

PRESS ACCREDITATION RULES

ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
HOME (B) DEPARTMENT

N O T I F I C A T I O N

Dated Dispur, the 1st August, 1989

No.HMB.75/87/20: Whereas it is considered necessary and expedient to frame new rules relating to Press Accreditation / Recognition and matters incidental there to the Governor of Assam is pleased to make the following rules:

CHAPTER-I

Short title
Commencement

1. These Rules may be called the Assam Press Correspondents(Accreditation/Recognition) Rules, 1989.
2. These Rules will come into force from the date of their notification in the official Gazette and on such notification, these rules supersede all such rules which were already in force.

CHAPTER-II

Definitions

3. In these Rules, unless the context otherwise required:
 - a) "Government" means the State Government of Assam.
 - b) "Director" means the Director of Information and Public Relations, Government of Assam appointed as such by the Government.
 - c) "Press Accreditation Committee" means the Committee set up by the Government under these rules.
 - d) "Accredited Correspondent" means a correspondent who has been granted accreditation in accordance with the procedure prescribed by these rules.
 - e) "Recognised Correspondent" means correspondent who has been granted recognition in accordance with the procedure prescribed by these rules.
 - f) "Press Correspondent" means a correspondent representing any Newspaper/News Agencies as defined in Working Journalist (Conditions of service and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1955 and employed as a whole time correspondent by the employer of Newspaper/News Agency.
 - g) "Stringer" means a correspondent not in the whole time employment of any Newspaper/News Agency and who is paid a retainer's fee as per the Wage Board Regulations for working Journalist.
 - h) "Editor" means the person who is declared as the editor under the Press and Registration of Books Act 1967.

- i) "Newspaper" means a daily, bi-weekly, tri-weekly, weekly & such other periodical publication containing public news and comments on public news.
 - j) "Press Photographer" means a photographer representing any newspaper and employed as a whole time photographer by the employer of the newspaper concern.
4. There will be two types of Cards-one-denoting accreditation and the other recognition. The accreditation / recognition card will be given only to those who fulfill the conditions laid down in these rules.

Constitution of the Committee

5. 1) "The Government shall constitute a Committee consisting of 10(ten) members, eight of whom will be nominated from amongst Editors and Working Journalists of different categories of News papers and representatives of recognised Journalist Bodies. The Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam or his nominee will be the Chairman of the Committee and the Director of Information and Public Relations, Assam will act as its member Secretary".

Term of the Committee

- 2) The normal term of the Press Accreditation Committee shall be for two years; but the Government may in special circumstances, extend the term of the Committee for any period not exceeding one year.
- 3) The Committee shall meet once in every three months by giving seven clear days notice to the members, but an emergent meeting may, however, be called after giving 48 hours notice.
- 4) The four members of the Committee shall form a Quaram for a meeting.
6. Upon receipt of the application of any matter relating to accreditation/ recognition of Press Correspondent, the Director of Information & Public Relations shall refer such matter with relevant information to the Press Accreditation Committee for disposal.

Accreditation / Recognition Procedure of making application

7. 1) Application for accreditation / recognition shall be made by a correspondent through the Editor/Management of the Newspaper or News agency in which he is employed, to the Director of Information and Public Relations, Assam for accreditation / recognition at the State Level.
- 2) In regard to the recognition at District level the application for recognition shall be made through the District Information & Public Relations Officer of the District concerned to the Director of Information and Public Relations Officer shall while forwarding the application certify that the application has not been convicted in a court of law for committing offence involving moral turpitude or criminal extortion in the course of acting in his profession, provided that in no circumstances the District Information and Public Relations Officer shall withhold any such application.

The District Information and Public Relations Officer shall forward the application of a correspondent for grant of recognition after a thorough examination to the Director of Information and Public Relations, Assam who in turn shall place the same before the Press Accreditation Committee for disposal.

Conditions for accreditation

8. 1) The Correspondent of Newspaper or a News Agency should fulfil the following conditions for accreditation.

a) He should be a working journalist as defined by the Working Journalist (Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1955 and should be engaged whole time as a correspondent as defined in these rules.

b) The correspondent of a newspaper or news agency should be drawing the prescribed wage in the category of his/her newspaper or news agency as per the Wage Board recommendations for working Journalist and the relevant notification of the Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India.

c) At the time of application, he should have spent at least three consecutive years in the profession of Journalism and should be a person of sufficient experience and standing to be able to discharge his/her duties in a competent and responsible manner.

2) The factors to be taken into consideration for granting accreditation to correspondents of News Agencies will be as under:

- a) Nature, standing and type of the news agency;
- b) Method of distribution of its service; and
- c) Centres of the Newspapers catered to.

Accreditation shall normally be restricted to the correspondents of news and features agencies of at least three years standing.

3) The factors which shall be taken into consideration for accreditation of Press Photographers/Correspondents of Dailies, Weeklies etc. will be as under:-

a) For Daily Newspaper/Weeklies etc.

i) The Newspaper concerned should be published daily and without any break between one publication and another.

ii) Its circulation should not be less than 5,000 copies as certified by the Registrar of Newspapers of India or the Audit Bureau of Circulation or by a Chartered Accountant.

iii) In the case of smaller Newspapers, their combined circulation may be taken into consideration if they request accreditation for a common correspondent or a correspondent himself seeks accreditation jointly on their behalf.

b) For Press Photographers:

i) Professional standing of the newspaper/ periodical of Photo Agency to be represented.

ii) Professional capability as a Press Photographer.

iii) Frequency and number of Photographer published and the space devoted for the same.

9. A newspaper or news agency will normally be entitled to have one accredited correspondent and only one Press Photographer at the State Headquarters. But the Govt. may, if considered expedient, allow more than one correspondent to be accredited depending upon the requirement such as circulation, language etc. of the Newspaper/News agency and the conditions of facilities that can be extended. However, the Editor of a Daily/Weekly/ Periodical may also get accreditation if it is sought for.

10. In the case of veteran journalists even after their retirements from the profession of journalists, the accreditation may be given to them but this will be done only in rare cases and where the committee so recommends.

Conditions for recognition

11. Recognition may be granted to a correspondent provided he fulfils the following conditions :-

(a) His residence should be at the Headquarters of State or of the District for which he seeks recognition.

(b) He should be a stringer/ part-time Press Correspondent Working with one or more newspapers or agency/agencies and is in receipt of retainer's fee under Wage Board Regulation.

(c) At the time of application, he should have spent at least three years in the profession of Journalism, and

(d) He should represent a daily with the minimum circulations of 5,000 copies as certified by the Registrar of Newspapers of India or Audit Bureau of Circulation or 'Chartered Accountant'.

(e) Editors of Weeklies: Editors who are covered by the Working Journalist (Conditions of service and miscellaneous provisions) Act, 1955 or different weeklies published in a district having circulation of 5, 000 copies per issue, with three years standing may only be considered for recognition. The circulation of the papers will be verified by the Director before the case is submitted to the Press Accreditation Committee for granting recognition.

12. Recognised correspondents shall not be entitled to any other facilities apart from entry into the offices of the Government and Semi Govt. Organisations and entry into functions on invitation.

They shall not be entitled to any of the facilities normally accorded to accredited correspondents in terms of instructions issued by the Government.

CHAPTER-IV

13. A correspondent will be liable to disaccreditation/derecognition if:

Disaccreditation / Derecognition of correspondent

i) He engages himself in work other than journalism such as soliciting business or advertisements for publications for which he works or any other newspaper or periodical;

ii) He uses for non-journalistic purposes information and facilities provided to him as an accredited/recognised correspondent;

iii) He publishes official secrets the inviolability of which is accepted by general understanding and the Press Accreditation Committee concurs with the view;

- iv) In the course of his duties, he behave in an undignified or unprofessional manner
- v) He ignores or violates the conditions on which information and facilities are provided by the Government;
- vi) He provides false information.

Disaccreditation of News Media Organisation 14. News media organisations will also be liable to disaccreditation if they are responsible for wilful publication of malafide reports of abuse of confidence or in the opinion of the Press Accreditation Committee, behave in a manner unbecoming of the profession of Journalism.

15. In all cases relating to disaccreditation/derecognition, the Director will take action as warranted by the circumstances in each case in consultation with Press Accreditation Committee. All such cases shall be referred to the Press Accreditation Committee.

Provided that in each case, the correspondent or the News media Organisation concerned should be offered an opportunity of a personal hearing by the Press Accreditation Committee before any action is taken.

Notice of termination, withdrawal of facilities 16. When an accredited/recognised correspondent cases to represent a news agency and or newspaper on behalf of which he/she is accredited/recognised, the fact shall be brought to the notice of the Director in writing by the Correspondent as well as by the Editor concerned within 15 days. Failing which, facilities accorded to the newspaper may be withdrawn without following the procedure prescribed in these rules by the Director and the correspondent shall be liable to be refused any facility thereafter. Any such action will be communicated to the Press Accreditation Committee.

CHAPTER-V

Periodical review of Accredited/Recognised correspondent's list 17. The lists of accredited/recognised correspondents will be reviewed periodically. Accreditation is personal and not transferable.

Effect of accreditation 18. Accreditation/Recognition does not confer any official status on the correspondent. The Govt. merely recognises that the accredited/recognised correspondents represents the Newspapers or News Agency which employ him/her. Correspondents should not have letter heads and visiting cards with the words "Accredited/Recognised" by the Government of Assam.

Submission of representation 19. Newspapers, Agencies and Correspondents can make a representation to the Minister, Incharge against any decision taken under these rules. Such representation should reach the Secretary to the Govt. of Assam, Information & Public Relations Department within two months from the date on which the decision in question was communicated to the Newspaper, agency or correspondent concerned.

Issue of Accreditation/Recognition Card 20. Press Accreditation/Recognition Card will be issued to each accredited/recognised correspondent. The admission to special functions will be governed by invitation. A Press Correspondent in possession of a Press Accreditation Card will automatically be admitted to a Press Conference.

Power of Government 21. Notwithstanding anything contained in these rules the Govt. shall be free to take any action warranted by circumstances in matters relating to accreditation/recognition and disaccreditation/derecognition in consultation with the Press Accreditation Committee.

- List of Accreditation/ Recognition/ Correspondent** 22. The Director shall maintain a list of accreditation/recognised correspondents with their full addressed.

CHAPTER-VI

- Grant of provisional accreditation/recognition** 23. Provided a correspondent fulfills all the conditions enumerated in these rules for the grant of accreditation or recognition, as the case may be, the Director may grant provisional accreditation/recognition to a correspondent for a period not exceeding three months at the first instance or till the meeting of the Press Accreditation Committee whichever is earlier.
- Provisional accreditation/recognition** 24. If a correspondent is deputed to the State Headquarters by a newspaper for a special period, the Director will have the authority to accord him provisional accreditation/recognition for a period not more than three months at the first instance. (During this period, the fully accredited/recognised correspondents also will enjoy all the privileges of accredited/recognised correspondents at the headquarters provided he/she fulfills all the conditions for grant of accreditation/recognition, as the case may be).
- Procedure for card issue** 25. After it has been decided to grant accreditation/recognition to a correspondent, a Press Accreditation/Recognition Card bearing a passport size photograph of the person concerned will be issued to him. This photograph will be duly attested by the Director or his nominee (Press at the State Headquarters and by the District Public Relations Officer at the District Headquarters.)
- Renewal of Card** 26. The Accreditation/Recognition Card will be renewal every year and will be issued under the signature of the Director of Information and Public Relations, Assam/Additional Director (Press) of Information and Public Relations at the State Headquarters and the District Public Relations Officer at the District Headquarters.

CHAPTER-VII

- Facilities for accredited Press Correspondents** 27. An accredited correspondent, will enjoy the following facilities, in addition to facilities as provided for under rule 20 of this rules.
- a) 5 % reservation in the allotment of Housing Board rental buildings to be constructed in future and priority in allotment of land.
- b) Supply of official Gazette and other important Government Publication free of cost.
- c) Free travel concession by the Assam State Road Transport Buses upto 2500 K.M. in one calender year and also to issue free passes for their travel by City Buses in Guwahati City and also right to use pool cars when on duty.
- d) "Accomodation in Circuit House, Dak Bunglows etc. inside the state and in Assam House outside the State in preference to other non-officials but at the rates applicable to non-officials only"

This practically modified this Deptt.'s Notification No.HMB.321/85/4
dtd.1.12.85.

Sd/- D.N. Saikia
Deputy Secy. to the Govt. of Assam
Home (B) Department.

Memo No.HMB.75/87/20-A

Dated Dispur, the 1st August/89.

Copy forwarded to:

1. The Director of Information & Public Relations, Assam, Dispur, Guwahati-6. He is hereby informed that printed copies, when received will be sent for distribution among all other Sub-Ordinate Offices.
2. The Deputy Secy. to the Govt. of Assam, General Admn. Deptt., Dispur for information.
3. The Deputy Secy. to the Govt. of Assam, Finance Deptt.
4. The Deputy Secy. to the Govt. of Assam, Transport Deptt.
5. The Principal Private Secy. to Chief Minister, Assam.
6. The Suptd. of Assam Govt. Press, Bamunimaidan, Guwahati-21.
He is requested to publishing the above Notification in the next issue of the Assam Gazette & also to supply 500 printed copies of the above notification to this Department immediately.

By order etc.

Special Officer to the Govt. of Assam
Home (B) Deptt.