

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3935
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.04.2025

DECLINING RANK IN GLOBAL PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

3935. SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH:

SHRI SHAKTISINH GOHIL:

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

- (a) the reasons for India's decline in the Global Press Freedom Index ranking in 2024;
- (b) the measures undertaken by Government to safeguard press freedom and journalists' rights; and
- (c) the details of consultations, if any, with media organisations and press bodies regarding concerns over press freedom?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): India has a vibrant press and media ecosystem, which does not need validation from foreign organizations.

India has about 1,45,000 printed publications, more than 900 private satellite TV 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.

Legal framework to protect journalists:

- Freedom of speech and expression is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution.
- Press Council of India (PCI) is a statutory autonomous body set up under the Press Council Act, 1978. PCI is headed by a retired Judge of the Supreme Court and adjudicates on the complaints filed by the members of the press concerning curtailment of press freedom, physical assault/attack on journalists etc.
- Under Section 13 of the Press Council Act 1978, the PCI is also mandated to take suo-motu cognizance on the pressing issues concerning freedom of Press and safeguarding of its high standards.
- Similarly, the freedom of press in electronic media is ensured through a self-regulatory mechanism under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

Besides the above, we have a robust judicial system that ensures the implementation of constitutional provisions.
