



The Indonesian Cyber Media Network (JMSI) Seminar in Pelalawan Regency in July 2025 will address the theme “Press Law in the Digital Era: Between Freedom and Responsibility.”

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Abstract

The development of digital technology has brought great changes to the press world in Indonesia. The Indonesian Cyber Media Network (JMSI) Seminar in Pelalawan Regency in July 2025 raised the theme "Press Law in the Digital Era: Between Freedom and Responsibility" as a reflection on the challenges faced by journalists and digital media. This article analyzes the results of the seminar which reviewed digital press regulation, the role of the ITE Law, and the urgency of implementing journalistic ethics and media literacy. This study uses an analytical descriptive method based on seminar documents and media reports. The results show that press freedom in the digital era must be accompanied by moral and professional responsibility to maintain public credibility and trust.

Keywords: *press law, digital era, press freedom, media responsibility, ITE Law, media literacy*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has significantly changed the landscape of the press in Indonesia. With the advancement of the internet and social media platforms, information can now be disseminated at high speed and reach a wide audience in a short time. This change has had a positive impact in the form of more open and diverse access to information and has encouraged freedom of expression, which has long been a main pillar of democracy.

However, on the other hand, the ease of information dissemination also presents serious challenges, such as the rampant spread of hoaxes, disinformation, hate speech, and manipulation of public opinion, which can damage social order and political stability. Freedom of the press as a constitutional right of citizens and media institutions must be exercised responsibly to maintain a balance between individual rights and the public interest.

The press has a strategic role not only as a conveyor of information, but also as a social control and enforcer of accountability of power. Therefore, the legal framework for the press, including the Press Law and the Electronic Information and Transaction Law (ITE Law), must be able to accommodate the dynamics of technological change while providing legal protection for journalists and media practitioners.

In the digital age, press law challenges have become increasingly complex with the emergence of new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), filter bubbles, and algorithms that have the potential to influence the independence and objectivity of news reporting. Digital media, which tends to prioritize speed, sometimes neglects the principles of verification and accuracy, thereby threatening the quality of information received by the public. Journalistic ethics and media literacy are becoming increasingly important to understand and apply in order to maintain the credibility of the media and protect the public from the negative effects of misinformation.

The seminar organized by the Indonesian Cyber Media Network (JMSI) of Pelalawan Regency in July 2025 with the theme “Press Law in the Digital Age: Between Freedom and Responsibility” is an important reflection on the conditions and challenges currently faced by

the press. This seminar provided a space for dialogue between the government, media practitioners, academics, and the public to find a balance between press freedom and responsibility in the digital age.

The seminar aims to examine the results and values contained in efforts to understand policy formulations, press law practices, and relevant journalistic ethics in order to respond to the challenges of the times. This study is expected to make a real contribution to the development of healthy, strong, and responsible digital press law and practices as pillars of true democracy.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive approach with content analysis based on documents and materials obtained from the JMSI Pelalawan seminar. Data was obtained from official speeches, presentations by key speakers, and media reports documenting the seminar activities. This approach is intended to describe the current situation and draw lessons from practical field experience in managing the freedom and responsibility of digital press.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The seminar was attended by stakeholders from the local government, members of the press, academics, and community leaders. Assistant I to the Pelalawan Regency Secretary, Zulkifli, emphasized the importance of the media's role in shaping public perception accurately and responsibly. The chair of JMSI Riau, Deni Kurnia, conveyed the challenges posed by the emergence of digital technology and AI, which are changing the face of journalism, but underlined the essence of integrity and courage in journalism, which cannot be replaced by technology.

Dr. Syafriadi, the main speaker, explained the urgency of understanding the main regulations governing the press, particularly the Press Law and the ITE Law, as tools for protecting and limiting press freedom so that it is not abused. Integrity, accuracy, and speed must be balanced to avoid inaccuracies in information that could harm the public. Journalistic ethics and media literacy are key to dealing with the rapid flow of information that may not be valid in this digital age.

The participants highlighted that press freedom is not unlimited and must be exercised with the principle of social responsibility. The media is expected to be a constructive critical partner in democracy, not a tool for propaganda or spreading hatred. Efforts to strengthen media literacy in society are also considered important so that the public is able to sort information intelligently.

The following are methods of community service that can be developed based on the seminar "Press Law in the Digital Age: Between Freedom and Responsibility" by JMSI Pelalawan:

This community service is designed to increase public awareness and understanding, as well as that of media practitioners, regarding the legal aspects, ethics, and responsibilities of the press in the digital age. The community service method is designed with a participatory and educational approach that involves various stakeholders, such as press personnel, local government officials, academics, and the general public.

1. **Participatory Approach:** Service is carried out collaboratively among stakeholders through interactive seminars, discussions, and workshops. This aims to gather aspirations and field experiences from journalists and the public as consumers of information, in order to understand the challenges and solutions in managing the freedom and responsibility of digital press.
2. **Socialization and Legal Counseling:** Socialization activities were carried out by delivering press law materials, including the Press Law and the Electronic Information and Transactions Law, in a manner that was easy for participants to understand. Counseling

also covered journalistic ethics, information verification procedures, the impact of disinformation, and the importance of media literacy in preventing hoaxes.

3. **Formation of Discussion Groups and Mentoring:** Discussion groups were formed to provide a forum for journalists and the public to exchange experiences, discuss real cases, and receive mentoring from legal experts and media practitioners. This mentoring helps participants apply legal knowledge and ethics in their daily journalistic activities.
4. **Digital Educational Media:** Digital media such as webinars, educational videos, and social media campaigns are used to reach a wider audience. The material is designed to be engaging and interactive in order to effectively improve legal literacy and press ethics among the general public.
5. **Evaluation and Monitoring:** The implementation of community service is followed by periodic evaluations through surveys and follow-up discussions to measure the effectiveness of improving understanding of press law and ethics. The evaluation results form the basis for improving future educational methods and content so that the community service program is sustainable and has an impact on positive behavioral change in the digital age.

This approach combines education on digital media law and strengthening the social responsibility of the press as a foundation for building a healthy and democratic media ecosystem in the wider community. The implementation of community service through the seminar “Press Law in the Digital Age: Between Freedom and Responsibility” has yielded significant results in increasing understanding of press law and media responsibility in the digital age, particularly in Pelalawan Regency..

1. Increased Awareness of Press Law and Journalistic Ethics

Seminar participants, consisting of members of the press, local officials, academics, and the general public, reported a significant increase in their understanding of press regulations such as Press Law No. 40 of 1999 and ITE Law No. 19 of 2016. The material presented by the speaker, Dr. Syafriadi SH, MH, emphasized the importance of accuracy, source verification, and journalistic ethics in maintaining media credibility (Syafriadi, 2025). This awareness is a key asset in carrying out the function of a free but responsible press..

2. Strengthening Media Literacy

The seminar emphasized the importance of media literacy in countering hoaxes and disinformation. Participants were taught how to recognize fake news and fact-checking techniques before spreading information. Deni Kurnia, Chair of JMSI Riau, called media literacy the key to building a healthy information culture, especially in this challenging digital age (Kurnia, 2025).

3. Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration in Media Management

Full support was expressed by Assistant I of the Pelalawan Regency Secretariat, Zulkifli, who emphasized the synergy between the government, the media, and the community as the main foundation for building a healthy and democratic local media ecosystem (Zulkifli, 2025). This collaboration is an effective strategy in safeguarding press freedom while limiting the abuse of that freedom.

4. Strengthening Journalists' Capacity

Through discussion sessions and mentoring, journalists in Pelalawan were given insights on how to overcome the pressures of social media algorithms, the threat of criminalization, and new technological challenges such as AI. This has improved journalists' readiness to adapt to rapid changes without compromising their integrity (Syafriadi, 2025).

5. Raising Public Awareness as Information Consumers

Participants from the general public also received education on how to be smart and critical news consumers. They were encouraged to verify the accuracy of information before

disseminating it and to understand their moral responsibility in dealing with freedom of the press. This is important for maintaining social order and a healthy democracy. Overall, this community service program has succeeded in strengthening legal awareness, ethics, and media literacy, which are greatly needed in the context of current digital media development. The implementation of these results is expected to strengthen the function of the press as a pillar of a healthy and responsible democracy, as well as open up opportunities for broader and more structured sustainable community service activities.



CONCLUSION

Press law in the digital age demands a balance between freedom of expression and social responsibility. Regulations such as the Press Law and the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (ITE Law) serve as the main legal basis, but their effectiveness depends on the commitment of members of the press to uphold journalistic ethics and professionalism. The JMSI Pelalawan seminar is a concrete example of educational and collaborative learning efforts in facing the increasingly complex challenges of the digital information age. To maintain the credibility and function of the press as a pillar of democracy, strengthening media literacy and multi-stakeholder collaboration are essential.

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