

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

**RAJYA SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 551  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.07.2022**

**DECLINING PRESS FREEDOM IN INDIA**

**551. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:**

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

- (a) whether Government is aware of the declining press freedom in the country and acknowledges the Index released by Reporters Without Borders which places India at 150 out of 180 in terms of Freedom of Press;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government is aware that the recent performance of India in these press freedom indexes reveal a dangerous state of affairs in the functioning of media and democracy and shows tendencies that are not apposite for the largest democracy in the world; and
- (d) the reasons thereof and steps taken by Government to rectify the situation?

**ANSWER**

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

**(a) to (d): 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.**

**The Government is committed to ensure the right to freedom of speech and expression enshrined under the Article 19 of the Constitution of India. 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 under Section 13 of the Press Council Act, 1978. 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.**

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