

India's Fourth Estate and policy recommendations in light of Global Press Freedom Index

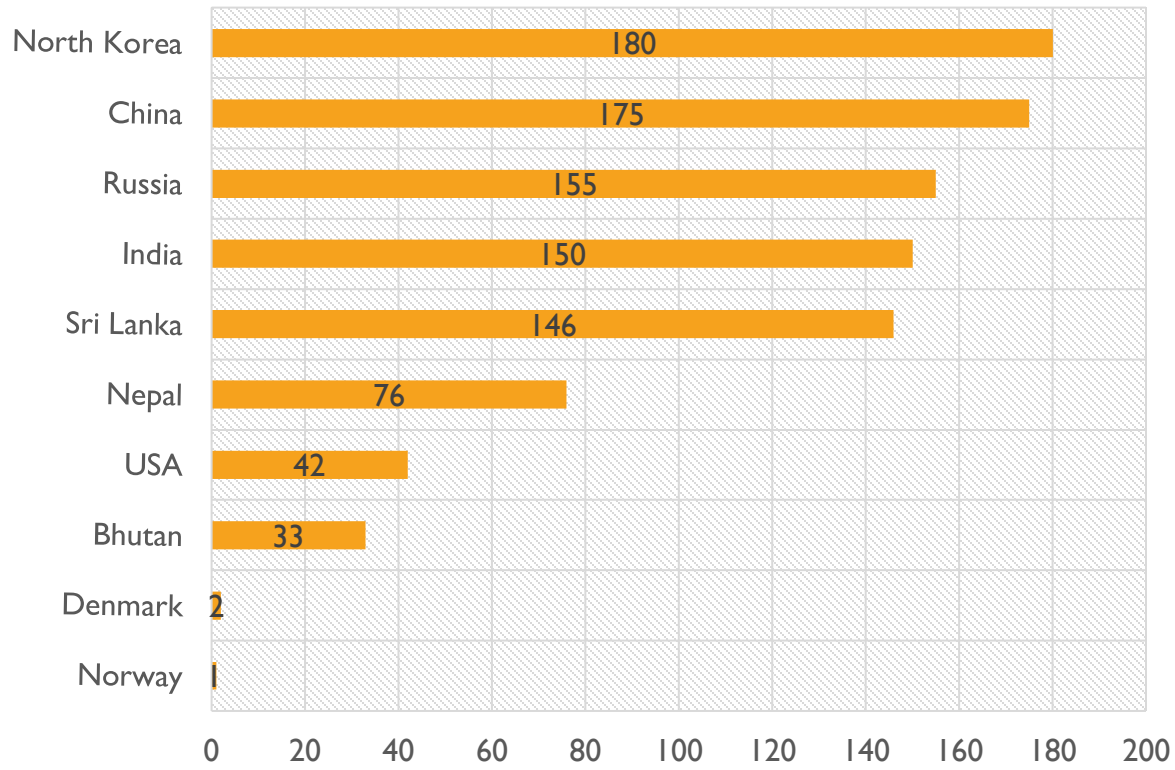
SANKHYA (संख्या)

“There cannot be a good plan for economic progress without adequate data and there cannot be adequate data without a good plan for collecting them...”

P.C Mahalanobis, Member, First Planning Commission of India & Scientist

GLOBAL SCENERIO – PRESS FREEDOM

Global Press Freedom Index 2022



- The 20th edition of Global Press Freedom Index was released by the Reporters Without Borders (RSF), which covered the state of journalism among 180 countries.
- The scoring of the countries was done on the scale of 0-100.
- The trio of Nordic countries top the chart, out of which Norway came first with the global score of 92.65, followed by Denmark with & Sweden .
- Bhutan performed the best among Asian countries with 76.46 global score.
- The USA improved by 2 position and came 42nd in 2022 compared to 44th in 2021.
- The Index classified situation of 28 countries as “very bad” press freedom situation.

Evaluation criteria

Political context

Legal framework

Economic context

Sociocultural context

Safety

INDIA'S PERFORMANCE ON PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

I

• As on 2022, India's ranking on the global press freedom index was recorded at 150 out of total 180 countries.

II

• India saw a negative performance, as it fell down by 8 positions compared to 2021 when India's ranking was 142nd. India's performance has been declining from 2016.

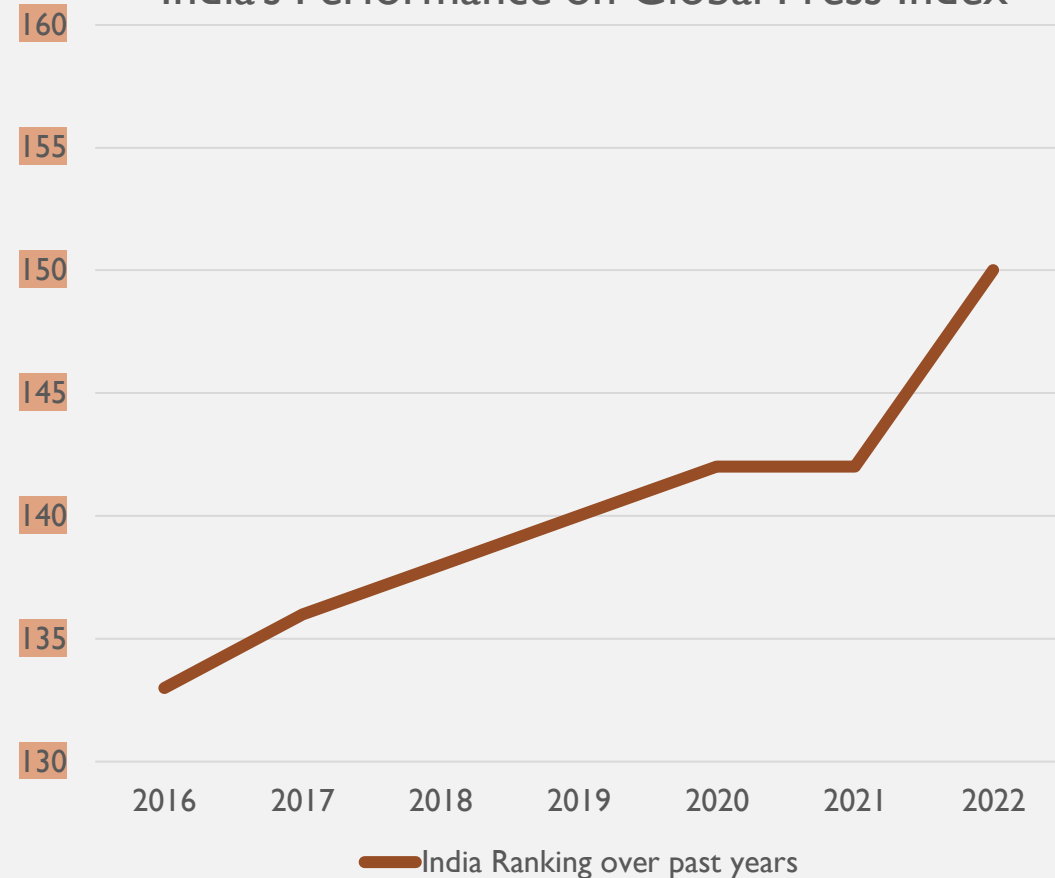
III

• India scored very less with a score of 41 whereas, neighboring countries like Nepal and Bhutan have performed good as their ranking went up by good margin.

IV

• India's rank has declined due to the increased violence on journalists, fault in current policy framework, etc.

India's Performance on Global Press Index



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSPARENT STRUCTURE

The Government should strive to provide a transparent process structure for filing of complaints and grievance redressal for the journalists and media houses through the Press Council of India. This shall promote accountability and transparency in the existing framework.

FAST TRACK MECHANISM

Fast track legal justice mechanism should be setup for cases where the journalists have been attacked or arrested or a media house has been bought for questioning for alleged offences. Legal framework with fast track is necessary to protect the fourth estate of the nation.

MAINTAIN EXHAUSTIVE LIST

An exhaustive data list should be maintained by the Government or by its authorised body on attacks and arrests of journalists in India as journalists are individuals of relevance in a democratic country.

LEGAL AID

Funds should be allocated to journalists in the form of legal aid to cover up the cost of legal proceedings filed against them for carrying out professional services. Decision to fund may be taken on a case to case basis as per the economy situation of journalist, alleged offences and to facilitate them to work independently in the open field.

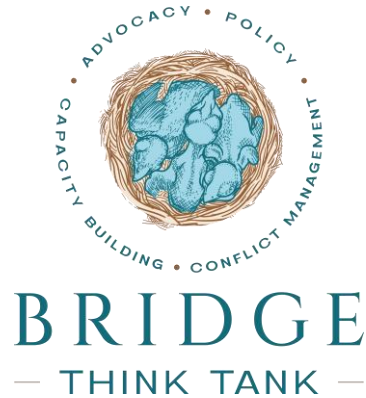
CONTROLLING FAKE NEWS AND PROPAGANDA

Creating awareness among the masses regarding the authenticity of the news spread through online or print media must be prioritized. Exhaustive definition of the term 'Fake news' or 'propaganda' should be developed for better understanding the scope of these debated terms.

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SANKHYA OR GIVE YOUR
VIEWS ON OUR PAST
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questions*

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Sankhya* is an initiative of Bridge Policy Think Tank to create interface snapshots in statistics and policy analysis while promoting critical thinking and analysis.

** Sankhya means numbers and is also a school of rationalist Indian philosophy. According to Sankhya philosophy reliable knowledge comes from only three pramanas (proofs)- pratyakṣa ('perception'), anumāṇa ('inference') and śabda (āptavacana, meaning, 'word/testimony of reliable sources').*