Association of Korea. The last time was in 2016, when media representatives from over 80 countries held face-to-face discussions and pondered on questions about peace and development. We also visited some cities and villages in South Korea. It was a memory engraved in the

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bright spring time. But this time around, we can only meet online. Such different formats further remind us of just how much the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the world.

Today, against the backdrop of major changes in the world unseen in a century intertwined with the COVID-19 pandemic, we exchange views under the theme of Fact-Checking to Provide Accurate Information to Viewers and Media Self-Regulation, and reflect on the media's mission of the era. This is very meaningful. We should realize that the battle against COVID-19 and turmoil in some regions have all posed a test to human conscience. Likewise, we should also realize that it is our mission as media professionals to eliminate vice and exalt virtue and safeguard the spiritual home of mankind. We are bound to seek the truth and make impartial judgements based on the merits of the matter to awaken conscience.

Here, I'd like to share my experience conducting interviews in Wuhan in April 2020, when the city was just lifted out of the "lockdown." This was also a journey of seeking the truth.

One story that left deep impression on me came from Mr. Kang Seung-seok, South Korea's Consul-General to Wuhan. He arrived in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province, on a charter plane in February 2020, at a time when the epidemic was very severe. The Chinese people was very touched by his "countermarch." At a press conference, he told us that "during the epidemic, the peoples of the two countries felt for each other and put themselves in each other's shoes, demonstrating extraordinary friendship and enhancing the feelings between the two peoples."

I also learned that at the time, the South Korean Embassy in Beijing also put up a banner with these words: "China's difficulties are ours." Landmark buildings in Seoul also displayed Chinese characters saying "Cheer up, Wuhan! Cheer up, China!" These heartfelt stories of true friendship revealed in hardship not only inspired solidarity against the epidemic but also deepened the friendship between the Chinese and South Korean people, after they were reported by the media.

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During that trip to Wuhan, I also came into contact with people from all walks of life. Among them, many foreign friends gave up the opportunity to return to their homelands on charter flights and instead chose to be with the Chinese people during the most difficult time of the epidemic. Such caring and cheering that transcend nationality and race revealed a persevering and warm strength, and also touched people's hearts.

Raphael Mwatela, a student at the Central China Normal University from Kenya, told me that China's anti-epidemic efforts gave him an inspiration – that the public believes the government actions are in the best interests of the people, which is a necessary basic element for overcoming crises. He thinks that “the Chinese people trust their government very much.” And it was based on such an assessment that he always felt safe in Wuhan even during the 76-day quarantine period.

Aurelien Viard, a French youth who has lived in different countries, told me that during major crises in a country, foreign nationals often encounter more difficulties and that only in China can they receive such warm care. He said that when the government of Suizhou, Hubei sent someone to deliver masks and disinfectants to him, he was not only deeply touched but also felt so proud that he was “a part of China's whole-of-society fight against the epidemic.”

Many foreign nationals who I interviewed told me that they had been persistently telling relatives and friends back home about what really happened in China, and proactively posted on social media platforms messages, pictures and videos of what they witnessed. They told the world that China did its utmost to protect the people's right to life, China's actions were very effective and there was no racial discrimination in China – and foreign nationals living here can attest to that. In particular, Raphael stressed that in the face of prejudice from some people and media outlets in the West, those who witnessed what happened should become advocates of the truth.

When they analyzed the reasons why some people in the US and the West smear China,

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they pointed out that the more people in the world recognize the important results of China's anti-epidemic efforts, the more some Western forces will feel the fear – the fear of being further surpassed by China. Hanane Thamik, an international student at Wuhan University from Morocco, believes that “rumormongers are always the ones who do not want to see rapid development in China.”

Through this mirror of the epidemic, we can see that the shining light of friendship, solidarity and cooperation can dispel the haze. But we also saw the struggle between justice and evil. We even learned how vicious the “political virus” that undermines human unity and cooperation can be, even as the COVID-19 rages on.

As we all know, for over two years, some American and Western politicians have been politicizing the epidemic, and they have even been trying to control the work of tracing the origins of the virus through political manipulation. They spared no efforts in smearing China through endless slandering and rumor-mongering. The only thing they don't think about is how to effectively contain the epidemic to save the lives of their citizens. Why does the US repeatedly refuse to conduct an in-depth analysis of early cases in the US? How can it be so numb to the fact that it has lost over one million lives of its citizens? Why has it refused to respond to the international community's reasonable questions about its biological lab in Fort Detrick and its more than 300 biological bases overseas?

Revealing the truth and exposing lies are the responsibility of the media. As a media outlet that firmly defends fairness and justice, the Global Times has always been at the forefront in terms of seeking the truth. For instance, last July, as some US politicians and media outlets slandered China with the so-called lab leak theory, the Global Times, based on the principle of fairness and justice, launched a petition, requesting a thorough investigation into the Fort Detrick base in the US. Also, last October, the Global Times launched another petition, demanding the US military and the US government to take responsibility and release the truth about the collision between the USS Connecticut and

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an “unknown object” in the South China Sea that month, clarify with what exactly the nuclear-powered submarine collided, whether there was any nuclear leak and whether it will contaminate the Ocean ecosystem.

These petitions received widespread responses from internet users, which further demonstrates that our pursuit of fairness and justices is what the people desire.

Fellow journalists,

At the moment, with the spread of the Omicron variant, the global epidemic prevention and control situation is still grim. What needs to be stressed is that the global fight against COVID-19 is not only a fight to safeguard global public health security and human health and wellbeing, but also a fight to maintain global prosperity and development and protect international moral conscience.

Upholding the concept of a community of shared future for mankind to ensure we overcome the pandemic as soon as possible and return to normal life as soon as possible and to ensure peace, development and advancement benefit people of all countries around the world is a pursuit that reflects conscience. As media professionals, we should take the responsibility to spread the truth and firmly uphold international moral conscience.

## Speaker



## Margaret Ojalvo

Al Dia Noticias / SIR Radio  
Editor and Senior Journalist  
Colombia

Margaret Ojalvo is a Colombian senior journalist. She studied journalism, communications and marketing. Has more than 30 years of experience. She has been a director and anchorwoman in many TV and Radio shows. She writes for different online and print media. She received the “National Press Award “Sim n Bolivar”,for best TV coverage. She won the “International Candean Press Medicine Award”(Latam award). She is the chief reporter for the daily radio news show "Al D a Noticias". She is also a senior journalist for SIR, an American-European news radio system, and director and anchor of RCLatin's weekly radio show.

### **Being a journalist is an honor. It is one of the most important professions in the world**

We watched on TV the war in Ukraine with great interest and we saw correspondents covering the conflict, risking their lives and moving through places of high danger to tell their stories to the world. We also read articles in the newspapers or blogs from experts on the stock market or geeks who talk about the latest technological advances or political facts about a campaign or about a global leader.

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The way each journalist and each media outlet writes and narrates their stories requires clear editorial standards. There are style manuals with generalities for everyone and particularities according to each publishing company. Aspects such as the handling of sources and codes of ethics, since the last century and before, were adopted to give an adequate framework to the way of communicating the news.

There are for the journalists keys as simple as having several sources, confront the sources, listen to the different voices and diverse perspectives to give the public various objective views of the same topic or event.

Don't forget that the source is vital, the facts are fundamental, the journalist must be a professional with knowledge of the topics, analytical skills, common sense and a good writer or storyteller. One source is never enough. The minimum is two. The journalist should ask as much as possible and record the interview.

Fact-checking: Veracity and correctness of reporting

Fact-checking is a process that has existed since journalism was born. Its objective is to ensure that the information to be published or already published is correct and truthful.

The publisher can do in-house Fact-checking, but it can also be done by a third party. It is an effective method of regulation and control.

This practice must be clear. Should be well explained and validated by the newsroom, by journalists and editors.

In the early years of the 2000s, organizations dedicated to external Fact-checking appeared in the United States and these entities have proliferated over recent years in many other countries, most of them in Europe and Latin America.

Fact-checking is a key methodology to deal with misinformation, errors and manipulation of information.

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It's not censorship, it's self-regulation.

It is important to distinguish and separate Fact-Checking to verify the veracity of information from censorship.

Journalists must be respected and always consulted about any intervention made to their articles or publications to check the facts of their stories.

Quality must prevail in the newsroom and in the entire editorial area, regardless of its size or specialty, in its products, articles, investigations, chronicles and interviews, in compliance with journalistic protocols.

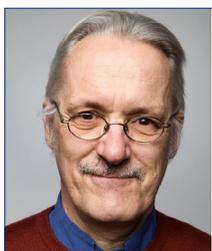
Journalists and editors must review and validate the information to be published. Self-regulation is valid, never self-censorship.

In times when the truth is questioned day by day, due to the proliferation of fake news on social networks and in unethical media and blogs, journalists have a serious commitment to always tell the truth without embellishments, based on investigations, interviews, data and concrete facts that can be validated, using plain language so that the audience can understand the information, give it the respective importance and form their own opinion.

As a curious fact, at the London School of Economics, at a conference for journalists and fact-checkers in 2014, the idea of commemorating the International Fact-Checking Day was proposed. This is how April 2, 2017 was celebrated for the first time.

Thank you very much.

## Speaker



### Flemming Ytzen

Politiken  
Editor  
Denmark

Flemming Ytzen is a CV Editor and columnist, former correspondent in East Asia. He also works as a Lecturer at Danish Universities on Asian and American history, and an author of books on China and Myanmar.

#### **If media leaders and journalists do not regulate the internet and social media, governments will do it for them**

The internet has changed radically in the past decade or so. Where social-media giants once boasted about being ‘the free speech wing of the free speech party’, in recent years, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other platforms have become increasingly censorious, cracking down on dissenting views and offensive speech. Big Tech has relished this role as the unofficial arbiter of acceptable thought.

Although divided on many international issues, the governments of Europe have for almost a decade have attempted to curb the dissemination of unreliable, manipulated and outright fake news. In March of 2022, the British government claimed to present a world-first online safety laws introduced in the country’s Parliament.

In the government’s view, these new measures include tougher and quicker criminal

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sanctions for tech bosses and new criminal offences for falsifying and destroying data. This measure, labelled The Online Safety Bill, represents a milestone in the fight for a new digital age claiming to be safer for users and hold ing tech giants to account. Another purpose is to protect children from harmful content such as pornography and limit people’s exposure to illegal content, while protecting freedom of speech. It will require social media platforms, search engines and other apps and websites allowing people to post their own content to protect children, tackle illegal activity and uphold their stated terms and conditions.

The government’s regulator (Ofcom) will have the power to fine companies failing to comply with the laws up to ten percent of their annual global turnover, force them to improve their practices and block non-compliant sites. Several other offences have also been added to the Bill to make in-scope companies’ senior managers criminally liable for destroying evidence, failing to attend or providing false information in interviews with Ofcom, and for obstructing the regulator when it enters company offices.

Within the same week EU lawmakers clinched a deal on landmark rules to curb the tech giants’ business practices in Europe. The new rules will mean that Alphabet’s Google, Amazon, Apple, Meta and Microsoft may have to change their core business practices in Europe.

Proposed by EU antitrust chief and Danish vice president of the Commission Margrethe Vestager last year in response to the slow pace of competition investigations, the Digital Markets Act (DMA) sets out rules for companies that control data and platform access. Under the DMA, the tech giants will have to make their messaging services interoperable and provide business users access to their data. Business users would be able to promote competing products and services on a platform and reach deals with customers off the platforms.

The rules prohibit the companies from favoring their own services over rivals’ or

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preventing users from removing pre-installed software or apps. The DMA will apply to companies with a market capitalization of 75 billion euros, 7.5 billion euros in annual turnover and at least 45 million monthly users. Companies face hefty fines up to 10 percent of their annual global turnover for breaching the rules and as much as 20 percent for repeat offences.

Do these initiatives mean that Europeans will be entering a better and brighter future in times, where warfare in the continent's second largest country includes the use of heavy digital 'artillery fire'?

Setting aside the current tragedy unfolding in southeastern Europe, there are reasons to be cautious. The new legislation in the UK aims to make Great Britain the 'safest place to be online in the world' – in other words, the country with the most strictly regulated and censored internet of any liberal democracy. This mammoth piece of legislation was five years in the making, and those five years show: the bill is vast in scope, and to some critics terrifying in its implications for free speech.

Most significant is the 'duty of care' the bill imposes on social-media firms: Tech platforms will be legally required to prevent users from seeing both illegal content and 'legal but harmful content'.

What actually constitutes 'harmful content' is likely to include content which might cause psychological harm, disinformation and trolling or harassment. Of course, all of these 'harms' are subjective. 'Trolling' can extend from playful banter to persistent harassment. Which views tech firms consider to be 'disinformation' has less to do with lies and truth than political expediency.

Once this list of harms is approved by parliament, the Ministry of Culture and Information will have the power to add more categories of harm, and firms will be required to report new 'emerging harms' the UK's communications regulator. One should expect the bill's censorious remit to expand over time.

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Firms which fail to comply with the new requirements, or are obstructive or provide false information to the government's regulatory agency, can be fined up to 10 per cent of their annual worldwide revenue, and platform executives can be sentenced to up to two years in jail. These severe penalties have allowed the governments' culture secretary Nadine Dorries to claim that she is taking on Big Tech, and that she is holding Silicon Valley firms 'accountable'. But it is not Big Tech firms that suffer when free speech is curtailed online. Indeed, they have already demonstrated their indifference to free speech.

Counterargument: It is not Facebook, Twitter or Google that produce the 'harmful' content the government wants to eliminate. It is us, the users of social media, the deplorable, unruly citizens, who are saying things that our political representatives would rather we did not say.

The bill means that platforms, when confronted with content that might possibly edge somewhere near the threshold of 'harmful', will censor it first, and ask questions later. A similar law in Germany, encouraging Big Tech to censor more proactively, ended up censoring one of the government ministers who pushed for the legislation.

That is because the bill will allow the government to define what is harmful, rather than Big Tech. But that does not stop this from being censorship. Besides, the responsibility still lies with Big Tech to enact the censorship. The bill is clear that the way for platforms to deal with harmful content is to censor it. This is state censorship, outsourced to a private company. The Online Safety Bill means the end of the free internet as we know it, but at this stage, only in Britain. Even though the UK and the EU has separated politically it cannot be ruled out that Bruxelles will adopt similar measures.

In other words: we are at crossroads regarding the future of online media freedom.

## Speaker

**Tobias Kaiser**

Die WELT  
EU Correspondent  
Germany

Tobias Kaiser works as EU Correspondent in the Brussels bureau of WELT and WELT AM SONNTAG. He covers EU policy in the fields of the Euro, economics, finance, competition, digital and climate. He has been working in different positions at WELT group since 2009. Tobias studied Journalism, Economics and International Relations in Munich, Copenhagen, Berkeley and Chicago and holds a PhD from the University of Munich.

**Fact-checking in times of war**

The war in Ukraine has made the work of fact-checkers more relevant than ever. The importance of fact-checks in editorial offices has taken on a whole new meaning. This is true for media in Germany and all over Europe.

In a war situation, just as in disasters, social media are an important source for editorial staff. There you can find up-to-date information, photos, and videos often before any professional reporter, cameraman or photographer is on the ground. At all times, journalists must treat information from social networks with great caution. But in war times even more so. After all, these channels are often used by interested parties for misinformation and propaganda.

## ----- Tobias Kaiser |

Even before the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, rumors and disinformation about the war in Ukraine were spreading on social networks. Since the invasion Ukraine, these disinformation activities have only increased. Misleading reports about the situation on the grounds or related issues are increasingly circulating on the internet. In some cases, there are justified doubts about the video and image material that is being circulated, but also the opposite can be true: In some cases, authentic recordings are also being questioned.

Here are a few examples of misinformation around the war in Ukraine that fact-checkers in Germany and elsewhere have scrutinized.

Recently one allegation spread on Facebook. According to the claim, the news channel CNN had tweeted about the destruction of a Ukrainian hotel. The authors claimed that CNN had passed off footage of a dilapidated Serbian hotel as actual footage from Ukraine. Fact-checkers got to work and found out the following: Yes, there were screenshot of a tweet, that seemed to have been tweeted by CNN. It showed the picture of a partly destroyed hotel. Fact-checkers from the German organization Correctiv found out, that the picture showed indeed an abandoned Serbian hotel. They used a reverse Google picture search; Google identified the pictures as pictures of a Serbian hotel. A google search for the hotel found similar pictures. And also a search on Google Maps led to similar pictures. So that part of the claim was right. The photo did indeed not show a bombed Ukrainian hotel.

But... fact-checkers from USA Today and three US organizations that also followed up on the claim found out, that CNN had never released such a tweet. Spokespersons from the channel said, that the channels official Twitter account had never published such a tweet. Someone had fabricated a fake CNN tweet with obviously wrong information – supposedly to spread the screenshot on social media.

In another case, a video of alleged body bags in Ukraine is circulating on the Internet.

## Tobias Kaiser

In early March, the video went viral on social media showing black bags lined up, reminiscent of body bags. In the foreground a journalist wearing a mouth-nose protector is commenting on the scene. The sound is muted. While the journalist speaks into the camera, there is suddenly movement in one of the black bags. This suggests that the alleged footage from Ukraine is proof of a staging. The video spread internationally - it was also shared in German-speaking countries. Different versions of the video are circulating on the Internet - one of them is done in a sloppy way. In the footage a name is recognizable in an overlay.

With the help of a Google search fact-checkers at the German organization "Correctiv" find out, that it is the name of a reporter from an Austrian news channel. They use the the name of the journalist and the name of the television channel in a Google search, and they do find a video on Youtube. The title is: "Vienna: Demonstration against climate policy". The video was uploaded to the official account of the Austrian news channel on February 4, 2022, thus three weeks before the invasion of Ukraine. The video is also available on the channel's official site. It shows the same scene that that has gone viral on social media. That is the crucial finding of the fact-checkers: the footage is not from a report on Ukraine, but rather it was taken at a climate protest in Vienna.

These are just two examples of many. They show, how pervasive disinformation can be and that professional journalists need to be vigilant, when they use information from social media. But these examples also show that newsroom staff don't need extraordinary expertise to detect disinformation. It takes only common sense and simple online tools like a Google search or Google Maps. That we have the tools for effective fact-checking at our fingertips, that is comforting news. And if we think about it, fact-checking has always been part of good journalism.

## Speaker



### Malik Sullemana

New Times Corporation  
Senior Journalist  
Ghana

Malik Sullemana has been practicing as a journalist for the past 10 years. His area of expertise is human rights, the environment and climate change. This year will be third time he is participating in this noble event organized by the journalist Association of Korea (JAK). He learned a lot, has been exposed to the Korean culture, press freedom and democracy. He is salivating already for the topics that would be discussed from April 24-26th.

### Fact-checking; a necessary for promoting good, quality journalism

Ladies and Gentlemen, colleague journalists across the globe, welcome to the World Journalists Conference 2022. I am exceedingly grateful to the Journalists Association of Korea for selecting me as one of the speakers for this august event.

To start with, the outbreak of COVID-19 which keeps wreaking havoc in many countries has changed Journalism forever; and today, many newsrooms, online platform, television, radio, newspapers and magazines are still adapting to the changing times.

For two years, journalists run shifts, others still work from home and many are yet to

## Malik Sullemana

recover from the post pandemic stress. With the enforcement of COVID-19 health protocols and restrictions to movement of persons, has made the work of journalists more difficult.

Ladies and Gentlemen, disinformation and fake news were the common global tragedy that stood the way of the credible and professional journalism and these threats called for renewed efforts to subject every piece of news to microscopic examination. With these developments, the call for fact-checking became even more apparent.

Fact-checking is a process in which an information or a news item is empirically verified just so to feed the public with accurate and factual information. In Ghana, only a handful of media organisations have a well-established mechanism to fact-check news before or after they are published. Sometimes, fact-checking only takes place when the authenticity of a publication is called to question, otherwise, most media organisations don't consider it as a tool for promoting good quality journalism.

Unlike advanced democracies where fact-checking is a big deal and resources made available to make it better, the opposite is true in Ghana and many African countries.

Fact-checking is sometimes difficult as 'sources' are sometimes adamant to give information.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am flabbergasted when the so called "ivy league" media organisation failed this litmus test. By all means, journalist must get their facts right before a story is published because publishing false news is like serving a poison chalice to the public.

I am concerned at the neglect and failure by the media to observe this two-way filter process and call for strict adherence to this basic journalistic ethic, lest standard is thrown to the wind in the name of journalism.

Ladies and Gentlemen, many things accounted for this state of affairs.

## Malik Sullemana

Indeed, we cannot gloss over the rush to break news, the needless competition between leading media outlets and the threats posed by faceless 'citizen journalists'

Needless to say, journalism is not a cloistered profession and those who practice it will certainly not want to live in cloisters, but the important role of fact-checking must be fully appreciated in every democratic set up.

The media owed it a duty to live up to its core mandate of ensuring the basic ethics of accuracy, objectivity and truth. self-censorship, the type that helps promote good governance and respect is ideal in the light of the challenges confronting journalism today.

Journalists act as the vanguard of every democracy, and, therefore must work in the best interest of society.

I thank you for your kind attention.

## Speaker

**Neelima Mathur**

Formedia  
Trustee / Trainer  
India

Neelima Mathur has worked in the field of media as researcher, writer, executive producer for documentaries and now trainer for nearly four decades. She specialises as Audio-visual Strategist, Development Communicator and Mentor for Documentary and NGO films. She is also a Trainer for the UNESCO Curriculum on Media & Information Literacy. She contributes as Columnist to daily English newspapers in India. She is currently Festival Director & Curator for the Lakeside Doc Festival of international documentaries held in the Central Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. As well as Executive & Project Director for Utsah Toli, a Community Cultural Centre in a semi-rural area addressing school-going children for targeted personality enrichment.

**Verification has been at the core of journalistic practice.  
It is Fact-checking that is wondrous.**

The world has tagged onto fact-checking that is more a social phenomenon than a journalistic one. Citizens love to be up-to-date about everything. News that comes their way now often goes through the grind mill of fact-checking. Maybe I will have something better and more enlightening to say at the party tonight!

## ----- Neelima Mathur |

Inadvertently, fact-checking has become an industry. Data shows a three to four-fold increase in fact-checking organisations across the world. Studies are already analyzing their validity. What questions are asked and how - and its impact on the answers. This can limit usefulness for citizens to decide which version of disputed realities to believe in. The contention is that the social, cultural, political background and context of a disputed fact can be missing in fact-checking processes.

News agencies, television channels, newspapers, started setting up their own fact-checking mechanisms years ago. They dealt with both, the pre-publication fact-check and then, post- publication fact-check arising due to consumers of the information. It was need-driven because doubts about verified facts and coloured opinion had set in deeply.

It is really noteworthy to recall one example. The curious story of Stephen Glass, who worked for The New Republic and other weeklies. The New Republic is a reputed American magazine from the early 1900s. Glass began his career as a fact-checker. Later he 'invented', repeat, 'invented', fictitious stories that he submitted as reportage. Fact-checkers at the organisations never flagged these stories. Michael Kelly, who edited some of Stephen's stories, frankly blamed himself. Not the fact-checkers. He said that any fact-checking system is built on trust. If a reporter is willing to fake notes, it defeats the system. The real vetting system is not fact-checking but the editor.

This brings us to the core. Citizen-driven Fake News is like a rebound effect of public opinion to decades of manufactured content to influence public opinion. Whether it is the perception of denial of full evidence, like in the case of the Bourgeois of Calais sculptures. Or demonization, like in the re-imaging of Trotsky, to permanently distance him from the Communist history in Russia.

Then there is WYSIATI (What You See Is All There Is) All There Is. This is a theory of Daniel Kahneman, a Nobel Prize winner. WYSIATI is based on the premise that we tend not to

## Neelima Mathur

look for what we do not see, without being fully aware of what we do not know.

This is a huge concept that goes beyond our commitment and dedication to good journalism. How many of us are trapped in the WYSIATI syndrome? And if we are, and the numbers are more than we would like to believe, are we ready to change?

If the answer is No, the cycle of Fake or Manufactured News, Misinformation, Agenda-driven fact-checking will spin reality beyond recognition. Fact-checking or self-regulation concepts have arisen because of personal biases and opinions in journalistic practice.

It is a long path to again being true to ourselves and the facts around us. Objectivity. Back to the basics in journalism - and leaving activism to activists.

## Speaker



### Ranjit Kumar

Ravivar  
Strategic Affairs Analyst  
India

He is presently working as independent strategic Affairs journalist. He worked with india's prominent Hindi daily Navbharat Times as Diplomatic editor for two decades. He writes commentaries for various publications on strategic issues.

### Fake news. An international phenomenon.

Fake news is an international phenomenon and Indian society is not immune to this serious problem. With the advent of social media sites and messaging groups , vested interest groups have found it convenient tool to tarnish the image of rival or opposing groups or parties or nations . Fact-checking thus becomes very important responsibility of journalists and media houses around the world to prevent the further flow of such false news through their medium and make their readers or viewers aware of the reality.

Since, we have journalist friends from various parts of the world and who would speak about the status in their countries, I would like to present before you the current status of fake news and fact-checking in India.

In a multicultural, multi ethnic, multilingual, multi religious country like India, functioning

## Ranjit Kumar

in a democratic milieu , there exists deep divide and resultant one-upmanship among various groups and communities to establish their superiority and stake bigger claim over governance structures and limited economic resources. In this backdrop there are attempts by vested groups to influence opinion and arouse passions . Public sentiments are aroused by popularising narratives in favour of one and often critical and abusive to the rival groups.

Fake news and rumours along with distorted news contained in a credible looking videos are often released from the neighbouring countries to create a divide and unrest in the society.

With the advent of new technology new, faster and more efficient means of delivering messages have been made possible.

In earlier days, fake news and messages were transmitted through mouth to mouth. News carriers like newspapers, radio and television are managed by people who could be held responsible for carrying wrong information or incite full content. But in the present era of social media, individuals masquerading as unknown entities, deliberately spread fake information to tarnish somebody's image. Political, social and religious groups are becoming victims of fake news by rival parties. Creators of fake messages often use old or related pictures or videos to incorporate them in current context and misguide gullible public. Such fake messages can easily be checked through Google fact-check process.

To check this menace, government information departments have set up their exclusive units or desks to have a regular tracking of such fake messages. In India under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, there is a department called Press Information Bureau, which has a dedicated unit to keep a tab on fake news, especially relating to government programs or statements. The Cyber cell of the Police stations also have their fact-checking unit to keep a regular tab on fake news, especially rumours which

## Ranjit Kumar

sensitizes general public to be aware of such false information which has potential to create social disturbances .

In India fake news managers get more active in times of General elections . Fake narratives are spread very often and gets planted in social media during or before parliament or assembly elections to misguide or influence the voters. Hence, headquarters of political parties also have such units to protect themselves from the impacts of such fake news released by opposing parties.

Not only government departments, major newspapers and media outlets have also set up their own fake news checking desks. This helps them to increase their credibility among readers or viewers.

In fact media managers lay special emphasis on publishing correct truthful news stories, without giving them any colour.

However some of the fake news look so credible that they don't create doubts and often get released by the media houses.

Fake news has created havoc in Indian society, especially during electioneering and communal riots. Whatsapp and other such messaging groups are easy carriers of such fake news and misinformation .

I think it is the moral responsibility of such organised media outlets like newspapers, news websites and television channels to check this menace and expose the errant person or groups.

## Speaker

**Sabina Inderjit**

Secretary General of Indian Journalists Union  
Vice President of IFJ  
India

Sabina Inderjit is a senior journalist and trade union activist. With a political science background and diploma in journalism started her career as a journalist with a leading English national daily in mid-80s and now am working for a news and feature agency. She has been a member of the Press Council of India for 2 consecutive terms; She is a first woman Secretary General of Indian Journalists Union; issues such as press freedom journalists rights, human rights, gender equality are close to her heart and has over the years made every endeavor to protect these. International solidarity helps to make a better world.

**Media Needs To Be Accurate, Not Checked**

The famous quote ‘facts are sacred, but comment is free,’ by British journalist CP Scott, founder of what is The Guardian today in the UK, is more relevant than ever before in these times of bitter competition and proliferation of websites and digital media menacingly overtaking the traditional print journalism globally. The need for objectivity, impartiality and balance in journalism is a bigger challenge for media professionals today, amidst the current climate of fake news, misinformation or disinformation.

## ----- Sabina Inderjit |

As a third generation journalist in India, I still adhere to the basic principles of reporting such as: facts must speak for themselves; the report must be accurate; mustn't be one-sided and the person or institution etc concerned must be given the opportunity to have their say; the name of a person must be spelt the way he/she does; sensationalism must be a no-go; do not give an opinion, even if you have one in a report and let the reader make his own assessment. Sadly, the basics are increasingly getting eroded in this era of cut-throat competition and a new genre of journalists. Verifying facts prior to publication or putting on websites are being given a go-by, impacting the right of citizens to make an informed decision.

Further, the internal procedures adopted by newspapers and magazines for verifying facts as in the early 1920s to ensure objectivity prior to publication, it is said are on the decline due to economic crisis. At the same time, external fact-checking, as per ‘Fact-Checking as Idea and Practice in Journalism’ by Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Communication, has become prevalent over the past two decades with the growing number and visibility of websites dedicated to debunking falsehoods circulating online or repeated by politicians and other public figures.

In particular, fact-checking is an effort to combat public misinformation. The digital media environment also raises “new questions for journalists about whether to report, and how to corroborate, online rumours or reports from citizens during breaking news events—concerns reflected in a growing catalogue of high-profile reporting errors during events such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks and the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing.” Fact-checking outlets, which specialise in evaluating claims from politicians, journalists, or other public sources have proliferated online in the new millennium. According to an annual census of such groups, as of February 2018, 149 non-partisan fact-checking operations were active in 53 different countries.

Over the past decade, waves of fact-checking sites have been launched by both

## Sabina Inderjit

journalists and civil society groups around the world; Europe and South America emerged as early hubs, while Asia, Africa, and the Middle East have seen more growth in the past several years. The growth of global fact-checking operations grew by nearly 100 percent from 2014 to 2019, according to a recent census by the Duke University Reporters' Lab. The census found 342 global fact-checkers in the world this year, compared to 277 in 2018 and, despite a slow-down in the last two years, the numbers are still growing.

In fact, the Covid pandemic has put a sharper focus on 'fact-checking' and it has been accepted that it is critical to limit the spread of disinformation. At the same time, election reporting is another area which has thrown up challenges to get the focus right-- as in to provide citizens with access to all facts, opinions and ideas being in the campaign so that they make the right choice and not get carried away by false claims or statements which every candidate inevitably indulges in and now more so on social media. Additionally, growing nationalism, populism and disinformation has made it more imperative to separate wheat from the chaff. Even social network sites are getting wiser and have become cautious against misuse of their platforms for spreading fake news and have fact-checkers in place.

The International Federation of Journalists has noted: As the phenomenon of 'fake news' becomes more widespread, it's essential for media professionals to have the right tools needed to face its hazards. Investigative journalism goes hand in hand with fact-checking, especially when facts that can be key to public interest are often buried and inaccessible.

The media, be it print, broadcast or digital, needs to gain the trust of its readers and viewers. The journalists need to reiterate their commitment to be accurate and true as possible and guard against being carried away by misinformation online or unverified news by rivals. However, I am not too optimistic for a reversal as fact-checking organisations growing globally should be seen as a clear warning signal of journalistic

## Sabina Inderjit

standards falling. Examples of the two largest and biggest democracies in the world can be ominous signs.

International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), an umbrella organization which monitors trends in fact-checking, provides training resources and hosts a yearly conference on fact checking called #GlobalFact. It aims to promote best practice in fact-checking and provide a place for collaboration between fact checkers worldwide. It's catchline: "Bad information ruins lives. It promotes hate, damages people's health, and hurts democracy. You deserve better," does say it all. The Poynter Institute in Florida also houses the Pulitzer Prize-winning PolitiFact, which is the largest political fact-checking news organization in the United States, which has published over 16,000 fact-checks of politicians and pundits.

India, the largest democracy in the world, is too witnessing the scrouge of fake news, which has prompted the mushrooming of fact-checking organisations. FactChecker.in is India's first dedicated Fact Check initiative, based out of Mumbai. Since early 2013, it has been "scrutinizing and researching for veracity and context, statements made by individuals in public life." Besides, picking up on issues where 'there is a strong need to examine data that is in public domain.' It says: "We do not like adjectives, we do not like opinion. Emotion is not our thing. Data are. Facts are. Reportage is." Importantly, it has sections such as 'Modi-Fied' (Fact-checking claims made by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi); 'Modi's Report Card' among others.

Boom, an independent digital journalism initiative with a mission to fight misinformation, explain issues and make the internet safer by providing readers journalistically verified facts. Alt News is seeking to reach out to communities as it says "the majority is still unaware that there is something called fact-checking."

There is Factly, which aims to strive to transform the public information landscape in India by "improving access & understanding of the common public about important

## Sabina Inderjit

government data/information and evolve into a reliable and significant resource in the context of public information & governance.” Social Media Hoax Slayer came up as it says: In last few years, the Social Media having a wider reach and faster, started polluting human minds by anti-social elements, wrong doers, pranksters etc. Several lies are so sugar coated that one never even attempts to use the sixth sense “Common Sense” and ultimately gets affected. Our country may get different leaders/Prime Ministers but till the people can’t have unbiased, logical mind, getting rid of the tag “Third World Country” is a far cry.” It’s goal is “To achieve cleaner, logical, unbiased Indian minds free of religious and political extremism.”

For journalists, the growth of fact-checking organisations is not a good omen. In fact, misinformation or fake news is giving governments handle to bring in laws to check the malice. And this is what journalists and media organisations must watch out against. Rather than laws, self-regulation is a much better option. India is witnessing stricter policies such as its controversial ‘Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediary and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021.’ This has been challenged as it will impact the independent functioning of digital/online media. DIGIPUB News India Foundation, an association of 11 digital news media publishers, says it has been created to “represent, amplify and evolve best practices to build a robust digital news ecology that is truly world-class, independent and upholds the highest standards of journalism.”

At the same time, the Foundation notes: We oppose all attempts by organisations to reduce the media space by promoting fake news and using digital platforms for trolling, spreading hatred between communities and the people.” It has formed an internal committee “to provide our members with an industry-wide level of self-regulation.”

Indeed, self-regulation is a concept which has been gaining ground in the country. Unlike the print media which is regulated by the Press Council of India Act 1978, with the objective of “preserving the freedom of the press and to maintain and improve

## Sabina Inderjit

the standards of newspapers and news agencies”, there is ‘self-regulation’ by news channels. The News Broadcasters Association, was established in 2008 as a private association of news broadcasters formed with the objective of “fostering high standards, ethics, and practices in need broadcasting”. It has constituted the National Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) and issued a ‘Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards’ as a model for self-regulation to avoid content that is “malicious, biased, regressive, knowingly inaccurate, hurtful, misleading or aimed at wilfully concealing a conflict of interest”. It can ‘warn, censure, or express its disapproval’ against the broadcaster and in some cases prescribe a fine too.

For non-news channels, including entertainment, children’s channels, and others, the Indian Broadcasting Foundation was set up, which in turn established Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC), an independent self-regulatory body in 2011, whose suggestions are strictly followed. In the print media, despite the PCI, a number of newspapers have sought to have internal-regulation by appointing an Ombudsman. But it needs to be emphasised that while self-regulation can help media outlets to stave off government control, a lot depends on the mechanism’s effectiveness and acceptability.

Time will tell whether the media will be checked or stick to the thumb rule of accuracy.

## Speaker

**Alireza Bahrami**

ISNA News Agency  
Editor in Chief  
Iran

He is a journalist, poet, publisher and documentary filmmaker who has covered news in more than 40 countries.

**A Journalist with a Waterproof Watch!**

With the rise of social networks in daily lives of people, some speculated that the age of formal media is over. But at least so far this hypothesis has not been realized, on the contrary, it may have gained strength. The invention of the telephone once suggested that the age of the book was over, but this did not happen. Later, with the invention of the Internet and its key role in people's lives, the assumption of the end of the book was raised again and again nothing happened.

However, some people who saw their profit in establishing this belief, are constantly propagating this idea.

But what is the reality? Let me focus less on theoretical discussions and give you an example in the media of my country, Iran. In Iran, especially with the spread of social networks, one of the types of fake news that increased was the fake news of the death of prominent figures, especially for those who have a history of illness or old

## ----- Alireza Bahrami |

age. Such news was mostly spread during the Iranian New Year holidays, that almost last two weeks. But some of the figures whose deaths have been reported over the past few years are still alive. Some Iranian media outlets fell victim to fake social media news. In my news agency, ISNA, a specific strategy was chosen in this regard. "Second Source"; It became more important than before. In ISNA, after receiving the news of the death of famous or important people, this news is published only when a second source has confirmed it. The second source is, in many cases, a family member and sometimes a guild in which the artist is a member and is responsible for planning the funeral.

Of course, in ISNA, the old debate about the "speed" of the news or the "accuracy" (correctness) of the news is also important. We believe that "speed" of the news is very important, but "accuracy" is also more important than breathing. How is this equation solved? This is the main point. Any non-professional can speed up the spread of news. Any unskilled driver can drive a car at breakneck speed, but for a professional journalist, the speed of news coverage is a different matter. In fact, the speed of a skilled driver is reassuring. So it can be said that successful journalists are those who can mix emotion with experience.

This is where "threat" becomes "opportunity." Over time, as much of this news became known to be fake on social media, it became important to cite standard media. On virtual networks, when they published the news, they tried to remind that the news was also published by the official media. Sometimes, in order for the audience to believe their news, they even lied that the news was published by a standard media. A number of fake news on Iranian social networks have been attributed to ISNA; though ISNA had not published that news. This shows that the media, which strengthened their professional behavior and did not lose their originality in imitating social networks, are still considered a reliable source. Do not doubt that this situation will be more beneficial for the standard media in the future.

## Alireza Bahrami

The media should act like a waterproof clock, showing the exact time, without increasing or decreasing the speed of its hands under the influence of external factors.

## Speaker



## Pooneh Nedai

Shokaran Magazine  
Editor in Chief  
Iran

Pooneh Nedai is an Administrator of Shokaran Magazine, Amrood Publication and Hoo art gallery, also a vice President of AJA and AsiaN correspondent, she also work as a poet, writer, artist. She wrote The Land of Phoenix: A travel diary on Korea, Time footnote, A handful of secret ashes, Typing moments, A desert full of horses, To the tree on foot, We lost darkness after awakening, This flower is brought by Gabriel

## Fact-checking and controlling minds

Fact-checking or finding reliable sources in journalism is a main column for producing valuable news or report. Nowadays that fake news has filled our life more than before, every media has responsibility for fact-checking before publishing the content. In fact, in the new media era which contains professional media and social media, lots of unreliable contents are published in any second.

In the case of social media, ordinary people define "citizen reporter" role for themselves and they publish contents based on entertainment or surprising subjects. Citizen reporters usually don't have special education in the case of fact-checking but they have important role for revealing sensitive subjects to draw

## ■ Pooneh Nedai

attention of the public opinion and governments at the same time the influencers can be used by professionals to lead public opinion into the planned area.

In the case of professional media, the idea of fact-checking has been related to the power and money in all over the history. The policy of producing and publishing the right news is influenced by media, people and governments. I do not want to point the crisis of fact-checking just with politics but I believe it is related to all. The human society and its disasters is a production of all people. When some media don't try to check the facts or hide the reality, there is some strong reason that its roots goes to public consciousness. I am aware that my sentences are closed to philosophy and anthropology, but when we look at the origin of the crisis of fact-checking in media, it seems that there is no way other than flash backing to the hidden desires of human which is greed. Human wants to control the situation to feed his greed to gain power and money.

So if we flash back to the history of fact-checking in journalism, we find out lots of fake news which published in order to guide public opinion to the desires target.

Now that we live in the pluralism world, we might be able to find solutions for producing the right news in the self-regulatory of each media. Any media which seeks its value has to find out new solutions to produce fact based news.

In the late pandemic situation, we are witnesses of floating human beings in fake news. The truth is not clear for us yet, because the system of power doesn't try to clear the mind of people. We journalists have the responsibility to check the fact of every word we publish.

## Speaker



**Frank McNally**

The Irish Times  
Columnist  
Ireland

Frank McNally is a reporter and columnist with the Irish Time. He writes "An Irishman's Diary" four days weekly.

### **War of Words - The Irish Times, the UN, and the war in Ukraine**

When Hollywood scriptwriter William Goldman sat down to write the screenplay for All the Presidents Men, based on the book by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, he was a faced with a dilemma. By then, 1974, everyone knew how the story ended. The journalists won. The US president had been forced to resign.

How could Goldman make cinematic drama from that? He wrestled with the problem for weeks, then found the answer. In his own words, he would throw out the second half of the book. The film would instead concentrate on the first half: the journalists' struggle. And the movie's climax would be the moment of their greatest mistake.

That happened when, because of a fact-checking mix-up, they prematurely named Howard Haldeman - White House Chief of Staff and second most powerful man in America - as part of the conspiracy.

Haldeman was indeed guilty. But under the Washington Post's own rules, the

## Frank McNally

reporters needed two sources. They had only one. In their eagerness to get a second among government insiders, many afraid to speak, Bernstein devised a convoluted, non-verbal system in which he would count to ten over the phone and if the source didn't hang up until the end, it meant the story was true.

In the event, the caller misunderstood the instructions to mean the opposite. So the story ran and the source publicly disowned it. That allowed the White House, on the defensive for months, to launch a fierce counter-attack against a newspaper it could now portray as reckless.

The reporters were given a dressing down by their editor, before being sent back to work and warned not to screw up again. And that's the climax of film. In the low-key closing scene, set in a quiet newsroom, all the drama is provided by a teleprinter at the bottom of the screen, typing dates and headlines of the journalists' subsequent triumph, up to: "President Nixon resigns".

If fact-checking could be confusing in the simpler world of 1974, how much more so is it today in an age of ubiquitous social media, when everybody is a publisher, when versions of the truth are constantly contested, and when the information wars are a big part of war itself?

Last month, one of my colleagues in The Irish Times, our European correspondent Naomi O'Leary, had a fraught experience of the new, chaotic reality. It began when she wrote a story to the effect that staff at the United Nations had been instructed, on the subject of Ukraine, to avoid the words "war" or "invasion" and to use "conflict" or "military offensive" instead.

There was nothing complicated about her sourcing of the story – she had a smoking gun in the form of an email from the UN's department of global communications. But an international incident followed. And as Ukraine expressed concern at the report, the UN mounted an all-out counter-attack.

## Frank McNally

Its official spokesperson's Twitter account quickly denounced the story as "fake". Snopes, the self-declared "definitive internet reference source", agreed, declaring it "false". Many others on social media, ranging from named journalists to unnamed truth vigilantes, took their cue from the UN and weighed in, dismissing the story or haranguing my colleague to withdraw it.

Luckily for her, the vehement denials that such instructions had been given encouraged other UN staffers to send more documentation supporting the story. This suggested the email in question was not an isolated one, that there had been more general, top-down, pressure to soften the language around what Russia was doing, or not to mention it at all.

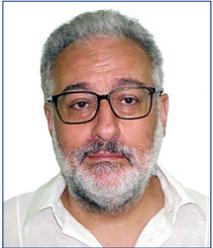
While our correspondent stuck to her story, meanwhile, the UN spokespeople eventually changed theirs, in instalments.

As Naomi has written of her experience: "I was amazed at how many people were dismissing my story based on a carefully worded denial by a spokesman, who if you listened closely, shifted from denying such an email was sent outright, to denying that it was (currently?) official policy, while then accepting it had been sent and minimising it as the act of a rogue regional office."

As for Snopes – which had not contacted her before making its original finding of "false", it has now declared the facts of the case to be "mixed". It accepts that the UN's Department of Global Communication did indeed instruct staff to avoid the word "war" – exactly as the original report said – but adds that the UN "as an entity" did not.

If that sounds Jesuitical, it is at least preferable to the use of one of Donald Trump's favourite words to undermine a journalist. The UN spokesperson's tweet denouncing the report as "fake" has since been deleted.

## Speaker

**Antonio Moscatello**

Askaneews  
Journalist  
Italy

Antonio Moscatello is a journalist in Italian News Agency ASKANEWS. He worked as a war correspondent in Iraqi War. Now is responsible for Asia in Askaneews News Agency. He wrote several books. The last ones: Megumi - Storie di rapimenti e spie della Corea del Nord (Megumi - kidnapping and spies from North Korea), Napoli, 2018; Forse non tutti sanno che in Giappone (Strange Things from Japan), Rome 2019; 101 cose da fare in Giappone una volta nella vita (101 Experiences to do in Japan Once in a Lifetime), Rome 2020.

### **Fact-checking, the idea of self-regulation and the Italian self-regulation environment**

We are living now in very dangerous time for journalists. After two years of pandemy, a terrible war erupted in Ukraine. Many journalists risk their lives in war zone with civilian populations. They are doing all the possible efforts to give us a reliable coverage of the events. But it is very hard to have a clear view from the field. I had the experience of coverage of events in Iraq in 2003-2005 and, sometimes, I had a feeling of discomfort: it was as I was embarked in a large ship, but I could watch just the panorama from the small porthole of my cabin.

## Antonio Moscatello

And the situation from the offices of a media outlet is not better. How can you fact-check a large influx of information coming every day, every hour from many and many sources in a war zone? It's really an hard task, while readers are asking news faster and faster.

Moreover, in a war situation, the pressures from authorities in many countries become stronger. Sometimes it emerges a drive to censorship. But there is a third way between the unchecked news and censorship, the correct one: self-regulation of journalists.

Media self-regulation is a joint endeavour by media professionals to set up voluntary guidelines and abide by them in a learning process open to the public. By doing so, the independent media accept their share of responsibility for the quality of public discourse in their nation, while fully preserving their editorial autonomy.

We can view the self-regulation and the promotion of good journalism as additional safeguards of media freedom as a human right.

Self-regulation is not censorship and not even self-censorship. It is about establishing good principles on ethics, accuracy, rights, while fully preserving freedom on what to report, how to report and what opinions to express.

Moreover, self-regulation helps the media respond to legitimate complaints, and eventually correct mistakes when it fair to do so. Quality-conscious journalists have to maintain a continuous dialogue with the public. To set up a rational and autonomous complaint mechanism is the right thing to do.

A rational self-regulation has two faces:

- 1) In the media world, those outlets whose journalists, editors and owners produce a responsible press would engage in dialogue with public. A fair self-regulation can be set up both industry-wide and in-house.

## Antonio Moscatello

2) Outside the media world, political institutions and public figures - usually the main providers of complaints - can be stakeholders of system of shared trust. Civil society's protagonists such as business groups and labour unions, religious and minority organizations, traditional and newly established interest groups, and individual members of the public must have a central role in that relation.

By promoting standards, self-regulation helps establish a pact with the public in a democratic context: press freedom and media responsibility are indispensable each other.

At the same time, self-regulation protects the right of journalists to be independent: their mistakes have to be judged not by those in power, but by their colleagues. It could be a good way to lessen pressure on the judiciary system to sanction journalists. Moreover, to launch a complaint in a self-regulatory context has advantages for the public: speedy resolutions for free.

Media self-regulation, in brief, is an effort to create a culture of freedom.

But what is the situation in my country, Italy?

In Italy there is an institution legally entrusted of the control of ethical standards of journalism. It's the National Order of Journalists born in 1963 (but there was a National Guild of Journalists in the Fascist Era, from 1925). Besides, we have an independent union, the National Federation of Italian Press (FNSI). To be part of the National Order every professional journalist has to pass a national examen.

These two institutions in 1993 adopted a Charter of Duties of Journalists, recalling the laws on press and the Constitution of Italy.

In the Introduction, the Charter has the following statement:

"Freedom of information and expression are the inalienable rights of all journalists. They are limited by the observance of the rules of law and subject to the protection

## Antonio Moscatello

of other people's personality. They always follow all duties set by fealty and good faith. The respect of the truth of facts is an unbreakable duty. All incorrect news must be rectified, and mistakes must be corrected.

Journalists and publishers are obliged to respect professional secrecy on the sources of a piece of information, when it is required by the fiduciary character of them; they have to promote the spirit of collaboration between colleagues, the co-operation between journalists and publishers, and the trust in press and in readers".

The relationship of trust between media outlets and the people is the foundation of every journalists' job. To promote and cement this relationship, all Italian media professional must sign an Ethics Code called Carta dei Doveri dei giornalisti. There are also some other Charters regulating different fields, for example the rights of children, the so called Carte di Treviso.

In the National Order there is an Institution, the Discipline Council. In that Council it is possible to process the professional complaints.

## Speaker

**Kanat Auyesbay**

LLP (Media Holding)  
Deputy Director  
Kazakhstan

Kanat Auyesbay is a journalist from Kazakhstan.

### **Kazakhstan's experience in combating fake information on the example of the website Stopfake.kz**

Fakes, trolls, haters, the drain of disinformation on social networks – terms that have relatively recently come into use are already actively accompanying the information field of Kazakhstan. As we can see, this is a global trend. Many countries, including countries of advanced democracy, are taking measures to tighten the norms to combat fake news.

The government of Kazakhstan continues to fight hard against fakes. There was an article of the Criminal Code – "dissemination of deliberately false information." An article that appeared specifically to prevent fakes during emergencies. According to it, several people were brought to justice at that time. There are two articles in the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan: article 130 "On libel" and article 274 "On the dissemination of deliberately false information". Both articles deal with fake information, only the first one concerns those cases when the honor and dignity of a person is discredited, and the second one when there is a danger of disturbing public

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order. The first article provides for punishment in the form of a fine of 2 thousand. MCI or imprisonment for up to two years. In the case of libel with the accusation of a person in the commission of grave and especially grave crimes, the penalty is a fine of 3 thousand. MCI or from three years of imprisonment. According to article 274, there is also a gradation of punishment. The most severe is seven years in prison for spreading deliberately false information by a criminal group during wartime or in a state of emergency.

According to the founder of the site Stopfake.kz Alexander Danilov, in July 2020, the Stopfake Internet portal was created.kz in order to stop the spread of false information in the Kazakhstani segment of the network, and in general to reduce the level of confusion and misconceptions, as well as to remind readers of the importance of critical thinking and explain how and why fakes are created. In total, about 2000 fakes were refuted during the operation of the site. Most often, the site refuted fakes about vaccination against CVI, coronavirus and pandemic, about chemical trails and conspiracy theories, fakes about 5G, Internet technologies and cellular communications. Also, during the January 2022 events in the Republic of Kazakhstan, fakes were refuted on the website, which were distributed in large numbers in the Kaznet. A lot of materials were devoted to the topic of Internet fraud and phishing sites. To identify false information, the Stopfake team monitors more than 90 sources on social networks, messengers, online and traditional media daily. To verify the information, open source search tools are used, data and comments are requested from official sources (official representatives, press services of ministries and departments of the Republic of Kazakhstan), as well as expert explanations. The primary sources and authors of the messages are checked for authenticity and authority. Also, the distributed videos and photos are checked for authenticity and signs of falsification. The materials created by Stopfake are freely available, they are distributed and quoted by both regional publications and all major Kazakhstani

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publications and Internet resources. The site regularly publishes interviews with experts. Stopfake.kz uses different ways of presenting information in order to make the content more accessible and understandable to readers. The site also publishes materials that explain how to distinguish pseudoscientific theories (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1840> ), as in deepfake videos, faces, movements and voice are substituted (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1125> ), What are the fakes (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1119> ), What are fake accounts, how are they dangerous and how to recognize them (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1675> ), what conspiracy theories exist (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1315> ), how social networks fight fakes (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/1191> ), how to recognize phishing sites and how they are dangerous (<https://stopfake.kz/ru/archives/2250> ). A series of materials was devoted to how the legislation of different countries of the world is fighting disinformation and the spread of fake news. For the website and social networks, Stopfake also produces entertainment and cognitive content in the form of tests, memes, illustrations, the purpose of which is also to remind about the importance of critical thinking. In addition, on the site you can find a complete list of resources with information about the formulations of vaccines against CVI and the results of studies of these drugs.

### Conclusions and recommendations

It is necessary to deal more systematically with fake information and pay special attention to media literacy training, the development of critical thinking for different categories of the population, from childhood to older people.

- Fakes and related phenomena have flooded the information space and are being used more and more often.
- Use the available levers to combat fakes with caution, so as not to violate freedom of speech and self-expression.

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- Taking into account the global trends taking place recently, residents of Kazakhstan are becoming victims of information wars, external stuffing of false information and propaganda. Before these trends, people are disarmed.
- Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen expert explanation to both journalists and the entire population and teach them the elements of fact-checking.
- Concentrate on training journalists and the entire population, teach them to distinguish between fakes that really pose a threat to society, the audience, and where fakes are mixed with trolling.
- Implement the experience of advanced countries in the field of media literacy and fact-checking.
- Use the power of large technology companies and global social networks to combat fakes.

## Speaker

**EunRyung Chong**

SNUFactCheck Center  
Director  
Korea

EunRyung Chong PhD, is the inaugural director of the SNUFactCheck Center, the first and largest web platform for professional fact-checkers in South Korea. She is currently serving as an independent advisory board member for International Fact Checking Network.

A scholar-practitioner, she has published on the state of fact-checking and media credibility in South Korea. Dr. Chong worked for 19 years as a reporter and editor at Dong-A Daily, a leading newspaper. She has served as a commissioner of the Press Arbitration Commission in Korea.

### **The state of fact-checking in different nations and the operation of the press self-regulatory model in Korea**

Fact-checking, developed around the American media in the 1990s, was primarily conducted to verify statements made by politicians. While simply informing the voters of “He said this, she said that” allowed reporters to retain their objectivity by distancing themselves from their sources, it nevertheless left the voters to judge the validity of the statement.

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**EunRyung Chong**

Fact-checking Journalism, a process in which journalists judge the validity of statements of political figure by citing evidence, aims to deliver more relative and correct information to the people, and it is associated with the journalism reformation movement.

After the early 2000s, Fact-checking journalism rose beyond the newsrooms in America and spread across the globe. For example, NGOs in the Balkan peninsula and former Soviet union states began to develop the reformer model, whose primary objective was in political reformation. In these regions, as shown by the current war in Ukraine, fact-checking against the hybrid threat of Russian political influence and misinformation is thriving.

In Western Europe, we see cases of the expert model; a group of independent non-partisan fact-checkers that neither classify themselves as journalists nor social activists. These fact-checkers not only fact-check the politicians, but also media outlets, and they have been actively developing automated fact-checking using computer algorithms.

Fact-checking in South Korea is similar to that of the American newsroom model in that it is the press that spearheaded the advance of fact-checking.

The fact-checking movement, which initially began as fact-checking political statements, is at a turning point in this post-truth era. Although fake news is as old as human history, contemporary fake news harbors four distinct traits.

First, with the advancement of digital technology, it became easier to post fake news on websites and monetize them through advertisements. Second, the structure of social media is formed in a way that is suitable for the proliferation of fake news. Third, the reliability of mainstream has been continually plunging. Fourth, political polarization has exacerbated.

## EunRyung Chong

Thus, the reliability of mainstream media declining and political polarization deepening has created a setting where misinformation can be mass produced. These issues were clearly revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The realm of science and health became politicized, and false information spread beyond borders through social media. Fact-checking institutions across the globe united to respond against the proliferation of misinformation.

South Korean media has initially been fact-checking since the 19th presidential election in 2017. The SNUFactCheck, where I work as the director, is the first fact-checking platform in Korea provided by the SNU Institute of Communication Research, where 31 news agencies in South Korea form a coalition to fact-check statements made by politicians and government officials as well as public issues that need to be verified. These issues, ranging from social, economic, scientific, and political, are cross-checked and uploaded on the SNUFactCheck platform. In the 5 years since the March of 2017, over 3,700 issues have been verified and 62% of them have been confirmed as false. 31 media outlets have verified the accuracy of 520 cases regarding COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines in the past 2 years.

In the trend of past 5 years, the source of false information have moved from politicians and influential figures to internet communities and social media. Since the start of the pandemic, 69% of misinformation on COVID-19 spread through the internet, and 22% was done through conventional media. Some media outlets have had an active role in the circulation and the proliferation of mis/disinformation by simply quoting or publishing them without verification.

An amendment to the Act on Press Arbitration introducing punitive damages to falsified news reports was proposed last year, but it has since been put on hold. We must consider whether to view the media as a source of the production of mis/disinformation or as a litmus test to examine and prevent the proliferation of mis/disinformation.

## EunRyung Chong

Regulating mis/disinformation by law poses threats to the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press. Because the execution of the law is done by the very power that is under scrutiny of the press, we must not exclude the possibility of an attempt to limit the freedom of the press under the guise of legality.

In a time where the need and discontent toward media are prevalent, a model based on the answerability of the media rather than its liability is more appropriate for the self-correction process in which the media actively communicates with the audience. This model can improve the quality of the journalism while maintaining the freedom of the press and the freedom of expression.

When the media spreads misinformation due to their compulsion to publish before others, it is the responsibility of other media outlets to verify their peers. It is not enough that news outlets verify one another, but an independent regulating body must step in to arbitrate. Researchers in South Korea proposed a formation of a combined independent media self-regulation agency at the end of last year. According to the proposal, the key role of the regulating body is the assessing and combining of the complaints and reports of users with the contents that it monitored so that the ombudsperson can quickly contact each news agencies to make amendments.

The EU has been supporting the rise in quality journalism as a response to mis/disinformation. In the contemporary information environment where mis/disinformation is constantly produced, it may be a while until we as a society build up an immunity against misinformation, but it will prove to be a fundamental solution. The improvement of the quality of journalism through self-regulation, along with the dissociation from mis/disinformation by the media through credible references will be essential in rooting out mis/disinformation.

**key terms:** Disinformation is the subset of misinformation that is deliberately

## EunRyung Chong

propagated. Disinformation is meant to deceive, while misinformation may be inadvertent or unintentional (Guess & Lyons, 2020).

### Reference

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## Speaker



**Hyung Joon Ahn**

MBC  
Journalist  
Korea

Ahn Hyung Joon joined YTN in 1994 and joined the MBC News Agency at the end of 2000. In 2001, he covered the scene of September 11 attacks. Also, he covered the scene of the Iraq war in 2003. He served as a president of Korea Broadcasting Journalist Association. He is an Author of <Deep News> the novel.

### The management of an embedded fact-check team at some legacy media platforms like public broadcasters

1) ~2016

Operating an (Embedded Factcheck Team)

2) 2017: Media \* platform specializing in fact-checking launched Since autumn 2016, "the candlelight revolution," a movement to have the president of the Republic of Korea step down, has been held in Seoul, Korea. In the process, the demand for fact-checking fake news grew. As such, in March 2017, the two groups of FactCheck Center of Seoul National University (SNU) and NEWSTOF were established. The name NEWSTOF was derived from the phrase "NEWS: TRUE OR FALSE?"

The SNUFactCheck Center professed to be a "fact-checking portal site" for gathering,

## Hyung Joon Ahn

posting, and evaluating articles of each media outlet related to fact-checking. It cooperated with 15 media outlets and was launched in March 2017. However, the center, part of SNU's Department of Communication, did not directly check facts. NEWSTOF, launched the same year in June, professed to be a media outlet specializing in fact-checking and checked the facts itself. Four people who had previously worked as journalists and producers worked there full-time off-line. In addition, about 50 experts from each field worked online as advisors. They selected news of interest, checked the facts two to three times every week, and posted the results. It thus gained trust and engaged in large-scale fact-checking projects like checking pledges made by presidential candidates and their implementation.

3) 2018: Fact-checking contest with citizens' participation The world's first fact-checking public contest to sort out fake news was launched by the Korea Broadcasting Journalist Association. Young people aspiring to become journalists, as well as the public, including hundreds of middle and high school students, participated in the contest. The team that won the Grand Prix at the second contest in 2019 attended the Google Cloud Summit held in Singapore in the winter of the same year and presented how they checked the facts and garnered their achievements.

4) 2020: "Fact-Check Net" launched The Journalists Association of Korea and the Korea Broadcasting Journalist Association established the "Fact-Check Net" in 2020. Civilians and experts who had completed a course on fact-checking started working as civilian fact-checkers. Within a year of its launching, over 200,000 civilians used the net. In addition, the Community Media Foundation under the Korea Communications Commission held a media literacy training program nationwide. However, the government budget support for both organizations has recently been cut.

5) Vitalizing fact-checking teams within media outlets and their limitations

## Hyung Joon Ahn

Likewise, in 2020, the JTBC newsroom, a Korean broadcaster, became a member of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN). Not only JTBC but also other media outlets each operate a team dedicated to fact-checking. About 30 media outlets, such as major dailies, including Hankyoreh, the 3 public broadcasters, and YTN, a 24-hour channel specializing in news, manage a fact-checking team. The teams in each media outlet and Korea's organizations concentrating in fact-checking play an important role in forming proper public opinion. However, they have also been criticized and sued for their "selection bias." The aforementioned "SNUFactCheck Center" was sued by a particular political party right after the May 2017 presidential election. However, it was concluded that the center was "being cleared of suspicion."

6) 2021-present: Pursuing the establishment of a media self-regulatory organization

Seven organizations, including the Korea Broadcasting Journalist Association, National Union of Media Workers, Journalists Association of Korea, and Korea Internet Newspaper Association, started preparing "the establishment of an integrated media self-regulatory organization" in 2021 as a certified nonprofit organization. Based on the Act on Press Arbitration and Remedies for Damage Caused by Press Reports, the plan is to have media outlets such as newspapers, broadcasters, and Internet newspapers pay a share of the cost of running the organization and participate by abiding by the regulations. The Korea Press Foundation shall also financially support it as a public agency.

The key is a committee for self-regulation. It shall consist of nine experts recommended by an external recommending committee, and the term shall be three years. Five to seven ombudspersons of the committee are to monitor news and articles. In addition, when user dissatisfaction and reports are submitted, they are to take appropriate measures with the relevant media outlets on the matter. A team to support the ombudspersons and a team for monitoring shall be managed separately.

## Hyung Joon Ahn

When severe violations of the regulations are committed, fines shall be imposed, and recommendations, cautions, and warnings shall be made. At the same time, the relevant articles can be corrected, with their exposure halted, and apologies may be made. Media outlets that surpass a certain number of penalty points may be expelled. On the other hand, those that abide well by the regulations shall have to pay a smaller share of the cost of running the organization.

## Speaker



### Kuban Taabaldiev

Kabar News Agency  
Director General  
Kyrgyzstan

He has 30 years of experience in journalism. For the last 10 years he has been the head of the Main News Agency of Kyrgyzstan "Kabar". The agency distributes information about Kyrgyzstan and all of Central Asia in six languages. The agency publishes materials on political, socio-economic topics, interviews, videos on social networks. K. Taabaldiev has a Ph.D and is a visiting professor at several universities in Kyrgyzstan. He has published many analytical materials in a number of international media.

### Emergence and elimination of the fake information space

We are witnessing the rapid increase of the influence the media flow has on big politics. Recent events fully prove such conclusions. Until now, the common perception was that political players use media to their own advantage, specifically aiming the flow of information in the direction they need. In other words, politics was primary and information resources followed in a given direction. This system was stable in giving certain results in favor of any given policies. However, over time as people stepped into the so-called "Internet era" it became obvious that information flows had the ability to rise above politics. More stories began to be fabricated, with their authors spreading their versions of events that were beneficial to them. This

## Kuban Taabaldiev

was the era of Web 1.0, associated with the growth of the Internet's influence on all aspects of life within the global community. This went on for a dozen years, during which information technology progressed so far that social networks emerged. There is no limit to the growth of these diverse platforms. We all remember well when Facebook appeared and initiated the creation of a new information society. At first, not everyone understood the significance of this network, but gradually began to appreciate it, until Facebook became one of the most important social and informational platforms. Its members could receive and distribute a wide array of news and stories, as well as opinions and interpretations. The information flow on the platform has increased significantly when the function of forming groups was introduced to the platform, which made it possible to multiply the audience of a single source. This led to the creation of countless groups united by different interests - social, economic and of course political. There are cases when Facebook groups have been used very effectively in election processes in certain countries at different levels. In particular, the example of Kyrgyzstan during the political events of 2020, when there was a change of power largely organized by Facebook pages, proves this well.

Soon similar platforms with various additional features began to appear and work in parallel with Facebook - Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube for video information. China also launched many of its own platforms on the web. The most effective new form of sharing information right now is TikTok, a platform which is used by a large number of young people who themselves become the authors of various information flows. The new possibilities of IT-technologies will surely continue to create more new forms and solutions to distribute information to a very wide range of people.

In these circumstances, it becomes almost impossible to track the authenticity of information, which has led to a lot of fake news. These stories can be divided into two types. The first type consists of unintentional fake stories, when their authors

## Kuban Taabaldiev

spread them without realizing their unreliability. Therefore, the issue of media literacy among the young audience on the web is now becoming very urgent. It is more important than ever to educate them to distinguish truth from lies.

The second type consists of purposefully created and deliberately distributed fake information. The effect of such materials on public consciousness around the world is becoming stronger every day. The main reason for the spread of fake news is the unlimited growth of platforms on Web 2.0. Social networks are largely unregulated, except for their owners' ability to manage platform participants to some extent. However, even they are already becoming dependent on big politics. Recent events in the world prove this quite clearly.

In general, we can conclude that the time of relevance of traditional media among the public, and through them within big politics, is unfortunately a thing of the past. Such traditional media outlets are themselves increasingly moving to social networks, thus also becoming active participants in the new trend of unrestrained spread of information. Moreover, journalists are losing their credibility among the audience because their information is not popular, although accurate. The audience wants sensationalism and scandals. This negatively affects the credibility of the media, and increases the popularity of social networks.

The world community needs to encourage and educate people, especially the younger generation, about the traditional values of media. It could be very difficult, but it must be done. Otherwise, we will find ourselves in a world with a completely unreliable, fake information space. An educated society needs to be able to figure out where the truth is and where is the lie.

Thanks.

## Speaker



## Chuluunbaatar Dolgor

Asia Journalist Association (Mongolia)  
President  
Mongolia

Mr. Dolgor is a renowned journalist, author, linguist, song writer in Mongolia, who began his journalistic career in 1987 on Mongolian National Television, the only channel at the time. He has contributed greatly to the development of Mongolian journalism with popular television documentaries about those who were 'repressed' under communism, along with many other programs. He has also lectured at journalism schools on the principles of democratic and independent journalism. His vast experience includes working as Editor in chief of two daily newspapers, "Mongolian News" and "Ulaanbaatar Times"; General Secretary of Confederation of Mongolian Journalists; Advisor to Vice President of Mongolia and President of Mongolia Nambariin Enkhbayar. Mr. Dolgor has been awarded many prizes from literary organizations and awarded by the Government of Mongolia including the Order of the Polar Star and Order of Sukhbaatar. In 2009, he received prestigious state award "Honorable Person of Culture" by the declaration of Mongolian President.

### Decline of Press Freedom and the Rise of Fact-Checkers

In recent years, we have seen press freedom deteriorating across the globe. In the past five-year period, approximately 85 percent of the world's population

## Chuluunbaatar Dolgor

experienced a decline in press freedom in their country, according to an analysis based on data from the Varieties of Democracy Institute. The Freedom House found that this downward spiral in press freedom is emerging in both democratic and authoritarian nations. It is most pronounced in Europe, as well as Eurasia and the Middle East.

Many countries are experiencing a crisis in journalism today due to new laws and regulations restricting freedom of expression online. Government requests for content removal from the major internet platforms have increased in the last five years. Actions taken in response to the COVID-19 epidemic were commonly invoked to excuse press freedom breaches. Falling advertising sales as audiences and revenue continue to migrate online. Global newspaper advertising revenue has decreased by half, while Google and Meta now earn roughly half of all global digital advertising spending. Reporters' safety is still in jeopardy, both online and offline. Journalists are being watched, restricted, and even imprisoned by governments in some countries. We are seeing trust in the media and information sources declining over the previous five years. These are some of the key findings of reports and research done on freedom of expression and media development across the globe. While threats to global media freedom are real and concerning in and of themselves, their impact on democracy is what makes them genuinely dangerous.

Against this backdrop, independent fact-checkers have sprung up in more than 102 nations throughout the globe in the last decade. 341 active such groups are operating now, according to Duke Reporter's Lab. The fast growth of fact-checkers started in 2016 during the time of the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom and the US presidential election, which sparked public concern about the impact of misinformation. As a result, major tech companies like Facebook and Google have made fact-checking a priority on their platforms, providing grants, direct funding, and other incentives to new and existing fact-checking organizations.

## Chuluunbaatar Dolgor

Today's fact-checkers aim to identify and report misinformation or disinformation by verifying the accuracy and honesty of political claims. This sets them apart from a traditional component of the journalistic process, carried out in newsrooms as a quality control measure to ensure that content produced by journalists was accurate. At least half of active fact-checkers are independent organizations with close ties to academia and non-profit initiatives. They are separate entity from mainstream journalism and traditional media organizations. Here in Mongolia, we have two active fact-checkers- Fact Check Mongolia and Live.tv. Fact Check Mongolia is an independent, non-profit organization in Ulaanbaatar. It is funded by Open Society Foundations, the Mongolian News Media Council and the UNICEF. As for Live.tv, it is also an independent organization run by journalists.

As the number of independent fact-checkers has grown around the world, we are seeing some struggling relationship between media and the independent fact-checkers with a number of complaints and objections from media about how fact-checking is conducted and how their information is removed from social media after fact-checkers have flagged it. Media outlets have claimed this promotes censorship, but it also encourages journalists and editors to self-censor for fear of facing penalties such as reduced reach on Facebook and, as a result, lower earnings and news visibility.

However, there is work being done to strengthen the relationship between media outlets and independent fact-checkers. In several nations, fact-checkers are now accepted as members of press councils. This holds fact-checkers to the same ethical standards as journalists, ensuring that if a dispute arises, the press council will be able to resolve it. Also, UNESCO launched programs to support press and media councils in encouraging fact-checkers to follow media self-regulation as well as journalistic and professional norms. Many fact-checking organizations have their own code of ethics and practices, such as the International Fact-checking Network's,

## Chuluunbaatar Dolgor

but reports have found that fact-checkers adhering to existing media self-regulation mechanisms at the national level is another way to strengthen cooperation between media and fact-checkers and facilitate dispute resolution.

Studies have identified that audiences prefer rigorous forms of journalistic scrutiny, as news organizations themselves have begun to include more dedicated fact-checking services into their reporting to combat the daily flow of disinformation and misinformation, without jeopardizing journalistic confidence. This may build and increase the degree of trust in news media.

## Speaker

**Bishnu Gautam**

Rising Nepal  
Editor in Chief  
Nepal

Bishnu Prasad Gautam is currently Chief Reporter of The Rising Nepal, the oldest English daily of Nepal, and general secretary of Nepal Chapter of Asia Journalists Association (AJA-Nepal). During his career of an active journalist for 26 years at the English daily, Gautam has earned a distinctive identity of a film critic in Nepal. Besides writing mostly on Nepali Cultures, films, mountaineering he has also been writing on political issues. He holds an MA in English Literature and Nepali History and Culture from Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Gautam also holds Bachelors degree in Law. He possesses deep knowledge in Nepali cultures, Politics and Law.

**Current Status of Fact-Checking**

Journalism is not pure now. It is contaminated. And consumption of contaminated news and information is not good for the health of readers, society, institutions, democracy, politicians. Contaminated information does not do good to anyone. Still flow of contaminated news has been on rise in recent years thanks to the people's growing access to information technology. As more people are connected to social media like facebook and tweeter, fake news, misinformation, disinformation and malinformation reach them quickly. As many of the users of the social media tend to

## Bishnu Gautam

believe everything they read or hear, they cannot distinguish between true and false information. Sometimes, fake news story culminates in violence as in Kathmandu in January 2000, when a false news story on the comment allegedly made by Indian film star Rihitk Roshan on Nepalis spread. Four persons were killed in a riot sparked by the false news and property worth millions was damaged in Kathmandu. This was the bitter experience we felt first because of the disinformation.

However, back then practice of fact-checking of any information did not exist, at least in Nepal, and the people who read or heard about the false news believed it. But these days, two institutions are doing fact-checking of the news and information circulated in the print, electronic and online media as well as social sites. As a result, the people having access to the site of these fact-checking institution could know whether the news stories they read were true or false.

In Nepal, fact-checking of information began in 2015 by South Asia Check. Nepal Fact Check, the second institute was launched in March 2019 with an editor and two researchers. Both of these are doing the fact-checking of the media contents and are promptly informing the readers whether the contents they read in newspapers, online media, social sites and hear from radio, TVs video are true or false.

In 15 months after its establishment, Nepal Fact Check factchecked over 7 million by June 2021 and found the 67 percent of information were fake and 21 percent misleading information. This data itself shows how common the fake or false news stories get published and spread in Nepal.

It is human nature that many of us do not check whether the contents we read are true. We believe them and share, helping the spread of false news.

Most of the misinformation get spread through video sharing in Nepal. In Nepal, political ideologies and conspiracy theories help breed false news. South Asia Check in 2021 revealed how the cadres of the then ruling party CPN-UML inserted an

## Bishnu Gautam

Indian flag in a picture of a political rally organized by the rival faction of the party against the dissolution of the House of Representatives by then Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. When local media lack contents, they use such false information while those in the party disliking the rival group spread it. Fake news and misinformation also spread rapidly when the government of Nepal endorsed the US grant Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) in February this year.

Proper audit system, human and technological competence are what required to filter the true and false news. But developing countries are lacking these, and false news stories continue to spread putting democracy, and democratic institutions at risk.

## Speaker



## Keshab Prasad Poudel

New Spotlight  
Editor  
Nepal

Keshab Prasad Poudel is currently working as an editor of New Spotlight National Magazine of Nepal and its online version. He completed his Master Degree from Tribhuvan University Nepal Specializing Journalism. Poudel was also completed media fellowship in University of California Berkeley. Having started journalism 28 years ago, Mr. Poudel has worked in various issues related to international relations. Mr. Poudel took part various international seminars and workshop.

### Fake News, Fact-checking and Challenges For Journalists

Fact-checking is always the basis of norms of news writing. News editors and media houses gave high priority for fact-checking and rechecking from the early days. News organizations used to have various steps for print or broadcasting. From copy editor to proofreader and stone editor, there were stages of news organizations to fact check and spelling check. In the era of the upsurge of social media and their growing influences and reach, journalists are using various technological and traditional methodologies in fact-checking. Unlike in the early era of yellow Journalism, fake news and disinformation are more destructive these days

## ■ Keshab Prasad Poudel

The emergence of social media is a boon as well as a bane to the journalists and media hours around the world. These media increase the reach of the news, videos and image. By sharing in social media, the write-up, videos and images can reach millions of audiences and readers. This is a positive side of social media. However, social media also carries millions of fake news. If journalists failed to do proper fact-checking, they can land in controversy and are likely to legal actions.

Globally, different local media self-regulatory organizations have been in operation to regulate fake news. Besides, there are also non-profit-making international organizations like Reporter Without Border, News Lab, Newspapers own units and universities are supporting journalists providing fact-checking tools. Besides, organizations like Journalist Federation, Reporter Club, or Editors Guild, are independent bodies that have a statutory responsibility to regulate their own members through the adoption and enforcement of rules of conduct for fair, ethical, and efficient practices in media. In some countries, government-created autonomous bodies like Press Council or Parliament-controlled press regulatory committees have been active to guide the journalists. Semi-autonomous organizations like the Nepal Press Council and independent professional organizations like the Federation of Nepalese Journalists are operating as self-regulatory organizations supporting journalists in fact-checking. Like some countries around the world, Nepal has passed a law and regulations forcing media to limit sharing the content of news on social media. This move restricts the freedom of people and independent journalism. As per new law and regulation, journalists are made legally accountable for sharing fake news for up to 10 years in prison or a huge fine.

Fact-checking was traditionally viewed as a part of journalistic pursuit performed within newsrooms as quality control to verify content produced by journalists. Following the advent of social media and migration of public debates to online space, fact-checking also became the focus of independent organizations aiming to

## ----- Keshab Prasad Poudel ■

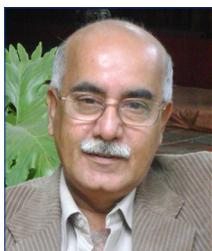
improve accountability related to claims on the veracity of information published on social media accounts for their claims. However, as the number of independent fact-checkers grew internationally, their relationship with media outlets has been on the wane.

Along with other UNESCO has also been supporting press and media councils in different parts of the world including Nepal to encourage fact-checkers to adhere to media self-regulation and to journalistic and professional standards. Many fact-checkers have their code of ethics and practices, such as the ones of the International Fact-checking Network, but the adherence of fact-checkers to existing media self-regulation mechanisms at the national level is an additional way to reinforce cooperation between media and fact-checkers and enable resolution of disputes. In some countries, press councils are now welcoming fact-checkers as members. This puts fact-checkers under the same ethical standards as media, ensuring that in potential disputes the press council would be able to handle the complaints.

All journalists and media outlets are encountering problems coming from fake news. Although many devices have been originated and fact-checking tools are in place, deep fakes are not going away anytime soon. It's safe to say that these elaborate forgeries will make verifying media harder, and this challenge could become more difficult over time.

We have seen a rapid rise in fact-checking technology recently and the advent of self-regulatory media organizations. The question now is: are they going to keep going, or are they plateauing? What's going to happen next? Despite the current uncertainty, newsrooms can and should follow the evolution of this threat by conducting research, partnering with academic institutions and training their journalists on how to leverage new tools

## Speaker



### Nasir Aijaz

Sindh Courier  
Editor in Chief  
Pakistan

Nasir Ahmed Memon Aijaz. Pen name: Nasir Aijaz, his head office is based in Karachi, the capital city of Sindh province of Pakistan. He attended international conferences in ten Asian countries. He had been conducting training workshops for journalists across Pakistan for one and half a decade.

### We have to reset our mindset

We have gathered today to discuss 'Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization'. The topic chosen by JAK for the World Journalists Conference 2022 is not only important but very interesting also, as the fact-check and self-regulation through Code of Ethics for making a report authentic and accurate, had been the basic lesson of journalism, yet we need to discuss it even today, being turning more complex with every passing day. Perhaps we have failed to find any workable solution, as the issue has become complicated with emergence of social media – a powerful weapon possessed by every citizen.

The Internet has a complex infrastructure and technology which enables users to

## Nasir Aijaz

access and exchange information globally. Today approximately 2.5 billion people worldwide are connected through the Internet, which has become a great source of dissemination of information, not only by the journalists but every user having access to Internet.

Prior to advent of Internet and the social media, there used to be a fact-check system in print as well as in electronic media. As the print and electronic media were considered as 'Gateway to Information', any report filed by the reporters, was to be checked thoroughly before publishing or telecasting/broadcasting, but the social media smashed all such systems and turned to be an 'Unguarded Gateway' from where any information passes without any hindrance and nobody is able to verify whether it's fake or authentic. In most cases, the journalists greatly depend on such unascertained information.

Since the digitalization has greatly increased the amount of information, prompting the governments to control that data, the situation has become more complicated, as the restrictions through certain laws are being considered as an assault on basic right to express views.

Here I must share that such a situation prevails in Pakistan where the government has drafted a new law to setup 'Pakistan Media Regularity Authority'. The controversial law proposes placing all media including print, broadcast and social media under the jurisdiction of one regulatory agency. Rejected by all the media owners and journalists' bodies as well as rights organization terming it as "draconian" and 'unconstitutional', the proposed law also envisage jail term for the journalists.

In fact the digitalization not only has changed the way people communicate, it has transformed profoundly and irreversibly the nature of journalism and ethics.

While new media encourages people to speak their minds, it still needs independent

## Nasir Aijaz

journalists to provide reliable and impartial news and analysis. Here begins the crucial task of self-regulatory mechanisms to foster public trust in the media, otherwise ‘all information would be considered guilty, until proven innocent’, as an author A. D. Aliwat suggests.

The widespread availability of content deemed harmful has inspired concern as there is no common understanding of the rules that should internationally govern the Internet. Hence self-regulation appears to be a solution to increase online accountability while offering more flexibility than state regulation.

With new technologies radically reshaping the media landscape, traditional regulatory assumptions have been called into question and, in many cases, existing rules have become counterproductive and the governmental regulations proved to be inefficient. This issue is still very much debated. There has not yet been a common agreement reached on people’s rights and responsibilities on the Internet.

In my view, self-regulation can help preserve the independence of media and protect it from government interference. I must clarify that self-regulation is not censorship and not even self-censorship. It is about establishing minimum principles on ethics, accuracy, and so on, while fully preserving editorial freedom on what to report and what opinions to express.

I must say that the journalism is not a free speech. Rather it is constrained expression, and it works in a framework of values and ethics, in framework of professional standards given in the Press Code/Code of Ethics for journalists. Journalism has public purpose and it has to be done in public interest.

We all know that publicly expressed criticism will always be perceived as incorrect by those scrutinized. However, self-regulation helps the media respond to legitimate complaints, and correct mistakes in a trial-and-error way.

## Nasir Aijaz

By promoting standards, self-regulation helps maintain the media’s credibility with the public. At the same time, self-regulation protects the right of journalists to be independent, and to be judged for professional mistakes not by those in power but by their colleagues.

On the other hand, the constitutions should prohibit censorship and protect freedom of expression; the Laws should guarantee free access to government information and protect journalists from being forced to disclose confidential sources of investigative stories; the regulations should guarantee the fair and transparent administration of media business such as registration, licensing etc.

A self-regulated media can fight more effectively for the repeal of unnecessary regulations by convincing the public that the media are conscious of the need for standards. Governments can best promote self-regulation by: Saying no to state ownership of the media; Ensuring full freedom from governmental interference in the press; Keeping the media pluralistic through anti-monopoly measures.

We all also are well aware that neither good laws nor ethics will ever fully satisfy the public about what the media do, but the responsible self-regulation is the way to move in the right direction. What we have to do is to reset our mindset.

## Speaker

**Gorethy Kenneth**

South Pacific Post  
Political Editor  
Papua New Guinea

Gorethy Kenneth is a Senior Journalist of South Pacific Post Limited (Jan 2000 – Present, 22 years 4 months). She has worked in Politics, Investigative, Business, PR, and General.

**Fact-Checking Remains a Major Challenge in Papua New Guinea**

Papua New Guinea, a land of a thousand tribes, 850 languages and two official languages is a very challenging country.

With two daily newspapers, four television stations, four radio stations, two weekly papers and about four online stations all in English, the operation of media self regulations rests within these organizations.

Only three media organizations are government owned – the two daily papers have private ownership but the one I work for has shareholders.

The new media technologies that has reached the country to ensure the cultural diversity in media content, and provide a free space of public access and various opinions and ideas without censorship has also become so challenging for our country here in the Pacific, given 80 percent of the 10 million population live in rural

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**Gorethy Kenneth**

areas and only 20 percent live in urban areas.

**Fact-checking by global journalism**

Because Papua New Guinea is now a global player in the world, fact-checking has become easier especially for mainstream media but remains a big challenge for the million masses that have access to internet and social media platforms that carry no such thing.

The global regulation of new media technologies bolsters legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of the public. And in our case, we make our own editorial judgments based solely on careful consideration of all the facts.

We do not allow political, sectional, or commercial interests to influence our editorials despite many challenges we have faced with the Government over the years who try to intimidate the main stream media for control.

**Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization**

Every organization in PNG including the company I work for, also have a media law that regulates the production and use of media in the country which we apply to a wide variety of media types, including broadcast television, the internet, and print media encompassing all legal issues that may arise during the production or consumption of various forms of media.

Our individual and PNG Media Council media ethics also promotes and defends values such as a universal respect for life and the rule of law and legality. This defines and deals with ethical questions about how media should use texts and pictures provided by the citizens

The biggest problem we have is the unsanctioned social media fake news that sometimes the mainstream media buys into. For the company I work for, because

## Gorethy Kenneth

we are a global paper, we have strict regulations on such and as Social media increasingly rely on independent fact-checkers to help them free their platforms of disinformation.

Although we don't have a fact-checkers team, there is a standard operation in the company for all to seek to help users trust quality information, their relationship with traditional media becomes strained when fact-checkers question the work done by journalists.

Fact-checking was traditionally viewed as a part of journalistic pursuit performed within newsrooms as quality control to verify content produced by journalists. Following the advent of social media and migration of public debates to online space, fact-checking also became the focus of independent organisations aiming to improve accountability related to claims on the veracity of information published on social media, and accountable for their claims. However, as the number of independent fact-checkers grew internationally, their relationship with media outlets has been on the wane, to which PNG is no exception.

Ends...

## Speaker



## Rosalin Garganera

Asia Journalist Association  
Correspondent  
Philippines

Rosalin F. Garganera has more than 25 years experience in investigative journalism and TV/radio broadcasting. She's currently the Chief Reporter of Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo (IMKT), a public service radio program, starting out as a reporter in 1997. She was correspondent of the TV program of IMKT in the late 90s and was its Executive Producer in its previous two seasons that aired in 2021. She also writes a weekly column in Remate, a popular daily tabloid newspaper in Filipino. She regularly contributes to AsiaN magazine writing about Philippines culture and politics and other assigned topics. She earned her degree from the University of the Philippines and married with two young adult boys.

## Fact-Checking and Media Self-Regulation

Thank you for inviting me to make a sharing in this conference. I hope to make a contribution by answering the following questions. Why is fact-checking important? Why should we self-regulate as media? Then I will share some fact-checking initiatives I came across in the past months. Then I will share my thoughts about the challenges of fact-checking social media. Finally, I will end with some of my reflections as a Filipino journalist.

## Rosalin Garganera

First, why is it important to do fact-checking? As a practicing journalist, I think it is important for us to be consistent. As journalists we must be truthful and accurate about what we write and to be sure that what we present on air – thru radio or television – is the truth, and that they accurately description of what happened. Whether we are writing straight news, a feature article or an opinion piece, the contents must be factual. It cannot be figments of our imagination. Even if it is an opinion piece, we must base our arguments on facts and not invented data.

We must go back to the basic elements of journalism, as forwarded by the American Press Institute. As journalists, our primary obligation is to the truth and we must always observe the discipline of verification.

For us journalists, to write or talk or spread misinformation and disinformation, it can be dangerous, sometimes even fatal for the vulnerable sectors and may put people at risk.

It is good to be reminded that journalism is the first draft of history. If we spread lies, then we are contributing to revising history or revisionism.

Now, why should we self-regulate as media? I see at least three reasons why this is crucial.

As humans, we DO NOT ALWAYS have the complete facts or the most complete picture. We have natural human limitations. We can't see or hear everything. No matter how diligent we are with our research and validation, there is a chance that we may overlook something or someone. Also, as individual journalists and reporters, we are often informed by our own bias and subjectivity. Our minds have been shaped by our own learnings from school, and our interaction with family and society. We have created opinions based on what we read and what we have experienced first hand. We can't always be objectively detached to what we report or write about. Finally, and this is the more dangerous reason for me, sometimes our corporate

## Rosalin Garganera

owners try to influence our work .

This third reason is important to self-regulate, even as we recognize that our media outfit must receive some form of income or profit. But we must ensure that corporate motive to profit does not become the prime motivation in producing our content as responsible journalists.

I have a strong personal conviction that we as journalists must reject the regulation that come from states (or governments) or from the corporations that technically own our media outfits. Yes, media outfits need sound organization and financial management. But profits alone should not be the basis for any editorial decision.

In the past few months and during this pandemic, I have come across two international fact-checking initiatives. These are 1) The International Fact-Checking Network or IFCN and 2) the Credibility Coalition. I found them very interesting, although I have not been personally involved in any of their networks. In the interest of time, I will not elaborate on them, but are sharing the links to their online content.

IFCN - <https://www.poynter.org/ifcn/>

Credibility Coalition - <https://credibilitycoalition.org>

I would like to focus now on some challenges in fact-checking social media. We must recognize that social media is a totally different animal from mainstream media that we are more familiar with. At the start, social media content production is decentralized. The articles and videos are not being written or produced in a central office or the news desk. Anyone with a camera and a set of ideas can produce social media content. Physical location is irrelevant. All they need is a good internet connection.

And unlike us, social media content is not subject to editorial review. There are no section editors or executive producers who can advise what is accurate or not, or if

## Rosalin Garganera

something is a verifiable fact. Finally, social media content creators get paid by the number of hits or likes, not by the facts or truth that they create. They can actually disregard facts and truths, in exchange for likes, follows or shares.

Let me now share a few of my reflection points as a Filipino journalist. I have seen the social media world outpace my writing and radio career. It is important to keep up with technology, but it is not necessary to do all social media platforms. I maintain several Facebook accounts, one for personal use, another one for professional connections and a third one as the public platform our radio program. We also have separate YouTube and Twitter and Instagram accounts, but I let the other younger reporters and social media staff to handle them.

In terms of doing fact-checking, it believe it is beneficial to join a local fact-checking group. I do not have actual personal experience, but I am aware that they offer training courses and other materials that can be effective in enhancing our skills as reporters and media practitioners to do our own fact-checking.

My lifelong lesson has been there is no short-cut to being factual. Research will always work, and we must never get tired of doing verification, until we are confident we are factual and near to the truth. Lastly, I think social media is both a blessing a curse for journalists, but that is maybe for another conference.

Thank you very much!

## Speaker



### Leonidio Ferreira

Diario de Noticias  
Deputy Editor in Chief  
Portugal

He was born in Setubal, a city some 40 km south of Lisbon, in 1971. He's Portuguese with Portuguese parents. He has studied in Set bal until being admitted to university, when he moved to University of Lisbon to study Social Communication. He also has a MA in American Studies and a PHD in History. He has two children (a boy and a girl). He works for Di rio de Not cias since 1992 . Currently, He's the deputy Editor-in-Chief of this newspaper founded in 1864. As a journalist, his field of specialization is international Politics, but he also has interest in Economics, Environment, Culture and Social Affairs. He speaks portuguese, spanish, english and french. He enjoys to travel and to know other cultures. He has visited Korea as journalist in 2014 and 2015 and with his family in 2017.

### War in Ukraine and fake news seen from Portugal

The Russian invasion of Ukraine (begun on February 24, 2022) has almost completely dominated the news agenda in Portugal in recent weeks. The news about the war in Eastern Europe only didn't fill the front pages of the Portuguese newspapers in the days when the new socialist government was announced and when the national team guaranteed qualification for the Football World Cup in Qatar. The explanation for this great interest of Portuguese readers in an international event is twofold:

## Leonidio Ferreira

on the one hand, the conflict being on the same continent as Portugal (which is a member of NATO) and involving a nuclear power such as Russia; on the other hand, the large community of Ukrainian immigrants in Portugal, second only to the Brazilian in number, and their reputation as honest, hardworking, educated people, very well integrated into society in general.

All the major Portuguese media sent journalists to Ukraine, which implies huge costs for a sector in chronic financial crisis (Portugal is a small country of ten million inhabitants, with a limited domestic market, and the potential of the Portuguese language in the world, 270 million speakers, much remains to be explored). The Di rio de Not cias, the newspaper where I work, for example, had a journalist and a photographer in Lviv, Kiev and Odessa. Another journalist was later sent to other regions of Ukraine. We also had journalists in Poland accompanying the arrival of refugees, some of whom were heading to Lisbon, Porto and other cities. But, as always happens in major conflicts, most of the information we publish arrives through international news agencies (AP, AFP and Reuters, but also the Russian TASS) or through major foreign media such as the American CNN, the British BBC and the most important Spanish, French, English and American newspapers. If this situation of dependence on highly reputed means protects us from errors or falsehoods, it is also true that it leaves us vulnerable to information wrongly validated as true by other means, when the filter fails them. And in this war, there were already some of the wrong news that we gave, both in the printed and digital edition, because we trusted international agencies: for example, the fight to the death of Ukrainian soldiers on Serpent Island, which later it was known to have surrendered to the Russian Navy and taken as prisoners of war to a base in Crimea; or Volodymyr Zelensky's escape from Kiev, which turned out to be false, since long after that the president was still in the Ukrainian capital. From computer game footage distributed as scenes of real combat to footage of other conflicts, such as Syria, that appear

## Leonidio Ferreira

to be a war in Ukraine, there are many ways of distributing fake news, intentionally shared by some and inadvertently by many more. The traditional media, pressured by the struggle for audiences, are tempted to use these dubious images that circulate on social networks, warning that they have not been able to confirm the veracity, but are automatically giving a stamp of credibility, which is dangerous in the medium term for your own image. This problem naturally worries a newspaper like the Di rio de Not cias, with more than a century and a half of existence, and which has already had to coexist with four different political regimes in Portugal, since it was founded during the Constitutional Monarchy in 1864, reported the implementation of the Republic in 1910, then reported the establishment of the Military Dictatorship in 1926 and finally broke the news of the revolution that brought Democracy in 1974.

There are now several Portuguese and international entities dedicated to fighting fake news, but if in relation to the covid-19 pandemic it was already difficult to have the capacity to respond, in relation to the war in Ukraine it is even more complicated, as disinformation is practiced as a battle strategy by both sides. Each media has to make an effort to verify the facts and this requires a wide and quality editorial office, this at a time when the media crisis has reduced the number of journalists in the media. The more thought-out print edition, done at a daily pace, is easier to defend than the digital edition, which relies heavily on the speed of reaction. In the case of a newspaper with more than a century and a half of existence like the one I work for, this effort is essential, as we have to defend the image of credibility that our history gives us - we have been among our great journalists since our foundation in 1864. Rule number one is only to move forward after ensuring the quality of the source, because if credibility can take decades to achieve, an error or false information can destroy that credibility in seconds.

## Speaker

**Timur Shafir**

Russian Union of Journalists  
Executive Secretary  
Russia

Timur Shafir is an international journalist and political scientist. He was born in 11, June, 1977. Heads the International Department of the Russian Union of Journalists. At the X Congress of the RUJ in 2013 he was elected as Executive Secretary of the Union of RUJ. In June 2019, at the World Congress of the International Federation of Journalists, he was elected Vice-President of the IFJ. More than 20 years of professional experience in international journalism, a permanent expert and author on the topic of journalism and political science in a number of central Russian media.

**The importance of fact-checking in the digital age of factoids**

In the modern era of digital technologies and communications, the concept of "factoid" is becoming more and more relevant. One of the meanings of this term is a fictional fact published in the media and received a live reaction from the audience. The influence of factoids on the picture of the world and people's actions is increasing every day. If earlier days it was assumed that the media simply did not publish false or unverified information, then in the digital era with an abundance of social networks, messengers and mobile applications that distribute a huge amount of data, the role of fact-checking is increasing. Now that the information is published

## ----- Timur Shafir |

by itself, the task of the media is to verify and refute it if necessary.

Fact-checking is a term that has entered the active vocabulary of most languages of the world; it means a set of principles, approaches and techniques for checking and verifying information. The process of verifying the authenticity of information published in the media has existed in traditional journalism for a long time, for many years.

Fact-checking appeared in the first half of the XX century and finally grew into a separate profession by the 1930s. Initially, fact checkers checked the data of non-professional journalists, especially materials sent by readers or third-party experts, they studied statistics or all kinds of figures very closely. However, now fact checkers also check the publications of ordinary journalists. There are special departments in the big media for this. In addition to fact-checking departments, which are part of editorial media, special fact-checking resources in the format of individual projects are also actively developing in the world. For example, in Russia, we can identify a number of the most successful projects in this area that may be useful to specialists working in this region and with the Russian language:

- "Verified" (<https://proverno.media/>) is a Russian non-profit educational media. The creators publish fake facts on the site. Users can send the article for review.
- "War on fakes" (t.me/warfakes) is telegram channel with information updated few times per hour, publishing fakes and showing the technology of its reveal

Nowadays experts identify five reliable ways to verify the accuracy of information. First, look for the original source or confirmation of information from several independent sources. Secondly, consider the opposite points of view on the event. Thirdly, learn to recognize fakes. Moreover, by fakes, the researcher means not only conscious forgeries and simulations, but also negligence, typos and technical errors. Speaking about the fight against factoids, the journalist separately mentions the

## Timur Shafir

careful use of information obtained from social networks, as well as the fact that the true fact is more important than sensationalism.

Thus, it can be argued that the spread of fake news in the modern media space has acquired a huge scope. Unreliable news plays an increasingly important role in shaping public attitudes, so the fight against fakes and fact-checking come to the fore. Not only the impartiality, accuracy, and objectivity of the published information depends on competently conducted fact-checking, but also the success of the publication, the reputation and trust of the audience.

## Speaker



### Khadar Awl Ismail

National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)  
Secretary of Information and Human Rights  
Somalia

Khadar Awl Ismail, Senior Journalist in Somalia, has more than 11 years of Media Experience. And he was a winner of several awards in Journalism. He is currently working for Human rights and principles of Journalism defender and Secretary of Information and Human Rights of National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ).

### **The Challenges of Fact-Checking and Media Self-regulation to journalism Transformation in digital news Era and social media effects of news reporting.**

Thank you for the excellent moderating and Actually I would like to appreciate Journalists Association of Korea and its great leadership for Organizing this Important Forum and selecting this significant topic on Current Status of Fact-Checking by Global Journalism and the Operation of Media Self-regulatory.

With growing multi-faceted intervention in media and the rise of user-generated content via social media, it is becoming harder to distinguish between fact and fiction.

Digital News Media is one of main challenges facing by Journalists and media outlets

## ■ Khadar Awl Ismail

globally, and many theories hold that digital news media is alternative news sources but the question is how digital news media is reliable?

As Digital news media includes online journalism, blogging, digital photojournalism, citizen journalism and social media, which is very popular in Somalia and many other countries in the continent are social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others.

This is what encourages more people to be citizen journalists on social media and makes it normal for everyone to post information on social media users like facebook, twitter or wherever they can reach others with.

This has led to increase of inaccurate information, misinformation and spreading false information on social media platforms, many people get confused by this issue because it is an uncontrollable technology which everyone is able to spread whatever he/she wants, Sometimes it is difficult for ordinary people to understand who is a journalist and who is not, because in Social media there are individuals who earn a lot of followers on their users and acting as journalists and spreading news on their social media but ethically are not acting as journalists and violating rules and ethics of journalism.

When crises, emergencies, elections, and other social conflicts arise, journalists need to be at the forefront, making sure they provide, accurate, accountable and timely information to the public, during these periods are most needed self regulation by journalists and media outlets As the phenomenon of 'fake news' becomes more widespread, it is essential for media professionals to have the right tools to avoid inaccurate information

Self-regulation is not censorship, It is about establishing minimum principles on ethics, accuracy, personal rights and so on, I believe that self-regulation can promote the quality of journalism and even of media power.

## ■ Khadar Awl Ismail

However, all above mentioned challenges are there for media landscape in the world, but journalists and media outlets should to double their efforts to inform the public and maintain the credibility and trust of media by audiences.

Finally, I would like to praise Journalists Association of Korea for organizing this annual event which can improve to enhance communication between media professionals in the world and help make a difference.

## Speaker

**J. Alex Tarquinio**

Society of Professional Journalists  
Past National President  
United States of America

J. Alex Tarquinio is a Past National President of the Society of Professional Journalists and a veteran journalist who has covered politics and finance on three continents. Her work has been published in Foreign Policy, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Post, The San Francisco Chronicle, The International Herald Tribune, and Politico, among many others. She was the first Investing Editor at Forbes.com, the Regional Special Sections Editor at The Real Deal and a Staff Writer at Smart Money Magazine. Ms. Tarquinio received a German Marshall Fund journalism fellowship for coverage of the divided Mediterranean island of Cyprus. Further reporting trips for articles with a global perspective include London, Paris, Istanbul, Toronto and Seoul.

**“War is peace. Freedom is slavery. Ignorance is strength.”**

Such are the propaganda slogans of the totalitarian state depicted in George Orwell’s political satire <1984>

This novel, published in 1949, in the wake of the second world war, has been on my mind as I prepared for our conversation today. We were asked to discuss the idea that some countries were setting up, and I quote, “an effective system designed to

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ban disinformation.” End quote.

So, let us step back for a moment to think about what we mean by the word “disinformation.” This is a modern word, but in fact, it is not such a very new concept. Until a few years ago, much of what we now think of as disinformation would have been called propaganda.

If you ask me what role government should play in banning disinformation in the media, my one-word answer would be: none.

Our role as journalists is to be a critical counterweight to powerful political institutions. To be skeptical of every statement. To dig deeper and verify whether information is inaccurate or incomplete.

I want to take a moment to thank our host, the Journalists Association of Korea, for emphasizing the importance of media self-regulation. At the Society of Professional Journalists, our voluntary Code of Ethics has four pillars: Seek the truth and report it; minimize harm; act independently; and be accountable and transparent. Fact-checking, that is another way of saying seeking the truth, has always been at the heart of ethical reporting, and neither the times nor the tools of transmission have changed that.

But fact-checking does not mean giving equal weight to two sides of a public debate. A popular metaphor is that of the weather forecaster. If one source says that it is raining outside and another says that it is sunny, the role of the weatherman isn’t to give them both equal airtime because each side might have a point. His job is to look out the window to see if it’s raining.

The same is just as true for political reporters. When they see that it’s not just raining outside, but in fact it’s a massive hurricane, their job isn’t to report the sunny propaganda that everything is going according to plan.

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Unfortunately, some governments have seized upon the concern about disinformation to stifle public dissent and impose their own version of reality. The common word for this is censorship. And this may be the most controversial thing I have to say today, but I hope not. I hope that such an esteemed group of journalists can agree that press freedom took a giant step back when the recent Nobel Peace Prize winner, Dmitry Muratov, was forced to close his newspaper, Novaya Gazeta.

Tragically, battlefield reporting has become an increasingly perilous form of truth seeking. More than half a dozen journalists have been killed while covering Russia's war on Ukraine—reporters, photographers and documentary filmmakers. Videos show more than a dozen others being directly targeted despite identifying themselves as journalists.

Let's pause for a moment to remember our fallen colleagues, Ukrainians and foreign correspondents. Sadly, this list grows longer by the day, so forgive me if I have omitted anyone.

Let us remember:

Evgeny Sakun, Brent Renaud, Pierre Zakrzewski, Olexandra Kuvshynova, Oksana Baulina, Mantas Kvedaravicius, and Max Levin.

Thank you.

## Speaker



### Do Hoa Mi Nguyen

Vietnam Journalists Association  
Deputy Head of International Desk  
Vietnam

Dedicated journalist with 10+ years of international reporting experience. Looking to apply strong writing and multitasking skills as a journalist for The Journalists and Public Opinion News. Mentor for foreign affairs of VJA. Extensive professional experience in people management and recruitment.

### Fake News and The Transformation Path of Vietnam Media

Majority of news consumers see "fake news" as a big problem today due to its countless negative impacts in society. Fact-Checking is an urgent requirement before spreading a news. So who will take responsibility? The readers, journalists or the authorities?

#### A high-speed chase of cheetah to antelope

If you have followed the developments of the Covid-19 situation in Vietnam in 2021, you will probably remember the case of Ho Chi Minh City. The city is considered as a typical case of the 4th wave of COVID-19 infections, starting from May 2021, lasting for more than 4 months with the average number of new F0 cases per day increasing more than 5 times. It should be mentioned here, that Ho Chi Minh City

## Do Hoa Mi Nguyen

authorities launched a COVID-19 vaccination campaign for about 80% of its 18 and older population. Despite the efforts of the city government to protect their citizens, misinformation about COVID-19 vaccines causing heart failure and female fertility appeared almost anywhere.

A small but fervent anti-vaccination people were marshalling against it. They had shown a lot of links from many sources which being distorted voiceovers, collages to prove that vaccines are completely ineffective, and many people died from injection.

I sent them some links from reputable newspapers, proving that vaccines have been approved by the World Health Organization (WHO) and its effectiveness for people in Western and Asia countries. For some people, it might work!

We probably come across something like this every day. Doctors are trying to convince anti-vaccinationists. Reputable newspapers try to publish a notice of fake news correction on social networks. The impasse has a clear shape. No matter how the amazing efforts to spot and fight fake news of journalism, there will still be those who believe that eating earthworms cures COVID-19, despite the evidences scientific and experimental evidence.

The fight against fake news and disinformation, therefore, is not simply encapsulated in thinking, but in efforts to win back those who "deny the truth" by skillfully verifying the truth, with a trustworthy team of experts. It's been a long journey, especially in the post-truth era. Like the seemingly endless chase of a cheetah and an antelope. Both are relentlessly against each other. Sometimes the cheetah catches its prey, and sometimes lets it escape. The fight against fake news will be a tough journey that journalists have to keep working hard, even though we don't know when we will completely win.

### Fact-checking information on social networks and the role of journalism

It can be said that the social media revolution has changed and will continue

## Do Hoa Mi Nguyen

to change journalism in the way of exploiting information and accessing sources. Social media provides clues to many stories as an opportunity for the media to exploit. Nowadays almost international - desk Vietnamese reporters have Facebook or Twitter accounts connecting to international news agencies.

With the outstanding feature of 24/7 connection and sharing, regardless of geographical distance, language, gender, country... social networks are becoming a technology product with strong influence and popularity. If social media is considered a big ore mine, journalists and news agencies must become factories that process ore into gold.

People really need official and highly reliable information. Fact-checking information is an advantage from journalism. The tabloid press had been full of lurid stories causing misinformation and saturation. Therefore, this is an opportunity for media to provide high-quality and reliable news. It is also the journalists who will play the role of capturing public opinion and orienting information to create stability in the online community and in social.

### The Operation of Media Self-regulatory Organization

Recently, when social network platform creates a greatly impact to human relations and economy with many outstanding features, media ecosystem is forced to move on. Media has lost its advantage in reporting and mastering information. Many newspapers have reduced their publication period and its circulation. Revenue from advertising decreased. Many reporters lost their jobs and drop income.

We are talking about the values of the media self-regulation including both - media professionals and people/citizens. Journalists take care about their professional standards by themselves. Obviously, when reporting is no longer a monopoly strength, media is forced to shift investment in the quality and value of information in the mass media. In fact, many print media agencies have focused on investing

## ■ Do Hoa Mi Nguyen -----

in series of thematic or investigating articles. The broadcasting, television, and online newspapers also focus on innovative and creative features such as podcasts, news on platforms Spotify, Google Podcast, Amazon Music, Sound Cloud to attract audiences, especially the youth. The investment in social networks such as fanpage on Facebook, TikTok Twitter with many video clips has also been enhanced. Political, economic contents are renewed with a more creative and in-depth presentation.

Recently, intellectual journalism asserts itself in a shift from public-oriented and forge a healthier relationship with the public. In fact, Vietnam media has changed direction. The application of artificial intelligence (AI) in journalism and the expression of intelligence (5I) in products are approached in all types of media with many high-quality journalistic products. That is the choice, finding the difference so that the press meets the selective and quality information needs of the public.

In addition, it is necessary to have a "Code of Conduct" for journalists who are active in society, which upholds the legality and ethics of social network participants in order to limit the freedom of one person without infringing upon the freedom of other organizations and individuals. Journalists need to have critical thinking and vigilance.

Journalists and media managers need to provide themselves technical skills to deal with fakeness, misinformation, spam as well as how to handle sensitive information; legitimacy, copyright to contribute positive values to society.

2022 세계기자대회

# WORLD JOURNALISTS CONFERENCE 2022

24(Sun) - 26(Tue) April 2022

## Participants List

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참가자 리스트



No.	Country	Name	Organization	Job Title
1	Bangladesh	Mahbub Morshed	The Daily Star	Joint News Editor
2	Dominican Republic	Luis Beiro	Newspaper Listín Diario	Editor
3	Germany	Tobias Kaiser	Die WELT	EU Correspondent
4	Colombia	Angel Galindo	Thepharmaletter	Latin American Correspondent
5	Nepal	Keshab Prasad Poudel	New Spotlight	Editor
6	Bangladesh	Md Tawfique Ali	The Daily Star	Former Senior Reporter
7	Romania	Tinica-Octavia Galescu	Romanian National Broadcasting Company	Senior Musical Editor/ Producer
8	Kyrgyzstan	Nurzhan Kasmalieva	Kabar News Agency	Chief of International Affairs and Translations Department
9	Somalia	Khadar Awl Ismail	National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ)	Secretary of Information and Human Rights
10	Cambodia	Rethea Pann	The Post Media	Reporter
11	Paraguay	Benjamin Fernandez	Radio Libre	Director
12	India	Ranjit Kumar	Ravivar	Strategic Affairs Analyst
13	Nepal	Arun Ranjit	Foreign Affairs News	Editor in Chief

## Participants List / 참가자 리스트



No.	Country	Name	Organization	Job Title
14	Nepal	Gokarna Awasthi	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry	Deputy Director General
15	India	Neha Banka		Journalist
16	Albania	Elira Canga	OSCE	Media Project Manager
17	Italy	Antonio Moscatello	Askanews	Journalist
18	Ghana	Malik Sullemana	New Times Corporation	Senior Journalist
19	Poland	Marek Traczyk	Polish Media Association	Chairman
20	United States of America	Lynn Walsh	Trusting News	Assistant Director
21	Papua New Guinea	Gorethy Kenneth	South Pacific Post	Political Editor
22	Georgia	Avtandil Otinashvili	News Day Georgia, News Agency	Director
23	Bulgaria	Pavleta Davidova	DUMA Daily	News editor
24	Honduras	Rosa Pineda	Newspaper The Tribuna	Journalist
25	Laos	Sengthong Phasavath	Lao News Agency (KPL)	Editor in Chief for News in English Division
26	Cambodia	Chanritheara Torn	Thmey Thmey Media	Journalist

## Participants List / 참가자 리스트



No.	Country	Name	Organization	Job Title
27	Ghana	Jefferey De-Graft Johnson	The Ghanaian Publisher Newspaper	Senior reporter
28	Bangladesh	Ahmed Jamil Ibrahim	Asian Television	News and Current Affairs Advisor
29	Portugal	Leonidio Ferreira	Diario de Noticias	Deputy Editor in Chief
30	Colombia	Margaret Ojalvo	Al Dia Noticias / SIR Radio	Editor and Senior Journalist
31	China	Qimin Wu	Global Times	Editor in Chief
32	Kyrgyzstan	Kuban Taabaldiev	Kabar News Agency	Director General
33	Denmark	Flemming Ytzen	Politiken	Editor
34	Cyprus	Petros Soutzis	Press Agency	Editor in Chief / Director
35	Nepal	Niraj Ranjitkar	Arthik Sanjal	Editor in Chief
36	Ireland	Frank McNally	The Irish Times	Columnist
37	Panama	Alma Solís	Snip Noticias	Director / CEO
38	Yemen	Mohammed Abdullah Almuhaimeid	Peace Initiative	Vice President
39	India	Sabina Inderjit	Indian Journalists Union/ IFJ	Secretary General/ Vice President

## Participants List / 참가자 리스트



No.	Country	Name	Organization	Job Title
40	Kazakhstan	Kanat Auyesbay	LLP (Media Holding)	Deputy Director
41	Kazakhstan	Bayan Ramazanova	Union of Journalists	Executive secretary
42	Pakistan	Rahul Aijaz	Film N' Chips Media Productions	Writer·Filmmaker·Journalist
43	Pakistan	Nasir Aijaz	Sindh Courier	Editor in Chief
44	Sri Lanka	Leo Nirosha Darshan Sathasivam	Express Newspapers Ceylon Limited	News Manager
45	Egypt	Ashraf Eldaly	The Silk Road Literature Series	Editor in Chief
46	Vietnam	Lan Phong (Lan Cu Thi)	Dantri Online Newspaper	Editor
47	Iran	Alireza Bahrami	ISNA News Agency	Editor in Chief
48	Iran	Pooneh Nedai	Shokaran Magazine	Editor in Chief
49	India	Neelima Mathur	Formedia	Trustee / Trainer
50	India	Gunjeet Sra	Subculture Media	Editor
51	Bahrain	Habib Toumi	Bahrain News Agency	Media Advisor
52	Singapore	Ivan Lim (Sin Chin)	Environment Communicators of Singapore	Editor

## Participants List / 참가자 리스트



No.	Country	Name	Organization	Job Title
53	Nepal	Bishnu Gautam	Rising Nepal	Editor in Chief
54	Philippines	Rosalin Garganera	Asia Journalist Association	Correspondents
55	Cambodia	Sophal Chhay	Cambodia News	Advisor and Columnist
56	Germany	Hassan Humeida	GEOMAR/ University of Kiel and University of Flensburg	Doctor
57	Malaysia	Norila Mohd. Daud	Malaysia World News	Editor in Chief
58	France	Bilal Bassal	Asia Journalist Association	Journalist & Art Critic
59	Uzbekistan	Dilmurod Djumabaev	Asia Journalist Association	Correspondent
60	Nepal	Bishnu Nisthuri	Asia Journalist Association (Nepal)	Editor in Chief
61	United States of America	J. Alex Tarquinio	Society of Professional Journalists	Past National President
62	Vietnam	Do Hoa Mi Nguyen	Vietnam Journalists Association	Deputy Head of International Desk
63	Indonesia	Ahmed Kurnia Soeriawidjaja	Indonesia Journalist Association	Head of Foreign Affairs
64	Russia	Timur Shafir	Russian Union of Journalists	Executive Secretary
65	Mongolia	Chuluunbaatar Dolgor	Asia Journalist Association (Mongolia)	President

※The list is based on the order of application for registration.

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