

By AIR MAIL

E-mail

D.O No. 17/17/15-16-PCI

Dated: 22.09.2015

Dear Mr. Deloire,

The Press Council of India is a quasi-judicial autonomous authority mandated by the Indian Parliament through statute of 1978 to preserve and protect the freedom of press in India. It has noted with concern the 2014 ranking by World Press Freedom Index, placing India at 140th position out of 180 Nations though its 2015 Index shows some improvement in ranking from 140th to 136th.

Having gone through the World Press Index, 2014, it has been noticed that it ranks the performance of countries according to index calculated based upon various parameters which include media pluralism and independence, respect for the safety and freedom of journalists and legislative institutional and infrastructural environment in which the media operate. The report is reportedly based partly on a questionnaire sent to partner organizations of RWB (18 'freedom of expression' non-governmental organizations located in all five continents) and its over 150 correspondents around the World, as well as to journalists, researchers, jurists and human rights activists. It appears to take account of the legal framework for the media (including penalties for press offences, the existence of a state monopoly for certain kinds of media and how the media are regulated) and the level of independence of the public media. It also reflects violations of the free flow of information on the internet. Acts of physical violence against journalists, netizens, and media assistants, including abuses attributable to the state, armed militias, clandestine organizations, and pressure groups; are also part of the final score.

The mandate of the Council is to see that media is allowed to function with absolute freedom, without any impediment from any quarter, be the government or any other agency. In order to understand the gravity of the matter, the Chairman of the Council, Mr. Justice Chandramauli Kumar Prasad (Former Judge of the Supreme Court of India), desires to know the inputs which weighed in ranking of the country in the Index so that remedial steps, it needed, can be taken to smoothen the functioning of the media.

The Hon'ble Chairman is further of the opinion that a structured discussion on the issue with your representative and the members of the Council would be helpful in achieving out object.

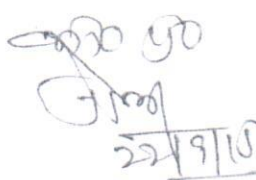
Your early response would be highly appreciated.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(Vibha Bhargava)

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22/9/15

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