

1. World Press Freedom Index, 2020

Prelims Syllabus: Governance

Mains Syllabus: GS-II Government policies and interventions for Development in Various Sectors and Issues Arising out of their Design and Implementation.

Why in News?

- India has dropped two places on a global press freedom index to be ranked 142nd out of 180 countries in the annual World Press Freedom Report.

Highlights:

- The report said that with no murders of journalists in India in 2019, as against six in 2018.
- However, there have been constant press freedom violations, including police violence against journalists, ambushes by political activists, and reprisals instigated by criminal groups or corrupt local officials.

World Press Freedom Index:

- The Press Freedom Index is an Annual ranking of countries compiled and published by Reporters Without Borders.
- It is based upon the organization's own assessment of the countries' press freedom records.
- It intends to reflect the degree of freedom that journalists, news organisations, and netizens have in each country, and the efforts made by authorities to respect this freedom.
- The report is partly based on a questionnaire which asks questions about pluralism media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

INDIA SLIPS TWO PLACES

India made its debut on this index in 2013 at 140 out of 180 nations. The rankings gradually improved, reaching 136 in 2017. However, it has since slipped back to 140 this time. South Asia, in general, features poorly on the index, with Pakistan dropping three places to 142, and Bangladesh dropping four places to 150

Situation
 Good
 Satisfactory
 Noticeable
 Difficult
 Very serious

Rank	Countries	Score	Rank	Countries	Score
1	Norway	7.82	10	Costa Rica	12.24
2	Finland	7.90	33	UK	22.23
3	Sweden	8.31	48	USA	25.69
4	Netherlands	8.63	106	Nepal	33.40
5	Denmark	9.87	140	India	45.67
6	Switzerland	10.52	142	Pakistan	45.83
7	New Zealand	10.75	149	Russia	50.31
8	Jamaica	11.13	150	Bangladesh	50.74
9	Belgium	12.07	177	China	78.92

Global Scenario:

- Norway is ranked first in the Index for the fourth year running.
- India ranked better than its neighbours Pakistan (145) and Bangladesh (151), but worse than Sri Lanka (127) and Nepal (112)
- China at 177th position is just three places above North Korea, which is at 180th.

Various Threats to Press Freedom:

- Across the world, press freedom is under pressure from aggressive authoritarian regimes.
- The media is also facing a technological crisis, due to a lack of democratic guarantees and a democratic crisis following polarization and repressive policies, the report reads.
- In addition comes a crisis of trust following growing suspicion and even hatred of the media, and an economic crisis and impoverishing of quality journalism.
- Among other issues, the report has listed coordinated social media hate campaigns against journalists reporting on issues that “annoy right-wing followers”, criminal prosecutions to gag journalists critical of authorities and police violence against journalists.

