

PRESS RELEASE



Associate Professor Singh Calls for Stronger Collaboration to Safeguard Media Freedom

2026: A prominent journalism academic is calling for stronger collaboration to safeguard media freedom in Fiji.

University of the South Pacific Associate Professor of Journalism, Shailendra Singh, has underscored the critical role of academia and emerging journalists in strengthening the media sector.

Associate Professor Singh highlighted the contribution of university journalism in advancing media rights during the Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission (FTRC) expert hearing in Suva on Wednesday, 23 March.

Associate Professor Singh emphasised the role of academia in safeguarding media freedom, stating, “University journalism has played a critical role in advancing media rights in Fiji, particularly through the USP student press and academic research.”

He noted that both the student press and academic research pushed back during the 2000 and 2006 political upheavals, adding, “We produced research analysing the Media Act to inform public debate and policy.”

He further highlighted, “We also advocated for fairer distribution of state advertising and public service broadcasting,” and added that “we consistently challenged media suppression through commentary and engagement.”

Emphasising the need for collective responsibility, Associate Professor Singh stated, “A strong media system needs all its parts working harmoniously. Research matters, and the student press matters.”

He stressed that “we need to work together, not in silos,” adding that “in times of trouble, and there will be such times, we must stand together.”

“This is strength in numbers,” he said, urging that “both university journalism and the Fiji media must realise this and act on it.”

Associate Professor Singh appeared as an expert witness before Commissioners Rachna Nath, Rajendra Dass, and Ana Laqeretabua.

Associate Professor Singh is currently engaged as the chapter writer for the Commission’s media chapter. His work examines the far-reaching effects of the 1987, 2000, and 2006 political upheavals on Fiji’s media landscape, including issues of censorship, press freedom, and the broader implications for democracy and public discourse.

Source: Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission

About FTRC:

The FTRC is an independent entity set up for truth-telling, reconciliation, and national healing. The mandate of the FTRC is to examine past political upheavals and their impact on people’s lives. The Commission is looking at the physical and emotional harm, loss of life and property, and systemic injustices on people.

The purpose of this work is to foster unity and social cohesion in a society where everyone feels safe, equal, included and able to thrive. The Commission seeks to honour the lived experiences of survivors by providing a platform for voices to be heard, validated, and acknowledged.

The Commission emphasises that truth-telling is not about retribution. It is about recognition, healing, to ensure that history is not repeated. Through reconciliation, the Commission aims to build a stronger, more just, and peaceful Fiji for future generations.

Media Queries Contact:

Maria Vula
Communications Specialist
Fiji Truth and Reconciliation Commission
M: +679 9909003