



Pro Bono Protection of Civil Liberties in Times of Crisis

APBVC2020 28 Sept

FIONA LI

TrustLaw, Thomson Reuters Foundation - Programme Officer APAC

Based in Bangkok, Fiona manages relationships with TrustLaw's network of NGOs & social enterprises in Asia Pacific and connects them to legal professionals for pro bono assistance. She supports projects facilitation and the growth of pro bono practice to meet the needs of organisations in the region. Fiona is passionate about social justice and empowering marginalized groups. Prior to joining the Foundation, she specialised in human rights education and developed trainings across Hong Kong, Thailand and Myanmar that empower refugees and migrants, persons with disabilities, vulnerable youth and minority women on law and human rights. She also worked with various NGOs in Hong Kong and Thailand, including the UN Human Rights office (OHCHR) for Southeast Asia. Fiona has a double degree in Bachelor of Arts in Literary Studies and Bachelor of Laws at the University of Hong Kong, and a Master of Arts in Social Justice at Kilns College.



FIONA LI

TrustLaw, Thomson Reuters Foundation
Programme Officer APAC

LAURA NOTESS

Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD) - Legal Officer

Laura Notess is a Legal Officer at the Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD), a human rights organisation in Halifax, Canada, where she focuses on freedom of expression, the right to information and other civil and political rights. Her background is in human rights law, including legal and policy work around issues such as indigenous land rights, political prisoners, refugee policy, the prohibition of torture, and protections for human rights defenders. She earned a J.D. from Georgetown University in Washington D.C. and a B.A. in International Political Economy from Fordham University.



LAURA NOTESS

Centre for Law and Democracy (CLD)
Legal Officer

SAROJ K. GHIMIRE

Supreme Court of Nepal - Advocate // Supreme Court Bar Association - Treasurer

Saroj K. Ghimire is an Advocate at Supreme Court of Nepal. He is also the Treasurer of Supreme Court Bar Association, Asst. Prof of Law at Tribhuvan University

Mr. Ghimire is one of the leading lawyers for advocating and educating pro bono legal service in Nepal and has conducted Nepal Bar Association's various trainings on Pro Bono and Legal Aid. He is also listed as pro bono lawyer by the Supreme Court of Nepal. Mr. Ghimire has instrumental experience in litigation and advising complex legal matters to national and supranational bodies and has delivered a guest lecture in various jurisdictions of USA, China, UK and India and has attended training and legal courses in China, Sweden, Myanmar, and India. Mr. Ghimire is an international speaker for IBA Annual Conference at Seoul and Sydney, 2nd Human Rights Conference of LAWASIA, 1st Human Rights Conference of LAWASIA Delhi, 2nd China-South Asia Legal Forum in China, SAARC Law Conference and Annual Conference of LAWASIA Hongkong and Kathmandu. He was invited to speak on the development of pro bono in Asia – opportunities and challenges and Business and Human Rights at the IBA Annual Conference Seoul and was the Speaker on various pro bono issues at the 8th Asia Pro Bono Conference at Kathmandu. He was the five-time Coordinator for International Women Lawyers Pro Bono Training for Nepal Bar Association, DLA Piper, UNDP and WLJH in Nepal. He was also in the organizing committee of 8th Asia Pro Bono Conference Kathmandu and is the Managing Partner of Himalayan Lawyers & Associates, the Firm was also the Supporting Partner of the same. He was also privileged to host the Closing Ceremony of the 8th Asia Pro bono Conference in Kathmandu 2019.



SAROJ K. GHIMIRE

Supreme Court of Nepal - Advocate
Supreme Court Bar Association - Treasurer

PRASANTH SUGATHAN

SFLC - Technology Lawyer and Legal Director

Prasanth Sugathan is a technology lawyer and the Legal Director at SFLC.in, a non-profit organisation based in New Delhi that promotes innovation and open access to knowledge and helps to defend rights of citizens in the digital space. His areas of practice include technology law, Intellectual property law, administrative law and constitutional law. He has deposed before Parliamentary Committees on issues related to Information Technology Act and Net Neutrality. He has also spoken at various national and international conferences on topics like Freedom of Speech on the Internet, Privacy, Net neutrality and cyber security. He represented SFLC.in in the landmark judgment of the High Court of Kerala in Faheema Shirin Vs State of Kerala wherein it was held that right to access the Internet is a part of right to education as well as right to privacy.



PRASANTH SUGATHAN

SFLC - Technology Lawyer and Legal Director

SHAWN W. CRISPIN

Committee to Protect Journalists - Senior Southeast Asia Representative

Shawn W. Crispin is Senior Southeast Asia Representative to the Committee to Protect Journalists, a New York-based non-partisan press freedom advocacy group. Mr. Crispin has served in the research and advocacy role since 2005 and covers press freedom related issues for all countries in Southeast Asia. He is also a 20-year veteran journalist and editor based in Bangkok, currently with Asia Times and previously with the Far Eastern Economic Review and Wall Street Journal. Mr. Crispin is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington DC, where he received a master's degree in Southeast Asian Studies and International Economics from. He speaks fluent Thai.



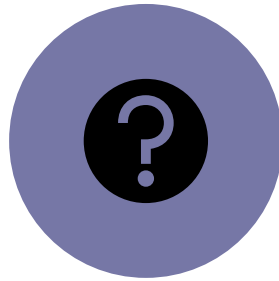
SHAWN W. CRISPIN

Committee to Protect Journalists
Senior Southeast Asia Representative

Protection of Civil Liberties amid COVID-19



MEDIA
FREEDOM



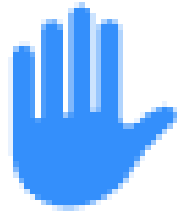
RIGHT TO
INFORMATION



PRIVACY

28 September:
International Day
for Universal Access
to Information
(IDUAI)

Theme for 2020:
“access to
information in times
of crisis”
(announced by
UNESCO)



raise hand



yes



no

Ice-breaker

1) Are there restrictions
put on journalists
during COVID-19 in
your country?



raise hand

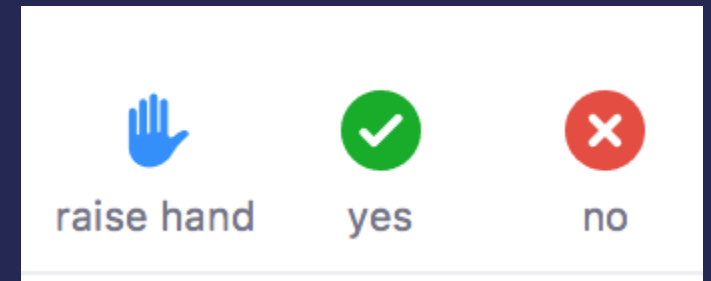


yes

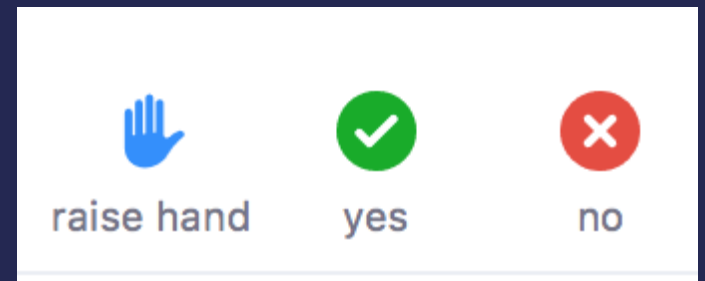


no

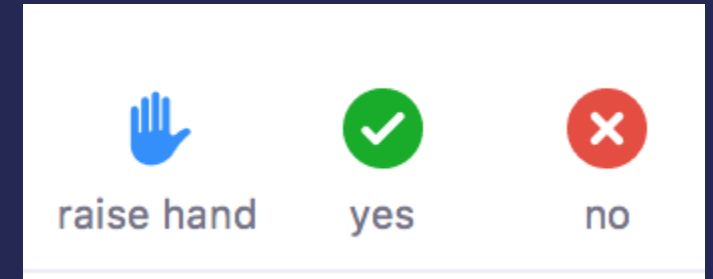
2) Is there a free flow
of information on
COVID-19 in your
country?



**3) Are you using any
contact tracing
apps?**



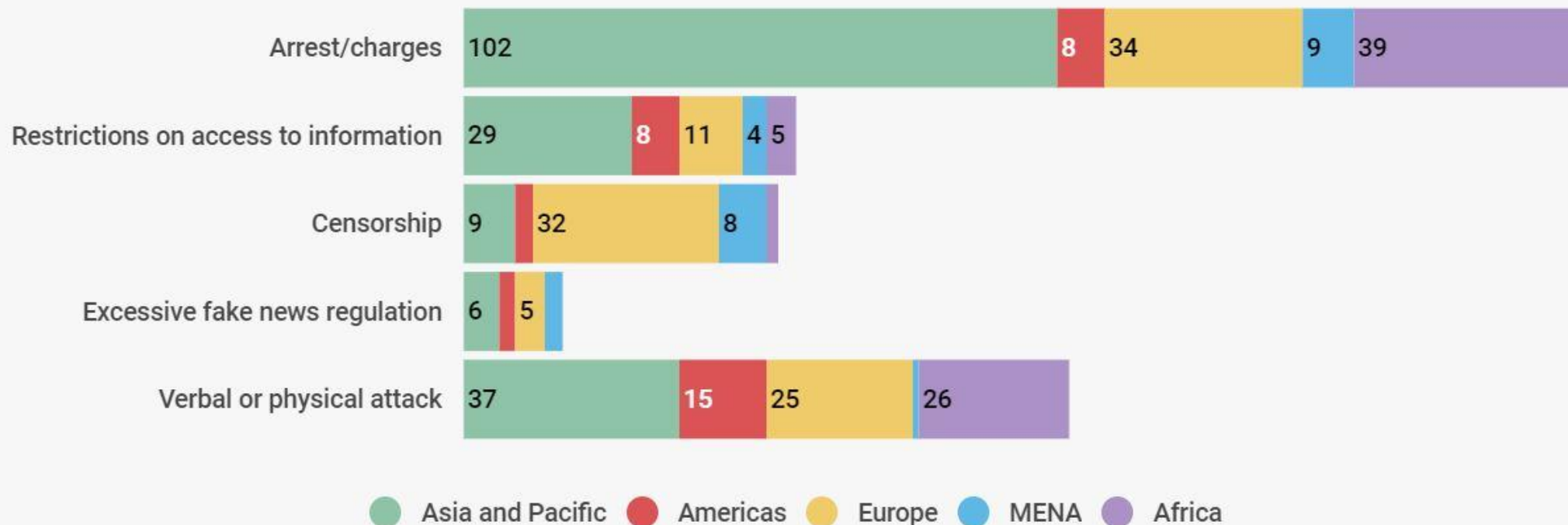
4) Is information of
COVID-19 patients
publicized in your
country?



Answer in Chatbox:
If yes, what kind of
information is
publicized?



COVID-19: Number of Media Freedom Violations by Region



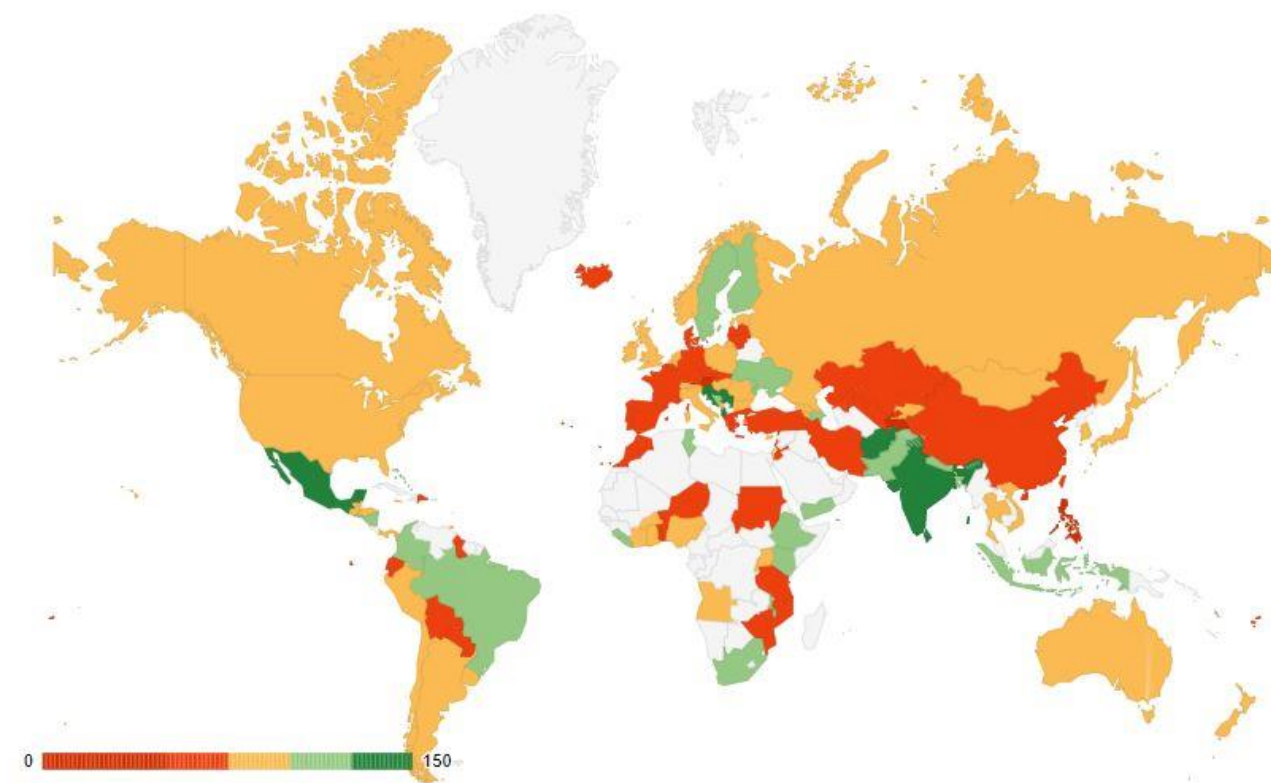
SOURCE: [International Press Institute \(IPI\) Tracker on Press Freedom Violations Linked to COVID-19 Coverage](#)

Fake news and media freedom

Right to information and National security

ATI

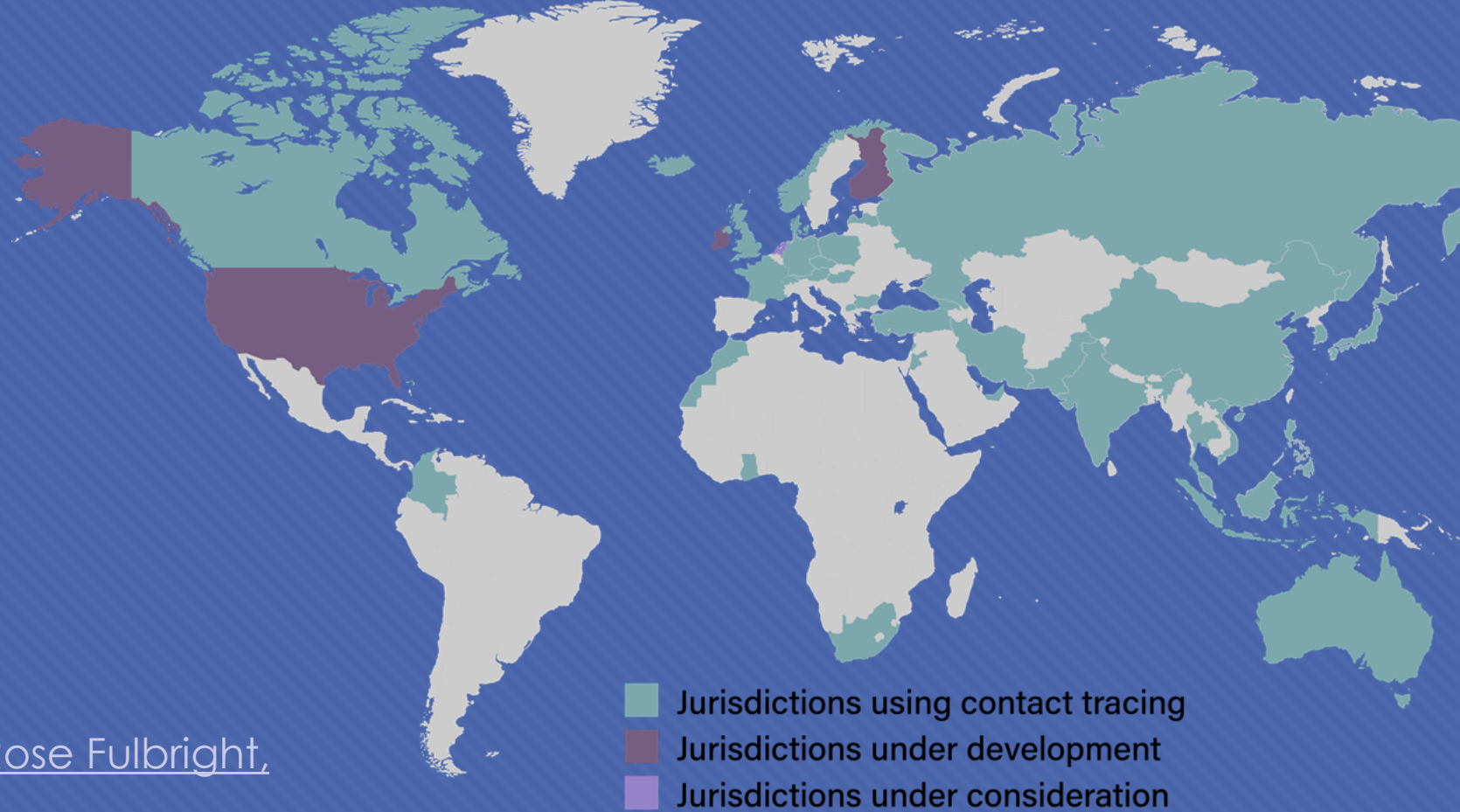
Global Right to Information Rating Map



[0 - 50] [51 - 75] [76 - 100] [101 - 125] [126 - 150]

[0 - 20] [21 - 40] [41 - 60] [61 - 80] [81 - 100]

0 120



SOURCE: [Norton Rose Fulbright](#),
[July 2020](#)

Data privacy and public health

Pro Bono in the court



India High Courts on internet shutdown and contact tracing app



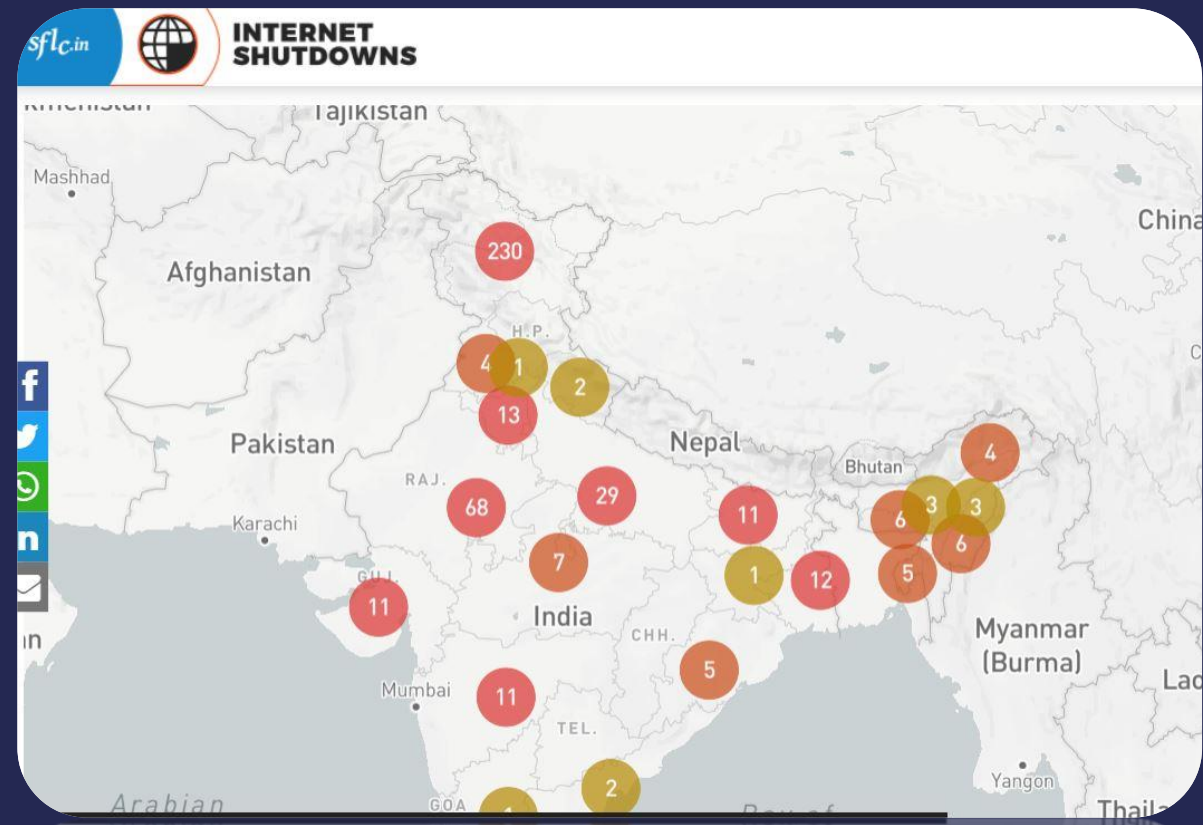
Nepal Supreme Court on COVID-19 patient data privacy



Defence of journalists in court

Pro Bono in other ways

- Comparative legal research
 - CPJ research on new laws that negatively impact press freedom in Latin America
 - CLD case law research on internet shutdown
- Policy work
- Trackers



Breakout Discussion

One person to report back

(1) Pro bono in the court (Saroj, Prasanth, Trishna):

- Do you have similar case examples from your country?
- Do you have litigation needs on media freedom/ right to information / privacy?

(2) Pro bono in other ways (Shawn and Laura, Fiona):

- What are some ways pro bono lawyers can help protecting media freedom / right to information / privacy in your country?



Fiona Li, Thomson Reuters Foundation
(Thailand) fiona.li@tr.com



Shawn Crispin, Committee to Protect Journalists
(Thailand) swcrispin@yahoo.com



Prasanth Sugathan, Software Freedom Law
Center (India) prasanth@sflc.in



Laura Notess, Legal Officer, Centre for Law and
Democracy (Canada) laura@law-democracy.org



Saroj Ghimire, Himalayan Lawyers & Associates
(Nepal) nbasarojghimire@gmail.com

**Thank you
for joining
us!**