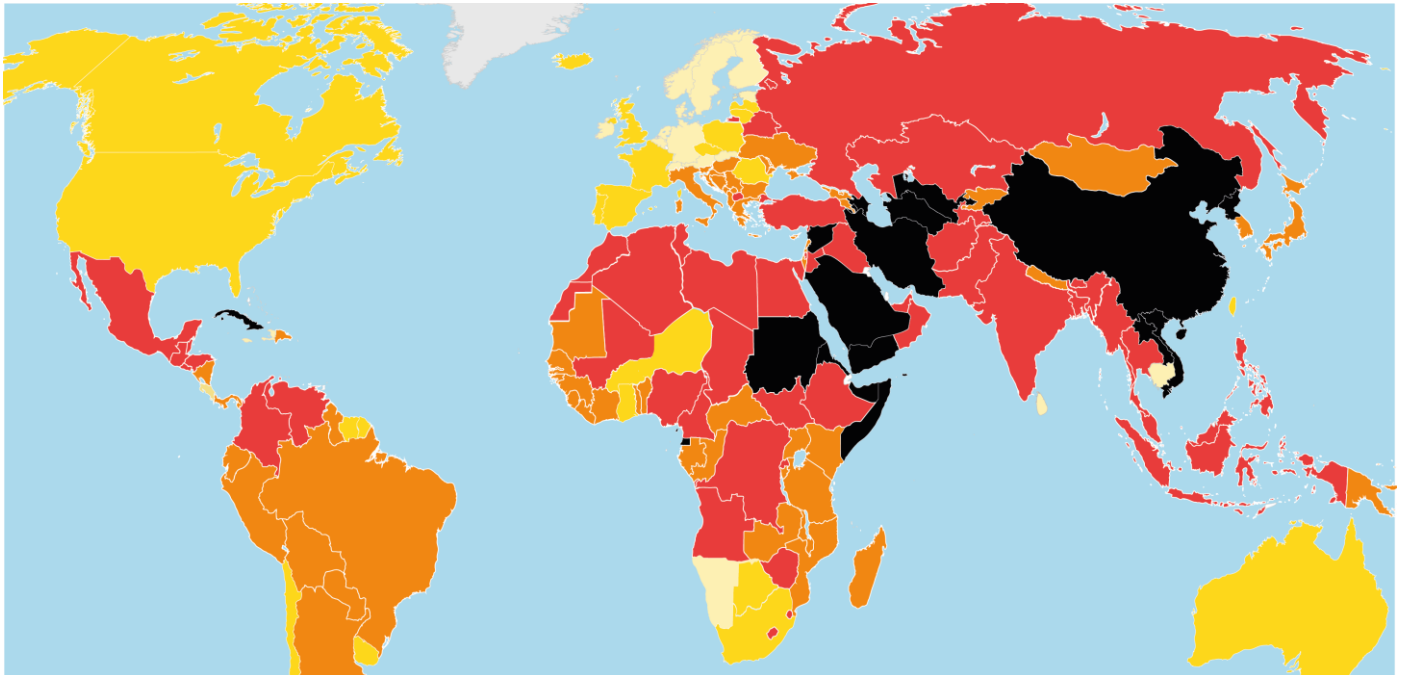


## World Press Freedom Index 2021



- **India has ranked 142<sup>nd</sup> yet again out of 180 nations in the recently unveiled World Press Freedom Index.**
- **The index is published each year by the international journalism not-for-profit body, Reporters without Borders (RSF).**

### **About the World Press Freedom Index:**

- **It has been published every year since 2002 by Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF) or Reporters without Borders.**
- **Based in Paris, RSF is an independent NGO with consultative status with the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF).**
  - **OIF is a 54 French speaking nations collective.**
- **The Index ranks countries and regions according to the level of freedom available to journalists. However it is not an indicator on the quality of journalism.**
- **The parameters include pluralism, media independence, media environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and the quality of the infrastructure that supports the production of news and information.**



### Reporters Sans Frontieres

- An international NGO, Reporter Sans Frontieres, also known as Reporters without Borders, is based out of Paris.
- This NGO publishes the World Press Freedom Index annually. The Reporter Sans Frontieres has consultative status with the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe, and the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF). The NGO published the first World Press Freedom Index in 2002 and since then, it annually published the index ranking 180 countries. The parameters used by the Reporters without Borders to rank countries on this index are:
  - Pluralism
  - Media independence
  - Media environment and self-censorship
  - Legislative framework
  - Transparency, and
  - Infrastructure quality that supports the production of news and information

### Global Scenario:

- **Journalism**, the main vaccine against disinformation, is **completely or partly blocked in 73% of the 180 countries.**
- **Only 12 of the Index's 180 countries (7%) can claim to offer a favourable environment for journalism.**
- **Covid-19 pandemic** has been used to perfection by nations to control the spread of information.
- The Report has **raised concern about the larger Asia-Pacific region** as several nations in an attempt to curb freedom of press have in place **draconian laws on 'sedition,' 'state secrets' and 'national security'.**
- **Norway has topped** yet again for the fifth year in the row, **followed by Finland and Denmark.**
- **Eritrea is at the bottom** meanwhile **China is ranked 177**, and is only above North Korea at 179 and Turkmenistan at 178.

### India's Performance Analysis:

- India was **ranked 142 in the year 2020** as well, thus showing no improvement in the environment it provides to its journalists.
- India **has fared poorly amongst its neighbours** with Nepal at 106, Sri Lanka at 127 and Bhutan at 65. Pakistan is a close follower at 145th spot.
- India is **among the countries classified "bad" for journalism** and is termed as one of the most dangerous countries for journalists trying to do their jobs properly.



- The report has blamed an **environment of intimidation** created by the **nationalist government** for any **critical journalist** often brandishing them as anti-state or anti national.
  - The **situation is worrying in Kashmir**, where incidents of harassment of reporters by police and paramilitaries have surfaced.

### Reasons Behind India's Poor Performance:

- **Journalists are exposed to every kind of attack**, including police violence against reporters, ambushes by political activists, and reprisals instigated by criminal groups or corrupt local officials.
- The journalists **have often been subjected to coordinated hate campaigns** on social networks.
  - Such campaigns are **particularly violent when the targets are women**.

### Country with most press freedom

The table below lists the top 5 countries that ranked in World Press Freedom Index 2019 and 2020:

World Press Freedom Index 2020	World Press Freedom Index 2021
Norway	Norway
Finland	Finland
Denmark	Sweden
Sweden	Denmark
Netherlands	Costa Rica

### Country with least press freedom

The table below lists the bottom 5 countries that ranked in World Press Freedom Index 2019 and 2020:

World Press Freedom Index 2020	World Press Freedom Index 2021
North Korea	Eritrea
Turkmenistan	North Korea
Eritrea	Turkmenistan
China	China
Djibout	Djibouti

### India's Performance in World Press Freedom Index

- India's performance in World Press Freedom Indices for the year 2019, 2020 and 2021 are given below:

- India ranked 142 in the World Press Freedom Index 2021
- India ranked 142 in the World Press Freedom Index 2020
- India ranked 140 in the World Press Freedom Index 2019

- Indian Constitution does not explicitly mention freedom of the press.
- **Article 19** of the Consitution provides freedom of expression to every citizen of India. Hence we can implicitly conclude that India has freedom of the press.