

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1536
(TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.07.2026)

INDIA'S RANK IN WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

1536. SHRI. JAVED ALI KHAN:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken note of India's ranking of 157th out of 180 countries in the latest 2026 World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), with a score of 31.96, placing the country in the "very serious" category;
- (b) the reasons for the six-place decline from 151st in 2025 and the overall low ranking in recent years;
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to safeguard journalists' safety, ensure media freedom and address concerns regarding legal, political and economic pressures on the press; and
- (d) the roadmap to improve India's global standing on press freedom?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): 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..

Legal framework to protect journalists:

- Freedom of speech and expression is protected under Article 19 of the Constitution.
- The 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 the Press Council of India is empowered to take suo-motu cognizance of matters where a prima facie violation of press freedom is observed.

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