

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3983
(TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.08.2026)

SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS

3983. SHRI SHYAMKUMAR DAULAT BARVE:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

- a) whether the Government is aware of India's ranking of 157th out of 180 countries in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index, sliding from 151st in 2025 Index;
- b) if so, whether the Government has identified and assessed the reasons leading to India's decline in the Index;
- c) if so, the details of incidents reported against journalists and media personnel including attacks, threats, arrests, detention, harassment and deaths across the country during the last ten years, State-wise along with any action taken thereof to punish the perpetrators and if so, the details of actions taken thereon;
- d) whether the Government has conducted any assessment of the impact of such incidents on media freedom and the functioning of independent journalism in the country; and
- e) whether the Government proposes or has taken any measures to ensure the safety of journalists, strengthen institutional safeguards for press freedom and improve India's standing in global press freedom assessments?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
(Dr. L. MURUGAN)

(a) to (e):

India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem. It has about 81,658 registered printed periodicals, including 7,414 titles registered during 2025-26, more than 900 permitted satellite television channels and numerous publishers on digital media including OTT platforms, e-replica of newspapers, digital newspapers, news websites and news channels on social media platforms etc.

The Press Council of India is a statutory quasi-judicial autonomous authority under an Act of Parliament, Press Council Act, 1978 with the two fold objects of preserving the freedom of the press by maintaining and improving the standards of newspapers and the news agencies in India.

Legal framework to protect journalists:

- Freedom of speech and expression is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution.
- Press Council of India, a statutory quasi-judicial body, registers and adjudicates complaints pertaining to curtailment of press freedom, including complaints relating to attacks on or threats to journalists, through its complaint redressal mechanism under section 13 of the Press Council Act, 1978, in accordance with the Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulations, 1979.
- Under Section 13 of the Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulations, 1979, the Hon'ble Chairperson of Press Council of India is empowered to take suo-motu cognizance of matters where a prima facie violation of press freedom is observed.

Besides, India has a robust judicial system that ensures the implementation of constitutional provisions.
