

Index on Censorship in association with The Digital Empowerment Foundation, organised a workshop in Bengaluru to launch Frontline Freespeech. The workshop was held in the Bangalore Management Academy on 24th September,2014.

This workshop brought together grassroots activists alongside leading free expression campaigners to share their recent experiences of censorship, to record and map current censorship challenges and to build impactful free speech networks in India. Various campaigners, community leaders, network co-ordinators, human rights defenders, journalists, bloggers, artists, scholars and representatives of minority groups facing free expression challenges alongside key human rights organisations and independent media participated in the workshop.

The workshop was kicked off with a head to head session by journalist Mr Subhranshu Choudhary also the winner of Google digital activism award and Mr Madan Mohan Rao, research director, yourStory media. They discussed the issues in and around censorship faced and noted by people across the country. They opened the session after which the participants divided themselves in groups of 5 and picked up topics to discuss issues around censorship.

During the workshop the participants deliberated on issues & challenges around freedom of expression for voiceless groups / communities. The workshop brought together community leaders, grassroots network coordinators and leading activists to record current censorship challenges and build free speech networks locally. The workshop introduced 'Frontline Free Speech' - Index's pilot platform and counter-censorship crowd-mapping tool to empower local free speech advocates to share censorship incidents. The larger perspective of the workshop was to provide basic reporting, security and cascade training to participant groups in order to facilitate effective use and subsequent spread of Frontline Free Speech.