

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2115
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2023**

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

2115. SHRI ADALA PRABHAKARA REDDY:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of falling rank of India on the World Press Freedom Index and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any steps to promote free and independent journalism in the country;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government has instituted any award to reward journalists for independent and valuable journalism;
- (e) if so, the details of the journalists and the news agencies to which they belong to since the inception of the award; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING; AND
MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS
(SHRI ANURAG SINGH THAKUR)**

(a) to (c) The World Press Freedom Index is published by a foreign Non-Government-Organization, “Reporters Without Borders”. The Government does not subscribe to its views and country rankings and does not agree to the conclusions drawn by this organization for various reasons including very low sample size, little or no weightage to fundamentals of democracy, adoption of a methodology which is questionable and non-transparent, etc.

In pursuance of its policy to uphold the freedom of press, the Government does not interfere in the functioning of the press. Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body, has been set up under the Press Council Act, 1978 mainly to preserve the freedom of the Press and improve the standards of newspapers and news

agencies in the country. PCI considers complaints filed 'by the Press' concerning curtailment of press freedom, physical assault/attack on journalists etc. under Section 13 of the Press Council Act 1978 and processed under the provisions of Press Council (Procedure for Inquiry) Regulations, 1979. PCI is also empowered to take suo-motu cognizance in matters on the pressing issues concerning freedom of Press and safeguarding of its high standards.

(d) to (f) Press Council of India confers the National Awards for Excellence in Journalism since 2012. List of awardees is placed on the website of the Press Council of India at <https://presscouncil.nic.in/NationalAwardsforExcellenceinJournalism.aspx>
