

NUJ(I) demands an International Enquiry Commission to probe Pak Journalist Shahzad's killing

The National Union of Journalists (India) and its state unit Delhi Journalists Association demonstrated in front of Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi to express its strong anguish against the brutal killing of Pak journalist Saleem Shahzad, 40, who worked for an Italian news agency and also for an online news site registered in Hong Kong.

The NUJ(I) and DJA presented a memorandum to Mr Shahid Malik, High Commissioner of Pakistan pointing out that since 1992 at least 37 journalists were killed in Pakistan which indicates that it is a clear attempt to silence the media. The quick disposal of Shahzad's body strengthens doubts of the involvement of state actors. In the memorandum, the NUJ(I) demanded a professional and scientific investigation to apprehend the killers. If necessary the government should seek the help from other countries in this regard. A solemn attempt to nab the killers would send out a clear message.

Shri Ras Bihari, Secretary General of NUJ(I) and *Shri Manoj Verma* President of DJA, called upon all journalists to spare a thought for Shahzad who died in the line of duty writing what he thought was the truth despite knowing that he was putting his life in danger. "This is a clear and violent attack on the rights of free speech" they said. The NUJ(I) also called upon the international media community to



stand together in this need of hour and demanded an International Enquiry Commission to investigate into this brutal killing and also to bring the perpetrators of the murder to justice. The Pak Government should consult media organisations with a view to allay journalists' apprehensions about their safety and security", the memorandum said.

Addressing a large number of journalists at Pakistan High Commission *Shri Ras Bihari* said "Pakistan has long been an

unsafe country for journalists, with the highest number of journalists killed in the country in 2010. Almost all these cases remain unresolved. The risks for the journalists are extenuated when they fear harm from agents of the state itself, as has been alleged in Shahzad's case.

NUJ(I) and DJA demanded that the government must also immediately release compensation to the bereaved family without any delay.