

**INTERIM REPORT**  
**monitoring and content analysis**  
**of ethical standards in print and online media of Kyrgyzstan**

**Reporting period: 15 March - 15 October 2012 (7 months)**

**Experts: Bakyt Orunbekov, Kubat Chekirov**

**Project manager: Elmira Toktogulova**

Bishkek, 2012

## Contents

Contents .....	2
Summary .....	3
Introduction.....	5
1. Publications containing intolerance, hatred and other forms of social aggression..	6
2. Failure to comply with the principles of accuracy and objectivity. Publication of false information .....	13
3. Lack of balance and impartiality .....	21
4. Political advertisement an discrediting .....	24
5. Un-justified identification of persons suspected in crimes.....	26
6. Violating secret and immunity of private life, except for cases when the facts concern public interest .....	28
7. Plagiarism.....	30
Conclusions and recommendations .....	31
Reference .....	33
Annex. Ethical Code of the Kyrgyz Journalists.....	34

## Summary

This report was the result of monitoring and content analysis held by public foundation Media Consult, with the support of the OSCE Centre in Bishkek, which monitored the current state of the Kyrgyz print and on-line media against the Code of Ethics of the Kyrgyzstan journalists.

This report covers seven month period: from March 15 to October 15, 2012; it updates the first report, which was published four months earlier, on 15 June<sup>1</sup>.

The report was based on the monitoring of 24 media outlets of Kyrgyzstan, on-line and print, in both Russian and Kyrgyz languages<sup>2</sup>. All the media in the sample was of public-political content. Monitoring and analysis were based on the standards and criteria of the Kyrgyz journalists' Code of Ethics, which was adopted at a national congress of Journalists December 8, 2007, and was on April 16, 2009, at the same level.

The analysis showed that most of the reviewed media violated core principles and standards of quality and ethical journalism; these include failure to provide facts and sources, lack of balance and impartiality, political engagement, disclosing names of persons suspected of crimes, breach of secrecy and privacy, except in cases where the facts are socially significant nature, and plagiarism.

There are violations in covering the activities of foreign companies, organizations and ethnic groups in the country. There are news entries containing statements inciting ethnic strife and hatred based on speculation, without facts and evidence. There was little precision, accuracy, neutrality, balance in many of the reviewed papers. It appeared that the violations were the norm rather than the exception. When covering the conflicting parties, the media did not always respect the balance of opinion and impartiality.

A number of media, unfortunately, was still used as a tool of achieving certain political goals of political groups. Bias against political leaders and labeling them was systematic in many publications. Usage of generalizations, statements and quotations go without validation. The breach of privacy and family life was commonly practiced.

It can be assumed that violations of professional and ethical standards are not always intentional, but they are a result of incompetence, lack of a clear system of quality control in the editorial offices and lack of an editorial policy. At the same time, a significant factor in the quality of information in the media was the fact that it belongs to a particular political group.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.osce.org/ru/bishkek/92695>

<sup>2</sup> See a list in Introduction p.5

The experts recommend that all the reviewed media develop their editorial policy, the definition of professional and ethical standards of quality, if the editorials are to change their skills and work on their capacity. There was a need in holding regular meetings with media managers, lawyers, human rights activists, linguists, media organizations, law enforcement agencies (police, prosecutors, the National Security Committee) and the judges; There was a need in discussing the legislation, ethics, the context of the mass-media and clarify terminology. Moreover, training activities on the ethical and professional standards should be carried out within the editorial offices.

The previous interim monitoring report was presented and discussed with a number of reviewed media. The experts substantiated the violations against the professional journalism ethics and gave examples of trend-errors and recommended to develop editorial policy based on the Code of Ethics. Notably, the chief editors and staff showed understanding and solidarity with the experts, and took their recommendations well about the Code of Ethics in their editorial houses.

## Introduction

The Kyrgyz journalists' Code of Ethics was adopted in order to form the ethical and professional standards of members of the media in Kyrgyzstan, regardless of their specialization, improve the professional level of journalism in Kyrgyzstan, as well as to maintain the confidence and respect of the media in the community. Code's standards are not mandatory requirements, and are formulated as a moral direction which can verify their products.

Media publications that previously had the highest social and political resonance were examined during the monitoring. The focus of the project includes not only the Kyrgyz media (with a registered office in Kyrgyzstan), but also a number of external regular media, covering important events in Kyrgyzstan: *"MK-Asia"*, *"Delo №"*, *"Dengi & Vlast"*, *"Vechernyi Bishkek"*, *"De-Facto"*, *"Super-Info"*, *"Azattyk.kg"*, the newspapers *"Zhangy Agym"*, *"Fabula"*, *"Ayat"*, *"Achyk Sayasat"*, *"Uchur"*, *"Alibi"*, *"Asman Press"*, *"Zhangy Ordo"*, *"Aikyn Sayasat"*, *"Maydan.kg"*, sites *"Akipress"*, *"Barakelde"*, *Centrasia.ru*, *IA 24.kg*, *Parus.kg*, *Chalkan.kg*, *Ferghana.ru*, separate TV Public TV's program, *EITR*. During the reporting period, the analysis covered all the materials have been produced and published by the journalists in the reviewed media, and reprints and TV programs containing resonant material from other media.

This content analysis was focused on quality parameters to identify the most typical violations of quality standards. About 70-80% of all published news entries in the reviewed media between March 15 to October 15 were related to political issues.

Because this report aimed to identify the most typical violations against the Ethical Code adopted by the Kyrgyzstan journalists, the report did not point out any specific media outlet and author involved in the violation. The authors believe that the report should describe the overall picture of the quality of the content in the media, determine the types of violations, and most importantly, provide a basis for media managers and journalists to draw conclusions and ramification on actions to improve the media quality.

The analysis revealed that not all publications sound ethical and professional standards of journalism. It was found that most journalists violated the principles of accuracy, fairness and balance. This was particularly evident from the materials on political events and persons. Content analysis captured a trend of loyalty of media to different political groups and persons. Media was used in the interest of some political groups to discredit the other political forces and leaders. Manipulation technology in the media made by spreading slanderous information and rumors, publications containing incriminating information. Some journalists use evaluating judgments, "labels", and form a negative public opinion of individual politicians, public figures, representatives of business.

We will consider more specifically the mistakes and violations of professional ethics, which are most common in the publications of the reviewed media.

## 1. Publications with intolerance, hatred and other forms of social aggression

News entries containing statements that incite ethnic strife and hatred based on speculation, not supported by the facts, evidence, are of expressive / emotional nature.

During the monitoring period, papers containing manifestations of intolerance and hatred to representatives of certain ethnic groups or countries, foreign companies and investors in Kyrgyzstan, were expressed in the form of concern that the latter were robbing the country and the local people. The following articles are clear from the headline, the way they give emotional and nationalistic tone of the author(s): "*Temir Jol salynsa Kytaylar rak shishigi symak zhabylyp ketet*" (If you build a railway, the Chinese will mushroom like cancer), "*Turktordun kozdogon Maksaty emne?*" (what are the Turkish for?) "How long ... teach Kyrgyz ", "Kazak Qaisar, evrei Artem kyrgyzdy tonop..." (Kazak Kaisar and Jew Artem are robbing the Kyrgyz).

The article "How many Chinese are there in Kyrgyzstan?" was published in the Kyrgyz language newspaper and re-published with Russian translation in the Internet. The paper above all, distorted the facts voiced by the Minister of Justice Shykmamatov, who actually said that in Parliament that Kyrgyzstan has about illegal 100,000 foreign employees. The newspaper wrote: "The Minister of Justice Almambet Shykmamatov recently said in Parliament that Kyrgyzstan has 90,000 Chinese." Secondly, the paper gives no confirmed information; It said: "they have captured bazaars; they own parts of bazaars "Dordoy" and "Kara-Su," "Slowly they crawled up into the arms of our women, and became our «narrow-eyed "sons-in-law."

A Russian website complained about the same paper on March 1, 2012 on its pages. The website reports that the newspaper issued an article entitled "Are we really a nation or not?" which according to the website, presents a problem. The Russian-based site said "the text of the material was close to a criminal content - the same type that was charged against the Russian-speaking journalist in Kyrgyzstan on inciting inter-ethnic hatred. The author of the newspaper said about the Russian people, for example: "... of the 145 million Russian people [in Russia] one part was loafers, another part was drunkards, and those sitting in jails," "... in the 19th century the Russians seized Kyrgyzstan; they not only captured us, but also the best lands; many of them who did not consider the Kyrgyz as humans."

The monitoring agrees that the article "Are we really the nation, or not?" contains elements inciting ethnic hatred. The points are not based on arguments, evidence, reliable sources of information, but stem from personal opinions, emotions and personal conclusions. Such publications bear potential for inciting hatred of ethnic Kyrgyz towards other ethnic groups.

Also, during the monitoring period there was no entry with balancing positions of the sides involved; for example the publications described the construction of the railway

by China, or the appointment of a new rector of the Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University. In one paper an author wrote an article named "Turkish in Kyrgyzstan", in which he s/he portrays the Turkish as saying, "In the past, the Russians used [the Kyrgyz] as slaves, now they [the Kyrgyz] will work for us." In another paper, an author wrote that "When Babanov [former prime Minister] was always accompanied by the Kazakh Qaisar and Jew Artem, and the Kyrgyz did not understand how they ended up being robbed". In the third paper printed it said that "they [Kyrgyz authorities] started the construction of the railway to allow the Chinese occupy Kyrgyzstan just as birds populate a land."

The monitoring also captured a material with provocative potential in local Russian language papers. The paper posted a text in the form of a reprint from the pages of the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights and a number of Internet sites in Russia; the text said that "Kyrgyzstan certainly did not belong to the circle of civilized nations, and journalists there have hard times". Material was not a journalistic product, but distributed by one of the most popular news agencies of the country, and could affect minds and moods of the audience. The source of the publication, reference to the statement of the Moscow Bureau for Human Rights, presents a provocative thesis that "Russian children are beaten by Kyrgyz pupils, and are viewed as descendants of invaders and colonizers." And there was no link / reference / source of information to the statement. Such an unsubstantiated statement could cause the aggravation of inter-ethnic relations in the country.

Also, hasty and irresponsible manner are demonstrated a number of Russian language media in April 2012. Such a trend was reflected in an article portraying a family tragedy with infanticide in Osh city of Kyrgyzstan as solely an attack by the Kyrgyz to the family of the Russian border guard, without allowing any other alternatives. Quote from the article: "Two men broke into the apartment of the Russian officer. Criminals beat up his wife and stabbed his children - two girls. One of them died from loss of blood. The woman and the second child ended up in the hospital. The official sources neither comment on the incident, nor utter any version of what happened. But they [authorities] do not exclude the possibility that the attack may be linked to the professional activity of the Russian officer. "

Later on, the press service of the Kyrgyz Interior Ministry issued information that the in the apartment of the Russian officer, the boy was found dead with his throat cut and sliced and the two year-old girl with a wound in the neck. "The task force in the wake of detained mother of the children, who said she had committed the crime, in the presence of lawyers and members of Task Force Border Service of the Russian Federation, stationed in Osh, being under the influence of psychotropic drugs."

Un-verified and hasty message about the attack on the family of a Russian officer has been extended a number of other Russian media, in turn triggering a wave of anti Kyrgyz statements in the Russian social networks and news sites. A local news agency reacted to this in the following way: "The mildest of the reactions in Russian-based internet sites to the un-verified article called for "immediate bombing of Kyrgyzstan", and "Giving all Kyrgyzstan's Russians Russian passports and take them

out from Kyrgyzstan and help them arrive in Russia". Such a reaction was evident, also in the context of the recent the Osh violence. If Kyrgyz police did not work swiftly and followed the current information of the press service of the Interior Ministry, the consequences and scope anti-Kyrgyz hysteria and speculation could have been difficult to predict.

Also, there was a material in a Kyrgyz language paper under the heading "If you are Kyrgyz, only serve the Kyrgyz", published in a series. These materials were written in Kyrgyz, but picked up by Russian language papers in their translated form. The author urges all Kyrgyz be well-educated, strong, friendly, and stand in solidarity to fight against the enemies, and multiply. Some of the author's theses can be interpreted as a hostile message, such as a call against other ethnic groups. For example it said: "The proportion of Kyrgyz by number in Kyrgyzstan reach as much as 90%", "Kyrgyz men are to protect Kyrgyz women from people of other nationalities." Perhaps the author calls for increased protection of the Kyrgyz and Kyrgyz women from good intention, but in its Russian translation its content could be interpreted by representatives of non-Kyrgyz ethnic background as a call to mono-ethnic Kyrgyzstan and exclusiveness towards the non ethnic Kyrgyz. Therefore, feedback to this article in social networks from the Russian-speaking audience bore disappointment.

One of the media used an excerpt taken from a forum of opinion in the internet, in which an opinion said that "in Kyrgyzstan Batyrov [leader of ethnic Uzbek] owns warehouses, which holds 450-500 pieces of weapons". The paper presented this as thought it were a fact.

In an article "Ozbek tilinde testirilo 2010 zhyldagy koogalangy kaytalayt" (Conducting school test in the Uzbek language may cause an unrest similar to the one in 2010) the author used no arguments and wrote: "The school graduation test must be carried out only in Russian and Kyrgyz, and there was no need in the Uzbek version." The material contains many other one-sided conclusions and personal emotions. The journalist neither based his/her claims on any external opinions, specialists from the Ministry of Education, nor provided any substantiation in support of this initiative.

In Article "*Kyrgyzdy maarytyp, sogyp turup altynyn algysy kelgen Kimakovsky kim ozu?*" (Kimakovski, who humiliated the Kyrgyz, and wanted to take its gold") It was about an accused businessman Kimakovsky, engaged in the mining of gold in the Naryn region, in the village of Tal Zherge. The material focuses on the fact that the businessman was a Jew; it said that he robbed the Kyrgyz people, was one of the tails "of the Jews, who ruled with Maxim, son of the former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev." The authors referred to some recorded the words Kimakovsky, allegedly containing swear and derogatory words with regard to Kyrgyz people. This quote could potentially become a basis for a conflict on an ethnic basis. At the end of this article, the authors wrote: "If the authorities do not react to such statements of Klimakovsky, the locals will share Kimakovsky for expulsion from the territory of Kyrgyzstan." In another article named "Kumbel", the journalist, accuses the Agency of Natural Resources and the two gold processing firms based on the received data



from the local population, but without presenting positions of the parties. The article also noted that the decree on granting the right to extraction of the ore was signed by [then] Prime Minister Chudinov. The author suggested that the head of the extraction company "Rokizol" Kimakovsky was abusive towards the Kyrgyz, calling them "sheep". Last month, in the same newspaper, he was described as "Kimakovsky the Jew, tail of son of ex-President Bakiyev Maxim". The lack of arguments creates ambiguity: connection between the two personalities as not explained. Also it was evident that the author emphasizes the fact that all natural resources were being given into the control of the non-Kyrgyz.

Another newspaper published theses of an alleged a secret conversation in transcript; the conversation was that between the incumbent president Atambaev, politician Tekebaev and Batyrov, who were believed to be discussing plans of provocation of the ethnic conflict in the southern Kyrgyzstan. The author warrants itself against possible claims for the authenticity of the information, by saying that it was not responsible for it; the text bore a potential for arousing hostile feelings towards both the Kyrgyz, and the Uzbeks, who went through the conflict.

An article "Judging the judges" described a trial with connotations that the judge Melnikova decided in favor of a person Dudin (one of the parties), based on the national solidarity. For example: "Dudin shouting in the courtroom, insults and humiliates Kyrgyz national dignity," "You, Kyrgyz, did not even know how to go to the toilet, without us, you'd still be wandering in the mountains". "*Judge Melnikova said nothing, as if she got water in her mouth*", wrote the journalist.

"Northerners will not give up power to the Sarts". This title was published on the front page with a photo of [then prime Minister] Babanov's Government. The word "Sart" was an insulting term towards the southern Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. The pronunciation of the word by the head of government, as it was introduced the paper, could be very negatively perceived by residents of the southern region and ethnic Uzbeks. At the same time, this "quote" of the Kyrgyz Prime Minister had no evidence.

Another paper described the way [politician and Member of Parliament] Omurbek Tekebaev supposedly affected the procedure for electing the head of the Supervisory Board of the Public TV: "We would appreciate it if you choose Kylych Sultanov as Chairman. Southerners took all they could take, therefore the Director General of the TV must be a Northerner; that way you can make everyone happy, and you will be content too", Tekebaev" whispered " into Atambaev's ear. The whispered message sounded as a music to the ears of Jantoro Satybaldiev [then head of president Administration], who was responsible for the paperwork, and who happily ran and supported his fellow from the south," the author wrote. The newspaper brings to reference that the applicants for the position of Director General of the Public TV and chairman of the Supervisory Board are selected on the basis of the "north-south". No opinions of officials and members of the Supervisory Board involved in this matter were interviewed.

In the article "Tribalists out in the open", the author, relying on information on the website, accused a citizen-author named Nazarov for his statement "Sart were corrupt," and for calling someone an "ethnic Kalmak by blood."

Also, there were article series in one of local papers with the following headlines: "Gay parade marches on the planet" (March 23), "What gays and lesbians are for" (April 12) about sexual minorities and their activities to promote their rights. The author commits a breach of neutrality principle did not comply with the principle of balance, and promotes openly expressed opposition to gays, uses abusive emotional vocabulary; for example, s/he wrote that "fortunately, for one part of society, gladly, for majority of society, it was clear that THIS was abnormal and unnatural"; "How childish it was, gentlemen, the homosexuals!", "Although it was time to protect us, heterosexuals, from attacks and obsessions of those who consider themselves "normal", "those who from his youth clung themselves homosexual husks and proudly say, "I am - gay, respect my rights, because I am more normal than you all together! " – they are really dangerous" and etc. A question of balance of opinions by was solved by the authors as follows: "if you have something to say, you should open your own mass media and inform as much as they want..."

In April, the same newspaper published an article "Sexual minorities are becoming more aggressive." This article reveals the identity of the person, a representative of homosexuals convicted of distributing pornography. The author did not constrain his/her personal emotions, did not hide his/her hatred and openly supports the judgment.

In May issues of the newspaper a series of publications on sexual minorities continued. While in previous publications, the paper spoke of them with emotional and abusive language, in the later issues the aggression aggravated. A section of the media called "survey" about a question "What do you think about gays and lesbians?" the page was filled with aggressive appeals, such as putting them down. For example: "Yes, homosexuals need to be smothered! If they only sat quietly, without shouting about their perversions all around ...", "And if those creatures seduce the minors they need to be neutered!"

The newspaper described negative reaction of sexual minorities to newspaper articles: "So much aggressive and intolerant attitude to the opinions of others ... So much confidence in one's rightness..." The report authors think these words are of the newspaper itself and its relationship to sexual minorities. The media also have to respect their rights, and a variety of people and nature, should not create a sense of social hostility to any group. The newspaper later informed its audience that it was closing this topic as it was "absolutely hopeless".

One newspaper published an article dedicated to the memory of the local 'crowned criminal' Rysbek Akmatbaev; "Armanda ketken, legendaga aylangan Rysbek." By giving credit to the leader of the criminal world, the author recalls some highlights of his life, he presented him almost as a national hero, who fought for the order in this unjust world. This publication may have been perceived as promoting the idea of

organized crime and thus was at odds with the ethical journalist standards, not to mention the values of society.

One of the editions published a letter of a reader who accused the party "Ata-Jurt" and its leader Kamchybek Tashiyev in racketeering based on national criterion. (Party of the Kyrgyz nationalists change policy, 8/14/12). Quote from the text: "Ata-Jurt" and associated criminal groups continue to ridicule the minorities. New tactics in this regard was the same. Now it was the turn of Meskhetian Turks. Currently, the Meskhetian Turks densely populated in the Cheryomushki district of Osh, Mayevka village near the capital, and rural Bagish village near Jalalabad, as well as in the settlement Shamaldy-Say; in the latter place they operate a cultural center, which was run by a local resident Bekzod Svanidze. Turks are engaged primarily in business, and pay their tribute to the local mobs. Until now, this situation suited both sides, but in recent years the appetite of racketeers has increased, and the Turks in large numbers leave Kyrgyzstan. For example, in late April, brother of the above named Bekzod Svanidze, Shavkat, paid thugs already five thousand dollars. Otherwise, he and his family were threatened with physical violence. In order to pay off the the extortions Shavkat had to sell their property and cafe, and left for Russia for permanent residence, «said the reader.

Before publishing such allegations, the author has not checked the accuracy of information from other sources. Rely solely on the reader's opinion, was to violate the principle of integrity and balance. In the absence of reliable data, such publication would promote inter-ethnic peace in the country, but instead can aggravate the fragile inter-ethnic relations.

The same edition of the September 14, 2012 in the article "Kyrgyzstan should be ruled by the pure Kyrgyz blooded" contained elements of nationalism. According to the author's (Imarali Kushmatov) opinion the rulers of Kyrgyz in the history - Turdakun Usubaliev, Askar Akayev and politicians Felix Kulov, Emil Kaptagaev and many other leaders were the descendants of the Kalmaks, conceal their ethnic identity, and hence, this explained "all the troubles that came to the Kyrgyz". "Now they (the Kalmyks, presenting themselves as Kyrgyz and Kazakhs) occupy almost all key positions in state agencies. Guided by the Jesuit principle "crushing barbarians with hands of barbarians", they deliberately change - their national affiliation. Often, at the village Koi-Tash, they discuss the situation in the country, taking appropriate actions (against [then prime minister] Babanov)", the author wrote. According to him, "Kamchibek Kydyrshaevich (Tashiyev) was right, because only noble Kyrgyz were able to restore justice in the state". This paper contains the elements of ethnic intolerance.

In another paper, on 12 September, the same article published in Russian under the same name - "Kyrgyzstan should be ruled by pure Kyrgyz blooded". Public activist Dastan Sarygulov wrote in the same issue of the newspaper that the overall population of the Chinese in Kyrgyzstan had reached 200,000. "If we do not make any conclusions, they can fully occupied our country, we need national mood as the air " - quoted by his newspaper.

In the same newspaper (29 August) in the article "Kyran Manastyn jerin Kytai basyp algan jataby?" (The Chinese are going to seize the land of Manas?) By describing the situation with investors in Talas, the author wrote that "the Chinese keep their eye on the golden fields, and that it did not bring any good" and that "the people of Talas not like the Chinese." The newspaper printed the article without any arguments and evidence, the text was accompanied by emotional statements anti-Chinese content.

Another newspaper (September 11) published an article titled "Kyrgyz do not mind their daughters to marry the Chinese"; it concluded that the problems was with those who do not care for Kyrgyzstan and are indifferent to the future of the nation, "it was all the same for them if they give their daughters to the Chinese, or Kyrgyz." After that, the Chinese would "occupy" all of Kyrgyzstan, the author believed. In the same issue published another article called "We [the Kyrgyz] ourselves were digging the grave." It spoke about a construction of a school in Bishkek in the Chinese language. The article argued that the benefits of such a development would be only for the Chinese, not the Kyrgyz: "While we cannot establish the Kyrgyz language in Uzbek and Russian schools, they want schools in the Chinese language". The journalist did not try to reflect any expert opinion of Ministry of Education, on reasons and purposes of a school in Chinese language.

In the newspaper on September 13 in an article entitled "This was what we deserve, the Kyrgyz who have no pride," the author wrote emotionally that [Kyrgyz politicians of different ethnic groups] Kadyrjan Batyrov, Salahuddin, Alisher Sabirov, Korkmazov, Roman Shin, Salimov spitted in the face of Kyrgyz, by doing anything they want. The author did not believe these politicians as his own "compatriots", by clearly drawing a line on the basis of ethnic exclusion.

Moreover, the monitoring saw a media publication at 26 September published an article "Americans staged a dirty provocation on the Internet against Kyrgyzstan: revenge or sabotage?" The author believed that there was a diversion simultaneous the livestock sector in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (mass infection of cattle virus in September). According to the author, such an information served "neither the Kyrgyz, nor the Uzbeks or Russians, but the U.S. only! Only these provocateurs interested in the political instability and economic poverty in our country could do it. In the American false report "from Kyrgyzstan", they got their ears out. The USA was too overwhelmed and rushed to announce about the "epidemic of natural causes." And it only reinforces suspicions about them. "

This article provided a direct appeal for political hatred and intolerance. In addition, paragraph 10 violated the Code of Ethics, which requires that facts, judgments and assumptions should be clearly separated.

## 2. Failure to comply with principles of accuracy and objectivity. Publication of false information

Precision, accuracy, neutrality, balance all focus on the pages of newspapers were not respected in most cases. Violation of the quality standards of journalism were the norm rather than an exception. In several reviewed media such violations occur in almost every edition.

One of the reviewed media reprinted the blog from the social network Facebook; the entry belonged to an ex-candidate to Parliament Askar Abakirov, named "Asha [belittling abbreviation for President Almazbek Sharshenovich Atambaev] should go to a psychiatrist, BOT [belittling abbreviation for then prime Minister Babanov Omurbek Tokotgulovich] was grabber, and the opposition are ass lickers". Article contained offensive language, profanity, and labeling to discredit, "Atambayev needed a check-up on his mental state and overall health .... This man was always afraid of something or someone, his views publicly "Katani was ass" (meaning politician Omurbek Suvanaliev), "Babanov - grabber businessman put the economy of the Kyrgyz Republic under his business", "Yesterday it was the Akayev's, then it was Bakiyev's ass lickers, and currently it was the opposition."

In the next issue of the same newspaper published an alleged transcript of talks [then] Prime Minister Babanov and Kazakh billionaire Baitemir Utemuratov, which had a wide resonance in the Parliament during the annual report of the head of government. This transcript was taken from the web site The Moscow Post, which claims to have taken it from a private blog, and reserved the dubiousness of its veracity. Item 7 of the Ethical Code states: "Journalist, under no circumstances shall not publish false information. Journalist should by all possible methods correct any dissemination of information, if it turned out to be false." The newspaper did not publish the refutation Press Service of the Prime Minister, who denied the conversation.

Professional ethical standards were violated in the article "Atambaev son-in-law Zhunushaliev was making a mess". Newspaper deliberately distorted the information in the header text and placed a collage with [President] Atambayev, where he stood with a chainsaw in a forest near a mountain of cut trees. On the front page headline - "Atambaev's son-in-law Junushaliev makes a mess", and the text on the inside pages gives words of the press secretary of the President formally declaring that Atambayev had no son-in-law with such a name.

Online Newspaper in Article "Under the roof "of the parliament: How [the prime ministers] Babanov and his family ran the economy of Kyrgyzstan" listed nine unsubstantiated facts, which, from author's opinion, showed that Babanov and his family had captured the Kyrgyz economy. The author did not give any facts to his allegations. The author provided neither opposing nor neutral evaluation for the sake of objectivity.

In another newspaper, without giving the source of information, the author wrote that one of the representatives of top government officials paid for one thousand dollars to program manager of "Ala-Too» Public TV information program Nurjamal Burkhanova for not broadcasting negative information. This article stated that "usually Burkhanova smelled perfume, and now comes the" green "smell [of money]". The author did not provide facts and evidence for this assertion. Potentially material contains the possibility of involving the author to liability for defamation.

Another newspaper said that "the Kyrgyz government on May 9 Victory Day flew 2 tons of alcohol, so officials made" fat extra money". However, no evidence was given.

Imprecision and lack of evidence led to legal action by one of the focus newspapers. The paper eventually apologized to the member of Parliament Tekebaev and his family. Previously, an article published (18 March 2011) a conversation with the member of Parliamentarian Pirmatov, alleging that "Asylbek Tekebaev took 85 thousand dollars by threats ". The paper could not prove this statement and apologized before it went to the court.

One of the reviewed media published an article from the Internet resource "Comment.kg" under the heading "Otonbayeva's son ran to the initiative of Asha", which states that "ex-President Otonbayeva had long consisted in the Masonic community, officially legalized there. "The author interprets an entry of ex-president on the occasion of the Club of Madrid as her membership in the Masonic society. In this case, first, the message did not indicate the source, then it was not confirmed and was not a fact. Secondly, unlikely there was evidence that the Madrid club was a Masonic society, accordingly, the author was false and fits into the concept of "defamation", for which the law provides for administrative and criminal liability (From Wikipedia: The Club of Madrid - an independent, nonprofit organization established to promote democracy and changes in the international community. Consists of 80 former presidents and prime ministers from 56 countries, was the world's largest forum of former Heads of State and Government. Was created in 2002). Newspaper, reprinting was non-confirmed information, and violated ethical and professional standards of journalism that require reliable facts.

In the next issue of the same newspaper article "Tekebayev preparing a new president," the leader of the party "Ata Meken" Tekebaev and Deputy Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Zh. Otorbaev presented as members of an international secret criminal organization that allegedly collude with foreign multinational companies and prepare for the sale of all the assets of the country. The article was not a single proof of all of fabrications. It should be noted that the above information was not presented as an opinion, and in fact there are both approval and evaluation of the facts, the truth of which was not proved. In court, this information could potentially count untrue and insulting the honor and dignity of the well-known political figures. There were many similar examples in the local judicial practice.

Number of discussions occurred on the topic of exception members of parliamentarian Ravshan Jeenbekov and Omurbek Abdrakhmanov from the party

"Ata Meken". Local news website in the publication "Why Americans expelled from the party" Ata Meken "without any confirmation or reference said that these members of parliament had U.S. green card and hid this fact. Elementary newspaper could refine the accuracy of this information from those members of parliament and bring their answers, which had not been done.

In the article "The Prime Minister's quadrille," the author argued that "the Parliament members meet many representatives of the criminal world, whose friends are in prisons, and therefore it was inconvenient for the MPs to remove head of prison system Bayzakov from his post". There was evidence, nor division between opinion and facts.

Impartiality of journalism does not mean that journalists and media should refuse to express personal opinions and positions. However, the reader should be able to distinguish between facts and opinion or interpretation of events. It was hard to see whether the statements are the opinion of the author. By the way, members of the Parliament followed up on the statement and required an explanation from the deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Melis Turganbaev, who publicly had stated earlier that there were Parliamentarians with ties with the criminal world. Perhaps the journalist repeated the statement uttered by the Deputy Minister, but did so without reference to it. Even if this was not a statement, opinion, the professional ethics require that the journalist should provide for the principle of balance, by giving the voice of the opponents, including those who happen to be the subject of the criticism.

Another newspaper which reported about the situation around the company "Alfa Telecom" made two mistakes. The first concerns the estimated value of the company. The paper points distorted figures: "49% of the company" Alfa Telecom "will be sold for 4.9 million KGS." Actually put up for sale of 49% of the company was valued at 4.9 billion soms. Another paper reported the illegal withdrawal of \$ 6 million in offshore accounts in the company owned by a person Abekov (one of the managers of the company, now involved in the case by the company "Alfa-Telecom"). The paper did not specify the source of information: Who said that? Attorney General, deputy or vendor in the market? Newspaper, ignoring the rules of the source thus deprived of trust of readers.

In the same issue of the newspaper was an entry about increased number of suicides among minors in Kyrgyzstan, the burning of houses Kyrgyzstan Baptist in Toktogul region. Again, there was no source of information. If this information came from the Ministry of Health, other government agencies or international organizations – official resources should have been provided for. However, if the newspaper could not confirm the facts, readers were once again presented with questionable information.

The presence of several errors in one and the same issue showed that the newspaper did not always check the incoming information. In the same issue another newspaper reported inaccurate information: Bakyt Tynaliev introduced as head of High Attestation Committee under the Academy of Sciences, ignoring the fact that the head was another person the already five years: academician Borubaev.

At the local site under the heading "CEC (central committee for elections) Abdraimov's private shop?" published a list of 26 employees working at the time in the Central Election Commission, who are presented as relatives of Chairman. The site notes that this information was from a comment of reader who left on the article "Prime-minister to riches". Accordingly, it was not a fact but merely an anecdote. Editorial neglected to verify the information. Meanwhile incorrect information from the site smoothly moved to the newspaper as a reprint. So unreliable information roams the sites and newspapers and widely distributed. In one the Internet forum one of the readers comment rightly pointed out that it was possible "fabricated article by a member of the CEC, who wants to get the post of chair."

The same newspaper in its issue dated 06/01/12 wrote that people's summit, kurultai, was held in Bishkek, authorized by the President: "So this action (Kurultai) in the sports palace, was blessed by Asha (*president Atambaev*), who desires the enhancement of his powers". Such a conclusion the author makes only on the grounds that "the Speaker and his brother" cronies of Asha".

One of the authors web site, on the eve of the anniversary of Osh events 2 (June 2010), made a statement that the Osh tragedy: that it was the work of the Americans. "It's time to tell the truth. Pretend that we do not know how and why American advisers work in our country, what their immediate and distant plans – it is so easy to work against national security. In short, the kindling fire in the Fergana valley is the main and long-term task of the United States, «the author wrote. The author did not bother to search for evidence and argument did not apply to the opinion of any expert in international politics, members of commissions of inquiry bloodshed.

In the article "Hidden in the shadow of money" without any evidence, it was reported that of the three thousand banners in Bishkek with two thousand taxes "funneling" in the pocket 2-3 Municipality officials.

In an editorial, "*KJK would like to state a protest in the capital, but it has no money for it*" was written, that the leader of the movement "Kyrgyzstandyn Jany kuchtoru" opposition deputies Kamchybek Tashiev asked for money for the rally". This information was based on such "sources": as "we were whispered," "based on unofficial sources."

In "Tashtemir. Gun. Mysterious death " it was written that "on 21 September the well-known "horseman" of our people Bayaman Erkinbayev was shot dead outside his home. Not long after they found a gun by which he was shot. We heard that the weapon belongs to the Committee of National Security". One-sided accusation of State agency, there are no facts, opinions on this issue on the part of the State Committee of National Security.

In one of the newspaper **VIP**column, there was a material containing personal views of journalists and their conclusions on a particular event. A striking example of this information on the second page of the newspaper on 1 June "Presidentship is not an inherited business by one's feather": "Bakyt Torobaev. The name of the son of



Ergesh Torobaev. His ambition to become president by the minute gaining momentum, thus it intends to participate in the upcoming presidential elections to be held in 2017. Maybe he was sitting on the presidential throne, but changing his position: the withdrawal of the team close friend Altynbek Sulaimanov and Babanov's support". Here was no distinction between information and opinion or position.

Another newspaper wrote about Azizbek Kachybekov detained on suspicion in the death of Aliev [one of the leaders of the Ministry of Interior, who died in 2005], that he was frequently forced to torture by interrogators by chief department of Interior Ministry. But the nature of the writing was one-sided. The journalist did not try to reflect the thoughts of the accused, but was merely his own. It also can be seen that the author showed compassion to the detainee.

The same newspaper gives information in the article "Who is Archimedes in the army?" that in the National Guard military servants to collect money in the amount of 6000 soms for uniforms and repairs. The source is not confirmed.

In the article "The interim government was not a thief," said that in 2010, after assuming office, the Interim Government gave opportunity to [then] Prime Minister Daniyar Usenov to escape, and even brought back all his property to his wife. However, the author did not confirm any facts.

In "They want to make money out of hajj" author makes suggestions about money theft in sending people to Hajj: the suspects are the head of the presidential administration Jantoro Satybaldiev and Chairman of the Religious Affairs Commission. Newspaper uses the phrase "as the people say". Positions of the two officials on this issue are not reflected and no explanation of the reasons for their absence given.

In "A master of cutting tails" the author identified head of the presidential administration Janotor Satybaldiev as corrupt. This was based on story that he had once visited the wife of former President Akayev Mairam Akayeva and transferred to her 20-30 thousand dollars for the post of governor of Osh region; the entry gave no evidence. The character of the article could well sue the journalists and newspapers for libel.

Here is a reprint from Kyrgyz language newspaper "On order to keep the air base, the U.S. was once again ready to arrange a coup in Kyrgyzstan?": "President proposed the U.S. airbase to withdraw, but the latter seems ignorant to it. And so they (US) decided to spend their money, to make third revolution in Kyrgyzstan. For this task they have enough agents of influence in all the structures of the government. According to their plan, they would first dissolve the parliament, then d using the discontent people they would topple the "naughty" president Atambayev. Instead of him put back on the throne a puppet president Roza Otunbayeva, that she was promoted to advance their plans. And what is more interesting, at the moment a Western investor arrived in Kyrgyzstan, planning to sell important facilities in Kyrgyzstan and preparing to leave. "In Kyrgyzstan, the revolution could happen

rather soon. So I do not want to be a food for the looters, «he shared private his thoughts to one authority officials." While the newspaper wrote that this information was obtained from reliable sources, there was no conclusive evidence of its authenticity. The word "reliable" was not specified.

In its issue of September 6, 2012 the newspaper published the focus portrait of the new Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiyev. The author lists negative facts of his professional career. According to the author, when he headed construction of the Bishkek-Osh road millions soms were stolen, while Satybaldiev was minister of transport, a large number of vehicles were sold and transferred to private ownership. And there are many statements in the material. By nowhere indicates sources confirming the veracity of these data, respectively, violated the principles of accuracy and objectivity.

In the same issue posted several messages without specifying the source of information: "Talgarbekov with no dignity, Jumaliev threatens him" (in response Talgarbekov sent two bullets to the former Attorney General Beknazarov, who presented the public with a list corrupted people); also an article named "Ush an ending" (detainment of Gulnara Derbisheva, now former Director of Social Welfare Department, by national Security,), an article "China is ready to help the Kyrgyz" (about the trip A.Atambaev in Urumchi). All these reports were published without identifying the source, thus newspaper here violated the principles of reliability.

One newspaper ran a story on September 8, "corrupt officials eager for power." It presents the MP Tokon Mamytov as a "self-serving man affected by tribalism and nepotism". Personnel police of Tokon Mamytov, when he led the Border Guard, became "a way of gathering money from the employees". The author gives a lot of different information and links, but there are no specific sources and documents to prove the authenticity of his allegations. Accordingly, the article violated the principles of reliability and objectivity.

The war of compromising materials on the eve of the collapse of the coalition in the parliament in the summer of 2012 clearly showed a tendency for the media division of loyalty to different political groups and persons. One newspaper in one of the rooms on the merits of information attack became a mouthpiece of the party "Ata Meken" on the Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov ("Republic" party). One of the publications contained following Statement of the fraction "Ata Meken" to withdraw from the majority coalition, interview fraction leader Omurbek Tekebayev and message of the secret plan of the Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov to sell 50% shares of "Kyrgyz Petroleum Company" in Jalal-Abad. Also in the article, "Kamchykeni Kandal kyrdaal zhushartty" states that the Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov in a political struggle with Tekebayev uses criminal elements. In this article there was not a single line about how all this explains the prime minister or faction "Republic" was not presented its position or the position of his colleagues on the issues.

Another newspaper contrary published materials critical of the leader of the "Ata Meken" Omurbek Tekebayev and his party. In its issue of August 24 newspaper

wrote about how the Republicans accuse the organization of looting by "Ata-Meken" members during the revolution of 2010 (the "Ata Meken" not shared stolen "). Also, in the article "Who was the customer of the government?" Initiative to dismiss the government head Babanov in interpretation of author presented as a combination of Tekebayev to save "their unscrupulous colleagues in the party", "extend the legal mess" and so on. In another issue of the same newspaper ("If Erkin Alymbekov right about pimps," September 14, 2012) newspaper reminded the public scandalous video online that demonstrates Tekebaev's personal confidences. ".. After all, the leader of the party Omurbek Tekebayev showed naked satisfying their lust with an unknown woman, at rented apartment on the plot of "NTV" and the record was still available on YouTube on the Internet " said newspaper. In the same issue of the newspaper on the whole page it talked about how four of the Bishkek jail inmate expose the party leaders' Ata Meken "of looting during the April events. In this case, none of these publications are not the opinions or Tekebayev his party on those issues.

Members of the party "Ata Meken" are accused of looting by one more reviewed newspaper: "The leaders "Ata Meken" Omurbek Tekebayev, Raykan Tologonov, Turatbek Madylbekov and Bolot Sher ... their actions are interpreted letter of the law, as looting. ... The activities of these 4 party members, at the moment of the bloody confrontation between the people and his tyrannical, more resemble as mess of OPG (organized crime group)," said the publication.

Another newspaper September 3, 2012 reported about the detention of Director of Social Welfare Gulnara Derbisheva by Anticorruption service of GKNB. Newspaper position was not impartial, even condemning: "Selling orphans? Shame on the woman's head, caught with a bribe". The crime had not been proved, the court had not made its decision, but the newspaper already condemned.

In the article "What was the weight of Omurbek in Jalal-Abad ..." author have compared the political weight of Omurbek Babanov and Omurbek Tekebayev. According to the newspapers, despite the fact that Tekebaev comes from Jalalabad, the political rating of the other Omurbek [Babanov] was much higher there. There is no mention as to how this rating was determined; instead there was a one-sided praise Babanov and criticism against Tekebayev, as a person and as a politician.

The same unbalanced material was published on August 31. The author criticizes «Kanat Isaev who spitted into the well from which he drank", the author condemns the MP Isaev, but supports and protects the [then] Prime Minister Babanov.

One of the media resources was trying to raise [then] acting Minister of Social Development Edil Baysalov. In an entry " Altynbek Sulaimanov conscience will not forgive" there is a unilateral criticism against Sulaymanov (MP), and an accusation that the latter had sold half of the 12 ore fields. "They're in the pocket of Sulaimanov, public is not going to excuse him" author named Cherik wrote.

In article "After the April events they fled to Dubai ..." wrote about 10 famous people (ministers, officials, members of parliament) each of whom were said to have made more than 10 million dollars investment to the economy of Dubai"; this information was not specified, facts not given. In **VIP** column "Celebration in Almaty" the author wrote: "Someone whispered in our ear that [brother of former president Bakiev] Janysh Bakiev [wanted by Kyrgyz government] arrived in Almaty to participate in the wedding ceremony of his son".

In another article, the newspaper reported that one of the deputies in Karakol prepares 50 thousand dollars as a bribe for the new Prime Minister Satybaldiev to become governor of the Issyk-Kul region. There was no efforts of the wording to clarify the information.

Information provided that Transport Minister Sultanov, continued corruption, by forcing employees to transfer illegal money offshore. The newspaper did not write where and who this information came from.

Another edition wrote that Urmat Barktabasov [a politician who with his associates tried to storm the Government House], under house arrest, joined the newly formed opposition movement. Also, the newspaper wrote that him, also being the deputy of the "Respublika" party, was going to finance the rally in front of the White House by [another MP] Iskhak Pirmatov to dissolve Parliament. The sources of these materials over the same reference lines: "as we have heard," and "seems to be".

One newspaper reported on October 12 that the ex-Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov in Turkey had been officially accepted into the club of billionaires. The message to the website said that from 1 to 5 October the billionaire Alikhan Ibragimov, known as "The Count", held lavish wedding of his son in the Turkish resort of Bodrum, which was also attended by former Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov and President Atambaev. "At the wedding the young guest Omurbek Babanov was announced as a new member club of billionaires with a fortune of \$ 1.7 billion". Neither the website nor the newspaper did not give first-hand information. Any information that can be called into question, must be confirmed by reputable sources, the reader should be able to verify its authenticity.

In article on October 11, 2012 "Is the the trusted men of Asha" reported about the way the head of the presidential administration Daniyar Narymbaev "foolishly fled from the "White House" and adviser to President Farid Niyazov " when there was a rally in front of the White House on October 3, when supporters of party leader "Ata-Jurt" Kamchybek Tashiev got over the fence". The newspaper describes them as cowards and ridicules them. No specific source as to who had seen the exodus of the officials. Accordingly, this information was not a fact, and the paper spreads a rumor.

In a short message ("Those who announced hunger strike are not in good health") in the same newspaper reported that, in the Jalal-Abad by hunger strike hospitalized sister of the arrested leader of the "Ata-Jurt" K. Tashiev and doctors discovered her hernia. If this information was extracted from its own sources, it should indicate

otherwise, and you cannot check it. In article "Social Democrats have usurped the office?" paragraph 10 of the Ethical Code was violated, according to which the facts, judgments and assumptions should be separated from each other. In this article, the journalist accused the Social Democrats for the collapse of the state and the monopoly of power, and was difficult for the reader to separate facts from judgment. Similar violations occur in the article "Why has a criminal case been initiated against MP Sadyr Japarov?" where the journalist made a subjective conclusion about marauding acts of the opposition MP.

### 3. Lack of balance and impartiality

In covering the conflict, the media do not always observe the balance of opinion and impartiality.

For example, one newspaper unilaterally accused the director of a metropolitan school, without waiting for the results of the investigation and trial, accusing her of creating a "slave system" and illegal money exactions in her school. The author of *"Honored slaveholder"* builds the entire article's material on the following allegations: *"The director of the school No. 44 has gone much further. She begins simply "draining milk" from her subordinates. When she pays wages, she held a thousand or two thousand soms without any explanation. When asked by cleaners and janitors: "For what reason?", - she answered that they come to work in a drunken condition and they were not enough zealous, so generally they should be happy that they have a job, and if they become impudent, they should be working with brooms for 8 hours a day. ... One gets the impression that Ms. Jumagulova has created a unique slave system in the school. She was busy in loading the cleaners full of work, and at the same time to withdraw a "submit" from their already enough miserable wage".*

However, the investigative materials do not give the right for the journalist to issue a verdict that the woman is guilty. Title of the article on the front page with a photo of the school director, even before the court took place, already issuing the following accusatory verdict: **"Honorable slave owner"**. In the journalism the focus of the reader's attention falls on the title, so the director was shown to the whole country as unscrupulous leader with easy accusations by the famous journalist in this case. Although by that moment nobody knew what the result of investigations would be. Many cases of corruption facts in education institutions were suspended or terminated due to difficulties to establish the truth. Professional standards require that the journalistic publications during the investigation and trial must be objective. At all stages of investigation and trial the journalist should strive for full coverage of all the view points of the parties. In this particular case the school director was denied even the elementary right to answer or explain what is happening. The journalist ignored completely the rights and interests of the director.

Another newspaper criticized the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance that the billion soms, which were given by the **"Kumtor" company**, was actually redirected for micro crediting activity. The author concluded his article in the following way: *"there's something wrong", "this is where the dog is buried by Mr. Babanov and Mr.*

*Japarov*, "they maybe came up with this story in order to assign the millions from *Kumtor*?" The author criticized the Prime and the Minister, but had no argument to support his critics. For the sake of fairness and professional ethics there should be provided all other points of view and contrary opinions.

The same newspaper in its issue dated 17/5/2012 highlighted the details of the court scandal about the security officer and his wife. The author completely took the side of the security officer's wife and discussed the issue from the prosecution's point of view. Coverage of legal trails requires from journalists a particular delicateness and neutrality. Especially in a family scandal the journalist is unlikely to find the truth. The first sentence of paragraph **13 of the EC** states that "*Media coverage of legal trails should be impartial to the accused person*".

One of the newspapers published an article written by **a former employee of the State Committee on Geology** who accuses the **head of State Committee on Geology Ms. Tashbaeva** in being engaged in secret plans and different schemes to sell the natural resources of the country. For the balance sake, the newspaper could have published a response of Ms. Tashbaeva, but it did not. Hence, the reader can conclude that the newspaper is biased to the head of State Committee on Geology and intentionally deprives her to provide a response words.

In July and August, the media's main political event was the political clashes between factions of the ruling coalition. The content analysis allows seeing the trend of media's division by loyalty to different political groups and persons, but this is mostly related to the content of the media in Kyrgyz-language. There were no obvious signs of such a separation among the Russian-language publications included in the focus group.

The exception was the publication that criticized the initiators of the government dissolution. The newspaper assessed the diplomacy of the Prime Minister Mr. Babanov as "fruitful" and the initiative of deputies-initiators was called as "suffocation of reform." ("**Do we really need such a change?**" article, dated August 7, 2012). Attitude of the author in this article could not be called neutral, since his position in favor of the government was so visible. Although in the same issue of the newspaper in the article called "Personnel's rotation" the Mr. Babanov's policy on personnel was criticized.

Another newspaper commented the appointment of the **"Aykol EI" party's leader Mr. Edil Baisalov to the position of Acting Minister of Social Development** with the following statement: "*Phew! This odious Baisalov... was appointed to be the Minister of Social Development!*"(dated 08/06/2012) reminded readers that the new minister "*at the time of being a human rights activist paid by USA, he organized many demonstrations and provocations; and to his credit, we remember the performance with its own beating. Additionally to that, in 2007 before the parliamentary elections he announced online the sample ballot, which was a rampageous or provocative act, caused a huge loss for the state budget.*" Also, the newspaper asked: "By the way, Mr. Baisalov lived in Sweden for several years. Does he still hold Kyrgyzstan's

citizenship? ", this was the question which was not answered, although the newspaper could verify this information.

In another article, *"Kyrgyzstan: religion, pedophilia, Turkish invasion, nationalism" ("Mudarris madrasah" Yiyk Sulaiman Too)* allegations were presented against medrese's Mudaris Mr. Nur Said and the Mayor of Osh city Mr. Myrzakmatov. *Having a Turkish citizenship, this graduate of the theological institution of Turkey Mr. Nur Said raped his students. This story began long ago, and it continued for several years. Mr. Nur Said intimidated their victims to silence them. The head of the madrese Mr. Amet Shakir, Turkish national, was aware about these escapades of the Mudaris, but kept a blind eye",* - said the publication. Who, where and when has established those "facts"? The material cannot answer these questions.

The author also categorically sure of the dangers that come from the Mayor of Osh city: *"When we speak about Osh city, one cannot but should say a word about the most vibrant personality – the" boss "of the city, rabid nationalist and corruptionist, who has close links with the underworld, who admire the Turkish people – Mr. Melisbek Myrzakmatov. This person is so mired with nefarious deeds, that the whole life is not enough to wash away the dirt. There is a reason to believe that there is even a Myrzakmatov's army of more than two thousand well-armed militants. They are ready to rise up by a single signal and unleash the fighting. "*

If reliable sources are not mentioned, the information set forth in the report cannot be viewed as authentic. In the article there were only unfounded allegations. In order to achieve fairness and balance, the editorial staff didn't question the mayor, Mudaris or law enforcement authorities. We believe this publication is violating all norms of journalist ethics. It is based on one-sided and unverified information.

Another newspaper published an article about the conflict that occurs in the youth editorial staff of the OTRK (First Kyrgyz "Public TV and Radio Channel"). The article lists few facts from an open letter to the youth editorial staff of the OTRK, which states that there are corruption, intrigues, obscene deeds, violations of labor rights, etc. And all this blames were put on the OTRK's Supervisory Board, "which turns a blind eye to these affairs". The material is one-sided and biased. Views of the other side were not represented and the author did not try to reflect alternative views.

#### **4. Political advertising and discrediting**

Media, unfortunately, is for the most part still used as a tool of achieving specific goals of a politician or political groups. Bias against political leaders, labeling are systematically present in a number of publications in focus media. Using statements, quotations without any validation: "Everyone knows that he was a master of political intrigue, power broker ..." opposition ... (04/21/12). Another example, a prominent businessman accused that he threatened tenants of shops: "I'll smash your kidney away". "Akim Omurbekova strongly supports Joldoshbekova arbitrariness". No

specific references to sources, confirming the accuracy of the threats from the businessman.

One newspaper published an editorial ("Let the President give you punishment") about the difficult situation around the pool "Kyal", which heavily criticized the organization's director Makashov and Minister of Finance Akylbek Japarov. Newspaper openly supports one of the warring parties, thereby lost a position of objectivity, neutrality and impartiality.

Media focus on the content you can see that some of the newspaper was a tool to achieve certain goals or that politician or political groups. For example, some newspapers publish advertisements in the most one-sided nature of the political party "Ata Jurt", "Butun Kyrgyzstan" and their leaders - KamchybekTashiev, Adakhan Madumarov, Akmatbek Keldibekov. In every issue you can see interview, views of the above politicians. At the same time, their opponents – Almazbek Atambaev, Omurbek Babanov, government officials and members of the ruling coalition are portrayed with satirical collages and a sharp criticism.

In contrast, in other newspapers do harsh criticism of President Atambayev, Prime-minister Omurbek Babanov and their parties are not observed, or if there was criticism, it was very discreet and polite. At the same time, representatives of the opposition (Tashiev, Keldibekov, Madumarov) were criticized in the acute form. There was a set of unilateral publications.

Precision, accuracy, neutrality, balance are not met in all focus newspapers. Violation of standards of journalism ethics converted into common.

For example, the newspaper wrote that opposition deputies Keldibekov met with Usenov (former Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was now on the run and in the official search). No updated information there was on where Keldibekov met him, when, who reported this information.

Journalists do not prove with facts, sources, truthfulness, and other opinion.

Unfortunately, it became a rule, when the journalists themselves make a personal assessment and conclusions. For example, the author wrote, "Babanov compared with Atambayev more "rogue", so in any situation Babanov was unscathed. This time, too, ASHA (*Atambayev*) remains trapped".

One newspaper published a letter from the exposure of the 1st Vice-Premier Aly Karashev ("Death to those who betrayed Bakiev, there is no difference between Gengizkhan and Atambaev.") The material consists entirely of only one criticism and accusations. The character of the article appears to be, according to the author, as a "sycophant", "dirty", "dishonest", "corrupt", "cursed people" politician. According to the entry, he said a toast on an occasion of Maxim Bakiyev event: " I'm ready to give my life for the President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. We Southerners will never betray him, and those who betray him - death." This was a clear illustration of discrediting of the official opinion of only one person who was probably his political enemy. Position of



author in relation to the character of the article was not objective, balanced and impartial. There was a possibility for legal action under "defamation" and "insult" against the author and the newspaper. The material was difficult to distinguish between facts and opinions, assumptions, all was mixed up. Newspaper violated paragraph 10 of the Code of Ethics: "The facts, judgments and assumptions should be clearly separated from each other."

In other article "No 3 million dollars could put Elmurza down" the author praises the unilateral ex-Attorney General Elmurza Satybaldiev despite accusations by Deputy Ravshan Zheenbekov that he took a bribe of \$ 3 million. No opinion of other officials.

General Kursan Asanov was presented in a positive way in the article "Father's son, General of the People". This was based on the opinions of readers, in the same article, also published three photos with the general. A sense of personal interest was clearly visible, which can also be seen in the content of the materials older issues.

In the materials of the other newspaper, one can note that leader of "Ata-Jurt" party K.Tashiev was presented in a positive way only. For example, in the newspaper on May 10, they posted 12 photos of Kamchybek Tashiev.

In another paper presented only the positive sides of deputy Torobaev - "he feeds people," "he has a lot of enemies." In the same way they published an article about the general Omurbek Suvanaliev: if he was appointed as a minister, corruption would not be. After these words in his address, it was not difficult to notice biased wording to Suvanaliev.

In the article "Jyldyz Joldosheva: Tekebayev was the worst enemy of the people" was published information discrediting the "Ata Meken" party leader Omurbek Tekebayev. The article showed the point of view of another deputy, with the negative sentiment to the "Ata Meken" leader.

Another newspaper systematically published only negative information about Tekebaev. "The views of opponents, including those who have been the subject of criticism of the journalist should be presented balanced." (Paragraph 17 of the EC).

## **5. Unjustified identification of persons suspected of crimes**

Another drawback or unethical behavior in the media is unjustified identification of persons suspected in committing crimes. Ethical rules prohibit the publication of names of the crime suspects, unless it is inappropriate in terms of public interest.

In March of last year a number of media publicized the notorious crime's details, the murders of 9-year-old boy. Many newspapers have fully revealed the names and other biographical details, as well as published the photos of the suspects, the arrested two women ("*Ene turup 9 zhashar balanyn omuryn kyyshty*" article , dated March 23, 2012). The experts considered these facts as a violation of ethical

standards, because no one should present these women as murderers only on the basis of the preliminary investigation materials. Until their guilt will be proven by the court, no one, including the journalist, has the right to call them murderers. In the end, there is a presumption of innocence. The newspaper unjustifiably publishes the suspects' photos, mentioning their names and place of residence.

In accordance with **paragraph 13 of the Ethical Code**, while covering such events the journalist should refrain from making public the names and surnames, as well as photos of people suspected of crimes, except in cases when they are well-known personalities, or they themselves do reveal their identity, or in the cases provided by law. Media should avoid identification of crime suspects, their relatives and friends without their consent. In this material, the story describe a serious offense, but still the professional ethics require that during the investigation no data should be disclosed, and the names, as well as photos of suspects should not be published. A similar violation has been made in another issue of the same newspaper date April 13, 2012. Under the heading "Crimeinfo" the newspaper published the names, photos and other information about the three citizens who are suspected of raping a woman. Obviously, the crime news reporters are lacking the knowledge or skills to comply with professional ethics in publicizing crimes.

In April a number of media have publicized in details the family infanticide tragedy in a family of Russian border guards of the Osh city. The wife of the Russian officer was arrested as a suspect in the crime. Many newspapers have fully revealed the names and other biographical details of the suspect and published her photographs. Experts consider this fact as a violation of ethical standards, because no one should present the suspect as a killer only on the basis of the preliminary investigation materials. Until suspect's guilt will be proven by the court, no one, including the journalist has the right to call her a murderer.

In accordance with **paragraph 13 of the Ethical Code**, while covering such events the journalist should refrain from making public the names and surnames, as well as photos of people suspected of crimes, except in cases when they are well-known personalities, or they themselves do reveal their identity, or in the cases provided by law. Media should avoid identification of crime suspects, their relatives and friends without their consent. In this material, the story describes a serious offense, but still professional ethics require that during the investigation no data should be disclosed, and the names, as well as photos of suspects should not be published.

In one of the publications there was published the article named "**Cruel Girls**" (dated 07/20/2012). The author tells of how three schoolgirls regularly beaten their classmate and how the law enforcement agencies for a long time refused to open a criminal case against the girls. The author cited those facts from the words of a human rights activist who has been providing legal assistance to the suffered girl. Her parents also demand to initiate the criminal proceedings on the fact of fomentation the ethnic hatred. The fact is that the battered girl is the Uighur girl, and those three who were beaten her are the Kyrgyz girls. The article presents the arguments of only one party – the injured girl. For the objectivity of position there are lack the other

side's arguments. It is often the case, when the facts are presented as ethnic discrimination; the author is only a one side defender.

This article lists the names of the beaten girl, and those schoolgirls against whom the criminal case was initiated. Identification of names of children caught up in this conflict may cause some harm to the children whose guilt has not been proved legally.

In the short report "*Kiyal menen Əmurbek mushtashkan emes*" there were unreasonably and unnecessarily published the names of schoolchildren suspected of involvement in the murder of another schoolboy. In this case, according to the text, nor the father of the died schoolboy, nor the law enforcement authorities were sure of those schoolchildren's guilt, and cannot confirm it. Correspondent does not seem to realize that the personality identification will cause an undue negative impact on the schoolchildren.

## **6. Failure to observe secrecy and privacy, except in cases when the facts have a socially significant character**

We can see how the media violated privacy just from the example of the article entitled "*Will Murad get away after stealing and brutally beating up a married woman?*". The author tells about the hard and miserable life of the women abandoned by her husband. The heroine tells her story about how her husband abused and beaten up her as she left him. Journalist fully disclosed the names, residence address and published the pictures of spouses. One of the spouses is presented as a rapist and a moral monster. It is clear that the journalist stood up out of a sense of compassion for the woman. However, the information constituting personal and family life can be published only if it affects the public interest.

**Item 11 of the Ethical Code** states: "*In his/her work a journalist should respect the private and intimate life of every person. Invasion into the privacy and private life is acceptable in cases where the actions of the person mentioned in the article are of social value or of interest to the community. Before the publication of such material the journalist should check and see whether or not in this case he/she will affect the rights of third parties*". In the abovementioned case, the facts are not of socially significant character, it is related to both of them only. Accordingly, the journalist should avoid identifying spouses involved in a family scandal, or at least must change their names. A citizen whose rights to privacy were violated has the right to demand compensation from the journalist or newspaper for the moral damages.

The video reels posted on the Internet with scenes of violence and abuse against girls done by the so-called "Kyrgyz patriots" generated great media coverage. This was the story when labor migrants from Kyrgyzstan, a group of young people, outraged by immoral behavior of their countrywomen in Russia, decided to punish them. In one of the videos, the guys stripped the girl till she was fully naked, rebuked

her tough questioning about her adventures with guys of other nationalities. They make a girl loudly chant her name, her place of residence in Kyrgyzstan and Russia, humiliated her, swear and threaten to kill her. These videos can be considered in the context of materials that contain images with unjustified naturalism, identification of persons that could potentially harm them or their relatives and friends. **Local TV companies** has devoted to this theme several programs, which showed excerpts from the sensational video. To their credit, they are professionally and competently approached their work and did not show the faces of the girls, neither called their names.

One newspaper published a photos related to a murder. Photo of the murdered person was published in the same position three times in the same one issue of the newspaper. There is a fact of unjustified naturalism – such images may act negatively on the human psyche. And the purpose of the media is not clear, allowing such excessive illustrative materials of photographs with such content.

Mass escape of inmates from Belovodskaya special school in last May was published in details by many of the media in Kyrgyzstan. As a result, an article accompanied by video was appeared on the website of a local newspaper. On these shots the children who talk about their beats by the administration were show in person. The journalists do not realize that children who are telling about the tortures in school may put themselves at risk of being punished by the administration. Professional ethics requires that the journalist should not pose a threat to the children, should exercise the utmost caution, and should assess the risk in the event of the use of the persons' names, photographs and visual identification.

Another kind of violation of the rights of children was allowed at another website. On May 20th, at one website the article appeared entitled "*The lunch – with worms, the "dessert" – with a truncheon*". At the beginning of this article a photo of a girl appeared with a bruise on one eye. This picture has nothing to do with that special school, since we have the proven information by the expert that the school hosts only boys.

In comments to the article, one of the activists of the youth group, who audited the special schools, confirms the discrepancy of the girl's photo and the children's escape story. That means the site is just used a photo of an irrelevant underage girl, and does not specify the origin of the photo. Here, according to all indications, there is a violation of children's rights. Journalistic ethics do not allow arbitrary and unauthorized use of photos of not only children but also adults.

Another newspaper in its issue dated 5/29/2012 published an article under the heading "*Inadequate and very dangerous*" about the persons escaped from a psychiatric hospital. The big photo have been published on the front page. The snap showed several people in a hospital bed with two or three people in the foreground who can be easily recognized. The photo had comments. Such a visual identification of mentally ill people can be considered as a violation of patients' rights.

In the article "*13 zhashtagy Islamdyn Butun kesip salyshty*" three times there were provided the shots of the boy with his foot cut off and leg was bleeding. There are no notes about the permit from any adults, boy's parents or doctors.

## 7. Plagiarism

One of the local newspapers published its many news stories without any reference, which is in order to create for the audience a feeling as if the newspaper has extracted the news by its own efforts and sources. But this is often fraught with a reverse effect; the fact of plagiarism cannot be hid from the eyes of an attentive reader.

A striking example of plagiarism is the report in the newspaper (dated 17/05/2012.) about the burning house of the Baptist Kyrgyz man in Toktogul region. Even an average reader can see that it copied the report that had been previously published online by the "Azattyk" radio.

## Conclusions and recommendations:

Preliminary results of the monitoring were presented and discussed with a number of focus media. Experts explained in detail how the professional ethics use to be violated, they cited case studies and recommended to develop the editorial policies based on the Ethical Code of Journalists. Chief editors and creative staff in general show understanding and solidarity with experts of the project, and take seriously the experts' recommendations on implementing the Ethical Code in the editorial policy, developing every media's own documents on ethics, participation of journalists and editors in the training and discussion events.

**The editors acknowledge the existence of many violations, and they told us about the violations' causes and conditions:**

- 1. Shortage of professional staff and lack of a qualitative staff. In some editorial offices only about 3-4 persons are working. Same time, a number of editors noted the problem of staff turnover: "We even afraid to train our personnel very well, because they immediately start looking for a job with a higher payment, so that our editorial offices left with no journalists".**
- 2. Pressure from owners, internal rules of the game, when the newspaper must be involved in the information war between politicians, who are in fact the owners of those newspapers.**
- 3. Lack of opportunities – time, resources, and knowledge – to develop a new strategy for the newspaper, to implement it and to introduce the quality standards.**

**4. Disappointment by the effect of their published words: “Whether we write in a good or bad way, the government does not respond anyway, the problems in the country are not solved anyway... Therefore, there is no incentive to invest in improving the quality and no motives”.**

**5. Editors are undertaking violations of ethics and quality STANDARDS in some cases deliberately, when "hot" material and shocking photo illustrations affect marketability of the newspaper.**

The analysis showed that the media violated the basic principles and standards of quality and ethical journalism, not possesses the skills of political events, crime news and family dramas coverage, and showed bias to the different political groups or other parties of the conflict.

Media certainly can publish materials containing value judgments, subjective views, outside of the journalism standards – otherwise how can we talk about providing the freedom of speech. But in this case the reader should be aware that this is a view of a subject (personal), and a match should be defined by the heading titled “**Opinion (of the reader, of the editorial visitor, etc.)**”, “**Column (of the editor, of the columnist)**”, “**Comments**”, etc, in order to make it clear that it is a point of view, an opinion, not a news story. In the focus media, as a rule, there is no such clear separator – that is misleading; so that a view or judgment can be perceived as a fact, which affects and distorts the real picture. Moreover, in a number of publications the author is not specified, thus it is not clear to which category this material should be related – is it a reader's letter, an editorial text, or a reprint from another media?

Media is often claiming something which is not linking to reliable sources of information. Instead, they widely use such a "links" as follows: “*all the people of Kyrgyzstan know that...*”, “*as we know...*”, “*people say that...*”, “*there are rumors that...*”

Some media have a tradition of publishing such unsubstantiated rumors about some politicians or public persons (the opinion and comments of the concerned person himself/herself is usually ignored), and in the end they complete the article by the phrase: “*The rest about this politician, we will publish in the next issue*”, that allows to intrigue the reader on the one hand, and the on the other hand it looks like blackmail, and it forces the concerned person to undertake some measures before the next article about him will be published.

Only a few journalists in the country can competently cover the legal trials and crime issues. The level of professionalism of some journalists covering ethnic and interethnic issues also remains at a low level. In Kyrgyzstan, there are already precedent trials against journalists and the media, in connection with publications on ethnic themes. There are also violations breaching the privacy and family life, even when it is not in a public interest.

We can assume that some of the above violations of professional and ethical standards are often not originate from an ill-will, but because of the lack of

professional standards and mechanisms of control within the editorial staff. However, many of these disorders can be and, in practice, become the subject of legal actions against the media, affect their reputation, and reduce the trust of readers to the media.

Therefore, the training activities on the ethical and professional standards in the media within the editorial board should be conducted. Specialized training is required to use photos, videos, special terminology, consult with psychologists, as well as on the study of ethics and its compliance. All focus media invited to develop their editorial policies, along with the definition of professional and ethical standards of quality, affordable and acceptable by all editorial staff.

It need also to hold a regular discussions inviting lawyers, human rights activists, linguists and representatives of law enforcement agencies – police, prosecutors, State Committee on National Security representatives, judges – in order to discuss the legislation, ethics, the context of mass media functioning, and to clarify the terminology.

**The Journalist Code of Ethics of Kyrgyzstan.**

**Adopted by the Republican Congress of Journalists on December 8, 2007**

**Amended at the Republican conference of journalists on April 16, 2009**

**The Journalist Code of Ethics of Kyrgyzstan was adopted to create ethical and professional standards for activity of the media staff in Kyrgyzstan, regardless of their specialty, improve competence of journalism in Kyrgyzstan, as well as to maintain the confidence and respect to the media in the community.**

1. A journalist should facilitate the process of democratization of the society, consolidation of the multinational people of Kyrgyzstan, as well as the economic and social reforms in the country.
2. Freedom of speech and expression is an integral part of the journalist's activity. In any situation, the journalist for the sake of exercise of every person's rights to freedom of speech, opinion and access to information, should strive to protect the freedom of speech, resist attempts to corrupt the information or implement censorship.
3. The journalist cannot use his/her official position for own profit , receive gifts, services, money, or any other remuneration, particularly relevant to development of the materials, data concealment or misrepresentation.
4. Personal interest should not affect the results of the professional activities of the journalist. The journalist must inform the media managers on the scope of his personal interests and those of his/her family.  
The journalist should not use for own interests or interested parties any information obtained as part of his/her professional activity, before the release of such information.
5. The journalist should refrain from membership in any party, political activity, civil service or working in a local government. Otherwise, he/she should report it to the readers, listeners, viewers.
6. It is prohibited for the journalist to use mass media to the detriment of the society, human and civil rights, promoting war and violence, racial, ethnic, gender, regional, religious, sexual, social intolerance.  
In development of the materials, the journalist should avoid indicating certain identities of the person (groups of persons), as well as physical and mental characteristics of the person, except when the information is an integral part of the journalistic material.



7. The journalist should refrain from making or participating in creation of promotional materials. Otherwise, he/she should do everything to ensure clear separation of the promotional materials from the information and analytical materials by relevant headings or additional signs (characters), font and any other way so that the commercial nature of these materials immediately became clear to the reader, listener, viewer.
8. Under no circumstances should the journalist publish false information. The journalist should use all possible methods to correct any distributed information, if it turns out wrong.
9. In editorial processing of images and captions, text, headings, no distortion or falsification of the materials is allowed. Text materials, inter-sounds, interviews should comply with the visual shooting.
10. Facts, judgments and assumptions should be clearly separated from each other.
11. At work, the journalist should respect the private and intimate life of every person. Invasion into private life is acceptable in cases where actions of the hero of the material are of social value or interest to the community. Before publication of such material the journalist should check, whether in this case the rights of third parties would be violated.
12. The journalist should be especially careful when covering children issues. The journalist and editor should have grounds to cover personal life of a minor (person) and permission of their parents, guardians or legal representatives. It is unacceptable to disclose names of minors (or mentioning the identities by which they can be recognized), who were involved in illegal activity, have become participants in the events of violence.
13. Coverage of litigation should be impartial to the accused. The journalist cannot call a person a criminal before proper court decision is made. In creating the materials the journalist should refrain from making public the first and last names, photos of the people suspected of crimes, except for cases where they are famous people, and disclose their names by the themselves, or in situations under the law.
14. The journalist should refrain from behavior that could harm or impair the physical and psychological state of victims of crime, accidents and emergencies, as well as their relatives and friends. In creating the materials, the journalist should refrain from making public the first and last names, photos and videos of victims of crime, accidents and emergencies, as well as their relatives and friends, except when they are famous people or disclose their identity themselves.
15. The journalist should understand that during the act of terrorism and counter-terrorism operations and rescue of people the right to life is prior to any other rights and freedoms. The journalist needs to remember that most terrorists are trying to use mass media to their advantage to present own position or inform the conventional signs to their associates in other places. Therefore, the journalists should not during terrorist attacks interview the terrorists by own initiative or enable the terrorists to go live without consultation with law enforcement bodies.  
  
In covering the terrorist attack and counter-terrorist operations, the journalist should avoid describing details about the actions of professionals involved in saving people, and stop excessive naturalism when showing the scene and its participants.

16. The journalist does not disclose sources of information except for cases provided by the legislation of Kyrgyzstan.
17. Viewpoints of the opponents, including those who have been the subject of criticism of the journalist should be presented in a balanced way.
18. It is prohibited to do selective quoting of sociological researches, distorting their content. The journalistic surveys of citizens should not be fabricated for the purpose to obtain certain results in advance. The journalist should refrain from quoting anonymous experts who are in favor of or against the situations, events or people who are heroes of the journalist's materials.
19. The journalist should make every effort to obtain the information, documents, photographs, audio and video materials in accordance with the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic. The use of other methods can be justified only in cases where such information is of great importance to the society.
20. No journalist should be required to write or execute anything contrary to his own beliefs or principles of objective journalism.
21. The journalist should not use plagiarism. In oral or written citing of the materials, he/she should refer to the source.
22. The journalist should not settle personal scores through mass media.
23. The journalist should not harm his/her colleagues, he/she should respect their honor and dignity. In the framework of professional solidarity, the journalist should act in the interests of profession, fair competition, freedom of expression and information.