

Contemporary Issues in

ISLAMIC COMMUNICATION

Editor

Mohd Yusof Hussain



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International Islamic University Malaysia

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Press Freedom from an Islamic Perspective

NERAWI SEDU

Introduction

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done (*Surah al-Hujurat*, 49. 6).

And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge, for every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning) (*Surah al-Isra'*, 17: 36).

The abovementioned verses warn a person to verify any information or news received from anybody in order to avoid any negative consequences or repercussion, and show that Islam is concerned about the impacts of one's expression as it can cause unrest in society. This writing brings to light critical aspects of press freedom, in relation to the freedom of expressions, as they promoted in the main sources of Islamic teachings, that is, the *Qur'an* and *hadith*.

Press Freedom with Reference to Freedom of Expression in Islam

The concepts of press, and press freedom are not mentioned specifically in the primary sources of Islamic in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (traditions) of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). On the other hand, the term 'news,' which is an important aspect of press freedom, or in Arabic, '*Naba'* or '*Khabar*,' is mentioned in many places in the *Qur'an* (Pasha, 1993). For example, the term '*Naba'* is used in verse 6, *Surah al-Hujurat*. It was also noted by Pasha