

GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER

*A STUDY ON THE KILLINGS OF AND ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS IN
INDIA, 2014–2019, AND JUSTICE DELIVERY IN THESE CASES.*

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Highlights

- *There were 40 killings of journalists between 2014-19. Of these, 21 have been confirmed as being related to their journalism.*
- *Of the over 30 killing of journalists since 2010, there were only three convictions. The cases were J Dey, killed in 2011; Rajesh Mishra, killed in 2012 and Tarun Acharya, killed in 2014.*
- *In a fourth case of journalist Ram Chandra Chhatrapati, killed in 2002, it took 17 years for justice to be delivered in the life imprisonment order for Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim*
- *The study documented 198 serious attacks on journalists in the period between 2014-19, including 36 in 2019 alone.*
- *Journalists have been fired upon, blinded by pellet guns, forced to drink liquor laced with urine or urinated upon, kicked, beaten and chased. They have had petrol bombs thrown at their homes and the fuel pipes of their bikes cut.*
- *Journalists covering conflict or news events were specifically targeted by irate mobs, supporters of religious sects, political parties, student groups, lawyers, police and security forces.*
- *Attacks on women journalists in the field were found to have increased. The targeted attacks on women journalists covering the Sabarimala temple entry were sustained and vicious. A total of 19 individual attacks of women journalists are listed in this report.*
- *Perpetrators of the killings and attacks included government agencies, security forces, political party members, religious sects, student groups, criminal gangs and local mafias.*
- *This study followed up on 63 attacks against individual journalists between 2014-18, who were targeted for their investigative work.*
- *Of the 63 cases studied, First Information Reports (FIRs) were lodged in only 25 cases. And in 18 of these, the case has not progressed beyond the registering of the FIR.*
- *In 18 other cases where journalists did file complaints (but no FIRs registered), counter complaints were filed in three cases. In 12 cases, there is no information at all and even the affected journalists do not know what happened post the attacks.*

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The death of my husband is a matter that should concern all journalists. We keep saying that the media is the fourth pillar of democracy. This struggle is not only about the death of one journalist.

- Asha Ranjan, schoolteacher and wife of journalist Rajdeo Ranjan, killed after he wrote critical reports about former RJD MP Mohammad Shahabuddin, currently lodged in Siwan jail.

Haan, nuksaan toh hua hai (I have suffered) because of this incident and this case. Please don't ask me to tell you what happened. It fills me with anger and shame. Abhi bhi, yaad karta hun toh bahut taqleef hoti hai (even now, when I remember the incident, I feel very distressed). No one should have to go through what I did.

- Shivraj Singh Raju, journalist, beaten-up and then forced to drink liquor mixed with urine by a transport union president and his supporters, April 2018, Gidderbaha, Punjab.

Journalism has become a dangerous profession in India. Journalists have had to pay with their lives for their investigative reports on illegal activities, land grab, corruption, educational malpractices and mafia gangs controlling the trade in anything from sand, crushed stones and timber to liquor, water tankers and oil.

Those who lived to tell the tale were subjected to gruesome and humiliating attacks: being beaten and forced to drink liquor laced with urine; being stripped and urinated upon; having their throats slit; being tied to motorbikes; being dragged, kicked and whipped; being shot at; being beaten with iron bars or bamboos; being hounded out or chased across state borders; having crude petrol bombs thrown at their homes; having the fuel pipes of their vehicles cut; and having their cameras damaged. Videos of journalists being thrashed underscore the vicious nature of the violence: blatant, unashamed and undisguised.

A majority of the journalists attacked or killed belong to small towns and villages, working with regional media as correspondents or stringers. They are the primary information-gatherers, reporters and messengers on corruption, malpractices and unlawful activities of business people, powerful politicians, police and security forces. Powerful criminal gangs wield political clout as they flout the law while law-enforcers and the civic administration are either indifferent or complicit in this criminal activity.

Overall, despite the exponential growth of the media in India and the popular notion of the power and influence that the media wields, the freedom of the media is compromised by state regulation, selective largesse and coercion, covert corporate control and a highly competitive and politically polarised market environment.

Journalists are bogged down in vexatious and protracted legal battles over their investigative reports, combating defamation cases or are embroiled in criminal cases. Major investigative stories, like the report in online portal The Wire, on the [growth](#) of the business firm run by Jay Amit Shah, son of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, are sought to be curbed with defamation cases and multi-crore legal notices.

Self-censorship has also become the norm, given the insidious political [pressure](#) on journalists and [reports](#) of resignations of senior [editors](#) in the run up to the last general election. This, even as they are derided and devalued as 'presstitutes' by leading members of the government. Save for media houses considered 'friendly' to the government, media houses found themselves being ignored by the government or subtly threatened with the denial of access and [advertising](#) if they fail to comply.

With the increasing corporatisation of the media, journalists on the frontlines of newsgathering are dogged by acute and increasing precarity, i.e. lack of job-security and increasing job losses. There has been almost a wholesale contractualisation and casualisation of journalistic work over the past two decades, with the "mofussil" journalists being at the bottom of the heap as stringers.

A majority of print and broadcast media journalists work outside the purview and the relative security that was hitherto assured by the Working Journalists and other Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Service and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1955 and its provision for a periodic industry-wise Wage Board. In spite of the existence of these legal protections, journalists invariably work on a retainership for a pittance, and forced to supplement their income by other means of livelihood. They are poorly paid, have no job security or benefits and little or no support from employers or media houses they contribute to.

But the ultimate censorship is the killings, that have claimed as victims both prominent senior journalists and editors in state capitals, to locally influential journalists as well as the foot-soldiers –stringers and freelancers- in small districts and towns across India. It is these journalists, a majority of whom write or publish in the regional language media or even eschew mainstream

media houses to self-publish on social media, who have been killed or physically attacked to within an inch of their lives.

Indeed, a spotlight on these killings and attacks reveals the stark reality of the work of journalists on the frontlines of information gathering, rendered defenceless by the systemic failure to deliver justice but still valiantly struggling to tell their stories.

The reportage on widespread corruption and malpractices and the more organised illegal activities such as the rampant sand mining across the country, invite bloody reprisal from a well-entrenched network of political power, criminal agents and complicit law enforcing authorities. The spate of killing of Right to Information (RTI) activists, several of whom either self-publish or provide information to journalists, must also be placed in this context.

The impunity that all these attacks enjoy only provides further protection to the perpetrators and justice delivery is slow and often non-existent.

Killings

A study on the deaths and attacks on journalists in India between 2014-19 documented at least 40 killings of journalists, 21 of which were directly linked to their professional work. The motive for the remaining 19 killings was either not linked to their work or was unclear.

In 2019 alone, there were six cases of deaths of journalists, but preliminary investigations indicate that only one was linked to the journalist's professional work.

In the latest case, senior environmental and wildlife journalist Naresh Mitra succumbed to injuries brought about by a possible assault on December 9, 2019. Mitra was found bleeding and unconscious near his office in Guwahati on November 22, 2019 and it was initially believed a vehicle hit him from behind. However, according to news reports, doctors said the injuries could have been caused by an assault. Attempts to obtain further information on the case at the time of finalisation of this report proved impossible, with the curfew and clampdown on online communication due to the agitation in Assam over the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Bill from December 10, 2019.

Attacks

Journalists have become an easy target of attacks by mobs or security forces during reportage of major current news events, as in the attacks on the media covering the arrests of JNU students in February 2016; the multiple attacks on journalists in Kashmir while covering encounters; or more recently, the attacks on the media in Assam and in Delhi in the wake of the protests over the Citizenship Amendment Act.

There were 198 instances of attacks on journalists between 2014-19, 63 of which were targeted attacks due to their investigative work.

In almost every instance of an attack or killing of a journalist, doubts are cast on whether they are killed due to their work or for other reasons. The testimonies of the journalists who survived near-fatal attacks provide valuable clues to the work they had undertaken.

Data on attacks on journalists is hard to come by. There is no official record on the attacks on journalists put out by the government, either in different states or at the Centre. In 2014, the government announced that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) would collate data separately but a satisfactory format has still not been devised. Nonetheless, in response to a question in the Rajya Sabha, the-then Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Hansraj Ahir, disclosed that there were a total of 204 cases registered and 140 persons arrested for attacks on media persons (under sections 325, 326, [related to causing grievous hurt) and 326A & 326B [related to acid attacks] IPC) during 2014-2017.

The figure would probably be higher if it includes many more sections of the IPC than those cited above. The most obvious would have been Sec 307 (attempt to murder), which, given the seriousness of the attacks, would easily apply in several cases.

Another reason for under-reporting is because journalists who are attacked sometimes do not file complaints since they just want to get the story done or do not think the process is worth their while. So, while the attacks take place, there is no official record of it.

In any case, the Union Government's way of dealing with inconvenient data is to make it disappear. In October 2019, the National Crime Records Bureau's 2017 Crime in India report that was published after a year's delay left out hate crime and lynchings because it found the available data on it "unreliable" and "vague". The NCRB report also left out data on crimes against journalists,

whistleblowers, RTI activists and crimes committed by the vigilante khap panchayats, religious leaders and illegal migrants for the same reason.

(Note: See Annexure I for details)

The Study

The objective of this study, commissioned by the Thakur Foundation, was to document cases of deaths and attacks on journalists from 2014-18, determine the status of justice in these cases as well as make recommendations on how best to tackle the increasing attacks on journalists and secure justice for them as well as how to safeguard the work they do.

While some cases of the killings of journalists received a lot of initial attention and media coverage, there are several other instances that fell off the media radar.

What exactly happens in these instances and how close are the victims/survivors and their families to securing justice? Which states or regions are worse affected and who are the perpetrators?

This detailed study seeks to answer some of these questions. It maps the situation on the ground and seeks to suggest some concrete and effective interventions for the safety of individual journalists and the independence and freedom of the press.

Chapter II

Deaths: Near-zero rate of conviction

The nexus between political power and the law-enforcing administration is often very strong and underscores the impunity that accompanies these cases. In other cases, investigating agencies are either indifferent or complicit. The result is a very poor rate of conviction.

Since 2010, there have been over 30 cases of deaths of journalists due to their professional work. Convictions have been secured in only three of these cases.

2010-2014

On June 11, 2011 J Dey, senior journalist and crime correspondent for *Mid-Day*, was killed in Mumbai. After a protracted investigation and trial, underworld gang leader Chota Rajan, was convicted in May 2018. Jigna Vora, a colleague accused of passing information on Dey due to 'professional rivalry', was acquitted, after spending more than six months in jail. Rajan is lodged in Tihar Jail, serving out his sentence of life imprisonment.

On March 1, 2012, Rajesh Mishra was killed in Rewa in Madhya Pradesh. A journalist for a Hindi weekly *Media Raj*, he had written articles on alleged financial irregularities in local schools. After speedy action by the police and a trial, Rajneesh Banerjee, the owner of a school Mishra had written about and also owner of a Hindi weekly *Vindhya Bharat*, was convicted of the murder in 2015. He appealed the conviction and successfully obtained bail a year later. The other accused in the case, *Vindhya Bharat* editor Anil Tripathi and two others, were acquitted.

On May 27, 2014, Tarun Acharya, who had published a news report in Odia daily *Sambad* on the employment of child labour in a cashew-processing factory, was killed by the factory owner and his staff. Again, after speedy police investigation and a trial, the Khallikote Additional District Judge held that the owner of the factory, Shyam Sundar Prusty, and four of his accomplices guilty of the murder in June 2019, a full five years after. The court awarded life imprisonment to Shyam Sundar Prusty (factory owner), Santosh Maharana (prime accused), Sibaram Nayak, Suresh Chandra Sahu and Ramesh Reddy.

In 2002, in the fourth case, that of journalist Ramchandra Chhatrapati, it took 17 years to secure justice against the deeply entrenched and powerful religious sectarian and political network that protected his killers. On January

17, 2019, the self-styled godman Gurmeet Ram Rahim, already serving a 20-year life term in two rape cases, was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Ramchandra Chhatrapati by a special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court in Panchkula, Haryana.

Ramchandra Chhatrapati ran a newspaper *Poora Sach*, in Sirsa in Haryana and ran a series of reports about the sexual exploitation of young women by the godman in his ashram. Chhatrapati was shot at on October 24, 2002. He succumbed to his injuries later after giving a statement clearly implicating Ram Rahim. But a case was registered against Ram Rahim only one year later, in 2003. The CBI took over the case in 2006, a chargesheet was filed in 2007 and the verdict pronounced more than ten years later.

2014-2019: Who are the perpetrators?

Of the 21 deaths followed up for the period of this study (2014-19), only one, that of Tarun Acharya, secured a conviction. In all the other cases, FIRs have been registered or trials have commenced but we are nowhere near justice.

Apart from the killing of editors Gauri Lankesh in Bengaluru, Shujaat Bukhari in Srinagar and the death of Doordarshan cameraperson Achyutananda Sahu in an attack by a Maoist group on security forces in Chhattisgarh, all other cases of killings of journalists pertain to those working as staffers or stringers for regional language publications, reporting on crime and corruption in the Indian hinterland. At least seven cases pertain to journalists pursuing investigative work on illegal activities, including reports on sand mining, illicit liquor trade, land grab, water mafia etc.

(Note: See Section I for detailed case studies of journalists killed due to their professional work)

The perpetrators varied from gangs indulging in illegal activities, business and trade to politicians, security forces, members of right-wing Hindutva organisations, militant groups and non-state actors.

Perpetrators in cases of killings of Journalists (2014-19)

| Category of perpetrator | Number |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Businesspersons | 02 |
| Police and politician | 01 |
| Politician | 01 |
| Right wing, Hindutva | 01 |
| State security forces | 01 |
| Village official | 01 |
| Maoists and/or splinter groups | 02 |
| Political party supporters | 01 |
| Illegal activity exposed | |
| Mining | 02 |
| Sand and liquor | 01 |
| Stone crushing | 01 |
| Sand mining | 02 |
| Kerosene trade | 01 |
| Unidentified* | 04 |
| Total | 21 |

**Investigations in progress*

Chapter III

Justice Delivery for killing of journalists

Thorough investigation, a speedy trial and conviction should be the norm, not the exception. But, in several cases, investigation is slow, uneven and inconsistent. In some instances, like in the death of Amit Topno in Jharkhand, who was writing stories connected to the Adivasi-led Pathalgadi movement, the challenge begins with trying to establish the motive for the killing.

Despite the testimonies of colleagues and family members, the reason for the killing is attributed to various factors from a property dispute, past enmity, a family dispute or even marital discord.

The struggle to secure justice is often lonely. Supporters of former RJD MP Mohammad Shahabuddin killed Rajdeo Ranjan, bureau chief of Hindi daily *Hindustan*, on May 13, 2016. It took the dogged persistence of his wife, Asha Ranjan, to get a CBI investigation going in the case. In March 2019, she travelled from Siwan to Muzaffarpur to appear before a special CBI court to record her statement. But there was no hearing as the judge was not attending court that day.

The trial was proceeding at a good pace and at least ten witnesses had deposed before the court. Suddenly, in October 2019, she found that the CBI counsel had stopped attending the court. Date after date was given and nothing transpired. After the fourth such date in November, she asked a police officer present what happened. And that's when she learnt that, sometime in October, a decision was taken that CBI case hearings would be dealt with by the special crime branch of the states.

“Abhi mujhe lag raha hai ki main jaha se shuru kiya, wahi wapas aa gayi hun (I now feel that I have reached right back to where I started),” she said a day after yet another date for a hearing in the case. There's no clarity why the case was transferred back to the state police and no clarity as to whether this decision pertained to all cases or only that related to Rajdeo Ranjan. Worse, there was no attempt to even convey the decision to her. No acknowledgment of her tenacity, no sensitivity to her plight and definitely no concern for the immense effort it took to travel around 130 Kms from Siwan where she lives and works.

More than two years after *Gauri Lankesh Patrike* editor and trenchant critic of rightwing forces, Gauri Lankesh, was shot dead outside her residence in Bengaluru in September 2017, two of the named accused are still at large. In

November 2018, the main charge-sheet, of 9325 pages, and a supplementary chargesheet, named 18 accused. Members of various hindutva organisations, including the Sanathan Sanstha, Hindu Janajagruti and the Shiv Prathistan Hindustan, they are also said to be involved in the murders of rationalist Narendra Dhabolkar and writer M M Kalburgi.

Police are yet to recover the murder weapons, said to be country-made 7.65 mm guns, which they said were thrown in the Vasai Creek, along the Mumbai-Thane highway. While the Special Investigation Team (SIT) said that its investigations are still on, a team of defense lawyers has already begun contesting the charges.

In the case of the killing of *Rising Kashmir* editor and peace campaigner Shujaat Bukhari and two of his bodyguards in Srinagar in June 2018, police arrested four persons, according to information submitted to the National Human Rights Commission. A prime suspect, said to be a member of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, was killed in an encounter by security forces in November 2018.

It must be noted that it took a year and eight hearings of the NHRC from June 25, 2018, and a threat of coercive action against the state Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir, to elicit any official response on the killing.

But, following the abrogation of Article 370 and the lockdown in Kashmir, further investigations appear to be at a standstill. The State Human Rights Commission was wound up on October 31, 2019, when the state became a Union Territory, and no further proceedings have been recorded.

There is also no response to the second part of the NHRC notice, which wanted the State Government to 'provide details of the attacks made on the media persons during last two years along with number of persons died/injured and status of relief/ rehabilitation provided to the victims and their families'. Given the uncertainty clouding the future of all these bodies, can one even expect a response to this query?

But in many other cases, even with assiduous and exhausting follow-ups, justice proves elusive as, after the initial media spotlight, there is little or no follow up on the status of the case, investigations or inquiry into judicial proceedings.

The perpetrators get away, secure in the knowledge that the arm of the law is still simply not long enough. Whether it is the killing of a dear one or an

attack, justice delivery is protracted and the process becomes the punishment, all over again.

Case Studies on Killing of Journalists in India (2014-19)

This is a summary of the killing of 21 journalists in India due to the pursuit of their professional work between 2014-19. The status of the cases listed here is verified according to the latest information available and interviews with family members, colleagues of the deceased and investigating police officers. It will be updated as and when new developments take place or additional information is made available.

A total of 40 deaths of journalists was recorded between 2014-19. Of these, 19 were either not related to their work as journalists or investigations are still unable to establish the link with their professional work. These cases have been documented separately and will be updated once additional information is available.

1. Amit Topno

Name: Amit Topno
Date: 9 December, 2018
Location: Khunti, Jharkhand

Brief details:

Amit Topno, reporter with Video Volunteers, contributor to Newscode and OK Times, was shot dead on December 9, 2018, in Khunti, between Doranda and Ranchi Jharkhand.

Amit, who also drove an Ola cab to supplement his income, was a pro-active reporter and pursued controversial stories. He reported on sand mining, illegal alcohol sales, adivasi rights, education, sanitation, human trafficking, land rights, culture and the Pathalgadi movement, which the State was eager to crush, of the right to self governance by adivasi communities across Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and the June 2019 Kochang gang rape of five women who were part of an NGO working on migration and trafficking.

According to his close associate, Topno managed to get on video statements of the five women who claimed in their testimony that no rape occurred. The associate also said that Topno had said 'ab dekhna sarkar ko nanga karunga' one doesn't know if out of enthusiasm of getting the government on the wrong foot, he went about bragging. The Jharkhand government was keen not only to control the Pathalgadi movement, which was then spilling over to Chhattisgarh and other tribal dominated areas, but also wanted to punish those who were working on awareness building of Adivasi rights.

Topno was covering both the matters and perhaps he knew too much? One does not know what happened to the video footage. Topno's friend feels perhaps Topno was the only person to have met the girls, as soon afterwards the girls were immediately taken into police custody and no one was allowed to meet them. Did Topno pass this to any news agency? What happened to that footage?

Eleven months after the incident of rape, the court on May 17th this year, convicted seven persons including Fr Alphons Aind, the principal of RC Mission school.

In Topno's case, the police registered a case (FIR number 289/18, charges include 302 (murder) 201 (Causing disappearance of evidence of offence)). The family members did not file any complaint as they were unsure whom to suspect. No arrests have been made so far. His close associates believe that, despite clear leads, not much progress appears to have been made by the police. They felt a good lawyer on board would help to move the case further. It appears that the police owing to several reasons, would rather let the case 'die'.

Anil Kumar, Inspector of Doranda, said that the case was filed against unidentified persons. Several persons have been questioned; however, no suspect has been taken in. The Ola cab that Amit Topno was supposed to have driven is still missing. A post-mortem recorded two bullet injuries, one appeared to have exited whereas the other was retrieved from the body and handed over to the police.

Link:

<https://www.firstpost.com/india/jharkhand-journalist-reporting-on-pathalgadi-movement-shot-dead-12-days-on-but-no-arrests-yet-5770271.html>

2. Chandan Tiwari

Name: Chandan Tiwari
Date: 30 October 2018
Location: Chatra District, Jharkhand

Brief details:

Chandan Tiwari, a reporter who worked for Hindi daily *Aaj* was abducted from Dumdi village in Pathalgada block of Chatra district, Jharkhand on the night of Oct 29, 2018. His badly wounded body was found in Balthar forest, about 175 miles from Pathalgada, the next day. Tiwari succumbed to his injuries in the hospital.

According to reports, Tiwari was investigating allegations of irregularities in the work of Pintu Singh, a private contractor for a government-funded program to support rural employment. On April 2, 2018, Tiwari published a story about Singh's alleged corruption and also posted about it on his Facebook page. Chatra police superintendent Akhilesh B. Variar told Dainik Bhaskar that Singh plotted against Tiwari because of the financial loss he incurred from Tiwari's reporting. Tiwari had filed two reports with the police about the threats he had received. His father said that, two months before, Tiwari had reported fearing reprisals by members of the Tertiya Prastuti Committee (TPC), a Maoist splinter group he had criticized. The police did not, however, take any steps to protect Tiwari.

On April 6, 2018, he submitted a letter to the Pathalgada police station specifically bringing to their notice that he had received threats from Mahesh Dangi, husband of Deviki Dangi, the mukhiya of Pathagada, for his story on the irregularities in road construction under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. In his letter, he said that 'if anything happened to him, like a road accident, an attack or a clash, the lodging of false complaints or murder', Dangi was to be held responsible.

Alleged perpetrators: Jharkhand police identified four people--Maoist area commander Prasant of the banned Tertiya Sammelan Prastuti Committee (TSPC) - a splinter Maoist group, the contractor Pintu Singh, Jamuna Prasad, and Musafir Rana-- as suspects who abducted and killed the journalist.

Case status: An FIR (53/18 dated 30.10.2018) has been registered under Section 364/302/201/34 of the IPC with PS Pathalgada against four persons, Prashant, Pintu Singh, Yamuna Prasad, and Musafir Rana. A charge sheet has been filed but the trial is yet to begin.

Two persons, Yamuna Prasad and Musafir Rana were arrested within one month and sent to judicial custody on 01.11.2018. Subsequently Commander Prashant of TSPC and Pintu Singh were arrested.

However, all the four arrested are now out on bail.

Raghubir Tiwari, the father of late Chandan Tiwari, while talking to this writer on phone, also informed that his family continues to receive threats from Rana, who is out on bail. Rana and Pintu's men are also threatening witnesses from the village (Dumdi) who saw Chandan being taken by some men.

The family is challenging this further in the Supreme Court.

The father, while talking to this writer on phone, also informed that his family continues to get threat from Rana, who is out on bail. Rana and Pintu's men are also threatening witnesses from the village (Dumdi) who saw Chandan being taken by some men.

Raghubir also shared that Chandan's family – wife and two daughters – have not received any compensation from any quarter. He has appealed that Chandan's wife be given a job – a compensation usually offered by government if murdered by Naxalites. However, nothing has come their way.

Additional information: Press Council of India did play an active role firstly by taking suo-motu cognizance of the case and even constituting a three-member fact finding committee who visited Jharkhand in December 2018 meeting relevant authorities, media persons and also the deceased journalist's home.

Links:

Chandan Tiwari's FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/Sameerlucky52>

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1583075115123120&set=a.110512535712726&type=3&theater>

<http://www.uniindia.com/chatra-police-cracks-journo-s-murder-case-arrests-two/east/news/1394907.html>

3. Achyutananda Sahu

Name: Achyutananda Sahu
Date: 30 October, 2018
Location: Dantewada, Chhattisgarh

Brief details:

Video journalist Achyutananda Sahu, who worked for the government-run broadcaster Doordarshan, was killed in Chhattisgarh on October 30, 2018, during a firefight between police and a Maoist militant group. He was travelling with a group of Chattisgarh Police personnel. A team of over 100 Maoists a team of over 100 Maoists ambushed the group, and opened fire. Sahu and 2 policemen died. Sahu was in Chattisgarh to cover the elections. The CPI (Maoist) claimed responsibility for the attack but said it was not their intention to target media personnel.

Case status: The spouse of the journalist was given compensation and employment in Doordashan. In April 2019, Dantewada police announced that six alleged Maoists were arrested in connection with the attack. There is no

information whether the state broadcaster issued any guidelines to government media personnel on accompanying security personnel when on official assignment.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/doordarshan-crew-chhattisgarh-maoists-attack-camera-man-killed-live-updates-5425161/>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/two-policemen-dd-news-cameraman-killed-in-naxal-attack-in-chhattisgarh/article25368523.ece>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/achyutananda-sahu/index.php>

<https://odishatv.in/odisha/govt-help-still-eludes-family-of-martyred-dd-cameraman-332331>

<http://ddnews.gov.in/national/killers-dd-news-cameraman-achyutananda-sahu-arrested>

4. Shujaat Bukhari

Name: Shujaat Bukhari
Date: 14 June, 2018
Location: Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir

Brief details:

Bukhari was the editor-in-chief of *The Rising Kashmir* newspaper. Several unidentified gunmen fired at Shujaat Bukhari, 50, outside his office as he was leaving for an iftar party. Two police officers, Abdul Hamid Tunch and Mumtaz Awan who had been assigned to protect him after an attack over a decade ago, were also fired at and died.

Case status: Motives for the murder remain unclear. Whether the Indian or Pakistani intelligence agencies had a hand, or militant groups, was not clear. The Jammu and Kashmir police claimed that the conspiracy was hatched in Pakistan and executed by Lashkar-e-Tayyabba militants, including wanted militant Naveed Jatt. Sajad Gul, who is associated with Lashkar and based in Pakistan, had started a "malicious online campaign" against Bukhari. LeT issued a statement to local newspapers, denying its involvement in Bukhari's killing. The Jammu and Kashmir Police has approached the CBI for issuing a Red Corner Notice against Sajad Gul, who escaped to Pakistan in 2017.

On June 15, 2018, police released images of three suspects on a motorcycle

captured on closed-circuit TV and said that Zubair Qadri, a fourth suspect, had been arrested and a pistol recovered from the crime scene. In November 2018, Naveed Jatt, a primary suspect was killed in a shootout. On November 29, Lashkar-e-Taiba commander Naveed Jatt, who according to Jammu and Kashmir police was the prime accused in the killing, and another unidentified militant, were killed in a gun battle with security forces in Budgam in central Kashmir.

The National Human Rights Commission took suo moto cognisance of the killing and issued notice to the state of Jammu and Kashmir on June 25, 2018.

An NHRC press release said:

This is a case of violation of Right to Life of the victim and the incident is causing serious threat to free speech and freedom of press in the State.

Looking into the gravity of the matter, the Commission has issued a notice to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police of the State of Jammu & Kashmir calling for detailed report in the matter. The State Government is also expected to provide details of the attacks made on the media persons during last two years along with number of persons died/ injured and status of relief/ rehabilitation provided to the victims and their families.

The Commission would also like to know as to what special measures have been taken by the State Government to stop such incidents in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.

The response was expected within four weeks.

However, there seemed no response and after a series of hearings, the NHRC issued a warning to the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, Jammu Zone, J&K for submission of their reports failing which it would initiate coercive process u/s 13 of Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 for their personal appearance.

Accordingly, a report was submitted. The last hearing of the NHRC on the matter was on August 19, 2019 and the proceedings recorded:

The instant matter pertains to death of Shri Shujaat Bukhari, Editor of a newspaper "Rising Kashmir" who was shot dead along with his two personal security officers outside his office on 14.06.18 in Jammu & Kashmir.

The Commission took suo motu cognisance of the news report and sought reports in the matter from the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police of the Govt. of J&K.

Pursuant to the directions of the Commission, the DGP, J&K vide communication dated 04.07.19 has submitted a report on status of investigation in the matter. As per report, four out of ten accused persons have been arrested and they are presently under judicial custody. One of the accused is still absconding and another one is presently in Pakistan against whom a Red Corner Notice has been initiated with the CBI. The remaining four accused have been killed in separate encounters in the State. It has been further informed that efforts are being made to culminate the investigation on merits within shortest possible time by the Special Investigation Team. However, the report is silent about the measures taken by the State Govt. to stop such incidents in the State as well as the relief and rehabilitation provided to the family of the deceased. Report be called on that point.

Adjourn this matter for further eight weeks.

Now, following the abrogation of Art 370 and the downgrading of the state of Jammu and Kashmir into a Union Territory on Aug 5, 2019, investigations in all cases have come to a standstill. The Jammu and Kashmir State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and the State Information Commission wound up by Oct 31 and there is no new body has been set up in its place.

Links:

<https://thewire.in/rights/shujaat-bukhari-kashmir-journalist-murder>

<https://thewire.in/media/have-identified-let-militants-responsible-for-shujaat-bukharis-killing-jk-police>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/shujaat-bukhari/>

<http://nhrc.nic.in/press-release/nhrc-notice-government-jammu-kashmir-calling-reports-killing-journalist-shujaat>

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/71780280.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

5. Navin Nischal and Vijay Singh

Name: Navin Nischal and Vijay Singh
Date: 25 March, 2018
Location: Arrah, Bihar

Brief details:

Nischal was a stringer for Hindi language daily, *Dainik Bhaskar*. Nischal and freelance journalist Vijay Singh were riding Nischal's motorbike on the Arrah-Sasaram highway when an SUV hit them from behind and ran them over. The car was driven by Mohammed Harshu, a former head (mukhiya) of village Garhani. Harshu was allegedly upset with Navin's reports on a human chain against dowry and child marriage and his coverage of an anti-encroachment drive by the local administration to vacate government land in Garhani. Harshu, who had allegedly encroached upon a piece of land, was also affected by the drive.

Case status: A case of murder was booked against Mohammed Harshu, his son Dablu and two unknown people. Both Harshu and Dablu were arrested.

The following is the report of the NHRC investigation on the incident:

Death of two journalists in a road accident (Case No. 803/4/6/2018)

The media reported that two journalists were crushed to death on the in Bhojpur district of Bihar on the 25th March, 2018, allegedly, after a heated exchange with a former Mukhia over some reports filed by them. He had, reportedly, threatened them with dire consequences. The Indian Federation of Working Journalists (IFWJ) has strongly condemned the incident calling for stern action against the accused. Reportedly, this is the fourth incident involving killing of journalists in the past two years making it amply clear how they have become the soft targets of miscreants.

The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Bihar calling for a detailed report in the matter. It has observed that if the deceased journalists were actually targeted, as indicated in the news report, it is indeed a serious threat for a civilised society. The state authorities are required to take immediate stringent action against the miscreants by protecting life, liberty and dignity of the media persons to uphold the rule of law and constitutional safeguards

extended to journalists in our democratic society. Freedom of speech and expression is essential for proper functioning of democracy.

After several hearings, the NHRC issued notice to the state government and director general of police. A chargesheet was filed on 30.06.18 (Charge Sheet No. 70/18) and the trial is now on. The Bhojpur Collector gave compensation of Rs Four lakh each to the spouses of both the deceased journalists.

<https://www.hrcnet.nic.in/HRCNet/public/CaseStatus.aspx>

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/in-bihar-former-village-chief-held-for-mowing-down-journalist/>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/navin-nischal/index.php>

6. Sandeep Sharma

Name: Sandeep Sharma
Date: 26 March, 2018
Location: Bhind, Madhya Pradesh

Brief details:

Sandeep Sharma was a reporter for the local News World television channel in Madhya Pradesh state's Bhind district. Bureau chief Vikas Purohit said both and Sharma began receiving death threats after publishing two stories in July and October 2017 on alleged police corruption and illegal sand mining. The journalists shot a video that showed how a senior police officer accepted a bribe to allow the movement of vehicles carrying illegally mined sand, Purohit told CPJ that about 10 days after News World aired Sharma's October investigation, the journalist was "beaten up by a bunch of goons but was saved thanks to the presence of police." The News World bureau chief also said that he and Sharma wrote letters to government authorities, including the state's inspector general of police, to ask for government protection after they began receiving death threats, but they received no response.

Case status: Ranbir Yadav, driver of the truck which ran over the Madhya Pradesh journalist, investigating sand mafia-police nexus, was arrested by the police. The state police have set up a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the murder.

The following is the report of the NHRC investigation on the incident:

A truck mows down a journalist
(Case No. 627/12/7/2018)

In yet another incident, the media reported that a television journalist was mowed down by a truck in front of a police station in Bhind district of Madhya Pradesh on the 26th March, 2018. He had complained about threats to his life after carrying a sting operation on illegal sand mining for a local TV news channel. He had informed various authorities including police. The Commission has issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Director General of Police, Madhya Pradesh calling for a detailed report in the matter.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the news report, if true, indicate towards negligence on the part of administration, especially the police authorities, who failed to save a precious human life. The tragic death of the journalist is indicative of violation of human rights as well as democratic values and also callousness of the state administration for not taking appropriate steps protecting the life and safety of the victim, when, reportedly, he had already complained about the threats to his life. The Commission further observed that the journalist, who had reportedly exposed certain unlawful and unauthorised activities, was doing his duty and his death is a matter of concern for it. India is a democratic country and the democracy cannot thrive without Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression, which is recognised under Article 19 of the Constitution of India as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

<https://www.hrcnet.nic.in/HRCNet/public/CaseStatus.aspx>

Concluded, no further action required: two accused arrested, truck driver and owner of truck.

Links:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/southasia/2018/03/indian-journalist-sandeep-sharma-dies-bhind-180326134319352.html>

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2018/mar/27/madhya-pradesh-journalist-murder-police-arrests-accused-driver-1792975.html>

7. Sudip Dutta Bhaumik

Name: Sudip Dutta Bhaumik
Date: 21 November, 2017
Location: RK Nagar, 20 km from Agartala, Tripura

Brief details:

Sudip Dutta Bhaumik, an investigative reporter at the Bengali-language daily *Syandan Patrika*, was shot outside the office of Tapan Debbarma, a commandant in Tripura State Rifles paramilitary force. Debbarma had invited the journalist to his office to speak with him about a clarification that the commandant wanted for a November 13, 2017 story Bhaumik wrote, alleging financial irregularities in the paramilitary force. The journalist was reportedly investigating the "financial irregularities" at the battalion, known for its counter-insurgency operations in Tripura. Subal Kumar Dey, editor of *Syandan Patrika*, told CPJ that witnesses told him that the journalist and commandant argued. When he reached there, he apparently had an argument with a PSO of the Commandant outside the latter's office, during which the PSO shot at him.

Perpetrators: Allegedly shot by a Rifleman Nandu Reang of the 2nd Tripura State Rifles (TSR)

Case status: Tapan Debbarma, a commandant of the Tripura State Rifles, who the journalist had gone to meet, was also arrested as it is on his alleged orders that Reang, Debbarma's personal bodyguard, shot at Mr Bhowmik. Nandu Reang was arrested. Head constable Amit Debbarma and rifleman Dharmendra Kumar Singh were also arrested on charges of criminal conspiracy.

Bhaumik's wife Seema Dutta said that two of the four arrested persons were given bail. The President of the Agartala Press Club, Subal Dey said that the state government had handed over the case to the CBI. Now the CBI is handling the case. The case is now in the High Court.

The family received compensation from the previous ruling Government. Seema Dutta is a primary school teacher with two children to look after, a 22-year-old son and a teenage daughter. With the support of the journalist association her late husband was a member of, she had sought further compensation and job for financial stability but so far nothing was forthcoming.

NHRC report:

Asst. IGP Crime Tripura filed its report dated 20.08.2019. The report reveals that a case was registered vide No. 2017BJNO50 dated 21.11.2017 u/s 109/ 302 IPC and 27 Arms Act PS Bodhjung Nagar. The accused were arrested on 22.11.2017 and investigation of the case was transferred to Crime Branch by DGP Tripura. Subsequently a special investigation team (SIT) was constituted by DGP Tripura, headed by DIG Southern Range. On the completion of investigation SIT submitted chargesheet No. 01/18 on 14.02.2018 against 4 arrested accused. During the trial of the case in the Court of Ld. Addl. Sessions Judge, Court No. 2 West Tripura Agartala, Govt. of Tripura issued a notification for handing over the case to CBI for further investigation. Subsequently CBI took up its investigation, this refers CBI case no. RC-2/S/2018 of CBI,SCB,Kolkata dated 07.03.2019. The case is still under the investigation of CBI. SCB Kolkata. The report further reveals that financial assistance of Rs.10 Lakhs was given to the family of the deceased Journalist Sudip Datta Bhaumik by the State Govt. as Gratuitous Relief (GR).

<https://hrcnet.nic.in/HRCNet/public/CaseStatus.aspx>

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/journalist-killed-again-in-tripura-sudip-datta-bhaumik-this-time-by-tsr-jawan-4947870/>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/sudip-dutta-bhaumik/index.php>

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/2-more-cops-arrested-in-connection-with-tripura-journalists-killing-1779971>

8. Rajesh Mishra

Name: Rajesh Mishra
Date: 21 October, 2017
Location: Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh

Brief details:

Rajesh Mishra was a stringer for the Hindi daily *Dainik Jagran*. Mishra was also an RSS worker. Police alleged that the murder mastermind Raju Yadav was angry about stories by Mishra that accused him of illegal sand mining and alcohol trafficking.

Assailants on motorbikes shot dead Rajesh Mishra. The suspects are members of a gang headed by a man named as Raju Yadav, who is suspected of being the mastermind.

Case status: Three people were arrested in connection with the murder. Gang leader Raju Yadav was still absconding

Link:

<https://www.firstpost.com/india/three-arrested-for-killing-journalist-in-ghazipur-scribe-murdered-for-reporting-against-illegal-mining-4242103.html>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/rajesh-mishra-1/index.php>

9. Shantanu Bhowmik

Name: Shantanu Bhowmik
Date: 20 September, 2017
Location: Mandwai, Tripura

Brief details:

Shantanu Bhowmik, a reporter for the local Bengali-language news channel Dinraat, was beaten to death while he covered clashes between members of the separatist Indigenous People's Front of Tripura and the ruling Tripura Rajya Upajati Ganamukti Parishad party.

A mob used sticks to hit him on his head and legs, Bhowmik was taking pictures with his mobile phone when members of the crowd attacked him. He was allegedly hacked to death. It is alleged that IPFT supporters were behind the incident. The IPFT is a tribal party and an ally of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party

Case status: In July 2018, The CBI booked three tribal leaders, including an MLA, for the murder of journalist Santanu Bhowmik in 2017. The three were Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) legislator Dharendra Debbarma and party leaders Balram Debbarma and Amit Debbarma. The case is still going on in the Tripura High Court.

Links:

<https://cpj.org/data/people/shantanu-bhowmik/index.php>

<https://www.ndtv.com/cities/cbi-books-three-tribal-leaders-of-bhartiya-janata-partys-ruling-ally-indigenous-peoples-front-of-tri-1876718>

10. Gauri Lankesh

Name: Gauri Lankesh
Date: 5 September, 2017
Location: Bangalore, Karnataka

Brief details:

Lankesh published and edited *Gauri Lankesh Patrike*, a Kannada-language weekly tabloid known for its criticism of right-wing extremism and the establishment.

At least three unidentified assailants fired at Gauri Lankesh outside her home in Bangalore as she returned home from work. B.T. Venkatesh, a lawyer who represented Gauri Lankesh, alleged in an interview with the media watchdog The Hoot that her murder “was a pre-planned and sinister attack by Hindu terror units.”

Case status: The SIT probing the murder named Hindu right-wing outfit Sanatan Sanstha in its additional charge sheet as an accused filed before a city court. A total of 18 people have been accused in the crime, including shooter Parashuram Waghmare, masterminds Amol Kale, Sujith Kumar alias Praveen and Amit Degwekar, PTI reported. The gang is suspected to be involved in the killing of three other rationalists M M Kalburgi, Narendra Dabholkar, and Govind Pansare. The first chargesheet in the case was filed against KT Naveen Kumar/ In its first charge sheet against Kumar, the SIT had quoted the alleged accused as saying that Lankesh was killed for her “anti-Hindu views”. A key accused in the journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh murder case Ganesh Miskin- has been identified as the one who fired at noted Kannada litterateur M M Kalburgi.

In November 2018, the SIT filed a 9,325-page charge sheet. The chargesheet names 18 people, of which two are still at large, have been accused of indoctrination, conspiracy, undergoing weapons procurement and training, mobilisation of funds and carrying out the murder among other charges. The police now claim to have that the murder weapons were thrown in the Vasai Creek, between Mumbai-Thane highway, and have to recover the country made 7.65 mm guns that would help the prosecution.

Links:

<https://freespeechcollective.in/2018/10/31/gauri-lankesh-chronicle-of-a-murder-foretold/>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/sit-files-9235-page-second-charge-sheet-in-gauri-lankesh-murder-case/articleshow/66774520.cms?from=mdr>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/gauri-lankesh/>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/gauri-lankesh-murder-case-probe-sit-arrests-hindu-outfits-5462349/>

11. Dharmendra Singh

Name: Dharmendra Singh
Date: 12 November, 2016
Location: Sasaram, Rohtas district, Bihar

Brief details:

Singh worked for Hindi daily, *Dainik Bhaskar*. He was at a tea stall outside his house in Amra Talab area in Sasaram when three motorcycle-borne men fired at him from close range. He was hit on his chest and abdomen.

Singh might have been killed by the stone-crusher mafia which has been active in the area for long in spite of the massive crackdown on their operations. "Being a journalist for over a decade, Dharmendra Singh has been writing regularly on police raids against illegal stone-crushers in the area which might not have gone down well with the powerful mafia involved in the trade," said a local journalist. Dharmendra had identified one of the three assailants and also tried to capture him. However, he fell to the ground after another criminal fired at him from close range.

That bullet hit his chest and abdomen, killing him. Dharmendra's brother-in-law Ravindra Singh was also present at the time of the incident. The assailants were aware that Dharmendra used to go to a local stadium every morning for football practice, a sport he was passionate about.

The stone-crushing mafia had threatened Dharmendra a month ago for writing on illegal mining going on unabated in the Amra Talab area in Rohtas, around 160km west of Patna, his brother-in-law Ravindra Singh told investigating officers. Dharmendra had told the Mufassil police station about the threats but there is no information whether a formal complaint was lodged. According to police reports, Pappu was lodged in jail after Dharmendra's reports that he was involved in a kidnapping case of a prominent goldsmith in Aurangabad.

Case status: A special investigation team arrested two persons Radhika Raman Rai and Manish Singh in November 2016. An FIR was lodged by Ravindra Singh, brother-in-law of the deceased. Five persons, including Pappu Singh, a resident of Dumariyan, have been charged. Police are investigating the involvement of Anil Sharma, Amod Kumar and Ajay Sharma - all absconding. The SIT had raided the hideouts of the gang.

A special investigation team arrested Radhika Raman Rai and Manish Singh. Manish Singh was wanted in three other cases.

An FIR was lodged by Ravindra Singh, brother-in-law of the deceased. Pappu Singh, a resident of Dumariyan, have been charged. However, police are yet to file a chargesheet in the case.

Links:

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/Another-journalist-shot-dead-in-Bihar/article16375705.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/Two-arrested-in-Bihar-journalist-murder-case/article16642993.ece>

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/india/scribe-murder-plot-hatched-inside-jail/cid/1484825>

12. Rajdeo Ranjan

Name: Rajdeo Ranjan
Date: 13 May, 2016
Location: Siwan, Bihar

Brief details:

Rajdeo Ranjan was the Hindi national daily newspaper Hindustan's bureau chief for Siwan. Unknown men shot him dead at close range. In March 2016, Ranjan had broken news about a prison meeting between the former lawmaker and another local official, who shared a "feast," reports said. Besides, Ranjan had written several reports on court proceedings against the RJD strongman who had several cases pending against him. The journalist's widow, Asha Devi, believes Ranjan was killed in retribution for his critical reporting on a lawmaker who is currently serving prison time for dozens of charges, including murder, illegal possession of firearms, and voter-intimidation, according to news reports. Local journalists said Ranjan had been receiving death threats from criminals before his death.

Case status: FIR No. 362/16 dated 13.5.16 registered under PS Nagar Thana, Dist. Siwan. for the offences punishable u/s 302/120B and 34 of IPC. His wife, Asha, said that a criminal and politician, Shahabuddin, was responsible for the murder but police failed to include his name. The investigation of the case was transferred to the CBI. Two others, sharpshooter Mohammed Kaif and Mohammad Javed, were declared as proclaimed offenders. On 10.9.2016, Shahabuddin was released on bail. Both Kaif and Javed were seen in his company but police feared arresting them.

On 14 September, 2016, photographs of Kaif and Javed with Tej Pratap Yadav, Health Minister of Bihar were circulated on all media channels. On 22 March, 2018, the CBI informed the SC that it had not found any criminality on the part of Tej Pratap Yadav, a former Bihar minister and son of Bihar RJD leader Laloo Yadav.

In January 2019, Charges were framed against former RJD MP Mohammad Shahabuddin and six others. The CBI had last year filed a charge sheet against all of them in a Muzaffarpur court. The other named in the charge sheet are Laddan Mian alias Azharuddin Beg, Rishu Kumar Jaiswal, Rohit Kumar Soni, Vijay Kumar Gupta, Rajesh Kumar and Sonu Kumar Gupta. The former MP and other accused have been charged under Indian Penal Code sections 120B (punishment of criminal conspiracy) and 302 (punishment for murder) as well as section 34 of the Arms Act.

The case against other accused, sharpshooter Mohammed Kaif and Mohammad Javed, continues. Both are in custody.

In March 2019, the trial commenced in the special CBI court in Muzaffarpur with the recording of the statement of Asha Ranjan, wife of Rajdeo Ranjan. But it could not be done as the judge was not available. Subsequently, the trial commenced and picked up speed and the deposition of ten witnesses was recorded. But from October, the CBI representative had stopped attending the court proceedings. On November 26, at the last hearing, Asha Ranjan learnt that the case had been reverted back to the special crime branch of the state. She had not been informed of this and now does not know what will happen to the case. The next date of the hearing is December 2.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/rajdev-ranjan-murder-case-charges-framed-against-former-mp-shahabuddin-5559897/>

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/68364168.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

<https://cpj.org/data/people/rajdev-ranjan/index.php>

13. Karun Misra

Name: Karun Misra
Date: 13 February, 2016
Location: Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh

Brief details:

Misra was the Ambedkar Nagar bureau chief of the Hindi daily *Jansandesh Times*. Three gunmen on motorcycles shot Misra in Sultanpur district as the journalist was driving to his home in Ambedkar Nagar.

Two mining contractors in the area were allegedly upset with Misra's coverage of illegal mining for his paper. Police named mining contractors--Rahul Singh and Pawan Singh-- as the suspected masterminds behind Misra's murder

Case status: On February 18, 2016 police arrested five people in connection with Misra's murder. Both contractors and three of the five men they allegedly hired, identified as Ajay Singh, Sandeep Singh, and Haider Abbas, were arrested following a joint operation by Sultanpur police and the state's Special Task Force, an investigative body set up to investigate criminal matters including mafia activities in the state. During questioning, the three men allegedly hired by the contractors confessed to murdering Misra, reports said. Police were still searching for two other suspects, Aman Singh and Mama, who was identified by only one name.

The pair allegedly paid five locals 100,000 Indian rupees (approximately US\$1,500) to kill Misra, according to the police statement.

Link:

<https://cpj.org/data/people/karun-misra/>

14. Raghavendra Dubey

Name: Raghavendra Dubey
Date: 17 July, 2015
Location: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Brief details:

Dubey was at a police station for questioning in connection with a recent attack on three journalists, Sashi Sharma, Santosh Mishra and Anil Notiyal. The journalists were covering a late night police raid on a local bar, when the owners and employees of the bar allegedly attacked them as they suspected the journalists had tipped off the police about activities of the bar. Dubey was asked to visit the police station regarding the attack and left at 4 am on his motorcycle. Later he was found dead and his motorcycle was missing from the scene. He was likely killed because he had regularly filed complaints with the police against bars in the area. He was owner of and journalist with Khushboo Ujala, a weekly paper.

Case status: The police took four people into custody in connection with the murder, including the owner of the bar, the bar manager and two others. Dubey's colleague Santosh Mishra who was also attacked and injured, said the police were complicit with the bar owners and staff. The Mira Road police ordered a departmental enquiry into the incident, which Mishra said was just an eyewash. Mishra himself was hospitalised after he was attacked. He said the bar was running a sex trafficking racket which he helped bust. FIRs were lodged in both instances- in the attack on him and for the death of Dubey. The FIRs were against the bar owners and staff. However, everyone arrested are now out on bail, Mishra says. He expects no justice in the case and has stopped following it up. He says he is no longer in journalism.

Links:

<https://www.ifj.org/es/centro-de-medios/noticias/detalle/category/press-releases/article/ifj-iju-condemn-murder-of-third-journalist-in-india.html>

<https://www.firstpost.com/india/journalist-who-covered-police-raid-on-bar-allegedly-murdered-in-mumbai-2348306.html>

https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/ANNUAL_REPORT_2015-16_PRESS_COUNCIL_ENG%20%281%29.pdf

15. Akshay Singh

Name: Akshay Singh
Date: 4 July, 2015
Location: Meghnagar, Madhya Pradesh

Brief details:

Singh, 38, an investigative journalist for Hindi news channel Aaj Tak, collapsed when he drank from a cup of tea. He began coughing and frothing at the mouth and died soon after. Singh was conducting an interview at

Meghnagar near Jhabua town soon after interviewing the parents of a girl who was an accused in the Vyapam scam and had died in suspicious circumstances. He was on assignment in Madhya Pradesh to investigate cases related to the Vyapam scam. Doctors said Singh suffered a heart attack. But his parents and colleagues said he was perfectly healthy. Doubts have been raised over the circumstances in which he died. In July 2015, MP chief minister relented to pressure that the case be examined as part of a wider investigation into the Vyapam scandal that Akshay Singh had been reporting on.

Case status: Akshay Singh's case was moved to the Central Bureau of Investigation. The post mortem report did not show any foul play.

Links:

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-vyapam-scam-no-foul-play-in-journalist-death-says-cbi-2291935>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/akshay-singh/>

<https://cpj.org/reports/2016/08/dangerous-pursuit-india-corruption-journalists-killed-impunity-Chapter-3-Akshay-Singh.php>

16. Sandeep Kothari

Name: Sandeep Kothari
Date: 21 June, 2015
Location: Balaghat -MP/Wardha-Maharashtra

Brief details:

Sandeep Kothari, a freelance journalist, was abducted from Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh and taken across the state border to Wardha District, Maharashtra where he was beaten and set on fire on June 19 or 20, 2015. Kothari, a well-known journalist in the area, had been reporting on illegal mining and land grabbing.

Case status: Madhya Pradesh police announced the formation of a SIT to probe the murder. Seven people, including prime accused Brijendra Daharwal, Vishal Tandi, and Rakesh Naraswani, Sanjay @ Sanju Soni and Tinku @ Yogesh Choudhary, were arrested for the murder. However, Sanjay and Tinku managed to get bail four months later and submitted before the court that they were only travelling in another vehicle behind Daharwal. Justice J K Maheshwari of the Madhya Pradesh High Court granted bail to the duo. In the order granting the bail, the counsel for the applicants said 'that

Brijesh Daharwal has made an accident by his car hitting the motorbike of the deceased Sandeep Kothari. Thereafter, the deceased was kidnapped in his car. After sometime, Vishal Tandi and Rakesh Narswani throttled him whereby he died and dead body of the deceased was put into fire by Brijesh Daharwal, Vishal Tandi and Rakesh Narswani. The present applicants were following the car of Brijesh wherein he was sitting'.

Tandi and Naraswani were granted bail by the Madhya Pradesh High Court in 2017.

Links:

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/madhya-pradesh-journalist-murder-police-forms-special-investigation-team-774326>

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/mp-key-accused-in-journalist-sandeep-kotharis-murder-arrested-from-balaghat-1017955.html>

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/journalist-refused-to-withdraw-mining-case-his-burnt-body-was-found-on-saturday-773988>

<http://asu.thehoot.org/media-watch/media-practice/anatomy-of-a-journalist-s-murder-8409>

17. Jagendra Singh

Name: Jagendra Singh
Date: 8 June, 2015
Location: Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh

Brief details:

A freelance journalist for Hindi newspapers, Jagendra also used Facebook to highlight his stories. Jagendra appears to have stumbled across a local source who was a goldmine of information about alleged illegal practices of Ram Murti Verma. He posted messages on Facebook against the minister and regarding his alleged involvement in illegal sand mining and land grabbing and alleged rape of an anganwadi worker by the minister and his henchmen.

Policemen, including an inspector, raided Jagendra Singh's residence, burning him with kerosene. Former UP Backward Classes Welfare Minister Ram Murti Singh Verma from Samajwadi Party is also an accused in the case.

Case status: An FIR has been registered against Minister for Backward Classes Welfare Ram Murti Singh Verma, Inspector Sri Prakash Rai besides four

others identified as Gufran, Akash Gupta, Amit Pratap Singh, and Bhure for allegedly killing Jagendra Singh by setting him afire. The FIR has been lodged under IPC 302 (murder), 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) and 506 (criminal intimidation). Former CM Akhilesh Yadav promised compensation of Rs. 30 lakh and jobs for the two sons of Singh. The compensation was provided, gun licences were given to both sons but no jobs were given. A UP police forensic report gave a clean chit to the accused minister.

The family subsequently withdrew the FIR naming Verma, which was filed by the elder son Rajyavendra Singh (Rajan). A subsequent case filed in the Supreme Court by younger son Pushpendra Singh (Rahul) was also withdrawn before it came up for hearing. Members of the family admitted to have taken Rs 30 lakh from minister Verma and had signed an affidavit stating that Jagendra Singh committed suicide. They claim they were under immense pressure to do so and that they did not want the money but it was brought to their house.

All cases have been closed.

Links:

<https://www.thelede.co.in/the-green-blood-project/2019/06/20/the-death-of-jagendra-singh-how-a-journalist-was-burnt-alive>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/why-did-they-have-to-burn-me-asked-dying-uttar-pradesh-scribe/article7310923.ece?ref=relatedNews>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/up-scribe-death-forensic-report-gives-clean-chit-to-accused-minister/article7350108.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/up-minister-booked-in-journalist-killing-case/article7298669.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/up-scribe-death-forensic-report-gives-clean-chit-to-accused-minister/article7350108.ece>

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/journalists-family-to-withdraw-murder-charges-against-minister/article7490277.ece>

18. MNV Shankar

Name: MNV Shankar
Date: 26 November, 2014
Location: Guntur, Andhra Pradesh

Brief details:

The 53-year-old journalist was allegedly killed for his reportage against mafia of illegally selling rationed essential items supplied through Public Distribution System in the black market. He worked with Telugu daily *Andhra Prabha*. According to local journalists, Shankar also 'earned the ire of those who were running gambling dens and illegal activities' as he reported on them in his newspaper. They told a special fact-finding team from the Press Council of India that police had named two 'rowdy sheeters' Kishore Babu and Vijay Kumar. The latter was arrested but Kishore Babu was arrested only after a visit of the Committee.

Alleged Perpetrators: According to the journalists who deposed before the PCI fact-finding team, local politicians of the then ruling party (Telugu Desam Party), Vengala Rayudu and P Srinivas Rao, an ex-sarpanch of Timmapuram village near Chilakaluripet town, were allegedly involved in the murder. Both politicians were followers of the local minister. They said Shankar exposed the illegal activities Vengala Rayudu and Srinivas Rao and they bore a grudge against him. Since they belonged to the ruling party, the police were not naming them in the case.

Case status: Then Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister (also in charge of Home Ministry) Nimmakayala China Rajappa had ordered a probe into the journalist's murder and directed police to form a special team to investigate the case and promised Shankar's family that justice would be served. An FIR was registered but there is no progress in the case thereafter.

Links:

<http://asu.thehoo.org/media-freedom/oil-mafia-behind-killing-of-andhra-journalist-8745>

<https://cpj.org/data/people/mvn-shankar/>

PCI annual report 2015-16 has details of the fact-finding team report on the case:

https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/ANNUAL_REPORT_2015-16_PRESS_COUNCIL_ENG%20%281%29.pdf

19. Tarun Acharya

Name: Tarun Acharya
Date: 27 May, 2014
Location: Ganjam, Odisha

Brief details:

Few days before the murder, Acharya had published a news report in Odia daily *Sambad* about child labourers being employed at Prusty's cashew-nut processing factory in Khallikote. Owner of a cashew nut factory, whom Acharya had written against and contract killers hired by the owner.

Case status: In June 2019, Khallikote Additional District Judge court awarded life imprisonment to Santosh Maharana (prime accused), Sibaram Nayak, Shyam Sundar Prusty, Suresh Chandra Sahu and Ramesh Reddy. They were found guilty of killing stringer Tarun Acharya. The sentence was pronounced after total 45 witnesses were cross-examined in the case.

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/odisha-police-crack-tv-journalist-murder-case/>

<https://odishasuntimes.com/five-get-lifer-in-odisha-journalist-murder-case/>

20. Mithilesh Pandey

Earlier in list of confirmed but moved to unconfirmed after PCI investigation.

Name: Mithilesh Pandey
Date: 24 October, 2015
Location: Gaya, Bihar

Brief details:

Mithilesh Pandey was a 40-year-old reporter with online Hindi newspaper Dainik Jagran. Pandey's family said that prior to his murder he had been receiving death threats and had informed police of this. Pandey's relatives claimed that the 40-year-old journalist had been receiving threats and that he had approached the police on several occasions regarding the issue. According to his colleagues, Pandey was a person with social concerns and was keen on reporting on issues related to corruption, scams and Naxals.

According to police reports, Pandey was killed when three masked intruders stormed his house and opened fire as he slept.

Case status: Three accused arrested and a chargesheet filed against five accused. The investigation is still on about the complicity of other accused.

According to Press Council of India Annual Report 2015-16, the PCI initiated suo motu cognisance of the matter. The report also stated that as per Manu Maharaj, the Additional Superintendent of Police, Gaya, Bihar, 'some accused have been arrested by Bihar Police and raids are being conducted regularly to arrest other offenders.'

Later, a Press Council of India report noted that that according to an investigation report submitted by the SSP, Gaya, Mithilesh Pandey was killed because of a property dispute and not because of his journalistic work. Several persons have been chargesheeted and the matter was pending before the court as of 2016. The inquiry committee of the Press Council then dropped the matter.

(<http://presscouncil.nic.in/WriteReadData/Pdf/Sechthirteen.pdf> Page 76).

In June 2019, the National Human Rights Commission closed the complaint filed before it by Henri Tiphagne, the secretary of Human Rights Defenders.

The NHRC report said the following:

In response to the directions of the Commission, SSP Gaya has sent his report dated 24 May 2018. As per the report during monthly monitoring by SDPO concerned, unnamed accused Raja Yadav, Satyen Yadav, Devlal Paswan and other unknown accused were arrested and offences were substantiated against them. Regarding complicity of Rajneet Viswakarma and 5 others named in the report, further thorough investigation in the case appeared to be necessary before taking a final decision in the matter. The Investigating Officer has submitted chargesheet against accused Manju Devi, Tasleem Ansari, Raja Yadav, Satyan Yadav and Devlal Paswan. The investigation of the case is in progress.

The complainant has been asked to send his comments, if any on the report of SSP Gaya dated 24.5.2018.

SSP Gaya has been directed to send a report on the updated status of investigation in the said case. But no response has been received. However, the complainant in his reply dated 3.5.2019 has made a request for extension of further time to submit his comments. Further, he has requested for

communicating him the translated version of the action taken report of the concerned authority.

The Commission carefully considered the materials on record and took note of the facts and circumstances of the case. The grievance raised by the complainant seems to have been duly redressed by the Gaya Police. Necessary action has already been taken against some of the miscreants. Investigation against other miscreants is in progress. The Commission hopes that the concerned Police will be able to arrest other absconding miscreants at the earliest and conclude the investigation strictly according to law. In view of the above, the matter requires no further intervention of the Commission. Hence the case is closed.

Links:

<https://samsn.ifj.org/second-indian-journalist-killed-this-month/>

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/journalist-shot-dead-inside-his-house-in-bihar-269746-2015-10-26>

https://mib.gov.in/sites/default/files/ANNUAL_REPORT_2015-16_PRESS_COUNCIL_ENG%20%281%29.pdf

<https://hrln.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/silencing-the-journalists.pdf>

Chapter IV

The Attacks: Precarious Press Freedom

The attacks on journalists tell another story. The attacks can be broadly divided into two categories: One, attacks on journalists reporting or covering any incident or event and two, attacks targeted at journalists involved in investigative work or reportage.

There were 198 cases of attacks on journalists that this study documented between 2014-19. Of these, the study examined 63 cases of targeted attacks on an individual journalist or a team of journalists engaged in any investigation in the period between 2014-18 (See Chapter V)

In 2019, there were over 36 serious attacks on journalists in India, including six during the recent protests over the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Bill in December.

No. of attacks 2014-19:

| 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | Total |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 14 | 24 | 50 | 43 | 31 | 36 | 198 |

In the first category, the attacks, serious as they are, were predominantly on journalists involved in field reportage. The assailants were mobs, supporters of political parties, followers of religious sects, lawyers, student groups, police and security forces.

Journalists have been attacked while covering elections, disasters, major incidents and protests, conflicts etc. While security forces routinely roughed up journalists or smashed their cameras, protesting mobs also viciously targeted media professionals. In Delhi, lawyers in Patiala House Court attacked journalists covering the arrest of JNU student leader Kanhaiya Kumar in 2016; in Bihar, journalists were assaulted while covering the raid on then Deputy Chief Minister, Tejashwi Yadav, in 2017; in Haryana, mobs owing allegiance to the Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim assaulted journalists and set fire to OB vans of television channels when their leader, convicted on charges of rape, was to be taken into custody in 2018; in West Bengal, journalists were beaten up while covering the clash between Trinamool Congress and BJP workers in Siliguri in 2018; in Kerala, journalists were beaten up while covering the assault on a biker by RSS in Mallappuram

in Kerala in 2018 and again, in Kerala, women journalists covering the right of women to enter the Sabarimala shrine were brutally beaten by devotees objecting to the presence of women in 2018 and in 2019, while covering the 'Women's Wall' in Kerala. In 2019, four photojournalists sustained geivous wounds from pellet guns while covering protests in Kashmir.

The attacks have been vicious. In 2016, freelance photographer Zohaib Butt was covering a clash between protesters and security forces in Srinagar in Kashmir when security forces fired pellets at him, blinding him in the eye. Butt said that he had held up his camera to show that he was a journalist on duty but it made no difference.

The journalists who were attacked said that the very sight of a camera, leave alone the act of shooting pictures or videos, was provocation enough for the attack. Journalists were targeted, chased and attacked, the outdoor broadcasting vans of television channels burnt or their equipment smashed. Hardly any of them have insurance cover for themselves or their equipment, making them doubly vulnerable and defenceless.

(See Section V for list of attacks in 2019)

The attacks on the journalists covering current news events or incidents underline the deep suspicion and hostility towards media professionals who are doing their duty. But the polarisation and increasingly divisive political atmosphere in the country has also played a major role in the attacks on the media.

The very first day of 2019 began with attacks on journalists in Kasargod, Kerala, by supporters of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), when the journalists were covering the Women's Wall, an over 600 km chain of women who came out in support of gender equality in the context of the struggle of adult women of menstruating age to secure entry into the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala.

Journalists' organisations claimed that over 100 journalists had been attacked by the Sabarimala Karma Samithi (SKS), backed by the BJP and RSS.

The assault on journalists continued in Thiruvananthapuram and videos of Shajila Ali Fathima, cameraperson for Kairali TV, continuing to shoot despite being heckled and assaulted went viral. In all, at least nine journalists from different television channels and newspapers reported being attacked in the Sabarimala temple entry issue.

Here is an example of how combative news coverage has become: in February 2019, a scuffle broke out between two journalists of Republic TV and students of the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) while covering an event on campus. While the students alleged that one of the reporters called AMU the “university of terrorists” during the live coverage, the reporters alleged that they were attacked only because they were from Republic TV.

In February 2019, BJP supporters attacked journalist Suman Pandey of the digital news portal The Voices, when he was covering the party’s meeting in Raipur. In protest, journalists in Chhattisgarh began sporting helmets when they went to cover any press conferences or meetings organised by the BJP.

Police in Kashmir who routinely target journalists when they cover encounters, opened fire and shot them with pellet guns. In January 2019, four photojournalists were injured after security forces fired pellets on them Shirmal area of Shopian in South Kashmir. The journalists were in the area to cover protests that had ensued after three youth were killed by troops. Among those injured were photojournalists, Nisar ul Haq of *Rising Kashmir*, Waseem Andrabi of *Hindustan Times*, Junaid Gulzar of *Kashmir Essence*, and Mir Burhan of the Asian News International news agency.

But what does one make of the violence and brutalisation of law-enforcers? On camera, a journalist from Shamli, Uttar Pradesh, who was covering a derailment, was beaten up by a group of GRP personnel led by SHO Rakesh Kumar. The group was seen repeatedly slapping and thrashing the journalist while he tried to reason with them. Later, the journalist alleged that he was subjected to torture. He said, "They were in plain clothes. One hit my camera and it fell down. When I picked it up, they hit and abused me. I was locked up, stripped and they urinated in my mouth."

The camera continues to roll and the videos, perhaps recorded by colleagues, continue to record the incident in the police station as the journalist is shown shouting about the assault, behind bars, while the police sit stoically outside.

Attacks on women journalists

Women journalists have been the target of online harassment, faced death and rape threats, stalked and doxxed with their personal data shared online. There has been considerable focus on the gendered nature of the harassment, often stigmatising and sexualising them for their opinions and their work.

Apart from this severe and relentless online harassment, the ‘offline’ targeting of women journalists in the field, has been brutal. In 2012, *Arunachal Times*

editor Tongam Rina survived a heinous attack. In 2017, the *Gauri Lankesh Patrike* editor Gauri Lankesh was killed by members of right-wing organisations for her strong campaign against hindutva politics. The petrol bomb attack on the residence of *Shillong Times* editor Patrician Mukhim, the hounding of journalist Malini Subramaniam from Bastar, the attack on journalists Sandhya Ravishankar or M Suchitra while covering illegal sand mining are only some instances before us.

Here is a list.

Women Journalists Killed (2014-19)

1. Gauri Lankesh, killed, for speaking out against right wing hindutva politics, Bengaluru, Karnataka, on Sept 5, 2017.

Attacks on Women Journalists on the field (2014-19)

1. M Suchitra and VM Deepa, attacked in Kulitalai, Tamil Nadu on 24.05.2014 and again in 22.05.2015 for investigating the sand mining mafia. Along with them, S Chandran and Prashant Albert were also attacked.
2. Bhairavi Singh, attacked by a mob in Delhi on 9.11.2015
3. Woman journalist (name withheld), in Guwahati, Assam on 31.01. 2015
4. Manju Kuttikrishnan, attacked by lawyers in Ernakulam, Kerala on 08.11. 2016
5. Rohini Swamy and cameraperson Madhu Y, by unidentified persons Bengaluru, Karnataka on 13.09.2016
6. Rashmi Mann and fellow crew members, in New Delhi on 30.05.2016
7. Malini Subramaniam, by Bastar police and self-styled anti-Maoist group, supported by police, in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, on 22.02.2016
8. Revati Laul, when interviewing a Gujarat riots convict out on parole, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on 22.01.2016
9. Damayantee Dhar, by Keval Rathod, advocate/dalit activist, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat on 07.01.2018

10. Emmy Lawbei, March 10th 2018. Assam-Mizoram border Details here:
11. Patricia Mukhim, by unidentified persons in Umpling, Meghalya, on 17.04. 2018
12. Sandhya Ravishankar, by unidentified persons allegedly sponsored by sand mining conglomerate V M Minerals, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on 28.09. 2018
13. Nabeela Jamaluddin and colleagues, by sand mining gang in Bangalore, Karnataka, on 08.12. 2018
- 14-18. Sarita Balan, Pooja Prasanna, Radhika Ramaswamy, Mausami Singh, Sneha Mary Koshy, while covering the entry of women devotees to the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala on October 17, 2018
19. Shajila Ali Fathim, while covering the protests by RSS-BJP supporters against the over 600 Kms Women’s Wall in Kerala on Jan 3, 2019
20. Rifat Mohidin, abused and attacked by security forces in Srinagar, Kashmir on Sept 9, 2019. Despite showing valid id proof and saying she was a journalist on duty, they rained baton blows on her vehicle as she sat inside, abusing her and her family all the while.

Journalists in conflict zones

Caught in the cross-fire, journalists in two major conflict zones – Kashmir and Bastar – are far removed from securing justice for attacks. Often, they do not even file complaints or attempt to seek redressal, considering it futile.

In July 2015, journalist Somaru Nag was arrested on charges of aiding Maoists in Bastar region of Chhattisgarh. He was acquitted of all charges a year later. Another journalist Santosh Yadav was arrested in September 2015 and remained in jail till March 2017. In March 2016, journalist Prabhat Singh was arrested for using allegedly obscene language against a police officer in a WhatsApp post.

In March 2016, a team from the Editors Guild of India, submitted a report that journalists in Chhattisgarh were unable to travel to Bastar, a conflict zone in South Chhattisgarh. In a detailed [report](#), the team said:

The fact finding team came to the conclusion that the media reports of threats to journalists are true. The media in Chhattisgarh is working under

tremendous pressure. In Jagdalpur and the remote tribal areas the journalists find it even more difficult to gather and disseminate news. There is pressure from the state administration, especially the police, on journalists to write what they want or not to publish reports that the administration sees as hostile. There is pressure from Maoists as well on the journalists working in the area. There is a general perception that every single journalist is under the government scanner and all their activities are under surveillance. They hesitate to discuss anything over the phone because, as they say, "the police is listening to every word we speak."

Several senior journalists confirmed that a controversial citizen group Samajik Ekta Manch' is funded and run by the police headquarters in Bastar. According to them it is a reincarnation of Salwa Judum.

In July 2016, Chhattisgarh advocate Sudha Bharadwaj (jailed for over a year under the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act), had co-authored a draft Chhattisgarh Special Act for Protection of Journalists and Human Rights Defenders at a citizen's convention organised by Chhattisgarh People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL).

But things remained on paper.

In 2017, at least 14 journalists were arrested by the Chhattisgarh government on various charges, according to information [disclosed](#) by the government in the state Assembly.

In February 2019, journalists in Bastar sported helmets when they covered press conferences by BJP leaders, as a mark of protest at the beating up of a colleague.

In March 2019, the Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced a committee, headed by former Supreme Court judge Aftab Alam, to formulate a draft Bill to safeguard mediapersons from harassment, intimidation and violence. In November 2019, the committee came out with a [draft law](#), the Chhattisgarh Protection of Mediapersons Act, which suggested a register of mediapersons and an authority that would maintain the register. But journalists have been unhappy with this provision, as it would impose authority on the very agencies that harass them.

In Kashmir, the attacks on the media have been ceaseless, reaching a nadir with the killing of Rising Kashmir editor Shujaat Bukhari in 2018. At least 19 journalists were [killed](#) in Kashmir from 1990 to 2018. There is no investigation into these deaths. Photojournalist Kamran Yousuf was arrested by the

National Investigation Agency (NIA), on charges of being a 'stone pelter' in September 2017 and released on bail in March 2018. Journalist Aasif Sultan of Kashmir Narrator was arrested on charges of supporting militants in September 2018 and is still in custody.

In 2016, Muneeb ul Islam, photojournalist said that the CRPF used him as a 'human shield' against stone pelters. But there is no way any formal complaint could be lodged or any action taken against the personnel responsible.

Journalists have had police raid their homes, smash their cameras and even fire tear-gas shells into their homes. In July 2018, Fahad Shah, editor of *The Kashmirwalla*, took to Twitter to say that a teargas shell was fired into his home, two weeks after his parents' car was broken into. Shah did not file a formal complaint. "Whom do I complain to? I know who did it but what's the point. Later, I got an 'informal' message via someone that it should not have been done and that the action was regretted," he said to a researcher who spoke to him for this study.

The targeting of journalists when they cover encounters took a turn for the worst in January 2019, when police opened fire and shot four photojournalists with pellet guns in the Shirmal area of Shopian in South Kashmir. The journalists were in the area to cover protests that had ensued after three youth were killed by troops. Among those injured were photojournalists, Nisar ul Haq of *Rising Kashmir*, Waseem Andrabi of *Hindustan Times*, Junaid Gulzar of *Kashmir Essence*, and Mir Burhan of the Asian News International news agency.

With attacks by security forces being a matter of routine, there was little or no chance for the media to fix any accountability and now, with the lockdown and communication blockade post the abrogation of Art 370, it has become virtually impossible.

Chapter V

Targeted Attacks on Investigative Journalists

Increasingly, journalists across the country who are involved in investigative reportage have been targeted and attacked, comprising the second category of attacks on the media.

This study has short-listed 63 such instances between **2014-18** for a more detailed follow up. These were cases where the attack was clearly targeted at an individual journalist or a team of journalists engaged in investigating allegations of corruption or malpractices.

In order to ascertain the status of the cases lodged, at least eight journalists fanned out and delved deeper into the cases to substantiate this report. With slender leads, news reports of the location of the attack, employers, friends, colleagues and even social media accounts, it has been possible to get some information on the cases, the status of investigations and determine how near or how far justice is for the families of the deceased and the survivors of attacks.

Our study of these 63 attacks sought to determine the kind of stories undertaken by the journalists and the manner in which they were being silenced. The perpetrators of the attacks, the vicious nature of the attacks that narrowly missed being fatal in some instances and the impunity that the attacks were often met with provide a crystal clear picture of how precarious the profession of journalism has become in India.

Journalists have had petrol bombs thrown at their homes, in a clear attempt to intimidate them! In 2014, a petrol bomb was thrown at the residence of *Tribune* reporter, Devinder Pal. In April 2018, an unidentified person threw a bomb into the residence of *Shillong Times* editor Patricia Mukhim.

Other assailants owed allegiance to gangs engaged in illicit liquor trade or timber smuggling or even the water tanker mafia. A journalist was shot at by criminals involved in a host of illegal activities, from mining to grabbing of contracts for a food department's procurement centres in a district in Uttar Pradesh during the Rabi and Kharif seasons every year.

Across the country, the mining mafia attacked journalists brutally. If the gangs in most cases operated locally, big mining corporates like V M Minerals are also suspected of being involved in intimidation and harassment. In Chennai, journalist Sandhya Ravishankar who had been writing about the

mining giant had the fuel pipe of her bike cut. Subjected to stalking and online harassment, she filed six complaints with police but no investigations or action followed.

In the mineral rich coastal Andhra belt, journalists reporting on illegal sand and laterite mining faced repeated attacks.

The perpetrators range from politicians, security forces, gangs operating in illegal activity, small business and trade, an anti-Maoist group working with police support etc.

Perpetrators for Targeted Attacks on Journalists (2014-18)

| Category of perpetrator | Number of cases |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Unidentified persons | 16 |
| Government security forces | 07 |
| Mob | 01 |
| State government | 01 |
| Lawyers | 02 |
| Private transport operators | 03 |
| Anti-Maoist groups | 01 |
| Gujarat riots convicts | 01 |
| Politicians | 06 |
| Businesspersons | 03 |
| Illegal Activity | |
| Mining | 12 |
| Timber | 01 |
| Water tanker | 01 |
| Liquor | 02 |
| Slaughter house | 01 |
| Rice milling | 01 |
| Oil | 01 |
| Coal | 01 |
| Drugs | 02 |
| Others | 01 |
| Total | 63 |

The assailants were also people with political connections, whether it was BJP MLAs in Tripura, YSRCP (Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party, the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh), or Samajik Ekta Manch, a self-styled anti-Maoist vigilante group in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, which hounded journalist Malini Subramaniam out of the area.

If there is any doubt about the response of the state to these attacks, this case in Punjab is a pretty good indication. In July 2018, a sand mining mafia attacked two journalists in Jalalabad. They surrounded them and beat them up, smashing their video equipment. Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh at first tweeted that stern action would be taken, only to backtrack later and say that the mining was not illegal and was within permissible limits. The journalists were being adventurist and were actually intimidating the miners, the Chief Minister said.

Chapter VI

Justice Delivery in Cases of Attacks on Journalists

The case status in terms of the attacks and deaths of journalists also reveals the precarious nature of investigations, when journalists are literally at the mercy of law-enforcing agencies. They are often alone and isolated. In most instances of targeted attacks, the alleged perpetrators are known but yet, there is a failure in booking the culprits.

The attacks, most of them heinous, warrant the lodging of complaints, a preliminary investigation, the registration of a First Information Report (FIR), the application of appropriate charges, the collection of evidence, the filing of a chargesheet, a trial and a conviction.

In most of the cases, nothing happens beyond the first or the second stages.

Targeted attacks (2014-18) Status of Justice Delivery

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Complaints lodged*, no FIRs registered | 18 |
| FIRs registered | 18 |
| Chargesheets filed | 03 |
| Trial commenced | 04 |
| No formal complaints preferred | 08 |
| No information | 12 |
| Convictions | 00 |
| Total | 63 |

*Counter-complaints filed in three cases

Clearly, the process of justice has been slow and uneven. Of the 63 cases studied, FIRs were lodged in only 25 cases. In 18 of these, the case hasn't progressed beyond the registering of the FIR. Chargesheets were filed in three cases but the process stalled thereafter. In only four cases, a trial has commenced.

In the 18 cases where journalists did file complaints (but no FIRs), counter complaints were filed in three cases. In 12 cases, there is no information at all and even the affected journalists don't know what happened post the attacks.

In the other eight cases, journalists were either dissuaded by police from filing formal complaints or chose not to do so, fearing further attack and harassment. In some cases, justice is elusive and even if charge-sheets have been filed, the trial may have stalled or investigations have been incomplete.

In several instances, the journalists have said that they were under threat and had even filed complaints with police. Indeed, several journalists reiterated that it was the failure of the police to investigate cases thoroughly, without being compromised or coming under pressure, that forced them to decide whether or not to pursue the case.

In a majority of the cases, there has been little or no action by police. In one case, when the sand mining mafia attacked journalists, police told the journalists not to file any complaint and to leave the area as soon as possible for their own safety.

In many cases, the accused were out on bail. The survivors our researchers spoke to had lost hope that the perpetrators would be punished and had become thoroughly disillusioned by the legal process. The journalists said they pursued the cases up to a point but gave up because it was perceived to be fruitless.

Besides, in several cases, the journalists who were attacked had to pursue their cases using their own resources. Many employers were not proactive in supporting the victims' quest for justice. Some journalists were told by their organisations not to 'drag' their names into the matter. In rare instances, the journalist was granted leave to pursue the matter. But in the main, the odds were so heavy and support so little that in one case a journalist said he had quit the profession altogether. In another case, a journalist switched from television to the print medium.

Narendra Yadav, journalist with *Dainik Jagran* in Shahjanapur, who survived the slitting of his throat by two persons, had no information on the status of investigation in his case. He finally got some information after filing an RTI. He got a response that a prime suspect in his case was also an accused in connection with another case relating to the death of a witness in the rape case involving religious leader Aasaram Bapu. Yadav says that the accused is currently lodged in jail. The other assailant is still absconding.

In cases related to illegal sand mining on the banks and riverbed of the Cauvery, journalist M Suchitra and her colleagues, S Chandran, VM Deepa and Prashant Albert were literally hounded out of the area by police in

Kuzhitalai, Tamil Nadu. They chose not to file a complaint but returned to their offices to file a report.

Incidentally, this team was attacked four times, once in 2014 and thrice in 2015.

Repeatedly, in their testimonies, the journalists expressed little hope that anything would be done in their cases. Often, they give up pursuing the case, expecting little or no justice.

Case Studies of Targeted Attacks on Journalists (2014-18)

A total of 198 serious attacks on journalists were recorded between 2014-19. This is a conservative estimate. Journalists have been attacked either individually or in groups, in the course of their professional work of reportage or coverage of any incident or current event. We have documented these instances separately. They are serious attacks on the profession and warrant attention, follow up on investigations, if any, and stringent action against the attackers.

Keeping the focus on redressing attacks on journalists, our detailed study shortlisted 63 cases of journalists targeted and attacked for their investigative work between 2014-18. The status of the cases listed here is verified according to the latest information available from the journalists concerned, wherever possible. It will be updated as and when new developments take place or additional information is made available.

1. Narendra Yadav

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Name: | Narendra Yadav |
| Date of attack: | 17 September, 2014 |
| Location: | Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh |

Brief summary:

In a heinous attack, an unidentified person attacked the Dainik Jaran correspondent Narendra Yadav on September 17 outside his office. The bike-borne assailant slit his throat and made away. Quick-thinking colleagues Shivom Dubey and Ajayvir Singh immediately rushed to his rescue and took a bleeding Yadav to hospital within eight minutes, where he underwent two operations in the span of a few hours. He survived and recovered from the heinous attack, resuming work as a journalist two and a half years later.

Yadav felt that the attack was linked to religious leader Asaram Bapu, who was charged with rape. Yadav had run a campaign called Asaram Aafat Mein, on the case. From August 2013, Yadav said he had filed 287 reports on the case.

In a Facebook post, Yadav said that Asaram Bapu, who had been charged with rape, had the temerity to offer him a bribe of Rs Five Lakhs but he turned it down. Subsequently, he managed to get police protection and a licensed revolver. He still works with police protection and finds it irksome but says he has no choice.

Alleged Perpetrators: Prime accused Kartik Haldar who was also a prime suspect in the killing of Kripal Singh, a witness in the Asaram Bapu rape case had been arrested in connection with another matter. Another accused, an unidentified person, is still absconding.

Case Status update: Yadav said he had no idea about the status of the trial. A trial will commence soon, Yadav hoped. Initially, Yadav did not get any information even on the arrested accused and was forced to file an RTI to get information on the matter.

He planned to file another RTI to ask for details on the progress in the case. He says he received a lot of support from his employers but more significantly, he pays tribute to his wife for supporting him and being a great source of strength.

Link:

[Jagran journalist attacked in Shahjahanpur](#)

2. M Suchitra

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Name: | M Suchitra |
| Date of attack: | 24 May, 2014 |
| Location: | Kuzhitalai, Tamil Nadu |

Brief summary:

M Suchitra, the Down To Earth correspondent in-charge of southern India, and news persons from a Malayalam new channel were attacked and manhandled by members of a mining mafia. They were shooting pictures of river Cauvery where indiscriminate mining of sand is taking place. Suchitra was with V M Deepa, senior news editor of the Malayalam news channel, Asianet, and the channel's camera persons, V B Hiran and P Praveen. To escape, the team took refuge for almost an hour in Mayanur police station near Karur, the district headquarters 40 km from Kulithalai. Later, they were escorted by two police personnel to the hotel. Suchithra said they contacted top Kerala police, who made calls to their counterparts in Tamil Nadu.

Alleged Perpetrators: Sand Mining mafia

Case Status update: The journalists decided not to file formal complaints because they had to complete the story, which was more important for them. So, as a strategy, they abstained from filing any complaint. Karur district police superintendent, Nirmal Kumar Joshi, asked the journalists to leave the state immediately, citing safety grounds. He said the journalists should have

taken proper permission from the district authorities before taking visuals of the river. The Karur Town Circle Inspector, Cedric Immanuel, told the team that all the police officials were busy with local Mariyamman festival and would not be able to ensure the safety of the journalists.

The attack was followed by three separate attacks on journalists S Chandran, M Suchitra, VM Deepa and Prashant Albert by sand contractors in the same area.

These occurred on the following dates:

- 03 May, 2015 (S Chandran): Chandran lodged a police complaint with great difficulty.
- 22 May, 2015 (M Suchitra)
- and 17 August, 2015 (VM Deepa and Prashant Albert)

Link:

[M Suchitra assaulted by sand mafia in Tamil Nadu](#)

3. Dhananjoy Nath

Name: Dhananjoy Nath

Date of attack: 16 May, 2014

Location: Kokrajhar, Assam

Brief summary:

Journalist Dhananjoy Nath, staff reporter of Dainik Janasadaran and Secretary of Kokrajhar Press Club, was attacked at around 7.15 pm. when he was on his way home from Kokrajhar Tiniali to Bhutiyapar. Nath said that two motorcycle-borne persons tried to kidnap him after brandishing a pistol. When he confronted one of them, he was attacked with a heavy lathi. Nath sustained injuries on his head and was rushed to MRM Hospital Kokrajhar.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status update:

The Kokrajhar Police launched a search operation to nab the attacker. No progress has been made in this regard.

Link:

[Journalist attacked in Assam violence](#)

4. Devinder Pal

Name: Devinder Pal
Date: 30 April, 2014
Location: Chandigarh

Brief Summary:

Unidentified assailants threw a petrol bomb at the residence of The Tribune's reporter, Devinder Pal, late at night. The Tribune was running a series of investigations by Devinder Pal about the business interests of the extended Badal family. Prakash Singh Badal, then Chief Minister of Punjab, was the leader of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), which had formed an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party to form the government in Punjab.

The incident took place shortly after Devinder had gone to bed. Devinder said he was woken up by the sound of broken glass. He found glass pieces strewn on the floor and a burning piece of cloth that was apparently attached to the glass container. He said he prevented the fire from spreading by pouring water on the burning cloth.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified assailants.

Case status: Devinder said a PCR vehicle reached his house after he called up the control room. Two Home Guard jawans were deployed at the main gate of the house. Devinder said his repeated calls to station house officer Anokh Singh at Sector 26 police station proved futile. The Chandigarh police acted after The Tribune team visited the police station and enquired about the delay in police response. Assistant Sub Inspector Gojinder Singh said he received the information from the control room at 11.45 pm. "I was busy in night patrolling. I will be going to the spot," he said.

Devinder has lodged a police complaint by night-time at the Circuit 26 police station alleging that some unidentified assailants tried to torch his house. But no investigations followed much less was there any attempt to inquire into the incident. His newspaper did provide him with some private security but he did not avail of it after a few days. While he said that he decided not to allow the attack to affect him, he admitted that his family was traumatised after the incident and his parents even tried to dissuade him from doing any more stories.

The petrol bomb attack came at the end of the series of reports he had filed so the question of stopping the series did not arise, he said. However, he continued to write other reports, even against the government of Capt

Amarinder Singh of the Congress. In June 2019, after writing once such report, he was indirectly threatened and given 'advice' to the effect that "he could lose your job if you write like this against the govt.

However, Devinder, who became a journalist in 1996 and has faced at least six defamation cases due to his work, says, "I don't bother, I'm an optimistic person. If I lose my job, I'll do farming, anything, but I will survive."

Link:

[Petrol bomb hurled at The Tribune staffer's house](#)

5. Paojel Chaoba

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Name: | Paojel Chaoba |
| Date of attack: | 17 February, 2014 |
| Location: | Imphal, Manipur |

Brief summary:

Senior correspondent, Paojel Chaoba alias Aribam Dhananjay of Imphal Free Press, was assaulted by personnel of the India Reserve Battalion (IRB) on February 10 around 11.30 pm. On Feb 17, unidentified persons fired two rounds of bullets in front of his gate around 7.50 pm. Chaoba was working in the IFP office at the time when the gunshots were fired. Chaoba said that, on the day of the assault, the IRB personnel had threatened to kill him if the matter was reported.

Alleged Perpetrators: IRB personnel

Case Status update: FIR filed against Havildar Majibur Rahman of IRB but the sections were bailable. The All Manipur Working Journalists Union President Shyamjai Wangkhemcha complained to Imphal Police Station and said the concerned authorities assured him that the accused has been suspended. But There is no copy of the order of suspension.

Chaoba said nothing happened to the case and it was all but forgotten.

Link:

[Gunshots fired in front of IFP scribe's gate](#)

6. Mangneo Touthang

Name: Mangneo Touthang
Date of attack: 20 November, 2015
Location: Imphal, Manipur

Brief summary:

The Assistant Editor of Khohui News Magazine was allegedly "kidnapped by unidentified persons after collecting information on human right issues related to child soldiers in Manipur. The unidentified persons came in a Bolero vehicle from Leirak Macha, Elangbam Leikai, Keisamthong, Imphal West and may be part of a state force from Keishamthong Elangbam leikai

Alleged Perpetrators: Unclear if security forces were involved.

Case Status update: Attempts were made to file complaints but In the OC of Imphal West refused to accept the complaint letter stating that the person was in the custody of Commando Barrack in Minuthong. Since it is a "covert operation" there is no need to file a complaint letter. Further details awaited.

Links:

<http://e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=19..181115.nov15>

<https://www.imphaltimes.com/news/item/4231-reachout-demands-immediate-release-of-mangneo-touthang>

7. Deepak Gupta

Name: Deepak Gupta
Date of attack: 21 October, 2015.
Location: Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh

Brief summary:

Deepak Gupta was shot at by unidentified assailants in Uttar Pradesh's Kannauj district. He was critically wounded in the incident. Gupta was on his way to pick up his wife from the primary school at Malkanthour where she works as a teacher. While driving back home on his scooter, he was ambushed by motorbike-borne persons between Hasanpur and Chidharua, police said. The attackers shot at him from a point-blank range. His wife raised an alarm following which Gupta was rushed to a hospital, while the assailants sped away. Police said it may have been a robbery attempt but Gupta

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified assailants.

Case Status update: Further details awaited

Link:

[Journalist shot at in Uttar Pradesh](#)

8. Amit Paban Bora

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Name: | Amit Paban Bora |
| Date of attack: | 26 September, 2015 |
| Location: | Dhemaji, Assam |

Brief summary:

Journalist Amrit Paban Bora was attacked by two unidentified persons with an iron bar when he was returning home. Bora was admitted to Dhakuakhana Civil Hospital.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status update: An FIR was lodged with Dhakuakhana Police Station in this connection.

Link:

<http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/mdetails.asp?id=oct0115/state056>

9. Ashok Pandey

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Name: | Ashok Pandey |
| Date of attack: | 4 August, 2015 |
| Location: | Dehradun, Uttarakhand |

Brief summary:

A section of journalist Ashok Pandey's house was allegedly demolished by the government. Pandey claimed that officials of the Mussoorie-Dehradun Development Authority "demolished his residence without issuing him prior notice". Pandey, had allegedly "exposed" the involvement of Uttarakhand CM Harish Rawat's personal secretary Mohammad Shahid, a senior Gujarat cadre IAS officer, in an alleged liquor scam. The sting showed him negotiation bribes in exchange for bringing changes the state's policy on the sale of alcohol.

Alleged Perpetrators: Uttarakhand state government

Case Status update: Days after the controversy, there was a letter from the Department of Personnel and Training asked Mohammad Shahid to immediately report back to his parent cadre. The senior bureaucrat has been on leave ever since. After the demolition of a section of Pandey's house, he wrote to the NHRC and said that he was being persecuted by the state government.

However, the NHRC dismissed the complaint and held that "On perusal of the complaint, it is seen that the allegation is about false implication in a criminal case. That is a matter, to be gone into by the Court of the competent jurisdiction, the complainant, if so desired may plead his innocence before the Court. Hence, no intervention by the Commission in the matter is called for. The complaint is filed and the case is closed."

Links:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/report-on-rawat-aide-journalist-files-petition-in-nhrc/>

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/Uttarakhand-govt-demolishes-house-of-scribe-who-aired-sting-on-Rawats-PS/articleshow/48349618.cms>

10. Haider Khan

Name: Haider Khan
Date: 14 June, 2015
Location: Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh

Brief Summary:

A journalist was allegedly attacked by a group of people here with four persons having been booked over the incident, police said. According to Pilibhit SP JK Shahi, the journalist, Haider, has complained that he was attacked yesterday by one Anand and his associates. Haider, a journalist in the electronic media, has claimed that he was attacked as he had reported stories which had not gone down well with the accused. He said he had received a call asking him to come to an appointed spot in order to obtain information on a story but, when he got there, was attacked by the accused.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified

Case Status: Pilibhit SP JK Shahi said that the journalist has been sent for a medical examination and, “as per the medical report, if there are any more sections of IPC applicable in this case, those will be added and prompt action will be taken to bring the accused to justice”.

Link:

<https://www.deccanherald.com/content/483602/journalist-attacked-pilibhit-4-booked.html>

11. S Chandran, M Suchitra, VM Deepa and Prashant Albert

Name: S Chandran, M Suchitra, VM Deepa and Prashant Albert
Date: 03 May, 2015; 22 May, 2015; and 17 August, 2015
Location: Kuzhitalai, Karur district Tamil Nadu

Brief Summary:

Senior news editor V M Deepa and camera person Prashant Albert, both of prominent Malayalam television channel Asianet News, were attacked by henchmen of sand contractors at Kuzhitalai in Karur district of Tamil Nadu on Tuesday. The goons beat up Prashant and threatened to kill him and his driver.

In the past one month, this is the third time that musclemen of sand contractors have assaulted and intimidated mediapersons at Kuzhitalai where large-scale mining in the Cauvery is going on. On May 3, S Chandran, stringer with Tamil television channel Puthiya Thalaimurai, was attacked by them. [On May 22, this correspondent and the team of Asianet television channel were attacked.](#)

On June 3 evening, Deepa and Prashant were returning from Tiruchirappalli after a shoot for their TV programme, ‘Nalla Mannu’ (Good Earth), an environment and agriculture-based weekly programme. They were on their way to Karur town, about 80 km from Tiruchirappalli, by road. Kuzhitalai is located midway between the two towns.

“When our taxi reached Kuzhitalai, we saw five to six goons on bike waiting for us. Someone may have informed them that we were reaching. Without stopping the vehicle, we proceeded towards Karur. But they followed us,” says Deepa. “The driver started driving fast so they got left behind and after a while disappeared from sight. We thought we were safe. But after a few kilometres, a man riding a bike told our driver that one of the tyres of our car was punctured. When he slowed down, another biker came and stopped his vehicle in front of the car and across the road, forcing us to stop. He started

accusing us of hitting his vehicle and trying to speed away. It was a ploy to stop us," says Deepa.

The argument peaked and Prashant and the driver got out of the car to talk to the man. By that time, the goons who were following the vehicle also reached there. "They surrounded the vehicle and started searching for our camera. They insisted that we had captured pictures of sand mining. When they failed to find the camera, they started beating me," says Prashant. The goons took out a dagger and threatened the driver, who is a local man from Tiruchirappalli. "When I tried to stop them, they threatened me with the dagger before leaving," he says.

The three have not registered a case with the police. "Last time when mediapersons were attacked, police asked them to leave the state. They were reluctant to register a case. Besides, our driver was so frightened that he just wanted to drop us somewhere and leave as soon as possible," says Deepa.

Alleged Perpetrators: sand contractors

Case Status: Chandran lodged a police complaint with great difficulty. But no action was taken thereafter.

Link:

<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/sand-mafia-attacks-journalists-again-44639>

12. M Suchitra

Name: M Suchitra
Date: 22 May, 2015 and 17 August, 2015
Location: Kuzhitalai, Karur district Tamil Nadu

Alleged Perpetrators: Sand contractors

Case Status: See Sr. No. 2 for details

13. VM Deepa and Prashant Albert

Name: VM Deepa and Prashant Albert
Date: 17 August.2015
Location: Kuzhitalai, Karur district Tamil Nadu

Alleged Perpetrators: Sand contractors

Case Status: See Sr. No. 2 for details

14. Mukut Roy

Name: Mukut Roy
Date: 22 May, 2015
Location: Guwahati, Assam

Brief Summary:

Guwahati based reporter Mr Mukut Roy went to cover an incident where the city police conducted a raid in a godown located in Gorchuk area of the city on May 22, 2015. The raid against the godown was following a tip-off that a massive racket was supplying expired consumer products after repackaging those to retailers. The repackaging was suspected to be done in that godown. Mukut Roy went for reporting, but he was little late and alone at that moment. He talked to the owner of the godown (Mr Indra Mohan Kalita and his wife) about the issue. After some debates, both Kalita and his wife assaulted the scribe and even broke his cell phone. Shockingly, there were some police personnel nearby but they did not respond to the situation. Mr Kalita is understood to be the project director of DRDA in Karbi Anglong of Assam.

Alleged Perpetrators: Owners of a godown

Case Status: The journalist later filed a case (229/15) at Gorchuk police station against the couple

Links: [Agradoot reporter assaulted](#)

15. Woman journalist (name withheld)

Name: Woman journalist (name withheld)
Date: 31 January, 2015
Location: Guwahati, Assam

Brief Summary:

According to the FIR filed by the concerned woman journalist, she and the camera person of her DY365 TV news channel had gone to Latasil Police Station. at about 12.15 pm to cover a story. With permission of the policeman at the gate they entered the police station compound and took "photographs

of the dilapidated condition of the premises and quarter rented out by policemen to others", the FIR stated.

"When we were about to leave the police station campus Sub Inspector Samsuddin Ahmed, and O/C of the concerned police station along with other police persons and tenants assaulted us and used criminal force against me intending to disrobe me", she alleged in the FIR."Thereafter they dragged me and my camera person inside the police station and have mercilessly beaten us and have pointed official arms at us, thereby attempting to murder us and threaten us not to publish the story and have in the process broken our equipment and (we) sustained injuries," she stated.

Alleged Perpetrators: Police officers, Latacil police station - Inspector Chidananda Bora (OC of Latacil PS) and Sub-Inspector Samsuddin Ahmed

Case Status: DY365 Executive Editor Pranay Bordoloi told reporters in the police station that the management of the TV channel would take up the matter with the state government DCP-Crime Swapnanil Deka told reporters in the police station that the incident was being inquired and action would be taken against the culprits if found guilty. The officer in charge of the police station was transferred or 'closed to reserve' (removed from duty). But no further action ensued.

Links:

<https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-journalists-protest-police-assault-of-woman-reporter-2057105>

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/two-cops-closed-for-alleged-assault-on-woman-scribe-in-guwahati/>

16. Manju Kuttikrishnan

Name: Manju Kuttikrishnan
Date: 08 November, 2016
Location: Ernakulam, Kerala

Brief Summary:

Manju Kuttikrishnan, a reporter with Malayalam daily Deshabhimani, filed a complaint against a few lawyers on charges of abusing and harassing a woman journalist. The case pertained to a section of lawyers on Wednesday forcing journalists to leave the Ernakulam District Principal and Sessions court room where they had come to cover the murder case trial of a Dalit woman at Perumbavoor.

Alleged Perpetrators: Group of lawyers

Case Status: The Ernakulam Central police on Thursday registered cases against Advocate Navas and a group of others under IPC Section 354 (A), 294 (B) and 506 (1). The case followed a formal complaint filed by the journalist. However, no FIR was registered and the case was not pursued.

While the process of lodging the complaint was underway, the journalist was told of some talks with the lawyers to effect a compromise. The police asked her whether she wanted to pursue the complaint, in which case they would file an FIR. She was even given time to think and respond! Deshabhimani, where the reporter worked, is also the organ of CPI-M and there were interventions from the lawyer's union which was affiliated to the same party. They lawyers expressed apologies and the reporter was therefore not keen to pursue the case.

Link:

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-kerala/attack-on-scribe-police-file-case-against-lawyers/article9303215.ece>

17. Journalist R Chandran's son Ratheeshmon

Name: Journalist R Chandran's son Ratheeshmon
Date: 25 October, 2016
Location: Madurai, TN

Brief Summary:

Three people were arrested for attacking an 18-year-old student in the city on Sunday. In his complaint, the boy said that the trio came home with an intention to attack his father, a journalist with a private Tamil news channel Polimer News for informing Commissioner's office and Intelligence Bureau about ganja being sold in residential areas. The police leaked details of his complaint to the ganja dealers. The incident took place on Sunday afternoon at Thiruvalluvar Street in Mullai Nagar-Mahatma Gandhi Nagar in Madurai. Police said the journalist, identified as Chandran was taking rest at his house, when the gang barged inside with the intention of attacking him. Son and wife were sitting outside when the gang attacked him.

Alleged Perpetrators: Illegal ganja dealers and police nexus

Case Status: Case was filed against three persons, they were arrested and released on bail within 3 days. Trial is ongoing.

Link:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/madurai/Three-held-for-attacking-son-of-TV-journalist/articleshow/55040484.cms>

18. Manoj Datta and others

Name: Manoj Datta and others

Date: 15 September, 2016

Location: Tinsukia, Assam

Brief Summary:

Media persons have been attacked by the coal mafia operating in the region.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/coal-mafia-assam-journalist-attack-tinsukia/1/764228.html>

19. Rohini Swamy

Name: Rohini Swamy

Date: 13 September, 2016

Location: Bengaluru, Karnataka

Brief Summary:

India Today Deputy Editor Rohini Swamy and her cameraperson, Madhu Y were caught in the thick of violence during the Cauvery riots in Bangalore. Rohini's experience was quite traumatic. She was rushed to hospital after being attacked by goons during angry protests in Bengaluru over the Cauvery water-sharing dispute. She was pawed, groped and hit by several men. Her cameraperson, Madhu Y, was also attacked, his camera chip taken out and smashed. Other journalists were also attacked. According to Madhu, a group of drunk men roughed up the duo of Rohini and Madhu as they covered the acts of arson and vandalism on the streets on Mysore Road.

Rohini did not file an FIR. The police required her to go through an identification parade which she was apprehensive of since she feared possible reprisals. The police followed up with her and the Additional Commissioner was also helpful. But it took her a week and a half to recover from the assault

and follow up with the police. She had forgotten the faces of the assailants by then and was also apprehensive of a backlash after the identification parade.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No action taken since no FIR was filed.

Link:

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/cauvery-water-dispute-india-today-journalist-cameraman-goon-attack/1/762634.html>

20. Farooq Shah and Muntazeer Yaseen

Name: Farooq Shah and Muntazeer Yaseen
Date: 1 September, 2016
Location: Pulwama, J&K

Brief Summary:

Farooq Shah, managing editor of the daily Kashmir Observer, and Muntazeer Yaseen, a copy editor and designer, gave in their paper, the journalists said they were driving to work separately on August 29 when protesters threw stones at their vehicles. Shah told the paper that when protesters in Srinagar saw the press decal in his car's windscreen, they began throwing stones which shattered the windows and hit his arm. Yaseen, whose car was also marked "Press," said he suffered minor injuries from broken glass after protesters used stones to smash the windscreen when he was driving in Pulwama.

Alleged Perpetrators: mob

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<https://cpj.org/2016/08/journalists-attacked-by-protesters-as-curfew-lifts.php>

21. Muneeb Ul Islam

Name: Muneeb Ul Islam
Date: 10 August, 2016
Location: Srinagar, J&K

Brief Summary:

A photojournalist who works with Kashmir Reader and daily Roshni was allegedly beaten up by the government forces at Semthan Bijerbehara in

Anantnag district of South Kashmir on Monday while he was covering protests. The journalist, Muneeb Ul Islam, said the CRPF men also used him as a shield and put before the youth, who were throwing stones on the forces. "First the CRPF troopers thrashed me and then put me ahead of them so that I get hit by stones. Two stones hit me" Muneeb said.

Alleged Perpetrators: CRPF and Mob

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<http://asu.thehoot.org/freespeech/CategoryDetailsRecord/2129/15/2016/8>

22. Navneet Kumar

Name: Navneet Kumar

Date: 4 August, 2016

Location: Patna, Bihar

Brief Summary:

A journalist of a Hindi daily was beaten up in Bihar's Vaishali district. According to reports, Navneet Kumar, a journalist with Hindi daily 'Hindustan', was beaten up as his attackers were protesting an item written by him about beating up of a bus operator on Monday for hiking fare.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/BJP-allies-protest-attack-on-journalist-in-Bihar/2016/08/03/article3561467.ece>

23. Siddharth Kamble

Name: Siddharth Kamble

Date: 7 June, 2016

Location: Bhiwandi, Maharashtra

Brief Summary:

The journalist Siddharth Kamble working for online news portal was at home with his family when five accused Nur Nisha, Khalil Shaikh, Jakir, Ashfak and one unidentified person came along with bamboo and tubelight came to

his home with intention to attack family members but as door was locked they damaged the window and CCTV camera installed at the door. They threatened to kill him and his family members for writing against their alleged illegal construction. The incident took place on Sunday 10.30 pm in Dream complex building situated in Kongaon area in Bhiwandi.

Alleged Perpetrators: five accused Nur Nisha, Khalil Shaikh, Jakir, Ashfak and one unidentified person

Case Status: The Kongaon police in Bhiwandi have arrested five persons.

Link:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Five-held-for-attacking-journalist-house-and-threatening-him/articleshow/52624680.cms>

24. Rashmi Mann

Name: Rashmi Mann
Date: 30 May, 2016
Location: New Delhi, NCR

Brief Summary:

A television journalist and fellow crew members on Friday were allegedly chased and attacked with bricks by a group of men when they went to report the alleged assault of a 17-year-old boy in South-West Delhi's Inderpuri. The attack allegedly happened outside the house of Sunny Rana, one of the accused. Although the bricks, hurled twice at Rashmi Mann from NDTV 24*7, did not hit her, she was forced to seek refuge in first a garden and then a house to save herself, said the police. Eyewitnesses said that when she was setting up the feed to be sent to the newsroom and had just parked her Outside Broadcast van next to the residence of Rana, a group of men started throwing bricks and stones at her. She, cameraman Kamalkant and another employee of the channel rushed in different directions to save themselves but the crowd went after Ms. Mann.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/tv-journalist-attacked/article8657913.ece>

25. Abhishek Agnihotri

Name: Abhishek Agnihotri
Date: April 16, 2016
Location: Bharwa Sumerpur town, district Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh

Brief summary:

Abhishek Agnihotri, district reporter for national Hindi TV news channel 'Sudarshan', had been working on exposing the rampant illegal sand (mauram) mining in Ken riverbeds in the region and regular practice of extortion of cash money "Hafta" (bribes) from the overloaded trucks carrying mauram at Bharwa Sumerpur town by the Hamirpur district police of Uttar Pradesh. On the night of the incident, six persons came on motorbikes and accosted him when he was returning home from a private function assaulted. He was beaten with hockey sticks and attacked with a hard object. He was also robbed of his valuables and money. A bleeding Abhishek Agnihotri ran towards a police post nearby and was chased by the attackers. The police did not intervene. Abhishek Agnihotri suffered injuries in his head, shoulder, chest and back. He went to a primary health centre, was treated for his injuries and discharged.

He called Mr. Ramashray Yadav, SHO of Bharwa Sumerpur police station and also spoke to Mr. Muniraj, SP of Hamirpur district informing about the incident. Mr. Ramashray Yadav, SHO of Bharwa Sumerpur police station refused to file his complaint in the night. Next day when local journalists and other people put pressure on the police, they agreed to file the complaint on April 17, 2016 at around 2 PM. Case has been filed under section 395 of IPC for charges related to looting. According to sources, charges were deliberately diluted with the clear intention of protecting the perpetrators. Police arrested only 2 among the 6 accused and 4 others are still not arrested.

Agnihotri has been consistently writing about illegal activities in his area. On January 23, 2016, he was on a reporting assignment in the city to cover a story on illegal gutka factory. After completing his work, he received several threat calls. He went to the Bharwa Sumerpur police station to file his complaint about the threats issued to him, the police officials refused to file his complaint. He approached the police on February 18, 2016, but they again refused to file his complaint. On March 10, 2016, he contacted, Mr. Jay Prakesh Yadav, SHO of Bharwa Sumerpur police station who asked him not to pursue the case. Again, his complaint was not filed.

On March 28 and 30, he went with his camera to cover the movement of

trucks laden with illegally mining sand at a city police post which is one of the points where police men normally extort money from the drivers. The illegal sand is brought from the Ken river beds at Bhulsi Basha village. The police constable Ashok Kumar forcibly took his tape which had all his recordings and threatened him. Dinesh Patel, assistant to the SHO also threatened him and told him that he has to stay in the city safely. Soon after that, he was attacked on the night of April 16, 2016. Even after the attack, he continued to get threatening calls and feared that a false case might be registered against him.

Accused/Alleged perpetrators: Sant Dayal (aged 32), Rajesh Verma (aged 27), four unidentified persons for the assault, Dinesh Patel, Assistant of SHO, Bharwa Sumerpur police station, district Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh for threatening him and constable Mr. Ashok Kumar, Bharwa Sumerpur police station, district Hamirpur for forcibly taking the recorded video tape and threatening the journalist

Case status: Two accused arrested.

Link:

<http://hrdaindia.org/hrd-alert-india-urgent-appeal-for-action-uttar-pradesh-physical-assault-in-an-attempt-to-kill-a-journalist-and-human-rights-defender-mr-abhishek-agnihotri-reporter-of-sudersh/>

26. Prashant Dubey, Azad Sirviya

Name: Prashant Dubey, Azad Sirviya
Date: 18 April, 2016
Location: Hoshangabad, Madhya Pradesh

Brief Summary:

A reporter and camera person of a regional television channel were attacked by the goons of sand contractors in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh on Saturday night. They thrashed reporter Prashant Dubey and his cameraman Azad Sirviya before breaking their camera. They were rescued by the police. The two journalists were reportedly were trying to capture footage of unabated mining near Neemsadia village around 8.30 pm when mining mafias abducted them on knifepoint.

It is alleged that mining officers are hand in gloves with mining contractors.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhopal/Journalists-attacked-by-sand-mining-mafias-in-Madhya-Pradesh/articleshow/51868955.cms>

27. Rajesh Tiwari

Name: Rajesh Tiwari
Date: 18 April, 2016
Location: Nagpur, Maharashtra

Brief Summary:

Few unidentified elements stormed Renuka Vihar apartment in Ajni in the dark of night on Saturday and ransacked the vehicle of journalist Rajesh Tiwari, bureau chief of a news channel India News. Commenting on the attack on his social media page, Tiwari said that few so called idealistic groups could not digest his views against anti-national and naxal sympathiser Kanhaiya Kumar.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Tiwari said an FIR was lodged at Ajni Police station, Nagpur under a non-cognizable offence. But the perpetrators are yet to be identified by the police. No action taken.

Link:

<http://www.nagpurtoday.in/vehicle-of-india-news-bureau-chief-attacked-at-his-residence-in-nagpur/04172009>

28. Charanjit Singh Teja

Name: Charanjit Singh Teja
Date: 26 March, 2016
Location: Jalandhar, Punjab

Brief Summary:

The staff on a bus belonging to Dabwali Transport Company, owned by the Badals, allegedly attacked the driver and conductor of another bus at the PAP Chowk in Jalandhar. The incident occurred at about 8.15 pm on March 26. The staff correspondent of the English daily, The Tribune, who was witness to the attack, began recording it on his camera. The attackers turned towards him and he identified himself as a journalist but that did not stop them from attacking him. He tried to save himself by running towards the depot office.

He had to be rescued by police but even then, it was only after the intervention of his colleagues and his newspaper that some action was taken.

It was the second such assault in the past three weeks. Earlier, the staff on an Orbit Bus, another firm owned by the Badals, had allegedly assaulted a physically-challenged journalist with a vernacular paper, in Ropar on 01 March.

Alleged Perpetrators: Supporters and bus staff of transport company belonging to then state Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal.

Case Status: FIR lodged u/s 323/324 (Voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means/Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt). However, no further action was taken. The attacks abated with the change of government and the journalist chose to keep the matter in abeyance. He felt that, if the complaint remained 'live', it would act as a pressure on the perpetrators.

Link:

<http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/badal-bus-staff-attack-reporter-with-english-daily/>

29. Malini Subramaniam

Name: Malini Subramaniam
Date: 22 February, 2016
Location: Bastar, Chhattisgarh

Brief Summary:

A journalist working out of insurgency-hit Bastar region in Chhattishgarh has been forced to pack up following alleged intimidation by Bastar police and a self-styled anti-Maoist group. Malini Subramaniam, who writes for news portal scroll.in, was "forced" to leave Jagdalpur, the commercial hub of Bastar region after her house was attacked for being critical of the police in her writing. Scroll.in had reported that a group of around 20 persons had come to her residence on Sunday evening and shouted slogans such as 'Naxali Samarthak Bastar Chodo. Malini Subramaniam Murdabad' (Naxal supporter, leave Bastar. Death to Malini Subramaniam). "Hours later, in the early hours of Monday morning, stones were hurled at her home, shattering the rear glass of her car." Later in the morning, the Chhattisgarh police on Monday refused to file a First Information Report in the incident.

Alleged Perpetrators: Members of self-styled anti-Maoist group, suspects named in complaint.

Case Status: A case (FIR 44/2016) u/s 451, 427 was registered in PS Kotwali Jagdalpur by the said journalist against unknown persons.

The police took 48 hours to file the FIR on the written complaint and statement given to the police. Although in the complaint names of the suspects were mentioned, the FIR was registered against unknown persons. A crowd of 30 odd persons had come hours before the attack in her house, shouted slogans to attack her and have her out of Bastar.

In a report filed by the Addl General of Police the matter was sent for closure as the police was unable to 'know the whereabouts of the accused.

The DPR GoCG informed the PCI that the matter 'is not found suitable to be considered by the High Level Coordination Committee' constituted by the GoCG as 'no criminal case has been filed against the journalist'.

Current Status: The journalist was only recently called and informed that they wanted to record her statement as the matter has come up for closure! The Journalist hopes to pursue the matter despite the considerable personal and professional difficulty that it would entail.

Link:

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/anti-maoist-group-bastar-police-compel-journalist-to-leave-jagdalpur/story-EI0sLGMc7FcIyOg7JmeFiP.html>

30. Kishan Barai

Name: Kishan Barai
Date: 2 February, 2016
Location: Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Brief Summary:

A News 7 television journalist was heckled and threatened by the secretary of the Unit I Market Association, Gayadhar Swain, and his men at Unit I in the city Tuesday for asking an uncomfortable question at a press conference. At least 200 people had attended the press conference. Only 15-20 journalists attended. Gayadhar Swain was close to Minister Ashok Chandra Panda (Ruling BJD Party). His wife Mahamaya Swain is a local corporator. Swain had convened the press conference to speak about allegations of rampant corruption in the allotment of vending spaces at Unit I market. When Swain termed the alleged corruption as rumors and said a BMC inquiry will clear the air, Barai asked him how a BMC inquiry can be trusted since his (Swain's)

wife is a corporator. This question prompted the assault on Barai by Swain and his men present there.

According to the complainant lodged by Kishan Barai, he was surrounded by Swain and a few men owing allegiance to him. Swain and his men, alleged Barai, held him by his shirt collars and threatened him with dire consequences.

The incident sparked off protests from the media fraternity. The Editor of the newspaper Ardhendhu Das, sat down on the road and blocked the road. He was arrested. But because of his stance, the police had to act. Strong action was taken by the News 7 owner: Manoj Ranjan Naiy; Samay newspaper

Police rushed to the spot after receiving a PCR call at 12.10 pm about the two persons and security agencies were also alerted as budget was being presented in Parliament not far from the site. Vehicular movement at AG Square remained crippled for two hours as agitating media persons parked their motorcycles, cars and OB vans in the middle of the roads. The blockade was lifted when ACP Asim Panda informed the journalists that Swain and three of his associates were arrested.

Alleged Perpetrators: Market Association secretary Gayadhar Swain and his men

Case Status: Swain faced charges under Sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 354 (assault), 294 (obscene act), 34 (common intention) and 323 (causing hurt) of IPC. Only charges are 506, not the more serious 307 of the IPC. However, lighter sections of IPC were clamped against them. The higher charges against them was 506. This helped them to get bail from the police station itself. The Case is still pending in SDJM Bhubaneswar. An FIR was registered against the culprits after 10 hours. As Gayadhar Swain is a ruling BJD party worker there was lot of pressure on police not to register the case. The IIC of Capital Police Station Manas Gadnaik who was looking after the case admitted this unofficially.

No chargesheet has been filed.

Link:

<https://www.orissapost.com/market-panel-secy-heckles-scribe-held/>

31. Manoj Sahoo

Name: Manoj Sahoo

Date: 25 January, 2016

Location: Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Brief Summary:

A working journalist of an Odia news channel was brutally attacked by a group of five youths at Lumbini Vihar under the Chandrasekharapur area on Friday. According to police, the group led by one Rati Mohanty waylaid and attacked Manoj Sahoo, a reporter, while he was on his way to work. Sahoo was beaten at least for 15 minutes.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://prameyanews7.com/en/jan2016/odisha/12407/Journalist-attacked-in-Odisha-capital-city-Journalist-attackedOdisha-Odisha.htm>

32. Revati Laul

Name: Revati Laul

Date: 22 January, 2016

Location: Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Brief Summary: Journalist Revati Laul was attacked by a 2002 riots convict when she went to interview him for her research on a book she was writing. "I visited him at his house and I politely asked him if he wanted to share information about himself, his past and family. Without provocation, he started slapping me," she had added.

Laul, who is writing a book on the convicts in the 2002 Naroda Patiya massacre case, said she was attacked by Suresh Chhara when she visited his house in Naroda area of Ahmedabad late Wednesday evening.

Alleged Perpetrators: Suresh Chhara, 2002 riots convict, out on parole

Case Status: The Gujarat Police on Thursday arrested Suresh Chhara, after a complaint was lodged. His parole was cancelled and he was sent back to jail. However, barely six months later, he was granted a ten-day furlough and it

took a major protest, as well as letters to the Ahmedabad Police Commissioner to cancel the furlough. The cancellation order came on the 9th day of the furlough, a day before he was due to go back to jail. Chhara was required to present himself before the police station daily, which he did not do. In any case, the local police were unaware of the grant of the furlough. According to regulation, they had to be informed of it by the jail authorities. There has been no inquiry into the actions of the jail authorities. There has also been no progress in the cases against him.

Link:

http://zeenews.india.com/news/gujarat/2002-riots-convict-suresh-chhara-arrested-for-attacking-journalist-revati-laul_1847475.html

33. N A Saha Ansari

Name: N A Saha Ansari
Date: 19 January, 2016
Location: Konark, Odisha

Brief Summary:

Noted Human Right activist and journalist N A Saha Ansari was attacked by miscreants engaged by the local liquor mafias on January 13, near Raulapatana when he is on his way to Konark from Bhubaneswar attending a professional work.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No action taken

Link:

<http://yugabda.com/city.aspx?id=642=Attack%20on%20Human%20Right%20Activist%20in%20Odisha%E2%80%99s%20Konark:%20journalists%20approach%20state%20human%20right%20commission>

34. Saroj Kumar Dixit

Name: Saroj Kumar Dixit
Date: 7 January, 2016
Location: Aul, (Kendrapara) Odisha

Brief Summary:

Saroj Kumar Dixit, a journalist working with *Samaj*, was attacked in Aul in Kendrapara district after he published some news on corruption in rural construction work. The alleged attackers were Bhisma Mohanty, husband of Rashmita Mohanty, the chairperson of the Aul block office and the head clerk of Aul block office respectively. The chairperson of Aul block is a BJD supporter and her husband allegedly acts in her name. The family had availed multiple ration cards showing false documents and the journalists did regular follow up stories on it.

Dixit was attacked thrice during the last 12 years. In February 2007 he was attacked at Rajkanika Block office in Kendrapara district. He was doing a series of stories on corruption in Rajkanika block This attack was conducted at the behest of Rajkanika block president of BJD. A case registered in Rajkanika Police Station but a compromise was arrived at with the help of local journalists.

The second attack, in March 2007 followed a report on the misappropriation of government funds. The Block Development Officer (BDO) of Rajkanika block Kanhu Charan Das, had misappropriated huge government fund and Local Fund Audit and then auditor general had raised objections to it in their audit report. When Saroj Dixit questioned the BDO on the point of misappropriation as raised by LFA and AG, the BDO attacked him in his office chamber.

The BDO had filed the FIR against Saroj in Rajkanika police station. Saroj Dixit obtained anticipatory bail from Odisha HC and then filed a counter FIR. The case is still pending, In the meantime the BDO passed away but the case is still pending in the JMFC (Judicial Magistrate First Class) court at Aul.

Alleged Perpetrators: Bhisma Mohanty, husband of Rashmita Mohanty, chairperson of the Aul block in Rajkanika.

Case Status: A complaint was lodged in the Aul Police station. However, the accused apologised and the journalist withdrew the complaint.

Link:

<http://yugabda.com/city.aspx?id=623=Journalist%20attacked%20for%20publishing%20news%20in%20Odisha%E2%80%99s%20Aul>

35. Nagarjuna Reddy

Name: Nagarjuna Reddy
Date: 11 February, 2017 and repeat attack on 24 September, 2019.
Location: Chirala, Andhra Pradesh

Brief Summary:

The journalist was beaten up by Amanchi Swamulu (alias Amanchi Srinivasa Rao), the brother of a sitting Telugu Desam Party (TDP) MLA, Amanchi Krishna Mohan, for an 'unfavourable' write-up in a busy market place in broad daylight on the streets of Chirala, Andhra Pradesh on Sunday. The write up of the journalist highlighted alleged corrupt activities that were undertaken by the MLA. The journalist was thrashed with sticks, other weapons and he cried for help even as passer-by watched helplessly.

The journalist was again beaten up on September 24, 2019. The journalist is currently recovering from a massive fracture on his right leg, an injury brought about by the similar set of people associated with the ex-MLA Amanchi Krishna Mohan. This time the reasons are no different: Nagarjuna had captured on his camera the illegal sand mining that involved the ex-MLA.

Alleged Perpetrators: Brother of ex-TDP MLA

Case Status: Nagarjuna filed an FIR (17/2017) in PS Vetapalem dt. 05.02.2017 u/s 147, 147, 148, 324, 307 with 149 against eight persons – Cherukuri Sai Prakash, Amanchi Srinivasa Rao, Amanchi Rajendra, Pinapureddy Srinivasa Reddy, Achimsetty Bhanu, Pinjala Siva, Satineni Rambabu, Kola Vasu, Karpurapu Srinu and others.

But there has not been a single arrest so far. Nagarjuna, when contacted, informed that the four accused got a station bail¹. A charge sheet was filed on 18 March against 11 persons, of these four have been identified as accused, the rest have been on record taken off as accused. However, the list of prosecution witnesses runs into a list of 53 persons. A long list of witnesses ensures the case drags its feet.

No trial has of course begun.

¹ The Code of Criminal Procedure 1973 confers wide powers upon Police of making arrest. In addition to the power of arrest, the Code bestows upon police powers parallel to the magistrate to release an arrested person on bail.

The charge sheet also dilutes the case where the police records that the complainant i.e. the journalist 'used to commit character assassination of the accused A1 to A4 by way of abusive postings on social media' as well as an essay with 'abusive comments' in a monthly magazine. In the charge sheet, the police retained sections 324, added 323 r/w 34 dropping all other sections such as 143, 147, 148, 307 with 149.

There has not been a single arrest so far. (<http://asu.thehoot.org/media-watch/regional-media/expose-gangster-politicians-at-your-peril-10241>) A detailed report on three journalists including Nagarjuna was published in The Hoot.

Further assault on the journalist: What has instead happened is that the journalist was once again assaulted on 15th October this year in much the similar manner. On this occasion too he had filed a complaint with the District Collector and the SP of Ongole district that he feared attacks from the ex-MLA and his henchmen as he had been threatened on several occasions.

Role of PCI: PCI had taken suo-motu cognisance of the case of assault against the journalist. The PCI submitted a closure report on 26th September 2018 convinced by the police' statement that Nagarjuna had several cases against him since 2001. Interestingly, the PCI was in receipt of a written statement from then SP that the journalist reports both in magazines, newspapers and social media, had irked the MLA as it 'caused huge loss to the sand transportation business'.

The statement also recorded that the assault did take place and that the sections were diluted by the Investigation Officer. The PCI sought personal appearance of the SP as well as the SDPO Chirala which were ignored. The PCI also issued notices to concerned officials that the journalist will not be subjected to any arrest until the matter of the attack was sorted.

The journalist had petitioned to the PCI that he fear arrest on some false case. This notice was completely ignored and an SC/ST atrocities case was slapped against the journalist and promptly arrested and sent to Chirala jail where he spent 23 days. In a personal appearance before the PCI, SDPO Chirala admitted that the 'arrest had taken place under a mistaken belief'. Subsequent to the final hearing on 26th June 2018 and taking into consideration the list of cases against the journalist submitted by the current SP Prakasam District, the PCI decides to 'drop the proceedings'. (Remarks: The earlier SP had been transferred and the PCI did not consider it important to recheck on the statement given by that SP).

Links:

2017: <http://www.financialexpress.com/india-news/andhra-goondaraj-tdp-mlas-brother-thrashed-journalist-for-write-up-legislator-justifies-beating/539491/>

2019: <https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/unidentified-men-attack-journalist-knives-sticks-andhras-ongole-109433>

36. Journalist R Chandran

Name: Journalist R Chandran

Date: 19 February, 2017

Location: Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Brief Summary:

Went out to buy milk, drank tea and was returning home. Two persons caught hold of him, one other person came from behind and threatened him for complaining to the police about ganja dealers. "We can be peaceful only if we kill you," said the attacker. One person had a knife, another had a sickle. They stabbed him 7-9 times. He spent a week in ICU.

Alleged Perpetrators: Illegal ganja dealers and police nexus

Case Status: Case was filed against three persons. Trial ongoing in Chief Magistrate Court in Madurai. None of the accused has appeared for trial. Accused are out on bail. The perpetrators have 15-20 other cases against them including attempt to murder. Chandran has moved out of the area altogether for fear of being attacked again.

37. Sudhir Suryawanshi, Santosh Fatate

Name: Sudhir Suryawanshi, Santosh Fatate

Date: 7 April, 2017

Location: Mumbai, Maharashtra

Brief Summary:

A journalist with a Mumbai-based English newspaper was attacked in the adjoining Navi Mumbai today. Sudhir Suryawanshi, who works with DNA, and his friend Santosh Fatate were attacked by 4 to 5 persons in Kharghar area, police said. "The assailants punctured the tyres of Fatate's Swift car in which both had come from Panvel. After the attack the assailants fled from the spot on motorcycles," said Hemant Nagrale, Navi Mumbai Police

Commissioner. Suryawanshi and Fatate were admitted to the Medicity hospital at Kharghar.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://www.india.com/news/agencies/journalist-attacked-in-navi-mumbai-1981313/>

38. Gomathi Sankar

Name: Gomathi Sankar

Date: 7 April, 2017

Location: Coimbatore, TN

Brief Summary:

Gomathi Sankar, journalist with Kumutham, a Tamil weekly, was assaulted and followed by Kerala police while attempting to visit Thekkuvattai in Palakkad district where Kerala is constructing a check dam across River Bhavani. Farmers in Tamil Nadu use the waters of the river too and there is a long-pending dispute over the sharing of the waters.

Recounting his harrowing experience, Sankar said that he was initially abused and then beaten by Kerala police. When he went to the dam site, two policemen in plainclothes stopped him. When he identified himself as a journalist, they snatched his mobile phone, camera, and the key of the motorcycle, abused and assaulted him. Sankar, who writes under the pen name Sakthi, managed to escape but he was chased and followed for at least six kms. until he reached Chavadi Pudur on the Tamil Nadu border.

Journalists from the Coimbatore Press Club took up the matter and around 50 journalists under the banner of Federation of All Press Unions and Clubs staged a demonstration in Coimbatore.

Alleged Perpetrators: Kerala police

Case Status: Sankar said no case was filed nor did he expect any action, since the matter was with police from another state.

Link:

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Coimbatore/journalist-alleges-assault/article17834720.ece>

39. Shivraj Singh

Name: Shivraj Singh
Date: 18 April, 2017
Location: 7Bhatinda, Haryana

Brief Summary:

A journalist working with *Ajit*, a vernacular newspaper was allegedly attacked by Charanjit Singh Dhillon, president of Truck Operators' Union, Gidderbaha, and his supporters at Gidderbaha in Muktsar district. Complainant Shivraj Singh Raju alleged that Dhillon along with others entered his office in the afternoon and attacked him. He alleged that the accused not only thrashed him mercilessly but made him drink liquor laced with urine. He added that the accused forced him to do sit-ups and rub nose on the floor at gunpoint. Raju, who was admitted to Bathinda civil hospital, claimed that Dhillon was angry over a news report of a marital dispute published in his paper.

Alleged Perpetrators: Gidderbaha truck union president Charanjit Singh Dhillon and supporters, including Anil Kumar and Harwinder Singh. A case was also lodged against Jaspreet Singh Bhalaiana, a "personal assistant" of Gidderbaha MLA and Indian Youth Congress leader Amrinder Singh 'Raja Warring'. Dhillon was said to be close to the MLA.

Case Status: Amidst a lot of protests from the local media, an FIR was lodged under the Arms Act and Sections 323, 342, 355, 427, 506, 148, 149 of the IPC and Sections 25 and 27 of the Arms Act. The accused were arrested and managed to secure bail after 18 days.

However, police delayed filing the chargesheet and when they finally did, they said there was no substance in the case and it could be closed. The Gidderbaha magistrate before whom the case was being heard issued summons to the journalist and asked him to be present in court. He was asked if he wished to pursue the case and when he replied in the affirmative, the judge posted the case for November 30, 2019. Raju will take the witness stand to record his statement.

Raju said that he received a lot of support from the local media and from the newspaper he worked in. However, for various reasons, he was forced to quit

his job and is now freelancing. “Nuksaan toh hua hai (I have suffered) because of this incident and this case)” he said. Raju did not wish to recount the actual incident. “Abhi bhi, yaad karta hun toh bahut taqleef hota hai (even now, when I remember the incident, I feel very distressed),” he said. But he is determined to pursue the case.

Link:

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/punjab/journalist-assaulted-harassed-by-truck-union-president-in-gidderbaha/story-60y8acwXolzp61iL2mqeqI.html>

40. E Babu

Name: E Babu
Date: April 26, 2017
Location: Vishakapatnam, Andhra Pradesh

Brief Summary:

E Babu, journalist working with Sakshi Media, was attacked with iron rods and wine bottles by six persons near Nathavaram area in Vishakapatnam for reporting the news on the illegal laterite mining. Locals at the spot managed to catch one person. The police said that he was a history-sheeter, Santosh.

Alleged perpetrators: Laterite mining gang

Case Status: One person arrested.

Link:

<https://english.sakshi.com/andhrapradesh/2017/04/26/sakshi-journalist-attacked-for-reporting-illegal-mining-in-vizag?pfrom=inside-sakshi-post>

41. Nallamilli Rama Reddy

Name: Nallamilli Rama Reddy
Date: 5 May, 2017
Location: Eluru, Andhra Pradesh

Brief Summary:

Reddy, a television channel reporter residing at Pittala Vemavaram village in Peravali mandal was attacked with iron rods by unidentified persons. They kept knocking at his door at night and when he opened the door, they demanded to know why he had filed two stories on illegal sand mining. They then began beating him with iron rods. When his mother came to his rescue,

she was also beaten. Reddy was taken to Tanuku Government Hospital for treatment.

Alleged perpetrators: Unidentified members of a sand mining gang

Case status: No progress so far.

Links:

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2017/may/05/tv-reporter-in-andhra-bludgeoned-for-exposing-illegal-sand-mining-1601297.html>

42. Priya Ranjan

Name: Priya Ranjan

Date: 5 August, 2017

Location: Jamshedpur, Jharkhand

Brief Summary:

A journalist of a Hindi daily was attacked by two persons in Seraikela-Kharsawan district while returning home from office in the early hours on Tuesday. Priya Ranjan, a journalist of Hindi daily Prabhat Khabar, was returning home at around 12.30 am on Tuesday on his motorcycle when two persons stopped him near main Adityapur-Kandra road and asked him for a lift but Ranjan refused. One of them then attacked Ranjan with a stone. A profusely bleeding Ranjan tried to escape but gathered courage when three of his acquainted persons came across and gave a chase to nab the accused persons. Ranjan said he along with others managed to nab one of the accused while the other escaped. Ranjan was rushed to a nearby Nursing Home, where he had four stitches on the head. Adityapur police station Officer-in-charge, Vijay Kumar Singh along with a force reached the spot and arrested the accused.

Alleged Perpetrators: Accused arrested

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/journalist-of-a-hindi-daily-attacked-by-two-persons-in-jharkhands-seraikela-kharsawan-district-3883885.html>

43. Ramesh Nath

Name: Ramesh Nath
Date: 16 August, 2017
Location: Khurda, Odisha

Brief Summary:

A journalist of a regional newspaper has been critically injured in an attack by unidentified miscreants late last night. According to reports, two bike-borne miscreants attacked the journalist, Ramesh Nath with sharp weapons on Monday night. Nath, a resident of Sishumatha under Balipatna police limits in the district, is currently undergoing treatment at the Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar. On being informed, police rushed to the spot and recorded Nath's statement.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://odishatv.in/breaking-news/miscreants-attack-journalist-in-khurda-231875/>

44. Rajesh Kumar

Name: Rajesh Kumar
Date: 23 August, 2017
Location: Maharajganj Bazar, Siwan district, Bihar

Brief Summary:

Unidentified criminals stabbed a journalist in Bihar on Sunday night, wounding him critically. This is the fourth attack on journalists in Bihar in the past 15 months. The incident took place in— the place that witnessed the brutal killing of another journalist last year. The victim, Rajesh Kumar, who worked for a local vernacular daily was returning home when unidentified outlaws stabbed him furiously. He was rushed to a local hospital that referred him to Patna for better treatment keeping in view his serious condition. His condition is still stated to be very critical. As per reports in the local media, the victim was working as a crime reporter and a few days ago, he had written a story over the molestation of a girl, which apparently angered the criminals. The police are investigating the case.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://gulfnews.com/news/asia/india/another-journalist-attacked-in-bihar-condition-critical-1.2077722>

45. Pankaj Mishra

Name: Pankaj Mishra

Date: 12 September, 2017

Location: Arwal, Bihar

Brief Summary:

A journalist was shot at in Bihar by two bike-borne unidentified assailants and remains in a critical condition. According to agencies, on Thursday, journalist Pankaj Mishra - working with Hindi newspaper Rashtriya Sahara was shot at by two bike-borne men in Arwal district of Bihar. He was also robbed off Rs 1 lakh. So far, one arrest has been made in the case. Speaking to the media, Pankaj said that one of the two men who attacked him was close to the JD(U) legislator Satyadeo Singh for Kurtha.

Alleged Perpetrators: Supporter of JD(U) legislator Satyadeo Singh for Kurtha.

Case Status: Further details awaited

Link:

<http://www.oneindia.com/india/two-journalists-attacked-for-doing-their-job-this-after-murder-of-gauri-lankesh-2539036.html>

46. Anjan De

Name: Anjan De

Date: 12 September, 2017

Location: Kolkata, West Bengal

Brief Summary:

West Bengal based Kolkata TV's Birbhum reporter Anjan De was thrashed for allegedly intervening a mob which was thrashing kids on suspicion of theft.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case status: No action so far

Link:

<https://www.oneindia.com/amphtml/india/two-journalists-attacked-for-doing-their-job-this-after-murder-of-gauri-lankesh-2539036.html>

47. Sajeev Gopalan

Name: Sajeev Gopalan
Date: 28 September, 2017
Location: Varkala, Kerala

Brief Summary:

Journalist Sajeev Gopalan who was allegedly beaten up by two police personnel at his house on Sunday night, on Tuesday said, "They (police officers) were taking revenge for a story I have done exposing their fault." Gopalan, a journalist of a regional Malayalam daily, was allegedly manhandled by the police at Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala, the latest in a series of attack on media persons across the country. Gopalan, local correspondent of Kerala Kaumudi, was admitted to a private hospital in Varkala with injuries. Earlier, his family members alleged that the journalist had recently published a news item on the abduction of a girl and the alleged involvement of some police officials in protecting the accused.

Alleged Perpetrators: Police personnel

Case Status: Gopalan lodged a complaint with the police on which no action has been taken so far. No FIR was registered either. On the contrary, the police booked him for 'interrupting the discharge of their duty' (332 IPC)! In this case, they have submitted a charge sheet in the court and the case is going on.

He has not made any complaint for compensation or any other steps, like meeting the Director General of Police, the Chief Minister etc. He says he is so fed up and frustrated and have no hope to get justice even if he pursues the case.

Link:

<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/260917/police-has-beaten-me-to-avenge-story-against-them-kerala-journalist.html2>

48. Mahesh Kamat

Name: Mahesh Kamat
Date: 15 November, 2017
Location: Badlapur, Maharashtra

Brief Summary:

Mahesh Kamat, editor of Badlapur Vikas, a local newspaper in Badlapur, was assaulted by a Shiv Sena corporator, Tukaram Mahatre, and his supporter, Bandy Mhatre. Kamat was on his way to a police station to lodge a complaint after a bus driver hit his car. Tukaram and his supporter reached the spot and started beating him with a bamboo, undeterred by the presence of a policeman. Both also allegedly damaged his car and set it afire. Kamat alleged that he was assaulted because he had earlier exposed the corruption of Tukaram's elder brother Waman Mhatre, president of Badlapur-Kulgaon Municipal council.

Alleged Perpetrators: Shiv Sena corporator, Tukaram Mahatre, and his supporter, Bandy Mhatre

Case Status: Both accused arrested after an FIR was filed in Badlapur West police station. Kamat says the case is being heard in Ulhasnagar court. He says the day the bus rammed into his car, the police did nothing to help. The same day he was assaulted by Shiv Sena members. He says the FIR was lodged at the police station but no progress has been made. Those who assaulted him are out on bail.

However, the threats and intimidation has continued. In 2019, Kamat's father and the executive editor of the paper, Jagannath Kamat was kidnapped and released later. In 2019, his father and executive editor of the paper, Jagannath Kamath, was kidnapped and then released. Despite him naming the people who kidnapped him, the police apparently registered a FIR in the name of unknown persons. Both cases are in the Ulhasnagar court. Mahesh says when journalists are attacked in Badlapur, the police does not help.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/sena-neta-held-for-assault-on-journalist/articleshow/61611814.cms>

49. Vikas Kumar alias Sonu

Name: Vikas Kumar alias Sonu
Date: 18 December, 2017
Location: Nawada, Bihar

Brief Summary:

A journalist of a Hindi daily was beaten up by liquor mafia in Bihar's Nawada district, police said today. The incident occurred when Vikas Kumar alias Sonu, working in the newspaper 'Hindustan' had gone to cover the raid on liquor mafia by a police team in Rajauli Dih area of the district last evening, Rajauli police station SHO Awadhesh Prasad said. Kumar, who received injuries in his head in the incident, was rushed to Rajauli primary health centre from where he was referred to Gaya but the relatives took him to Ranchi for treatment, the SHO said. The operation for brain injury has been completed at Ranchi, Dinesh Kumar Barnwal alias Pinku, Kumar's cousin, said adding that his brother's condition is stable.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: Further details awaited.

Link:

<https://www.outlookindia.com/website/story/journalist-beaten-up-by-liquor-mafia-in-bihar/305348>

50. Damayanatee Dhar

Name: Damayanatee Dhar
Date: 07 January, 2018
Location: Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Brief Summary:

A Facebook post by Damayantee Dhar who reports for The Wire records an attack on herself and another reporter from the Ahmedabad Mirror on January 7 by a "mob of 15-20 dalit men" headed by Keval Rathod. She says the two of them, were heckled, manhandled and had their press cards and mobile phones snatched and the recording she was doing deleted. She says she was advised by "Leftist activists and editors" to let the attack go and not file a complaint against dalits as it would "go against the movement." She was investigating a story of alleged caste discrimination in a medical college. Eventually she did write to the Police Commissioner at Ahmedabad and her complaint was acted upon.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: No official complaint filed. Damayantee found the Ahmedabad Police very helpful and a woman police inspector was deputed to help her. However, she said she was advised by many leftist activists not to file a case

and also says she received no support from the journalistic fraternity. Also, Keval Rathod was allegedly made to apologise at the police station. No further action has been taken.

Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/damayantee.dhar/posts/10214975886580344>

51. Biplab Dey

Name: Biplab Dey
Date: 23 January, 2018
Location: Athiabari, Meghalaya

Brief summary:

A Meghalaya-based journalist was injured and his camera and mobile phone snatched when suspected timber smugglers assaulted him on the night of January 23. Biplab Dey, 37, a freelance journalist who reports for Assam Tribune and other papers in Shillong from Garo Hills in the state's western region, was on the trail of smugglers when he was assaulted around 10.30 pm in Athiabari, West Khasi Hills district. Dey and his driver Dipen Rabha received injuries on the chest, hands, legs and back. "We were kicked and thrashed with sticks by a mob of about 25 people," said Dey, who was following the smugglers in order to collect evidence of illegal transportation of timber from the Garo Hills to Assam. The culprits took away his camera, mobile phone and laptop to destroy evidence.

Alleged Perpetrators: Timber Gang

Case Status: Dey said that he had filed an FIR, but he doubts that the case was even taken to court. He thinks that the case will never be pursued as sections of police and sections of administration are involved in the illegal timber trade. He was provided no compensation or any kind of support from the government. No one responded and he did not get back any of his lost properties. He tried pursuing the case by calling the OC of the police station every now and then but did not get any response from them. He said it is difficult for him to follow the case as the place of occurrence and FIR is far away from his place of stay. The Press Council of India has sought a report from the Meghalaya government on the assault but there is no further information.

Link:

<https://www.newslaundry.com/2018/01/25/meghalaya-scribe-thrashed-timber-smugglers>

52. Anup Debbarma

Name: Anup Debbarma
Date: 01 April, 2018
Location: Khowai District, Tripura

Brief Summary:

Anup Debbarma, a television journalist was reportedly assaulted by a BJP worker in the Khowai district of Tripura. The wife of the journalist accuses Sudip Debbarma, a resident of a nearby locality. According to her complaint, he had allegedly threatened the journalist and even vandalised their house in the past. The journalist is currently under treatment at Gobind Ballabh Pant Hospital. The police have launched a search operation to track the accused.

Alleged Perpetrators: Sudip Debbarma, who belongs to the BJP party, currently ruling the state.

Case Status: Anup Debbarma said that the accused was arrested and jailed but had been let off. The case has been dropped since the accused belonged to the BJP party, currently ruling the state. He said that the lack of punishment under the law has made the life of victims like him, particularly journalists insecure and unsafe. His family, too, feels insecure. He was severely injured in the attack. He received no compensation from the state government or any other agency.

Links:

<https://thenortheasttoday.com/tripura-television-journo-severely-injured-in-attack-family-accuses-political-worker/>

<https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/north-east/journalist-attacked-in-khowai/cid/1445665>

53. Patricia Mukhim

Name: Patricia Mukhim
Date: 17 April, 2018
Location: Umpling, Meghalya

Brief Summary:

April 17, evening, two unidentified people on a bike threw a petrol bomb at the residence of Patricia Mukhim, the editor of Shillong Times. Though Ms. Mukhim was in her house at the time, she wasn't injured by the attack and there was negligible damage to property.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: The police have registered an FIR at Rynjah police station. But no arrests have been made as the police has not been able to identify the culprits as yet. They had assigned her two personal security officers. She found it intrusive, so they have insisted that she retain one. Patricia Mukhim said that conviction rates in Meghalaya are very low, because police are not very efficient and public pressure to deliver is low. Her organisation, Shillong Times has been supportive of her.

Link:

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/meghalaya-bomb-hurled-at-the-residence-patricia-mukhim-editor-of-the-shillong-times-1839117>

<https://scroll.in/article/876139/attack-on-the-house-of-shillong-times-editor-patricia-mukhim-revives-debate-about-media-freedom>

54. Sushant Kumar

Name: Sushant Kumar
Date: 14 May, 2018
Location: Delhi

Brief Summary:

A reporter with a private television channel was abducted, locked up and thrashed by goons while covering a story about suspected water tanker mafia. The victim told police that the goons locked him inside a room for nearly 12 hours and thrashed him brutally.

The reporter, Sushant Kumar, had gone to Fatehpur Beri village along with a cameraman to conduct a sting operation on alleged tanker mafia being run by a local strongman. Kumar's colleagues said that he had gone to the area on Saturday as well and shot some videos. When he returned on Sunday, the goons surrounded him and the cameraman. They were abused and thrashed by the men who threatened to kill them and bury their bodies. While the cameraman managed to escape and inform the police, Kumar was abducted and locked up and told that he would be killed if he did not delete the videos. Fortunately, a police team managed to locate and free Kumar before the goons could carry out on their threat. A probe has been launched to identify the accused and an FIR for causing hurt and illegal confinement has been lodged.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons

Case Status: An FIR has been registered on a complaint by the television channel. No action thereafter.

Link:

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/tv-reporter-beaten-up-by-water-mafia/articleshow/64151751.cms>

55. Suman Debnath

Name: Suman Debnath
Date: 18 June, 2018
Location: North Tripura

Brief Summary:

Journalist Suman Debnath was attacked on June 18 at around 10.45 pm night when he was returning from Shanichara. When he reached the Indian Oil Depot, he was called by Simin Ahmed, brother of Abdul Mukid, a BJP Booth President. Ahmed asked him to enter the shop and when he did, he attacked him with a sharp weapon. Mihir Deb was also present at the time. Suman managed to escape and rushed to Dharmanagar District hospital.

Suman Debnath works in News Vanguard TV Channel. He wrote consistently against corruption in MGNREGA, the black-marketing of fuel, stone-theft from National Highways projects, etc.

Alleged Perpetrators: Oil mafia

Case status: Suman lodged an FIR against Mihir Deb and Simin Ahmed under Sections 325,307,386, 34 (IPC) in Dharmanagar police station). While Deb was arrested, Ahmed was absconding. Debnath said that Mihir Deb was arrested only because he was from the Left Front while Simin Miya was not arrested as his elder brother is a local leader in the BJP ruling party of the state.

Suman Debnath said that his life is still insecure as the oil mafia about which he had been filing several reports has grown stronger with the rise of the new state government. They have powerful protectors and journalists are no match for them.

Link:

<http://www.tripurainfoway.com/news-details/TN/109358/fuel-mafia-raj-continues-in-north-tripura-amid-cm-rsquo-s-tall-claims-no-arrest-of-bjp-booth-president-after-police-caught-him-red-handed-in-fuel-black-market.html>

56. Satyendra Gangwar

Name: Satyendra Gangwar
Date: 26 June, 2018
Location: Bisalpur, UP

Brief Summary:

Satyendra Gangwar, a journalist, was assaulted and shot at by Aman Jaiswal and his aide on June 24 in Uttar Pradesh's Bisalpur. The Times of India reported that a first information report (FIR) was filed by Gangwar's brother, Jitendra. Jaiswal had allegedly fired at Satyendra near the railway station, hitting the journalist in the left leg and lower back, Times of India reported. Jitendra was quoted by Times of India as telling the Pilibhit superintendent of police (SP) Balendu Bhushan Singh, "Jaiswal is a part of the mining mafia, who grabs contracts for the food department's procurement centres in the district during the Rabi and Kharif seasons every year. He is extremely well-connected politically. In order to appease ministers and MLAs, he extorts money from rice millers."

Alleged Perpetrators: Aman Jaiswal

Case Status: FIR filed by Gangwar's brother, Jitendra

Link:

<https://www.newslandry.com/shorts/journalist-assaulted-shot-at-in-uttar-pradesh-bilaspur>

57. Fahad Shah

Name: Fahad Shah
Date: 09 July, 2018
Location: Srinagar

Brief Summary:

Armed forces fired a tear gas shell inside the living room at Shah's residence in Srinagar. He is the editor of The Kashmir Walla – an online news magazine – and writes for various international newspapers and magazines.

"The shell hit the window, falling straight on the floor of the room, where we sit. It burnt the flooring of the room which could have led to burning down of the entire house," says Shah's family member. Struggling with respiratory medical conditions, Shah's mother found it difficult to breathe after the incident. This is the second time Shah's residence has been targeted. On June

19, 2018, the armed forces vandalised Shah's vehicle parked outside his residence in Soura. In that incident, the forces entered the residential area and resorted to breaking window panes and vandalised two cars, despite there being no provocation from the residents whose property was vandalised.

In June 2017, Jammu and Kashmir police had detained Shah.

Alleged Perpetrators: Jammu and Kashmir police

Case Status: Shah did not file any complaint and no further action was taken. However, informally it was conveyed to him that the bursting of a tear gas shell into his home was a mistake. Earlier, in 2017, Shah was picked up and taken for questioning in the notorious Cargo Detention Center, run by Special Operations Group of the JK police. He was picked up from outside his house while he was going to work and questioned for eight hours.

Link:

https://www.thekashmirwalla.com/2018/07/govt-forces-fire-tear-gas-shell-inside-journalists-room/?fbclid=IwAR2oOUX206SmOpu_zteYc-x4LvyZFzLodasIHpT2-LV2FzVQ3OgXPjcr9Pk

58. Sandeep Kumar Neeraj Bali

Name: Sandeep Kumar Neeraj Bali
Date: 31 July, 2018
Location: Jalalabad, Punjab

Brief Summary:

Two News18 journalists were attacked by the sand mafia in Punjab's Jalalabad while reporting on illegal mining. The reporters, after receiving a tip off about illegal mining being carried on in the area, reached the site to investigate the activities. Upon arriving, the duo was surrounded by a group of unidentifiable people who attacked them and damaged their video equipment. After being attacked, the scribes somehow managed to free themselves. They then went to a private hospital to tend to their injuries.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons.

Case Status: A complaint was lodged. Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh tweeted that stern action would be taken. Senior officer and DSP Jalalabad Amarjit Singh Sidhu said police had recorded their statement and "will nab the accused soon". But a day later, the Chief Minister said the mine

was not illegal and that the journalists were intimidating the miners. No action thereafter.

Link:

<https://www.news18.com/news/india/two-news18-reporters-attacked-in-punjab-jalalabad-for-reporting-on-mining-mafia-1827511.html>

59. Shivan Chanana

Name: Shivan Chanana
Date: 09 August, 2018
Location: Ramnagar, Karnataka

Brief Summary:

Alleged illegal slaughterhouse operators attacked the journalist from India Today TV and a social activist when they went to investigate reports of an illegal slaughterhouse operating in the area.

An illegal slaughterhouse functioning in Kodipalya village in Karnataka's Ramnagar district was raided by animal activists and police officials from Kudur Police Station. On the day of the raid, two unarmed policemen were provided to accompany animal activist Joshine Anthony and the India Today reporter to visit the alleged crime site. An India Today reporter was also present on the site and filmed the entire raid.

Alleged Perpetrators: Alleged illegal slaughterhouse operators

Case Status: FIR lodged against seven accused identified as Gazipeer, Khasi, Syed, Mubarakhan, Noor, Imthiaz and Tabrez, all hailing from Ramnagar district, Kudur Police Station under IPC sections 428 and 429 (mischief by killing or maiming animal). No FIR for attack on journalist

Link:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/karnataka/story/india-today-journalist-thrashed-by-mob-for-reporting-on-illegal-slaughterhouse-in-karnataka-1309330-2018-08-09>

60. Subhanker Majumder

Name: Subhanker Majumder
Date: 12 September, 2018
Location: West Tripura district

Brief Summary:

Subhankar Majumder, 30, a television journalist engaged with Live 24 – a local channel, was attacked by three persons near his home at Indranagar area last Wednesday following an altercation,” Singh said. Majumder sustained severe head injuries.

Alleged Perpetrators: Prasenjit Saha, Tanmoy Deb and Narayan Debnath

Case Status: A complaint was lodged but police were reluctant to arrest the accused since they were close to the ruling BJP party. They were arrested only after protests and pressure from journalists’ organisations, notably the Agartala Press Club.

A chargesheet has been filed and a trial will commence. The journalist received no help or compensation from the state government or any other agency. He received moral support from the journalistic fraternity.

Link:

<https://indianexpress.com/article/north-east-india/tripura/tripura-journalist-attack-police-5364549/>

61. Sandhya Ravishankar

Name: Sandhya Ravishankar
Date: 28 September, 2018
Location: Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Brief summary:

Chennai-based journalist Sandhya Ravishankar has stated that attempts were being made to harass and intimidate her by unknown persons. Ravishankar has faced multiple instances of harassment, stalking and violation of privacy after her four-part exposé on the sand mafia was published by The Wire early last year. On Friday morning, Ravishankar took to Twitter to say that on the previous day, she had found that the petrol tube of her bike was cut. While she initially suspected that it was a simple case of petrol theft, she found that her fuel tank will still full. Suspicious, she checked the CCTV camera that was installed at her house, overlooking the parked vehicles. She tweeted the CCTV footage, in which two persons can be seen stopping at her house at 11:43 pm on Wednesday. While the footage is not clear, the men – wearing helmets – can be seen fiddling with Ravishankar’s bike. They leave after a few minutes and arrive again at 11:51 pm and can be seen approaching her bike once more.

Alleged Perpetrators: Unidentified persons but suspects linked to sand mining mafia and mining conglomerate VV Minerals that Sandhya Ravishankar has been consistently writing about.

Case status: On Sept 28, Sandhya Ravishankar filed a complaint with the Chennai police and the state government. Investigations were promised but no further action was taken. This is the sixth police complaint she filed. (The details of all the complaints are in an accompanying table)

Earlier, she was subjected to online harassment and stalking by a blogger who was suspected to be close to the mining group. She filed complaints on the online harassment too and a number of citizens as well as journalists supported the complaints through signature campaigns.

The harassment abated but re-started in September 2019.

On Oct 1, 2019, she sent a letter to the Chennai police commissioner drawing attention to the online harassment and demanding follow up on the stalking. But there has been no response from the police.

Link:

<https://thewire.in/rights/investigative-journalist-sandhya-ravishankar-faces-intimidation-threats-again>

62. Radhakrusna Sahu

Name: Radhakrusna Sahu
Date: 29 September, 2018
Location: Baliapal, Balasore, Odisha

Brief Summary:

Radhakrusna Sahu, a journalist working with Prameya, a vernacular newspaper, was attacked by two persons. Police said the issue was over suspected past enmity, but journalists say the attack was prompted by his investigation of a land scam in the area.

Sahu was attacked with a sword while he visited block chhak in Baliapal to distribute newspapers to the hawkers. The accused cut his fingers and told him they were doing this so that he would not be able to write anymore. He sustained injuries on four fingers and right thigh.

Alleged Perpetrators: One of the two identified as Ayaskant Sahu from Jamakunda.

Case status: Sahu was rushed to the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Baliapal for treatment. After his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to the CHC in Rupsa of Balasore district.

Link:

<https://indiascoops.com/subscribe-radhakrushna-sahu-of-prameya-attacked-in-balasore-admitted-to-scbmch/>

63. Nabeela Jamaluddin

Name: Nabeela Jamaluddin
Date: 08 December, 2018
Location: Bangalore

Brief Summary:

As authorities conveniently turn a blind eye to mining within the eco-sensitive zone around Bannerghatta National Park in greater Bengaluru, journalists trying to cover the illegal activity were allegedly attacked and threatened on Thursday afternoon. Three people have been taken into custody in connection with the incident. News 9 TV journalist Nabeela Jamaluddin and her colleagues had gone to Tulasipura in Jigani taluk in the outskirts of Bengaluru to report on one crusher unit on Thursday afternoon. It was while leaving the spot that their cab was surrounded by musclemen who blocked their way for 25 minutes. All this while, around six to seven men abused the TV news crew and asked for the footage to be deleted.

Alleged Perpetrators: The mining mafia

Case Status: Nabeela lodged a complaint based on which Bannerghatta police registered an FIR. Following the complaint, police arrested three of the accused— Umesh, Muralu and Shankar and a local court sent them to 15 days in judicial custody.

Sections under which the accused were booked include Section 341 (wrongful restraint), 252 (intent of fraud), 504 (insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the Indian Penal Code. However, no action was taken thereafter. There has been no further investigation much less any charge sheet filed.

Link:

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/bluru-journos-attacked-while-reporting-illegal-mining-bannerghatta-3-held-92989>

Chapter VII

In Conclusion

While attacks on mediapersons involved in field reportage demonstrates a disturbing hostility and mistrust towards the media, the targeted attacks on journalists for investigative stories reveals the arrogant power and entitlement of the assailants, secure in their confidence that they enjoyed a great degree of impunity.

The perpetrators for the killing of journalists and the attacks on them have got away with their attacks, aided by poor or indifferent police investigation. Often, law enforcers disbelieve the claim of the journalist, families or colleagues of killed journalists that the reason for the attack was some personal dispute or corrupt practice on the part of the journalist. And when political leaders or heads of government belittle the journalist's story, the message gets transmitted to law enforcing officers and the journalist's testimony is further devalued and discredited.

The professional reasons for the killing – the investigative stories the journalist was trying to bring to the fore- are almost never investigated.

With the result, the stories the journalist has tried to tell are also forgotten.

Another point of concern is the increasing polarisation within the media, with clear biases and stances taken by media houses owned by or close to political parties, has also played a role in the attacks on journalists in India. The tussle between news-makers to take control of news coverage and oppose the coverage of television channels perceived to have a bias is not new. It has been seen in Tamil Nadu when then Chief Minister J Jayalalitha refused to allow recordings or interviews by television channels owned by rival political parties.

But, over the years, this has only worsened and the belligerent and strident tone adopted by a section of television anchors and editors in their studios has had its impact on the reporters and camerapersons of these channels. On the field, they are clearly prevented from covering events, told not to record with their cameras or then attacked.

Finally, as we found in a number of cases, just the act of reaching out to the journalists or their families lets them know they aren't alone and their struggle for justice is not a solitary one. As Asha Ranjan said, "The death of my husband is a matter that should concern all journalists. We keep saying

that the media is the fourth pillar of democracy. This struggle is not only about the death of one journalist.”

If the attackers continue to get away with murder, the death-knell will sound for the media.

Chapter VIII

Recommendations

Given the vulnerability of journalists to being attacked, it is imperative for the profession and media freedom advocacy bodies to organise networks of solidarity and assistance, including free legal aid, for journalists. While there have been several attempts to address this issue, including campaigning for separate journalist protection laws, a comprehensive multi-pronged approach is sorely needed.

Drawing upon the findings of the study and the experience and suggestions of the journalists attacked, here are a list of recommendations for ensuring safety and justice for journalists:

Personal Assistance for Journalists and Families

1. Reaching out to journalists, their families and colleagues without delay. Immediate assistance for the families of killed journalists and for attacked journalists.
2. Psychological assistance to families of deceased and to journalists attacked. They may be in a state of shock and would need help in providing details of any reports or work the journalist may be involved with and any leads on threats or complaints filed by the journalist. They may also need protection and safety.
3. Medical aid to be rendered swiftly and, if necessary, move the journalist to another facility.
4. Financial assistance to be disbursed immediately to journalists / their families who have been attacked.

Government Agencies

The government has to take a proactive stand and respond promptly when journalists are killed or attacked. A high level officer of the government must monitor investigations and ensure that no pressure or influence is brought upon law-enforcing agencies. If the task of investigation is to be given to special investigating authorities or to agencies like the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), it must be done speedily so as to ensure no evidence is lost or manipulated.

If government agencies are implicated in the killing or attack, an independent agency must be assigned to the case. Transferring the case back to the government agency must not be allowed.

Police and Legal Aid

1. Police personnel, especially at the level of first-responders, must be trained in collection of evidence without contamination, and processing it without delay. Through investigation, including forensics, is of vital importance to securing convictions.
2. Monitoring of police investigations, ensuring that the facts are recorded in any complaint or FIR, that the right charges are applied. Pressure, if necessary, on the law-enforcing authorities to conduct speedy investigation and book the culprits.
3. Providing legal assistance to journalists/ their families as a priority.

Statutory quasi-judicial bodies

The Press Council of India and the National Human Rights Commission, as statutory bodies, which have quasi-judicial authority, must use their powers to take suo moto cognisance of cases of killing and attacks on journalists, initiate enquiries, summon details from investigating agencies and demand action. They need to make their inquiries and their findings public. They also need to monitor investigations instead of closing enquiries as soon as they obtain reports that cases have been lodged.

Employers and their responsibilities

1. Ensure that employers fulfil their duties and responsibilities towards their journalist employees, even if they are stringers and freelancers.
2. Ensure that these employers take a pro-journalist stand and extend help to the journalist.
3. Ensure that the employers/media houses publish accounts of the attack, seek their intervention to write to law-enforcing officials or administration to ensure that the case gets the required attention.
4. Ensure that employers provide insurance for journalists and for their equipment.
5. Financial assistance must come from media houses journalists are employed in or contributing to.

Network of journalists' organisations

Build up a network of journalists' organisations and groups comprising working journalists' organisations, peer groups and networks of journalists, bodies like the Editors Guild of India and the News Broadcasters Associations

need to work together at different levels—village, district, city and national—to

- set up helplines
- provide safety training and
- monitor cases and justice delivery till their conclusion

Network of Lawyers and human rights activists and medical practitioners

Build up a network of lawyers, human rights activists and medical practitioners who can provide timely assistance and back-up at every level, over the entire duration of the case.

Campaign

Campaign to raise awareness about attacks on journalists and on threats to freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

Chapter IX

About the study

The study on the killings and attacks on journalists in India between 2014-18 was commissioned by the Thakur Foundation. This status report concerns the study on the deaths of and attacks on journalists in India between 2014-18.

Its objectives are to:

- a) document cases of deaths and attacks on journalists from 2014-18;
- b) document the reported causes and perpetrators of these attacks;
- c) determine the legal status of cases;
- d) and sum up the response of the administration and political authorities.

The study has also made recommendations on how best to tackle the increasing attacks on journalists; the efforts needed to ensure the safety of journalists; and how to secure justice for them as well as how to safeguard the work they do.

The study was launched in August 2019. It was originally limited to a five-year period but subsequently incorporated data on the killing and attacks on journalists for 2019.

Note on Methodology

There is no official record on the attacks on journalists put out by the government, either in different states or in the Centre. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) did state that they will collect information on attacks on journalists and did so for a year and stopped the process thereafter because they said the format was being re-worked. The NCRB also does not provide any break up in terms of the states or even a list of cases so it is very difficult to get additional information on the actual cases from the NCRB.

An additional source of information was the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the Press Council of India, which took suo moto cognisance of a few cases. Both quasi-judicial bodies, they have the power to summon police and record findings. However, while their reports are a useful record, there is still much to be done by both agencies in terms of information and follow-ups.

Given the absence of official data, our study draws its findings from a range of sources: news reports; testimonies of families of the deceased journalists; accounts of journalists who were attacked; statements and accounts of journalists' organisations; and police case diaries wherever possible.

We found that the attacks were brutal enough to warrant the application of much stronger sections of the Indian Penal Code than those listed in the Rajya Sabha reply. Besides, many journalists were either actively dissuaded from filing formal complaints with the police or simply gave up on following up on the complaints in frustration.

We first looked at the nature of the stories undertaken by the journalists attacked and then describe the vicious nature of the attacks that in some instances narrowly missed being fatal; sought to identify the perpetrators of these attacks; and to uncover the impunity the assailants enjoyed in their areas of operation.

The team also examined all the data available with various organisations – national and global. These included

- The media tracker of the media watch site The Hoot, which functioned till March 2018, monitored and documented attacks on journalists in India.
- The report of the Committee Against Assaults on Journalists (CAAJ)
- The report 'Silencing Journalists in India' by Human Rights Law Network
- Yearly reports of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

It must be noted that the organisations that maintain some kind of record have varying criteria to determine whether an incident involves a journalist on duty, whether the attack or killing was confirmed to have occurred due to journalistic work and whether media workers who are attacked or killed in the course of an attack on the media houses should be added to the list of attacks on the media.

Hence, most of the data available on the deaths or attacks on journalists is secondary data, reported in mainstream media or on social media.

Our first task was to collate all the available data from the above-mentioned sources and organisations, tally them and crosscheck for relevance, verify that

they were related to journalism and remove duplicate entries, if any. We then checked the different sources of the information and tracked the latest verifiable information on each case.

We categorised the data by year, location and state, in a comprehensive table, with brief details of the cases, the names of perpetrators and the case status.

For the attacks, we created an additional category – whether the attack was by a mob or by security forces on an individual journalist or a group of journalists in the course of reporting any incident or event or whether the attack was targeted at an individual journalist or a team of journalists engaged in any investigation.

Our rationale was to do a more in depth study of these attacks to determine the kind of stories undertaken by the journalists and the manner in which they were sought to be silenced. The perpetrators of the attacks, the vicious nature of the attacks that narrowly missed being fatal in some instances and the impunity that the attacks were often met with provide a crystal clear picture of how precarious the profession of journalism has become in India.

In order to ascertain the status of the cases lodged, at least eight journalists fanned out and delved deeper into the cases. With slender leads, news reports of the location of the attack, employers, friends, colleagues and even social media accounts, it has been possible to get some information on the cases, the status of investigations and determine how near or how far justice is for the families of the deceased and the survivors of attacks.

The Research Team

Geeta Seshu was the Research Director for this study with Urvashi Sarkar as Lead Researcher.

Ajit Dash, Geetartha Pathak, Laxmi Murthy, Linda Chhakchuak, Malini Subramaniam, Moazum Mohammed, Sandhya Ravishankar and Shahina KK conducted additional research on specific cases.

The study would also like to acknowledge the leads, information and contacts generously shared by a number of journalists and academics, including Abhishek Srivastava, Anand Singh, Omar Rashid, Jyoti Prakash Mahapatra, Mohammed Ghazali and a number of working journalists who chose to remain anonymous.

The study is indebted to Sevanti Ninan and Laxmi Murthy for their valuable comments and suggestions.

Thanks are also due to Sarita Ramamoorthy for the design and layout.

Above all, the study would not have been possible without the sharing of information, documents and experiences of the families of the deceased and the journalists who survived attacks.

If any information has been omitted or has not been updated, please do let us know. We shall incorporate it without delay.

Contact: information@thakur-foundation.org

Table I
Deaths of Journalists killed due to their professional work) (2014-19)

| Serial No | Year | State | Name | Investigations | Alleged Perpetrator | Status of Case – Interim update |
|-----------|------|----------------|----------------|---|------------------------|---|
| 1 | 2014 | Odisha | Tarun Acharya | Child labour in cashew mill | Business | Life sentences awarded to five persons found guilty of his murder. |
| 2 | 2014 | Andhra Pradesh | MNV Shankar | Kerosene dealers illegal trade | Illegal Trade Activity | SIT investigating case |
| 3 | 2015 | Uttar Pradesh | Jagendra Singh | numerous illegal practices of then Minister Ram Murti Verma | Politicians | Clean chit to then minister Verma, despite FIR, which was withdrawn by family. Another SC case also withdrawn before it came up for hearing. The family took compensation allegedly under pressure from minister. All cases closed. |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| 4 | 2015 | Maharashtra | Sandeep Kothari | Illegal manganese mining | Illegal activity | 7 arrested for murder, including Brijendra Geharwar, Vishal Tandi and Rakesh Naraswani |
| 5 | 2015 | Madhya Pradesh | Akshay Singh | Vyapam education scam | Unidentified persons | CBI investigation ends, foul play ruled out |
| 6 | 2015 | Maharashtra | Raghavendra Dubey | Illegal Bar | Business | Four arrests; case is on |
| 8 | 2016 | Uttar Pradesh | Karun Misra | Mining mafia | | Five arrested, 3 confessed |
| 9 | 2016 | Bihar | Rajdeo Ranjan | Illegal activities of Politician | Politician | FIR lodged but list of accused omitted the name of criminal and politician, M Shahabuddin. The investigation of the case was transferred to the CBI. Two others, sharpshooter Mohammed Kaif and Mohammad Javed, were declared as proclaimed offenders. In January 2019, the chargesheet was filed against all accused; On Mar 22, 2018, the CBI informed |

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| | | | | | | the SC that it had not found any criminality on the part of Tej Pratap Yadav, a former Bihar minister and son of Bihar RJD leader Laloo Yadav. The case against other accused, sharpshooter Mohammed Kaif and Mohammad Javed, continues. Both are in custody. |
| 10 | 2016 | Bihar | Dharmendra Singh | Illegal Stone crushing activities | | Two arrests |
| 11 | 2017 | Karnataka | Gauri Lankesh | Editor, public intellectual and Critic of right-wing and fundamentalist groups | Right-wing Hindutva groups | 18 accused of crime; SIT filed a 9,325-page charge sheet in November 2018. Trial yet to begin |
| 12 | 2017 | Tripura | Shantanu Bhowmik | Covering clash of Tribal groups | Political party groups | 3 tribal leaders booked for his murder. The trial is on. |
| 13 | 2017 | Uttar | Rajesh | Illegal | Sand Mining | 3 arrested, one absconding |

| | | | | | | |
|----|------|----------------|------------------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| | | Pradesh | Mishra | activities of Sand Mining and liquor mafia | and liquor mafia | |
| 14 | 2017 | Tripura | Sudip Dutta Bhaumik | Corrupt activities of Tripura state rifles c Commandant | State security force | Four arrests; two out on bail. Case handed over to CBI, now proceeding in the Tripura High Court. |
| 15 | 2018 | Madhya Pradesh | Sandeep Sharma | Illegal activities of Sand Mining mafia | Sand mining mafia | One arrest, SIT to probe murder |
| 16 | 2018 | Bihar | Navin Nischal and Vijay Sngh | Illegal activities of village head | Government | Two arrests |
| 17 | 2018 | Jammu & Kashmr | Shujaat Bukhari | Editor and peace negotiator | Unknown | Not solved, one suspect killed in a shootout (as of June 2019) |
| 18 | 2018 | Chhattisgarh | Achyutanand Sahu | Journalist covering elections, caught in Maoist attack | Maoist group | A Maoist group expressed regret for the killing; Dantewada police arrested six alleged Maoists in April 2019; Sahu's wife received |

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|----|------|-----------|----------------|---|---|--|
| | | | | | | compensation and employment in Doordarshan |
| 19 | 2018 | Jharkhand | Chandan Tiwari | Local contractors and Maoist splinter group | Maoist splinter group and local contractors | <p>Four persons arrested- Maoist area commander Prasant of the banned Tritiya Sammelan Prastuti Committee (TSPC) contractor Pintu Singh, Jamuna Prasad, and Musafir Rana</p> <p>An FIR registered under Section 364/302/201/34 of the IPC with PS Pathalgada against four persons, Prashant, Pintu Singh, Yamuna Prasad, and Musafir Rana. A charge sheet has been filed but the trial is yet to begin.</p> <p>Musafir Rana and Pintu Singh have both got bail. While Rana is out on bail,</p> |

| | | | | | | |
|----|------|--|------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | Pintu Singh continues to be lodged in jail despite the bail order as no one is coming forward as guarantor, informed Raghbir Tiwari, father of late Chandan Tiwari. The other accused, Prashant and Yamuna Prasad are currently lodged in jail. |
| 20 | 2018 | Jharkhand | Amit Topno | Local issues and Pathalgadi movement | Unknown | No arrests |
| 21 | 2019 | S Annavaram village, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh | K Sathyanarayana | Motive unclear; Journalist's family said he was threatened earlier by YSR legislator Dadiseti Raja | Family alleges political involvement; Police drop name from FIR | Six persons arrested Venkata Ramana, Sakuru Durga, Sivaramakrishna Tataji, Gangisetty Suresh, B Ramesh and Allad Babjee. Prime suspect Dorababu absconding |

Table II
Stateswise break-up of deaths of journalists
2014-December 10, 2019

| States | Confirmed | Unconfirmed |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | 2 | |
| Assam | | 1 |
| Bihar | 4 | 2 |
| Chhattisgarh | 1 | |
| Gujarat | | 2 |
| Haryana | | 1 |
| Jammu & Kashmir | 1 | |
| Jharkhand | 2 | 1 |
| Karnataka | 1 | |
| Madhya Pradesh | 3 | 3 |
| Maharashtra | 1 | 1 |
| Odisha | 1 | |
| Punjab | | 2 |
| Tripura | 2 | |
| Uttar Pradesh | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 21 | 19 |

Table III
List of targeted attacks on Journalists doing investigative reports (2014-18)

| Sr No | Date | Location | Name | Alleged Perpetrators | Current status |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| 1. | 18 September, 2014 | Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh | Narendra Yadav | Kartik Haldar and another unidentified person | One accused lodged in jail for another matter, other absconding. Yadav doesn't have any information on the trial or status of the case |
| 2. | 24 May, 2014 | Kulitalai, Tamil Nadu | M Suchitra | Sand mining mafia | No complaint filed; journalists asked by Karur district police superintendent, Nirmal Kumar Joshi, to leave state, citing safety grounds |
| 3. | 16 May, 2014 | Kokrajhar, Assam | Dhananjay Nath | Unidentified persons | Kokrajhar police launched a search operation; no information thereafter |
| 4. | 30 April, 2014 | Chandigarh | Devinder Pal | Unidentified persons | Police complaint lodged; no action or investigation thereafter |
| 5. | 17 February, 2014 | Imphal, Manipur | Paojel Chaoba alias Aribam | Personnel of Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) suspected | FIR filed against Havildar Majibur Rahman of Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB). No action taken, nor was the accused havlidar suspended. |

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|-----|---|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| | | | Dhananjoy | | |
| 6. | 20 November, 2015 | Imphal, Manipur | Mangeo Toutang | Unidentified persons | No further information |
| 7. | 21 October, 2015 | Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh | Deepak Gupta | Unidentified persons | Police said it appeared to be a robbery attempt but investigations on. No Progress |
| 8. | 26 September, 2015 | Dhemaji, Assam | Amrit Paban Bora | Unidentified persons | FIR lodged with Dhakuakhana Police Station |
| 9. | 4 August, 2015 | Dehradun , Uttarakhand | Ashok Pandey | Uttarakhand state government | Pandey filed a complaint of persecution by the state government with the NHRC. No action thereafter. |
| 10. | 14 June, 2015 | Pilibhit, Uttar Pradesh | Haider Khan | Unidentified persons | Pilibhit SP JK Shahi sent the journalist for a medical examination. |
| 11. | 03 May, 2015; 22 May, 2015 and 17 August, | Kuzhitalai , Karur district Tamil Nadu | S Chandran, M Suchitra, VM Deepa | Sand mining contractors | Chandran lodged a police complaint with great difficulty; no further action followed |

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|-----|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|
| | 2015 | | and Prashant Albert | | |
| 12. | 22 May, 2015 and 17 August, 2015 | Kuzhitalai, Karur district Tamil Nadu | M Suchitra | Sand mining contractors | No complaint filed |
| 13. | 17 August, 2015 | Kuzhitalai, Karur district Tamil Nadu | VM Deepa and Prashant Albert | Sand mining contractors | No complaint filed |
| 14. | 22 May, 2015 | Guwahati, Assam | Mukut Roy | Owners of godown | The journalist later filed a case (229/15) at Gorchuk police station against the owners |
| 15. | 31 January, 2015 | Guwahati, Assam | Woman journalist (name withheld) | Assam Police | DCP-Crime Swapnanil Deka said an inquiry would be held. |
| 16. | 08 November, 2016 | Ernakulam, Kerala | Manju Kuttikrishnan, a reporter | Lawyers from Ernakulam District Sessions court | Complaint lodged but no FIR registered. The lawyers apologised. As a result, the reporter not keen on pursuing the case. |

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| | | | with Malayalam daily Deshabhmani | | |
| 17. | 25 October, 2016 | Madurai, TN | Rathismon Minor son of TV journalist Chandran | Drug pedlar gang | Three persons arrested, released on bail. Trial on. |
| 18. | 15 September, 2016 | Tinsukhia, Assam | Manoj Dutta and five others | Coal mafia supported by Kuldeep Singh and Sandeep Sethia, close to BJP MLA Bhaskar Sharma | No progress |
| 19. | 13 September, 2016 | Bengaluru, Karnataka | Rohini Swamy and cameraper son Madhu Y | Unidentified persons | No FIR was lodged. The police required the journalist to go through an identification parade but she was apprehensive though police were helpful. |
| 20. | 1, September, | Pulwama, J&K | Farooq Shah and | Stone pelters and J&K police | No information, no progress |

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|-----|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | 2016 | | Muntazeer Yaseen | | |
| 21. | 10 August, 2016 | Srinagar, J&K | Muneeb UI Islam | CRPF | human shield |
| 22. | 4 August, 2016 | Patna, Bihar | Navneet Kumar | Private transport operators | No information, no progress |
| 23. | 7 June, 2016 | Bhiwandi, Maharashtra | Sidhdhrth Kamble | Nur Nisha, Khalil Shaikh, Jakir, Ashfak and one unidentified person | The Kongaon police in Bhiwandi have arrested five persons. |
| 24. | 30 May, 2016 | New Delhi, NCR | Rashmi Mann and fellow crew members | Sunny Rana and others, accused of assaulting a 17-year-old youth | No information, no progress |
| 25. | 16 April, 2016 | Bharwa Sumerpur town, district Hamirpur, Uttar Pradesh | Abhishek Agnihotri | Six members of sand mining mafia, including Sant Dayal, Rajesh Verma and four unidentified persons and police officers Dinesh | Two accused arrested |

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|-----|-------------------|----------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | | Patel and constable Ashok Kumar | |
| 26. | 18 April, 2016 | Hoshangabad, MP | Prashant Dubey and cameraman Azad Sirviya | sand contractors | No information, no progress |
| 27. | 18 April, 2016 | Nagpur, Maharashtra | Rajesh Tiwari | Unidentified persons | FIR lodged at Ajni Police station, Nagpur under a non-cognizable offence. But perpetrators are yet to be identified by the police. |
| 28. | 26 March, 2016 | Jalandhar, Punjab | Charanjit Singh Teja | Staff of private bus operated by Deputy Chief Minister Harsimrat Badal | FIR lodged u/s 323/324. No further action but attacks abated with the change of government. The journalist chose to keep the matter in abeyance. |
| 29. | 22 February, 2016 | Bastar, Chhattisgarh | Malini Subramaniam | Bastar police and self-styled anti-Maoist group, supported by police | FIR (44/2016) u/s 451, 427 registered in PS Kotwali Jagdalpur, after a 48-hour delay. Despite naming accused, police register case against 'unknown persons and now want to file for closure! |
| 30. | 3 February, 2016 | Bhubaneswar, Odisha | Kisan Barai | Market association chief Gyanendra Swain | Swain was arrested on charges under Sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 354 (assault), 294 (obscene act), 34 (common intention) and 323 (causing hurt) of IPC. |
| 31. | 25 January, | Bhubaneswar | Manoj | Five unidentified | No information, no progress |

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|-----|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| | 2016 | war, Odisha | Sahoo | persons | |
| 32. | 22 January, 2016 | Ahmedabad, Gujarat | Revati Laul | Gujarat riots convict Suresh Chhara | Parole cancelled, Chhara was sent back to jail. He secured furlough six months later and this was also cancelled, barely a day before the furlough ended. The cases against him on complaints of rape, domestic violence and assault are pending. |
| 33. | 19 January, 2016 | Konark, Odisha | N A Saha Ansari | Unidentified persons from the liquor mafia | No information, no progress |
| 34. | 7 January, 2016 | Aul, Odisha | Saroj Kumar Dixit | Rural construction work contractors | A complaint was lodged in the Aul Police Station but there was no further action. |
| 35. | 11 February, 2017 (and repeat attack on 24 September, 2019) | Chirala, Andhra Pradesh | Nagarjuna Reddy | Politician: TDP MLA brother | FIR registered against eight accused; no arrests. Chargesheet filed but trial yet to begin. |
| 36. | 19 February, 2017 | <u>Madurai</u> , <u>TN</u> | R Chandran | Drug pedlar gang | Case filed against three persons. Trial on in Chief Magistrate Court in Madurai. Accused out on bail. Chandran changed |

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|-----|----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | | | | | residence for fear of reprisal. |
| 37. | 7 April, 2017 | Mumbai, Maharashtra | Sudhir Suryawanshi and Santosh Fatate | Politicians | Chargesheet filed but culprits are out on bail. The journalist alleges the involvement of a BJP MLA and his cousin. The MLA is not mentioned in the FIR or chargesheet. |
| 38. | 7 April, 2017 | Coimbatore, TN | Gomathi Sankar | State security: Kerala Police | No case filed |
| 39. | 18 April, 2017 | Bhatinda, Haryana | Shivraj Singh Raju | Gidderbaha truck union president Charanjit Singh Dhillon and some unknown people | An FIR was lodged after great difficulty; case is on |
| 40. | 26 April, 2017 | <u>Vishakapatnam, Andhra Pradesh</u> | <u>E Babu</u> | Illegal laterite mining gang | One person arrested |
| 41. | 5 May, 2017 | Eluru, Andhra Pradesh | N Rama Reddy | Unidentified persons, sand mining gang | No progress |
| 42. | 5 August, 2017 | Jamshedpur, Jharkhand | Priya Ranjan | Unidentified persons | No information, no progress |

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|-----|--------------------|--|----------------|---|--|
| 43. | 16 August, 2017 | Khurda, Odisha | Ramesh Nath | unidentified persons | Balipatna police recorded Rath's statement. |
| 44. | 23 August, 2017 | Maharajganj Bazar, Siwan district, Uttar Pradesh | Rajesh Kumar | Unidentified persons | No information, no progress |
| 45. | 12 September, 2017 | Arwal district of Bihar. | Pankaj Mishra | Persons close to the JD(U) legislator Satyadeo Singh for Kurtha | No information, no progress |
| 46. | 12 September, 2017 | Kolkata, WB | Anjan De | Unidentified persons | No information, no progress |
| 47. | 28 September, 2017 | Varkala, Kerala | Sajeev Gopalan | State security: police | Complaint lodged but no action taken. Instead, police booked him for 'interrupting the discharge of their duty' (332 IPC). A charge sheet was submitted and the case is going on. |
| 48. | 15 November, 2017 | Badlapur, Maharashtra | Mahesh Kamat | Political party leader: SS corporator Tukaram Mahatre, | FIR lodged, both accused arrested and case is proceeding in Badlapur sessions court. However, the threats and intimidation has continued. In 2019, Kamat's father and the executive editor of the paper, Jagannath Kamat was |

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|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | and his supporter, Bandy Mhatre | kidnapped and released later. |
| 49. | 18 December, 2017 | Nawada, Bihar | Vikas Kumaralia s Sonu, | Liquor mafia | No information, no progress |
| 50. | 07 January, 2018 | Ahmedab ad, Gujarat | Damayant ee Dhar | Keval Rathod, advocate/dalit activist, from Una | Keval Rathod allegedly made to apologise at the police station. No complaint lodged and no further action has been taken. |
| 51. | 23 January, 2018 | Athiabari, Meghalay a | Biplab Dey | Timber mafia | FIR filed but no progress in investigation or trial. The journalist got no compensation, much less any response from the government. He tried pursuing the case but got no response from the police. |
| 52. | 01 April, 2018 | Khowai District, Tripura | Anup Debbarma | BJP worker Sudip Debbarma | The accused was arrested and jailed but had been let off as the case was dropped. The journalist, severely injured, received no compensation or help. |
| 53. | 17 April, 2018 | Umpling, Meghalya | Patricia Mukhim | Unidentified persons | FIR registered at Rynjah police station. But police has not been able to identify the culprits as yet. |
| 54. | 14 May, 2018 | Delhi | Sushant Kumar | Members of water tanker mafia | FIR lodged, police investigations on; perpetrators still absconding |
| 55. | 18 June, 2018 | North Tripura | Suman Debnath | Oil mafia | FIR lodged u/s 325,307,386, 34 of IPC. One person, Mihir Deb, arrested but other accused, Simin Ahmed, is still absconding. |
| 56. | 26 June, | Bisalpur, | Satyendra | Aman Jaiswal, part | FIR filed by Gangwar's brother, Jitendra |

| | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | 2018 | UP | Gangwar | of mining mafia, rice millers, contractor for food department's procurement centres, and aide | |
| 57. | 9 July, 2018 | Srinagar | Fahad Shah | J & K police | No complaint lodged. No action taken but the journalist was 'informally' told the attack was a mistake. |
| 58. | 31 July, 2018 | Jalalabad, Punjab | Sandeep Kumar and Neeraj Bali | Members of illegal sand mining gangs | A complaint was lodged and both the Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh and Jalalabad police promised stern action. A day later, the Chief Minister said the mine was not illegal and that the journalists were intimidating the miners. No action was taken. |
| 59. | 09 August, 2018 | Ramnagar, Karnataka | Shivan Chanana | Alleged illegal slaughterhouse operators | FIR lodged against seven accused under IPC sections 428 and 429 (mischief by killing or maiming animal). No FIR for attack on journalist. |
| 60. | 12 September, 2018 | West Tripura district | Subhanker Majumder | Prasenjit Saha, Tanmoy Deb and Narayan Debnath | Complaint lodged, police arrested accused only after journalists' protests. A chargesheet was filed and a trial will commence. No help or compensation from the state government. He received moral support from the journalistic fraternity. |
| 61. | 28 September, 2018 | Chennai, Tamil Nadu | Sandhya Ravishankar | Unidentified persons but suspects may be | Complaint, the sixth in all, filed with Chennai police and the state government. Investigations promised but no further action was taken. |

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|-----|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | | linked to sand mining mafia and mining conglomerate VV Minerals | |
| 62. | 29 September, 2018 | Baliapal, Balasore, Odisha | Radhakrusna Sahu | Two persons, including Ayaskant Sahu from Jamakunda | Police investigations on |
| 63. | 08 December, 2018 | Bangalore, Karnataka | Nabeela Jamaluddin and colleagues | Sand Mining gang | FIR lodged, three accused arrested. But no action taken thereafter. |

Table IV
Attacks on Journalists in 2019 (till December 17, 2019)

| Sr No | Date | Name Journalist/organisation | Location | Brief Details | Alleged Perpetrators | Links/updates |
|-------|------------------|--|----------------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| 1. | 01 January, 2019 | Reporter of Manorama News; Reporter and cameraperson of 24 News channel (identity not disclosed) | Kasargod, Kerala | Journalists covering the Women's Wall attacked. Reporter of Manorama News assaulted and camera and destroyed. Reporter and cameraperson of 24 News channel attacked, memory card from camera taken away. | RSS-BJP workers | https://scroll.in/article/907827/keerala-women-form-620-km-human-wall-to-counter-sabarimala-agitation-pledge-to-ensure-gender-justice |
| 2. | 02 January, 2019 | Suchitra, Reporter, News 18 Tamil; Ramarajan, Camera person from News 18 Tamil; KP Dhanesh, Camera Person, News 18 Malayalam; AV Mukesh, Camera Person, Mathrubhumi News; PS Arun, Camera Person, 24 News. | Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala | Journalists beaten up while covering BJP protests to Women's Wall. | BJP workers | Journalists beaten up, Sabarimala |
| 3. | 02 January, 2019 | Shaajila Ali Fathima, Kairali TV | Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala | Shajila Ali Fathima, camera person, heckled, roughed up and chased. She continued shooting BJP protests to | RSS-BJP workers | https://www.newslaundry.com/shorts/i-am-not-afraid-of-bjp-woman-cameraperson-assaulted-by-bjp-members- |

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|----|------------------|---|---------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|
| | | | | Women's Wall. despite being visibly upset. | | when-covering-sabarimala-protests |
| 4. | 22 January, 2019 | Waseem Andrabi, Nisar ul Haq, Junaid Gulzar and Mir Burhan. Waseem Andrabi and Nasir ul Haq | Shirmal, Shopian, Kashmir | Four photojournalists injured with pellet guns. They were covering protests after three youth were killed by troops. Waseem Andrabi was left with six pellet wounds to his face and neck and Nasir ul Haq's eye was injured. | Security forces | UPDATE 1-Attacked by both sides: journalists caught in the crossfire of Kashmir conflict |
| 5. | 23 January, 2019 | Reporter Prathibha Priyadarshani Mukkera and camera person Bhanu Mudhiraj of MoJo TV | Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh | The two journalists were harassed and assaulted while covering a protest | Members of a right-wing group | Mojo TV journalists assaulted:Sabarimala |
| 6. | 26 January, 2019 | Kapilendra Pradhan, Prameya newspaper reporter | Bhubaneswar, Odisha | Attacked by unidentified persons | Unidentified persons | https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/state-editions/guv-intervention-sought-for-scribes---protection.html |
| 7. | 29 January, 2019 | Biplab Chakraborty and Sadeq Mia | Sepahejala, Tripura | Unidentified persons reportedly involved in the drug trade stopped the journalists' vehicles and attacked them, destroying their cameras and taking away their mobile phones. | Drug Pedlars | https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/two-tripura-journalists-attacked-by-drug-peddlers-in-sepahijala-dist/articleshow/67729604.cms |

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|-----|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|--------------------|---|
| 8. | 30 January, 2019 | Kumaresh Nayak of Kamyab TV | Kendrapada district, Odisha | The reporter was stabbed by unidentified persons | | https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/state-editions/guv-intervention-sought-for-scribes---protection.html |
| 9. | 30 January, 2019 | Paradip reporter of OTV (unidentified) | Paradip, Odisha | Paradip reporter of OTV was attacked and seriously wounded by a particular political party supporter while collecting reports in connection with an attack on a journalist of OTV during coverage of a protest by students of Gada Sri Maa government high school. The OTV journalist was attacked and the camera equipment was also ransacked. A couple of protesting students were also injured in the process. The students of the high school had been on a protest for their demands. | | The Paradip Lock police arrested one Biswanath Behera. html |
| 10. | 02 February, 2019 | Prameya reporter Bikram Acharya | Puri-Konark marine road, Odisha | The reporter had gone to the Puri-Konark road to cover a car accident and was beaten up while he was taking photographs of a damaged car. | Unidentified youth | http://www.prameyanews.com/attack-on-puri-scribe-police-inaction-resented/ |
| 11. | 02 February, 2019 | Suman Pandey | Raipur, Chhattisgarh | Journalist Suman Pandey beaten up while he was recording a clash between members at a | BJP leaders | BJP workers beat up journalist BJP district chief Rajeev Agarwal and party workers |

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| | | | | meeting of the BJP's district-level meeting. He filed a complaint against four persons, including BJP Raipur district president Rajeev Agrawal. local BJP office-bearers Vijay Vyas, Utkarsh Trivedi and Deena Dongre. | | Vijay Vyas, Utkarsh Trivedi and Deena Dongre were arrested. The four, who were booked under Indian Penal Code Sections 342 (wrongful confinement), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 504 (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intention) were later released on a bail bond from the police station. |
| 12. | 11 February, 2019 | | Dharmanagar, Pecharthal, Sonamura, Belonia and Khowai subdivisions, Tripura | Journalists attacked while covering narcotic hauls and arrests of peddlers, including complicit police officials, in the campaign against drugs | Drug trafficking gangs, alleged police involvement | Five attacks on journalists in Tripura by suspected drug pedlars |
| 13. | 13 February, 2019 | Republic TV crew attacked in scuffle with students at AMU Reporters Nalini Sharma and Sumaira Khan, Republic TV | Aligarh, UP | The journalists got into a scuffle with the students of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) while covering an event on Tuesday, 12 February. The students allege that one of the reporters called AMU the "university of terrorists" during the live coverage, the reporters allege that they were attacked only because they were from | Students of Aligarh Muslim University | A video of the scuffle that has been broadcast by Republic shows Sharma arguing with the security on campus amid a crowd of students |

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| | | | | Republic TV. The journalists were reportedly there to cover an event of small, sidelined political parties and marginalised activists to discuss the government's failures and achievements. | | |
| 14. | 22 February, 2019 | Jibran Nazir | Pune, Maharashtra | Journalist from Jammu and Kashmir beaten up amid reports of assault on Kashmiris after the Pulwama terror attack. Initially, the dispute began as an incident of road rage at a traffic signal but when he identified himself as a journalist from Jammu and Kashmir, the two attackers beat him up, saying "we will send you back to Kashmir, do your journalism there." They snatched his mobile phone, damaged his bike and fled. | Azharuddin Shaikh and Dattatray Lavate | The journalist stated that it was not an "organised" attack. The attackers later apologised to Mr Nazir said he decided not to pursue the matter further and withdrew his police complaint. Later on Friday evening, the Pune Police registered a case, on their own, against Azharuddin Shaikh, 32, and Dattatray Lavate, 35, the two suspects. While Azharuddin Shaikh was arrested, the police were in the process of arresting Dattatray Lavate. him at the police station Journalist From Kashmir Beaten Up In Pune, Told He Would Be "Sent Back" , |
| 15. | 28 February, 2019 | University staff attack on scribes, three arrested | Ranchi, Bihar | Three journalists had gone to Ranchi University to investigate complaints of exam-related fraud when they were severely | | |

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| | | | | beaten up. | | |
| 16. | 22 March, 2019 | Chakrapani Parashar, journalist of satellite news channel News18/AssamNE | Guwahati, Assam | Parashar was attacked with knives and seriously injured by some workers of a restaurant adjacent to his office when he was on duty. He sustained serious injuries and was rushed to a nearby hospital. The journalist went with his unit to cover a fight between the main accused, who runs a restaurant in the same building as the news channel and some youth while playing Holi. News18 Assam/NE Deputy Manager (Operations) Aparup Barua said."Though the news was not telecast, the restaurant owner started an argument with Parashar for covering the incident. In the evening when about five to six of our journalists, including Parashar, went to the restaurant to settle the matter amicably, the accused took out a dagger and stabbed him repeatedly," Mr Barua said. | Hotel staff, detained | TV journalist attacked with knives in restaurant |
| 17. | 22 March, | Reporter, Anumodh, and | Kozhikode, | The journalists were attacked | CPM supporters | CPI(M) workers allegedly |

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| | 2019 | cameraman, Aravidh, of Asianet News, Kozhikode bureau | Kerala | while covering a public event by CPI(M) Polit Bureau member Pinarayi Vijayan. The attackers reportedly objected to their taking pictures of empty chairs when the audience left after Vijayan's speech. | | attack Asianet journalists in Kozhikode |
| 18. | 22 March, 2019 | Chandan Paikaray | Odisha | The journalist, working in a television channel, reportedly attacked when he had gone to cover election news | Unidentified supporters of BJP MLA Jayanta Kumar Sarangi | Paikaray lodged a complaint at Astaranga Police station. Carrying out investigation, the cops subsequently arrested one accused involved |
| 19. | 7 April, 2019 | Congress workers beat up journalist for taking photos of empty chairs at party meeting | Tamil Nadu | The journalist from a Tamil weekly magazine was assaulted by Congress party workers, while he was taking photographs of empty chairs at the party's election meeting in Tamil Nadu. | Congress supporters | |
| 20. | 12 April, 2019 | Murad Patel | Satara, Maharashtra | The journalist, working with a vernacular newspaper, was attacked by unidentified persons. | Unidentified persons | Journalist attacked with stones in Satara ; Satara Superintendent of Police Tejaswi Satpute said a case was registered under IPC section 307 (attempt to murder) against unidentified persons. |
| 21. | 14 April, 2019 | झूटी कर रहे पत्रकार को ASI ने पीटा | Delhi | वेस्ट दिल्ली के राजौरी गार्डन थाना पुलिस के एक एसआई ने अपनी झूटी कर रहे एक पत्रकार को पीटा | ASI, Delhi Police | |

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| | | | | दिया। पत्रकार को उस वक्त पीटा गया जब वह एक घटना से संबंधित मामले की विडियो बना रहे थे। आरोप है कि तभी वर्दी पहने एएसआई ने हेलमेट उतारकर पत्रकार को दो बार पीटा। हालांकि, मामला उच्च अधिकारियों की जानकारी में आने के बाद एएसआई को लाइन हाजिर कर दिया गया है। | | |
| 22. | 27 April, 2019 | Rajen Deka | Tegheriattari village, Nalbari, Assam | Deka, a correspondent with Assamese daily Dainik Asom, allegedly assaulted by BJP activist Ripul Deka alias Baba. Another youth, identified as Jintu Medhi, uploaded a post on social media threatening to kill the journalist. | An FIR has been lodged against both Ripul Deka and Jintu Medhi | https://thewire.in/media/assam-journalists-attacked |
| 23. | 29 April, 2019 | Reporter Shantashree and channel crew of Republic TV | Asansol West Bengal | TMC workers attacked the journalists covering violence in the constituency during the fourth phase of Lok Sabha elections. | TMC supporters | Republic TV crew attacked in Asansol |
| 24. | 31 May, 2019 | Pratap Patra, Samaj daily | Balasore, Odisha | The reporter was attacked on his head, chest and hands with sharp weapons. Baliapal police station inspector in-charge Prabhu Kalyan Acharya said the journalist survived as he was wearing a helmet. | Sand mining mafia | |
| 25. | 12 June, | Journalist with news | Shamli, UP | The journalist was beaten up on | GRP personnel | Stripped, thrashed, urinated |

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|-----|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
| | 2019 | channel | | camera by a group of GRP personnel led by SHO Rakesh Kumar when he was covering a train derailment in Dhimanpura on Tuesday night. The group was seen repeatedly slapping and thrashing the journalist while he tries to reason with them. Later, the journalist alleged that he was subjected to torture. He said, "They were in plain clothes. One hit my camera and it fell down. When I picked it up, they hit and abused me. I was locked up, stripped and they urinated in my mouth." | led by SHO Rakesh Kumar. | upon: UP journalist faces police wrath for doing his job |
| 26. | 12 June, 2019 | Journalist team attacked | Tumkur, Karnataka | The journalists were allegedly attacked by the employees of a pharmaceutical firm, Beloor Biotech Boylor, when they trying to report on the issues faced by the people due to the company's presence in the area. The workers of attacked the journalists and they were admitted in the nearby hospital for the treatment. | Pharma company workers | https://www.ndtv.com/karnataka-news/karnataka-journalist-attacked-by-employees-of-pharmaceutical-company-in-tumkur-2052038 |
| 27. | 31 July, | Gopal Chatterjee, | Suri, Birbhum, | Crude bombs hurled at the | Sand mining | The police have started probes |

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| | 2019 | correspondent, ABP Ananda | | house of the journalist. Within two hours of the incident, unidentified miscreants threw similar bombs in front of the bungalow of district magistrate Moumita Godara Basu in Suri. Chatterjee had reported on illegal stocking of sand recently and mentioned such miners in his police complaint. | | into both the incidents. "We have started investigations into both incidents. No one has been arrested so far," district police chief Shyam Singh said. Bombs Hurlled At Birbhum Reporter Home |
| 28. | 30 July, 2019 | Jitendra Sharma | Panipat, Haryana | Journalist Jitendra Sharma said he was assaulted and there was an attempt to kidnap him by supporters of the self-styled godwoman when he asked an inconvenient question at a meeting she presided over. | Supporters of Radhe Maa | https://hindi.oneindia.com/news/india/radhe-maa-supporters-booked-for-assault-on-journalist-in-panipat-518082.html |
| 29. | 11 August, 2019 | Dolendra Prasad, the editor of Zameen Rythu | Nellore, Andhra Pradesh | YSR Congress party MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy attacked the editor of the popular weekly Telugu magazine. Prasad said that the MLA and some of his supporters barged into his house, and abused him and later assaulted him over the publication of a report that was critical of him. | YSR congress MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy | Police filed a case against the MLA a day later Dolendra Prasad attacked |
| 30. | 23 | M Nagarjuna Reddy | Kundooru | Unidentified persons attacked | A Krishna | Journalist Nagaraj attacked |

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| | September, 2019 | | village near Chinna Ganjam town, Ongole, Andhra Pradesh | the journalist with sticks and knives. His condition was said to be serious and he was shifted him to Chirala government hospital. Earlier in the day, he had submitted a complaint at a grievance programme in the SP office. Reddy had also lodged assault complaints against A Krishna Mohan, former Chirala MLA. | Mohan, former Chirala MLA. | |
| 31. | 30 September, 2019 | Ripudaman Singh Kushwah | Lahar area of Bhind dist., MP | The journalist, who runs a local newspaper 'India Aajkal' was attacked for writing of the nexus between Congress minister Govind Singh and local land mafia | Minister Govind Singh and supporters | SP Rudolph Alwaris said an FIR has been lodged. MP journalist beaten by four masked persons |
| 32. | 6 December, 2019 | Principal correspondent at The New Indian Express (identity not disclosed) | Bengaluru, Karnataka | An Assistant Commissioner of Police slapped the journalist while covering a protest. The video of the ACP slapping the reporter, too, has now gone viral on social media. | | ACP slaps journalist videographing threat to protestor https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/bengaluru-acp-allegedly-slaps-journalist-commissioner-promises-inquiry-113566 |
| 33. | 12 December, 2019 | Prag TV staff beaten | Guwahati, Assam | CRPF officials stormed into the office of Prag TV and and beat up three of its staffers on December 12. The incident was | CRPF | https://scroll.in/latest/946675/assam-police-beat-up-staffers-of-news-channel-inside-its-guwahati-office |

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| | | | | recorded on CCTV footage and the video has now gone viral on social media. | | |
| 34. | 15 December, 2019 | Bushra Sheikh | Delhi NCR | Bushra Sheikh, a journalist with the BBC said as she was covering the students' protest in South Delhi, a male cop pulled her hair, hurled abuses and hit her with a baton. I came here for BBC's coverage. The police took away my phone and broke it. A male cop pulled my hair. They hit me with a baton and when I asked them for my phone, they hurled abuses at me. | Delhi police | https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/citizenship-amendment-act-protest-jamia-millia-islamia-students-journalist-attacked-delhi-police-1628500-2019-12-15 |
| 35. | 16 December, 2019 | Ujjwal Roy and Sarabjeet Singh ANI Reporter and Cameraperson | Delhi NCR | The duo were assaulted, allegedly by students, while covering protests near Jamia Milia Islamia University Gate-1. | Alleged students | https://twitter.com/ANI/status/1206514386728173569?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etwembed%7Ctwtterm%5E1206514386728173569&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.freepressjournal.in%2Findia%2Ftwitter-users-fume-after-ani-journalists-attacked-in-jamia-milia-islamia |
| 36. | 17 December, 2019 | Azaan Javaid and Anis Zargar | Srinagar, J&K | Assaulted, abused and phone snatched from him for clicking pictures of police beating up students near Islamia College of | J&K Police, Rashid Khan, Station House Officer of | https://theprint.in/india/abused-hit-phone-snatched-theprint-journalist-azaan-javaid-beaten-up-by-jk-police/336760/ |

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| | | | | Science and Commerce. | Srinagar's Rainawari area and SP Sajad Shah | |
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Annexure I

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †510**

TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 7TH FEBRUARY, 2018/MAGHA 18, 1939 (SAKA)

ORGANISATIONS BEHIND ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS

†510. SHRI P.L. PUNIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of attacks made on journalists and the number of journalists killed during the last three years, the details thereof including State-wise cases;

(b) the names of the organisations whose role has come to light behind the continuous attacks on journalists and the action taken thereon including details thereof; and

(c) the number of such cases in which culprits have been arrested and the number of unresolved cases so far, the State-wise details thereof?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
(SHRI HANSRAJ GANGARAM AHIR)**

(a) to (c): As per data compiled by National Crime Records Bureau, the information on attacks on media persons for the period 2014-17 is at Annexure. 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. This Ministry has no information whether any organization or organizations are responsible for attacks on media persons.

Annexure

State/UT-wise cases registered (CR) and Person Arrested (PAR) for attack on media persons (under section 325, 326, 326A & 326B IPC) during 2014-2017.

| SL | State/UT | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | 2017 | |
|----|--------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | CR | PAR | CR | PAR | CR | PAR | CR | PAR |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 0 |
| 2 | Arunachal Pradesh | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Assam | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 4 | Bihar | 22 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Chhattisgarh | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6 | Goa | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 7 | Gujarat | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | Haryana | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 9 | Himachal Pradesh | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 10 | Jammu & Kashmir | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 | Jharkhand | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 12 | Karnataka | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 13 | Kerala | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 14 | Madhya Pradesh | 7 | 10 | 19 | 32 | 24 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | Maharashtra | 5 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 16 | Manipur | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| 17 | Meghalaya | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18 | Mizoram | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19 | Nagaland | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 20 | Odisha | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 21 | Punjab | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 22 | Rajasthan | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 22 |
| 23 | Sikkim | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 24 | Tamil Nadu | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | Telangana | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 26 | Tripura | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 |
| 27 | Uttar Pradesh | 63 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 3 | NR | NR |
| 28 | Uttarakhand | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | West Bengal | NR | NR | NR | NR | NR | NR | NR | NR |
| | TOTAL STATE(S) | 114 | 32 | 28 | 41 | 47 | 41 | 15 | 26 |
| 30 | A & N Islands | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | Chandigarh | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | D&N Haveli | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 33 | Daman & Diu | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | NR | NR | NR | NR |
| 34 | Delhi UT | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 35 | Lakshadweep | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 36 | Puducherry | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL UT(S) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | TOTAL (ALL INDIA) | 114 | 32 | 28 | 41 | 47 | 41 | 15 | 26 |

Source: Monthly Crime Statistics

NR: Implies data not received.