

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 294
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.07.2022**

PRESS FREEDOM

**294. SHRIMATI MALA ROY:
SHRI A. RAJA:
SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI:**

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

- a) whether it is a fact that India ranked in the bottom 30 worst nations out of 180 as maintained by the media watchdog in the World Press Freedom Index;
- b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- c) whether the Government has made any analysis of the reasons due to which press freedom is on the decline and if so, the steps taken to restore it;
- d) whether the executive is using unfettered powers through various laws like National Security Act, IPC Sedition Law, UAP Act., etc., to gag the freedom of journalists and threaten them;
- e) if so, the number of complaints received by the Government and Press Council of India in this regard, during each of the last three years and the current year; and
- f) the details of action taken by the Government in each such complaint?

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 organisation 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.

(d) to (f) 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.

Central Government attaches highest importance to the safety and security of all residents of the country including journalists. The Ministry of Home Affairs have issued advisories to States and UTs, from time to time, to maintain law and order and ensure that any person who takes law into his/her own hand is punished promptly as per law. An advisory specifically on safety of journalists was issued to States/UTs on 20th October, 2017 requesting them to strictly enforce the law to ensure safety and security of journalists/ media persons etc.
