

## Indonesia: Media Companies Cut Salaries in the Midst of Covid-19

16 April 2020

<https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/indonesia-media-companies-cut-salaries-in-the-midst-of-covid-19.html>

News outlets in Jakarta and in provinces across Indonesia have started to cut the salaries of the media workers amid the Covid-19 outbreak. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has joined its affiliate the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) Indonesia to call on media proprietors to look at other options and to consider employee salary cuts as the last resort.



*AJI Indonesia staged a rally in Jakarta to celebrate International Labor Day in 2019. Credit: AJI Indonesia*

Payments to employees at the Jakarta-based Viva Networks media group have been delayed, with some staff receiving the delayed payments in two installments. The company which owns a number of online media including Viva.co.id and VIVAnews.com, started deferring salaries before the coronavirus outbreak.

AJI has received similar reports from its networks in the different provinces. Many newsrooms have announced that they will pay the salaries in instalments. Several media outlets announced salary cuts starting in April. The policy also affects freelancers and specialist correspondents, as newsrooms cut budgets and limit the number of published articles.

Newsrooms across Indonesia, affected by digital disruption and declining advertising revenue, have been struggling, even before the pandemic. Printed media outlets have been the hardest hit.

AJI, in its statement, said that although the current, unprecedented situation is very challenging, they hope the media companies will adopt other measure to survive the crisis. Salary deductions should be the last resort.

“It is essential to maintain the role of the media to give guidance and inform public as well as to hold the government to account. This guidance is necessary to ensure officials introduce the right policy and deliver it as fast as they can to tackle the pandemic,” AJI added.

The IFJ said: *“The challenges caused by the coronavirus crisis do not have to lead to the abuse of workers’ rights, such as cutting or withholding salaries. The IFJ calls on companies to step up to support their workers and urges the government to take action to provide structural support in the form of tax breaks and other support mechanisms.”*