



PRICE MEDIA LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION CASE

2026/2027 COMPETITION YEAR

**Official case of the 2027 International Rounds and the
2026/2027 Regional Rounds in South Asia, Asia Pacific, South-
East Europe, North-East Europe, the Americas, the Middle East
and Africa Regional Rounds**

BACKGROUND

1. The facts of this case take place within the Turustein Republic, a country of 6.2 million inhabitants. Turustein has a coastline of about 1300 km., including its 27 islands, with sunny beaches and impressive mountains. The capital is Lisparjana, which is situated in between the two biggest lakes in the country. Tourism, agriculture, fishing, and solar and wind energy are the main sources of revenue for the country.

2. Until 1990, Turustein was part of the Federation of the Peoples' Republic. Turustein became an independent democratic republic in 1991. Until the early 2000s, the ruling party was the Party for Liberty of the People (PLP). In the mid-2000s, the Green Party ruled Turustein for eight years, but it was replaced by the PLP, which has been ruling the country since 2012. Claims that the elections have been rigged have gained force since 2018 and, in the latest 2022 parliamentary election, the PLP won by less than 5%. The society is widely divided at the moment along political lines.

3. Turustein has signed and ratified all human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It also acceded to Convention 108+ of the Council of Europe, following an invitation by the Committee of Ministers. Given its recent past as part of the Federation of the People's Republic, and the turbulent movement for independence, Turustein's constitution strongly safeguards civil and political rights. Articles 17 and 19 establish the following:

Article 17. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his private life, family, home, or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation.

Article 19. Every individual shall have the right to receive, hold, and express opinions within the law. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

4. Turustein does not have any laws guaranteeing freedom of press; however, it enacted the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA 2004) in 2004, which establishes the following:

Article 1. Purpose of the law

Section 1. Any citizen, or group of individuals located in Turustein, is entitled to request public information from a public authority, and to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the type specified in the request and, if possible, to receive the information.

Article 30. Exempt information

Section 1. The following information is exempt from Article 1, S1:

Section 1.5. Any information, the confidentiality of which is necessary to preserve public order; (...)

Section 1.10 (added by way of the Data Protection Act 2018). Personal information: Any information containing personal data, or the disclosure of which would contravene data protection principles, as set out in the Data Protection Act 2018.

5. The Data Protection Act 2018 defines personal data in Article 3 as ‘any information relating to an identified or identifiable individual’. Article 3 also states that, among others, the following constitute data protection principles: (1) lawfulness; (2) transparency; and (3) data minimisation.

6. Turustein’s Constitution endows the Turustein’s Constitutional Court (TCC) with jurisdiction to consider violations of the rights guaranteed thereunder.

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA SECTORS IN TURUSTEIN

7. Until the early 2000s, the PLP was criticised for exerting too much influence over the media in Turustein, both in the press and the electronic media of radio and television. With the expansion of social media platforms, however, the PLP lost significant influence over the media ecosystem.

8. From the mid-2010s, the use of social media platforms grew exponentially within Turustein. At first, PLP discussed regulating social media platforms to keep its influence; however, seeking to attract international investment, the PLP abandoned this approach. The country allows zero-rate policies, so it is common for citizens to use the main social media platforms and messaging apps without using their data allowance. In a recent survey by the government, 55% of citizens indicated that they obtain information through social media platforms, while the other 45% still rely on TV and newspapers.

9. To maintain their influence on the media, the government of Turustein, especially when PLP was in power, invested heavily in their online presence. All branches of the government post regularly on official government profiles on all of the major social media platforms and frequently engage influencers to boost the government’s online presence.

10. From the mid-2010s, NGOs and citizen bloggers have been exercising an important function in Turustein’s media ecosystem, often posting information regarding issues of national importance and calling on protests. The most popular social media platform in Turustein is GramSta, which accounts for approximately 65% of social media use in the country. It allows users to follow one another and to post photos and 1-minute videos (‘Snaps’), which are available to followers for 24 hours. It also permits posting photos and longer videos that remain available indefinitely (‘Feed’). Unlike other social media platforms, GramSta presumes that all content posted on the Feed is publicly available, so there are no

privacy settings that allow for users to post content on the Feed for their friends/followers only. The algorithm curates the trending content to show to users, which considers the number of people who like, share, comment, or interact with the content.

11. GramSta is headquartered in Orile-ede, a country on the same continent as Turustein, which serves as headquarters to all major global AI and social media platforms.

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

12. PLP was in power during the COVID-19 pandemic. The PLP-led government adopted severe measures to tackle the spread of the disease, including closure of borders and lockdowns in 2020 and 2021. In 2021, vaccination became mandatory in the country. Citizens were required to provide a vaccination certificate to enter restaurants, movies, offices, public and private hospitals and schools, stores, public transportation, airports, parks, and to attend concerts or other events. To preserve citizens' freedom of religion, there was no requirement to provide a vaccination certificate to access churches or religious buildings.

13. In response to the mandatory vaccination scheme, a group of influencers started spreading misleading information on social media platforms linking the vaccination to autoimmune diseases. This group was comprised of 5 doctors who, collectively, had 1 million followers on GramSta. These doctors created a campaign known as the 'Vaccine of Truth' – instead of creating a new profile for the campaign, they used their own profiles and coordinated the posts to collaborate on short and longer videos both on their Feed and on Snaps, tagging each other and ensuring a wide reach for their content.

14. Because of the politically divisive nature of the posts, the Vaccine of Truth campaign attracted high visibility at GramSta. Some of the campaign's posts on the doctors' Feeds reached 3 million people and directly following such posts, some minor protests took place in front of the Ministry of Health building. Protestors' signs and chants demanded the suspension of licenses of doctors supporting the government's vaccination campaign.

15. Following posts from the campaign, there was growing dissatisfaction with the lockdown and mandatory vaccination measures imposed by the government. Additionally, the number of vaccines administered in Turustein declined for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic after the first post from the campaign went viral. Meanwhile, the number of COVID-19 cases continued to rise.

16. Despite growing dissatisfaction from the public, the Minister of Health (MH), Dr. Tesäi Taayitaa, continued to support mandatory vaccination. While she engaged some influencers on the MH's GramSta account to promote the public health measures taken by the government in response to the pandemic, the reach of the campaign was limited as the posts on the Feed were only reaching around 100,000 people, on average. Furthermore, only 50,000 people followed the MH's profile, which significantly reduced the reach of any Snaps.

17. As the weeks passed, and the Vaccine of Truth campaign gained traction online, those following the campaign on GramSta began organising larger, in person protests against the mandatory vaccination campaign. At the same time, users commented on the campaign's posts with demands for the revocation of Dr. Taayitaa's medical license. One comment, posting the home address of Dr. Taayitaa and calling for a protest to take place there on 15 July 2021, went viral.

18. On the evening of 15 July 2021, around 300 people gathered in front of Dr. Taayitaa's house. A Special Ops Squad of around 50 police officers was deployed to ensure that the protest was peaceful. At some point during the protest, an altercation broke out between protestors and police officers, who were ruthless in suppressive actions. The Special Ops Squad indiscriminately used rubber bullets and batons against protestors and even journalists, who were identified as 'press' by their vests. Some users on GramSta, who were posting live from the protests, posted videos on their Snaps and Feed which showed police officers using electric shock devices on protestors who were on the ground. Dozens of protestors were hospitalised and a journalist who was covering the protest lost his eyesight following a strike by a rubber bullet. In December of 2021, five of the officers involved in the altercation with the protestors were prosecuted for excessive force and given 6-month suspensions. On 10 December 2021, the main newspapers in Turustein covered the trial, publishing photos from the Court house and the outcome of the proceedings. Although the faces of the officers were visible from the photos, their personal data, such as name and station, was not disclosed by the media.

19. Two measures emerged as response to the incidents of 15 July 2021:

a. GramSta enacted a new policy to fund independent, third-party fact-checking organisations with the aim of minimising the risk of false information fuelling civil unrest. To qualify for the funding scheme, organisations must comply with GramSta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Initiative Rulebook (FC Rulebook), which requires the verification of at least 5 posts per month. After checking the posts, fact-checkers present their conclusions to GramSta. Fact-checkers must classify the verified post as 'true', 'false', or 'partly accurate'. Upon receipt of the verification by the fact-checker, GramSta decides whether to remove the post, demote it, or simply present the factchecking information below the original post.

b. The government enacted anti-doxxing laws and strengthened its laws on document secrecy, especially those documents containing personal data of public officials.

THE ANTI-DOXXING LAWS

20. The Anti-Doxxing Laws (ADL 2021) establishes the following:

Article 1. Purpose of the Law

To protect civil servants from being subject to harassment, threats, and intimidation, this law aims to protect civil servants' online privacy, also providing remedies for damages suffered.

Article 6. Prohibited acts

Section 1. A person, business or association shall not knowingly publicly post or otherwise disseminate on the Internet, or through other means of information distribution, personal information or images of any civil servant with the intent of either

Section 1.1. Threatening the civil servant, or

Section 1.2. Inciting a third-party to cause harm to the civil servant, where such harm is likely to occur.

Section 3. Personal images can only be disseminated with the express consent of the person concerned, unless the dissemination provides a portrayal of contemporary society on condition that the publication does not interfere with a legitimate interest of the person concerned.

Article 10. Remedies

Section 1. A civil servant whose personal information or image is made public as a result of actions described in Article 6 may:

Section 1.1. Bring an action seeking injunctive relief in any court of competent jurisdiction.

Section 1.2. Bring an action for damages in any court of competent jurisdiction. The damages to be awarded to the civil servant, if they are successful in their claims, shall be awarded in the amount no less than \$2,000.00.

Article 15. Amendments to the Criminal Code

Section 1. Introduces Article 294c. to the Criminal code, as follows:

Section 1.1. Anyone who obtains, disseminates, or otherwise makes publicly available personal data of civil servants with the intent of threatening, causing nuisance, interfering with, or hindering the exercise of their office or profession, shall be punished by imprisonment for a maximum of 2 (two) years and/or a fine of no less than \$2,000.00 and no more than \$1,000,000.00

THE KUAAYVA MOVEMENT

21. In 2022, during the 2022 parliamentary elections, one anonymous online profile was created on GramSta, which quickly attracted significant attention because of posts leaking information about alleged corruption scandals, governmental wrongdoing, and political gossip in general. The Kuaayva Movement's profile indicates:

‘An anonymous movement. We are everywhere. We watch everything. There are no secrets for us. Got a tip or a story? Send it to us at Contact@KuaayvaMovement.com.’

In 2022 alone, the profile attracted 1.5 million followers. Its posts often reach 3 million views on GramSta’s Feed.

22. In 2023, Kuaayva Movement branched out to start a fact-checking organisation called Kuaayva Check. The organisation submitted a successful application to GramSta in 2023 and received funding shortly thereafter. It is currently the largest fact-checking organisation in Turustein, employing around 10 journalists and 15 interns. In addition to posting fact-checks online and on their profiles on social media platforms, Kuaayva Check also has channels on messaging apps that people can join for proper and verified information concerning their local communities. Such local information is particularly helpful during floods and droughts, as residents of the affected areas often rely on this information.

THE 2026 EVENTS

23. In early 2026, GramSta started to revise some of its internal policies in response to elections held in Orile-edé, in which a right-wing populist emerged as victorious. The new president’s policies included ostensibly strengthening freedom of expression in Orile-edé and tackling what he called ‘censorship of truth’ - allegedly sponsored by social media partnerships with government and with independent fact-checkers. One such policy prohibits social media platforms that operate in Orile-edé, including GramSta, from sponsoring or funding fact-checking initiatives.

24. As a direct result of the new policy, GramSta scaled down its fact-checking partnerships in Orile-edé and other regions. From mid-July 2026, GramSta announced that it would no longer fund any fact-checking initiatives in Turustein, including Kuaayva Check, which would drastically reduce its fact-checking work absent such funding from GramSta. GramSta justified the new policy by claiming that there was no conclusive evidence that fact-checking reduced the harm caused by false information on its platform. As an alternative, it decided to establish a community notes regime. Under community notes, fact-checking is no longer conducted by fact-checking organisations, but it is crowdsourced. Users write notes on the accuracy of posts and the community rates their helpfulness. Once a diverse group of contributors – notably, those who have historically disagreed on ratings on different posts – agree on a community note, the note is published. GramSta is responsible for posting the community note by attaching a banner to the bottom of the post, indicating that the content is ‘accurate’, ‘inaccurate’ or ‘partly accurate’, in addition to a brief contextual explanation. A post which is subject to a community note is neither removed nor demoted.

25. Kuaayva Check, along with other fact-checking organisations, started an online campaign requesting Turustein to pass laws to regulate false information online, which calls on social media platforms to work together with fact-checking organisations to tackle this

problem. So far, the government has not passed any laws directed at reducing the spread of false information online, claiming that lack of such regulation attracts foreign investment to the country. In fact, Turustein is often chosen by international social media platforms as the headquarters for content moderation operations, where these corporations are able to pay moderators a modest salary that is well below what is required in other countries. Several independent media organisations have published reports on content moderation practices in Turustein, revealing that moderators are forced to work excessive hours while being exposed to egregious content without any psychological support from employers. In a post on GramSta from 2025, Kuaayva Movement revealed that more than 75 percent of the moderators working in Turustein quit after less than a year due to mental health concerns directly related to their roles. More than half of these individuals were diagnosed with depression as a result of their work as moderators.

26. At the end of 2026, Turustein held turbulent national elections, with PLP emerging as the ruling party once again. The vote differential between PLP and the Green Party was less than 0.5 percent. While claims of election rigging are not new to Turustein, these elections were different. Some influencers, affiliated with the Green Party, posted videos containing alleged evidence that the elections had been rigged – one of these videos contained minutes of a purported meeting with different ministers and army branches that outlined plans for a coup d’etat (Alleged Coup Post). According to the Alleged Coup Post, Constitutional Court Ministers supported the Coup and were ready to provide legal support to it.

27. Kuaayva Check, no longer funded by GramSta, fact-checked the Alleged Coup Post. It found that the documents had likely been doctored. In an initial post about the Alleged Coup Post, Kuaayva Check reported the following: ‘We are conducting investigations into the Alleged Coup Post. It is likely that the information presented on these events has been doctored’.

28. To reach a conclusion on whether the information was accurate, Kuaayva Check filed a Freedom of Information Request to obtain the minutes of meetings held between the relevant actors. The government refused the request on the basis of Article 30, S.5. and S.10. of the FOIA 2004. According to the government’s response, the meetings involved matters of national security and public order, including secret plans to preserve the public order in the aftermath of the elections, and the personal data of the participants in the meeting could not be meaningfully anonymised. Because of this lack of information from the government, Kuaayva Check could not determine whether the Alleged Coup Post contained false information. Rather, it could only conclude that it contained potentially misleading information. GramSta did not promote Kuaayva Check’s post and no other fact-checking organisations in Turustein evaluated the Alleged Coup Post due to the lack of available funding. Furthermore, users on GramSta could not agree on a community note and the Alleged Coup Post, which remained online, unverified, and had approximately 5 million views.

29. In early January 2027, protests were organised in response to the Alleged Coup Post. For around a week, from January 15-January 21, around 10,000 citizens gathered in front of

the Parliament and the Constitutional Court buildings, negatively impacting daily operations. Fearing the protestors, some judgments were postponed and court sessions were suspended for the full week. To reestablish order, the Special Ops Squad was dispatched to the protests, once again employing illegal tactics such as excessive use of force. This time, however, some of the faces of the police officers of the Special Ops Squad were familiar to the public, following their 2021 trial.

30. One participant of the Kuaayva Movement who garnered a significant following on GramSta in the previous years - with the username Kuaayva_Anonymous 1 - posted a photograph on their Feed on January 17 (Post 1) of the Special Ops Squad just before they started to disperse the protestors on the same day. In the photo, all members of the Special Ops Squad were wearing balaclavas, but the insignia of the Squad was visible on their uniforms. The caption of the photo stated: *'I think we all know who these good people are. Should we give them a bit of their own medicine?'*. Another user commented on Post 1 saying: *'Good ol' Squad 41 from Precinct 12 at Bakers Street. I wonder what they are up to?'*. Post 1 gathered more than 200,000 likes in the first 48 hours and was heavily reshared on the platform, reaching more than 2 million users.

31. Later, on January 17, Kuaayva_Anonymous 1 uploaded another post to their Feed (Post 2), which included another photo of the protestors, with what looked like the Special Ops Squad in the background, and the following caption: *'Insignias are a bit blurry, so I cannot vouch that these are the people we all think they are, but I was told by a buddy that there is a video that would confirm our suspicions. Stay tuned.'*

32. On January 18, Kuaayva_Anonymous 1 uploaded another post (Post 3). This time, they shared a video on the Snap, instead of on the Feed. The video showed the Special Ops Squad putting on their balaclavas. In this video the officers are seen receiving instructions from their sergeant and two squad members can be clearly identified as members of the squad involved with the COVID-19 protests. The video ends with the Special Ops Squad leaving their post to disperse the protestors. The video is captioned with *'I guess we were right.'* The post reached 500,000 users in the first 6 hours. Users commented on this post asking for justice and retribution for their beaten-up friends. Some of them asked where Kuaayva_Anonymous 1 obtained the video, to which they replied: *'This was supposed to have been on the news segment'*. On 19 January 2027, around 500 protestors marched to the front of the police station, where they were received with violence from the Special Ops Squad. Around 10 of the officers were severely injured by the protestors and 50 protestors were apprehended.

THE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

33. Following the January protests, the Public Prosecutor's Office launched an investigation to uncover the identity of Kuaayva_Anonymous 1, on the basis that they allegedly violated the Anti-Doxxing Law. The Public Prosecutor's Office sought and obtained an order compelling GramSta to disclose the identity of Kuaayva_Anonymous 1, including IP

addresses. Analysing this data, the police learned that Eni Kookan, a 23-year-old journalism student, was behind the account. The investigation also revealed that he had been previously sentenced to a probational sentence for injuring an officer during the COVID-19 protests. Eni Kookan immediately complied with a notice to delete Posts 1 and 2. Being a Snap, post 3 had already been automatically deleted 24h after posting.

34. Notwithstanding Mr. Kookan's cooperation, the Public Prosecutor's Office brought a case against him, as it considered the damage stemming from the publications to be irreparable. Accordingly, on February 25, the case was heard in a criminal court. The judge of first instance considered that Posts 1, 2, and 3, cumulatively, constituted dissemination of personal data with the intent of threatening and interfering with the exercise of the officers' duties under Article 294c. Considering that Mr. Kookan was a repeat offender, he was sentenced under Article 294c of the Criminal Code to 90 days in prison and a \$2,000.00 fine. Mr. Kookan appealed these sanctions, to no avail.

35. On 28 February 2027, Mr. Kookan and Kuaayva Check approached the Constitutional Court of Turustein, seeking the following orders of relief: (1) that the Anti-Doxxing Law be declared unconstitutional for interfering with Mr. Kookan's rights to freedom of expression and privacy; (2) that, by not providing Kuaayva Check with the information sought to fact-check the Alleged Coup Post, Turustein failed to uphold the protection of freedom of expression, particularly the right to receive information under the Turustein Constitution; and (3) that, by failing to regulate false information through positive measures to promote access to reliable information, Turustein is in breach of its obligations under international law and violates provisions of the Turustein Constitution, including the right to freedom of expression and the right to impart information.

36. On 1 April 2027, the Constitutional Court heard the parties' arguments, and ruled the following: (1) While acknowledging that the Anti-Doxxing Law and Section 1.10 of Article 30 of the FOIA 2004 interfered with the right to freedom of expression, both frameworks reached the correct balance between freedom of expression and the right to privacy; and (2) that it was for the executive and the legislative to decide on measures regarding regulation of false information, including to determine and impose conditions for the accessibility of reliable information, thus dismissing the claims.

37. The Universal Court of Human Rights exercises exclusive jurisdiction to receive and consider applications from persons and organisations alleging the violation of rights recognised in the ICCPR. Mr. Kookan and Kuaayva Check filed applications before the Universal Court of Human Rights alleging violations of articles 17 and 19 ICCPR.

38. No law, domestic or international, restricts Mr. Kookan and Kuaayva Check's standing to bring these claims. Each party's claims were rejected on their merits in the domestic courts in Turustein, and all appeals or other remedies within Turustein court system have been exhausted. The Universal Court of Human Rights granted the request to hear the applications together, and certified the applications on two issues:

(A) Whether Turustein violated its obligations to safeguard Kuaayva Check's right to freedom of expression under Article 19 ICCPR, (1) by failing to take measures to safeguard access to reliable information following GramSta's withdrawal of funding from fact-checking organisations; and (2) by declining the FOI request brought under the FOIA 2004.

(B) Whether Turustein violated Mr. Kookan's rights to freedom of expression and privacy under Articles 17 and 19 ICCPR, respectively, by: (1) compelling the disclosure of his identity and account data associated with his anonymous online activity;(2) imposing sanctions under the Anti-Doxxing law; and (3) ordering the removal of his posts from GramSta.

39. Mr. Kookan and Kuaayva Check have sought from the Universal Court of Human Rights: (1) declarations that their rights under the ICCPR have been violated; and (2) an order directing Turustein to take immediate measures to fulfil its obligations under the ICCPR.