

JOURNALIST UNDER FIRE

**Violation of Journalists' Rights in India
2000-2018**

Human Rights Law Network

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Annex A.1 – Grant application form - Concept note

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23/04/2019 at 12:00 (Brussels date and time)

(in order to convert to local time click [here](#)²)

Title of the action:	Using the Law to increase access to justice for Human Rights Defenders
Name of the lead applicant	Socio Legal Information Centre
Nationality of the lead applicant ³	India

Dossier No

(for official use only)

- ¹ Online submission via PROSPECT is mandatory for this call for proposals (see section 2.2.2 of the guidelines). In PROSPECT all dates and times are expressed in Brussels time. Applicants should note that the IT support is open from Monday to Friday 08:30 to 18:30 Brussels time (except for public holidays).
- ² An example of a time converter tool available online: <http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/converter.html>
- ³ An organisation's statutes must show that it was established under the national law of the country concerned and that the head office is located in an eligible country. Any organisation established in a different country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation. See the footnotes to the guidelines for the call.

Introduction: A dangerous profession

Journalism in India has always been a difficult calling. The country's diversity, complex political dynamics and sharp inequalities of caste and class present a challenge for journalists across the board. Despite the constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of expression, attacks on the press are rife, from murder and physical attacks to online trolling, intimidation and slapping of false cases as a form of harassment.

The sources of threats are many: from governments, armed militants, politicians, corrupt officials, corporations, land mafia, and fundamentalists of all religions who continue to attempt to silence journalists.

Too many have paid the ultimate price for uncovering the truth. From 2000-2018, as many as 64 journalists have been killed in the line of duty, 55 of them deliberately targeted. Uttar Pradesh, with a low record of law and order holds the distinction of the state with the highest number of journalists killed since 2000 (12), followed by conflict-wracked Assam and Jammu and Kashmir with six killings each.

The wall of impunity has yet to be dented, with very few perpetrators having been brought to justice. A notable exception was the awarding of a life sentence to self-styled 'godman' Gurmeet Ram Rahim and three others by a CBI special court on January 17, 2019, holding them guilty of the murder of Sirsa-based journalist Ram Chander Chatterpatti in 2002.

With the recent exceptions of the cold-blooded shooting of Gauri Lankesh in 2017 in Bangalore and Shujaat Bukhari in 2018 in Srinagar, it is journalists in small towns and remote corners of India, working with the regional press, who are particularly vulnerable to threat, intimidation and assault. With no job security, regular or decent wages, medical or accident cover, these intrepid news gatherers risk their all to investigate and report news in the public interest. In many cases, they are stringers and freelancers, who are fighting prolonged and lone battles in courts, often without any support from the media houses they work for.

In recent years, the state in the name of "national security" is increasingly using draconian laws to crack down on press freedom; restrict the rights and security of journalists and deny access to information. Cases of defamation criminal and SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) are deployed in order to silence and induce self-censorship – a grave threat to freedom of expression.

The digital transition has transformed access to and dissemination of news, views and information in unprecedented ways. Alongside, governments and corporations are seeking to control and regulate this flow in increasingly aggressive ways. This ever-increasing control, hearteningly, has also been accompanied by a push-back from sections of the media community as well as courts, where 'reasonable restrictions' on the fundamental right to free expression are being debated with vigour.

As a response to the increasing intolerance toward independent journalism and the rising violence against journalists, this report seeks to systematically document the killings of media persons in the line of duty as well as cases aimed to clampdown on freedom of expression. This database will form the basis of advocacy to challenge violations of journalists' rights and curtailment of the right to freedom of expression.

(A) JOURNALISTS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY FROM 2000-2018

Year-wise journalists killed in India: 2000 to 2018¹

State	Total	Journalists killed	State/s
2000	4		Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Manipur, Tamil Nadu
2001	1	1	Uttar Pradesh
2002	3	3	Haryana, Manipur, Uttar Pradesh
2003	3	3	Delhi, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir
2004	4	3	Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir
2006	2	2	Assam, Maharashtra
2007	1	1	Jharkhand
2008	6	4	Assam (2), Bihar, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir (2)
2009	1	1	Assam
2010	3	2	Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh
2011	2	2	Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra
2012	6	4	Assam, Madhya Pradesh (2), Manipur, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal
2013	5	4	Chhattisgarh (2), Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh (2)
2014	2	2	Andhra Pradesh, Orissa
2015	6	5	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra (2), Uttar Pradesh (3)
2016	4	4	Bihar (2), Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh
2017	5	5	Karnataka, Tripura (2), Uttar Pradesh (2)
2018	7	5	Bihar (2), Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand (2), Madhya Pradesh
2000-2018	65 (62 men, 3 women)	55	Across 17 States in India

State-wise journalists killed in India: 2000 to 2018

¹ Killings here indicate (i) targeted killings related to journalistic work and (ii) unnatural death in the course of duty

Andhra Pradesh	3	2004	2010	2014					
Assam	6	2004	2006	2008 (2)	2009	2012			
Bihar	5	2008	2016 (2)		2018 (2)				
Chhattisgarh	5	2010	2011	2013 (2)				2018	
Delhi	1	2003							
Gujarat	1	2016							
Haryana	3	2002	2003	2004					
Jammu and Kashmir	6	2000	2003	2004	2008 (2)			2018	
Jharkhand	5	2000	2007	2013	2018 (2)				
Karnataka	1	2017							
Madhya Pradesh	4	2012 (2)		2015	2018				
Maharashtra	4	2006	2011	2015 (2)					
Manipur	4	2000	2002	2008				2012	
Orissa	1	2014							
Tamil Nadu	1	2000							
Tripura	2	2017 (2)							
Uttar Pradesh	12	2001	2002	2010	2012	2013 (2)	2015 (3)	2016	2017 (2)
West Bengal	1	2012							
Across 17 States in India	65(62 men, 3 women)	2000 - 2018							

YEAR 2000

1. Adhir Rai

Name	Adhir Rai
Publication / Channel	Freelance
Date	18 March 2000
Place	Deoghar, Jharkhand
Targeted Killing	Yes

Adhir Rai, a freelance journalist was murdered in the temple town of Deoghar, while on assignment in March 2000. The state of Jharkhand was formed later in the year, in November 2000. In 2016, the Jharkhand Journalists Association demanded a probe either by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) or a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the murders of journalists in the state.

2. V Selvaraj


Name	V Selvaraj
Publication / Channel	Nakkheeran (Tamil bi-weekly)
Date	31 July 2000
Place	Perambalur, Tamil Nadu
Targeted Killing	Yes

V Selvaraj, a reporter for the Tamil-language biweekly *Nakkheeran*, was murdered in his hometown of Perambalur, Tamil Nadu. He was attacked in the night near the bus station by about a dozen men who hacked him to death. He died instantly.

Editor of *Nakkheeran*, R Gopal. suspected that Selvaraj may have been murdered for writing about the wrongdoings of officials in Trichy (Tiruchirappalli).

The police caught eight suspects, 45 minutes after the crime was committed. However, they stated that the motive behind the crime had not been established. The Crime Branch Central Investigation Department, India's top-level investigative agency had not reported any significant progress.

3. Pradeep Bhatia

Name	Pradeep Bhatia	
Publication / Channel	Hindustan Times	
Date	10 August 2000	
Place	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir	
Targeted Killing	No	

Pradeep Bhatia, a photojournalist for an English-daily *Hindustan Times*, was one of people killed in a bomb attack in the Kashmir capital, Srinagar on 10th August 2000. At least 14 people were killed, and 30 were injured. Bhatia died of shrapnel wounds to his heart.

The bombing was claimed by the militant Kashmiri separatist group Hizb-ul Mujahideen.

4. Thounaojam Brajamani Singh

Name	Thounaojam Brajamani Singh
Publication / Channel	Manipur News
Date	20 August 2000
Place	Imphal, Manipur
Targeted Killing	Yes

Thounaojam Brajamani Singh, the editor of an English-daily Manipur News, was assassinated in Imphal, the capital of Manipur State. He was riding a scooter in the night when two unidentified men stopped him and shot at him twice in the head at point-blank range. He was riding with Henry Salam, a computer operator, who was asked to stand back and look away.

Days before the murder, Brajamani had received death threats, and wrote about it in his paper as well. He was also an activist who helped found the Journalists Front Manipur to unite the fragmented community of local journalists.

YEAR 2001

1. Moolchand Yadav

Name	Moolchand Yadav
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Publication / Channel	Freelance
Date	30 July 2001
Place	Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes

Moolchand Yadav, a freelance reporter who regularly contributed to Hindi-language dailies, including *Jansatta* and *Punjab Kesari*, was shot dead on the street in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh. His colleagues said that he had been murdered by those angered by his exposes about local corruption and vested interests.

YEAR 2002

1. Paritosh Pandey

Name	Paritosh Pandey
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Publication / Channel	Jansatta
Date	14 April 2002
Place	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes

Paritosh Pandey, a crime reporter for the Hindi-language daily *Jansatta*, was shot dead on 14 April 2002 in Lucknow. Pandey was shot in his home at 10:30pm, around 5-6 shots were fired at point-blank range in his head and chest. He died instantly. *Jansatta* editor Ghanshyam Pankaj said that Pandey was likely targeted because he was reporting regularly on criminal gangs.

In July 2002, it was reported that a suspect who helped arrange Pandey's murder was arrested though in connection to another crime. This suspect said that Pandey was targeted due to some information he had on the crime the suspect was arrested for. However, in September 2002, another individual arrested for his involvement in Pandey's killing suggested that the murder was due to a personal dispute.

2. YambemMeghajit Singh

Name	YambemMeghajit Singh
Publication / Channel	Northeast Vision (TV)
Date	13 October 2002
Place	Imphal, Manipur
Targeted Killing	Yes

YambemMeghajit Singh was found dead, blindfolded, and with his hands tied, late in the evening in Imphal on 13 October 2002.

He had been beaten with bamboo sticks and shot in the head, according to local journalists.

Local journalists are not sure if this was related to his work for *Northeast Vision* as his work was not particularly controversial. However, he had criticised separatist groups and local politicians on his programme. Meghajit was also a dealer in semiprecious stones, and some speculate he was killed in connection with this business.

3. Ram ChanderChaterpatti

Name	Ram ChanderChaterpatti	
Publication / Channel	PooraSach	

Date	21 November 2002	
Place	Sirsa, Haryana	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Ram ChanderChaterpatti, editor of the Hindi-language newspaper *PooraSach*, died on 21 November 2002, of injuries sustained in an assassination attempt made a month earlier on 24 October 2002. A gunman fired several shots at Chaterpatti at his home in Sirsa, Haryana.

Three suspects were arrested, including the alleged gunman and a leader of the Sirsa-based religious sect Dera Sacha Sauda. Members of the Dera Sacha Sauda are said to have ordered his murder because of his reporting on sexual abuse and other crimes allegedly committed at the group's compound in Sirsa.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) India's premier investigating agency filed a chargesheet in case of this murder in 2007. A key witness who said that Gurmeet Ram Rahim, the of the Dera Sacha Sauda had ordered the elimination of the journalist, had turned hostile in 2012. In 2018, he was recalled as a witness again, and he said he had earlier turned hostile due to threats.

On January 17, 2019, a CBI special court handed down a life sentence to self-styled 'godman' Gurmeet Ram Rahim and three others (Kuldeep Singh, Nirmal Singh and Krishan Lal) by a CBI special court on January 17, 2019, holding them guilty of the murder of journalist Ram ChanderChaterpatti in 2002 in Sirsa. All the four were convicted under Sections 302 (murder) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 each.

YEAR 2003


1. Vikram Singh Bisht

Name	Vikram Singh Bisht
Publication / Channel	Asian News International (ANI)
Date	09 January 2003
Place	New Delhi, Delhi
Targeted Killing	Yes

Vikram Singh Bisht was a cameraman for the Delhi-based Asian News International. In December 2001, he was covering an attack on the Indian Parliament by a suicide squad and was shot at by the suicide squad. The shooting left him paralysed from waist-down. On 09 January 2003, he died following internal injuries after falling from his wheelchair the previous evening.

Fourteen people died in this attack. In 2002, an Indian court sentenced three men from Indian-controlled Kashmir to death for planning the attack.

2. Parvaz Mohammed Sultan

Name	Parvaz Mohammed Sultan	
Publication / Channel	News and Feature Alliance (NAFA)	
Date	31 January 2003	
Place	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Parvaz Mohammed Sultan, editor of the independent newswire service News and Feature Alliance (NAFA), Srinagar, was shot dead on 31 January 2003. Two men, who entered his office in the evening, shot at him at 5:30pm. Since the pistol used had a silencer, no one stopped the men when they left his office. Sultan was rushed to the hospital but declared dead within minutes.

Though there were no specific threats to him, his colleagues said that newswire services such as NAFA were under constant pressure to carry statements issued by competing political and militant groups.

The police blamed the murder on militant groups, but no arrests have been made. No group claimed responsibility.

3. Parmanand Goyal

Name	Parmanand Goyal
Publication / Channel	Punjab Kesari

Date	18 September 2003
Place	Kaithal, Haryana
Targeted Killing	Yes

Parmanand Goyal, a journalist with the daily *Punjab Kesari*, was shot and killed by three unidentified assailants at his home in Kaithal, Haryana. Goyal's son reportedly answered the door for the three men who asked to speak with his father. The son overheard the men threatening Goyal to stop writing about a local political figure and the police. Later, Goyal was found wounded in the backyard. He was rushed to the hospital but was declared dead on arrival.

Earlier, in May 2003, Goyal had been arrested on corruption charges, and released on bail. His family said that these charges were false.

YEAR 2004

1. Indra Mohan Hakasam

Name	Indra Mohan Hakasam
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Publication / Channel	Amar Assam
Date	Kidnapped in June 2003, date of possible death in-between 2003- 2004.
Place	Goalpara, Assam
Targeted Killing	Yes

Indra Mohan Hakasam, a correspondent with the Assam-language daily *Amar Assam*, was abducted at gunpoint on 24 June 2003 from his home in Goalpara by members of the armed insurgent group United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).

In November 2003, local newspapers reported that ULFA had killed Hakasam. Another report said that on 20 February 2004, ULFA told police officials that Hakasam had died of unspecified illnesses. However, local police believe that lower-level ULFA members likely killed Hakasam on the day of his abduction.

CPJ reported that state intelligence officials accused Hakasam of having good contacts with the ULFA and claimed that ULFA field operatives would often deposit extorted money at Hakasam's house for safekeeping. Local sources say that Hakasam may have had a disagreement with the ULFA relating to extortion money, which could have ultimately led to his death.

2. VeeraboinaYadagiri

Name	VeeraboinaYadagiri
Publication / Channel	Andhra Prabha
Date	21 February 2004
Place	Medak, Andhra Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes


VeeraboinaYadagiri, a veteran journalist and staff correspondent for the local, Telugu-language daily Andhra Prabha, was stabbed to death on 21 February 2004 near his home in Medak.

It is reported that he was murdered in reprisal for his articles investigating the illegal sale of home-brewed liquor, known locally as toddy. Yadagiri had received threats in this regard and had registered a police complaint as well.

On the night of his murder, he was meeting with several people involved in the toddy trade. He was murdered by one of the men who accompanied him on his way home. The police arrested four suspects and charged them with involvement in the murder. One of them was Siddaram Reddy, a local journalist and a friend of Yadagiri. The police accused Reddy of being the true culprit.

The Andhra Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) pressured the federal Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate the state's prosecution of Yadagiri's murder. The CBI began an inquiry into the handling of the case, postponing the trials of all the defendants.

3. AsiyaJeelani

Name	AsiyaJeelani	
Publication / Channel	Freelance	
Date	20 April 2004	
Place	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir	
Targeted Killing	No	

AsiyaJeelani, a freelance journalist, was working with the Coalition of Civil society to prepare a report on its election monitoring activities. On 20 April 2004, a van carrying Jeelani detonated an explosive device on a rural road in Kashmir. Jeelani died on the way to the hospital. The driver of the van was also killed.

4. Dilip Mohapatra

Name	Dilip Mohapatra
Publication / Channel	Aji Kagoj
Date	08 November 2004
Place	Bhagirathipur, Orissa
Targeted Killing	Yes

Dilip Mohapatra, the editor of the Oriya-language newspaper *Aji Kagoj*, disappeared on November 8. The next day his body was discovered on the NH-42 national highway, with his hands and legs tied and with a head wound.

Local journalists could not think of any particular motive. However, the police detained one suspect in connection with the case and suggested that the killing was planned and intentional.

The IFJ reported that Mohapatra's murder was connected to his work as a journalist relating to recent exposes run by the newspaper about the timber and narcotics mafia in the region.

YEAR 2006

1. PrahladGoala

Name	PrahladGoala
Publication / Channel	Asomiya Khabar

Date	06 January 2006
Place	Golaghat, Assam
Targeted Killing	Yes

PrahladGoala was murdered near his home in Golaghat, Assam on 06 January 2006. He was riding his motorcycle when he was rammed by a truck. When the police arrived, they found that Goala had been stabbed several times.

Goala had written a series of articles linking local forestry service officials to timber smuggling. Forest warden Zamman Jinnah had made death threats against Goala after these articles were published.

The police arrested forest warden Zamman Jinnah in connection with the death after Goala's widow filed a First Information Report (FIR). Jinnah was released on bail, and two other suspects, who were not forestry service employees, were also taken into custody.

2.Arun Narayan Dekate

Name	Arun Narayan Dekate
Publication / Channel	Tarun Bharat
Date	10 June 2006
Place	Nagpur, Maharashtra
Targeted Killing	Yes

Arun Narayan Dekate, a reported with the Marathi-language daily *Tarun Bharat*, died on 10 June 2006. He was pounded with rocks by four unidentified men on 08 June when he was riding a motorcycle with a friend. Two days later, he died from his injuries in a hospital.

The police did not cite a motive for the attack. However, Dekate had written articles about illegal gambling in Takalghat district in Nagpur and had cooperated with the police in their investigations on this illegal gambling.

YEAR 2007

1. Pramod Kumar Munna

Name	Pramod Kumar Munna
Publication /	SamkaleenTapman

Channel	
Date	16 December 2007
Place	Deoghar, Jharkhand
Other	Yes

Pramod Kumar Munna, a journalist with the Hindi-language weekly *Samkaleen Tapman*, was gunned down on 16 December 2007. He was shot after bombs were hurled at him on Sunday evening after he had reached the Baidhyanath Dham railway station upon receiving a call on his cell phone.

Munna was often threatened for his work, especially his stories on Banka Giridhari Yadav, a parliamentarian with alleged links to Maoist rebels. Munna was the victim of an attack in which he lost an eye, and in 2003, his house was set on fire.

Munna's widow Parvati Devi, accused the state's minister of urban development and tourism, Harinarayan Rai, and Yadav, of masterminding Munna's murder. However, the police said that the murder appeared to be linked to past grudges involving Maoist rebels or known criminals. Also, the police arrested two suspects of whom one was a person linked to Yadav.

YEAR 2008

1. Mohammed Muslimuddin

Name	Mohammed Muslimuddin
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Publication / Channel	AsomiyaPratidin
Date	01 April 2008
Place	Barpukhuri, Assam
Targeted Killing	Yes

Mohammed Muslimuddin, a correspondent with the Assamese-language daily *AsomiyaPratidin*, was attacked by about six assailants with sharp weapons near his home in Barpukhuri in Assam on 01 April 2008. He died on his way to the hospital of multiple injuries to his head, chest and stomach.

Senior editors at the daily said that Muslimuddin was targeted for writing about criminal activities, including the illegal drug trade, in the weeks leading up to his murder. His reporting implicated local influential figures and politicians.

Three suspects were arrested in connection with the murder.

2. Ashok Sodhi

Name	Ashok Sodhi	
Publication / Channel	Daily Excelsior	
Date	11 May 2008	
Place	Samba, Jammu and Kashmir	
Targeted Killing	No	

Ashok Sodhi, a senior photographer with the local English-language *Daily Excelsior* in Indian-controlled Kashmir, was killed in crossfire in Samba, close to the border with Pakistan.

Suspected militants holding several hostages exchanged fire with security forces. Three militants, one soldier, and three other civilians were killed in the battle, which lasted several hours.

3. Javed Ahmed Mir


Name	Javed Ahmed Mir
Publication / Channel	Channel 9
Date	13 August 2008

Place	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir
Targeted Killing	No

Javed Ahmed Mir, a cameraman with a local news station, Channel 9 was killed while he was covering protests in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. He was covering a growing protest rally on a main road in the state's summer capital, Srinagar, and was shot in the head when security forces opened fire on the protesters. Mir was waiting for equipment to arrive from the news channel when he was shot. 26 people were killed that day.

A press release published by a group of Kashmiri journalists alleged that the attacks on the press were carried out by design.

4. KonsamRishikanta Singh

Name	KonsamRishikanta Singh	
Publication / Channel	Imphal Free Press	
Date	17 November 2008	
Place	Imphal, Manipur	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Towards the evening of November 17, 2008 the bullet-riddled corpse of a young journalist was found near the Langol Hills.

KonsamRishikanta Singh, 22 of KakwaNingomthongSairomLeirak in Imphal West, a desk staff of the daily *The Imphal Free Press*, had not reported for work that evening. No militant group active in the state claimed responsibility for the killing. Journalists' unions and vehemently protested the killing and went off the air and off the stands in protest.

It was only in May 2013 that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) charge-sheeted two persons for the killing of Rishikanta. One those charge-sheeted is ThounaojamHerajit Singh, head constable of Imphal West Police Commando, who is also one of the accused in the alleged fake encounter case at KhwairambandKeithel in which one ChungkhamSanjit and a pregnant woman Thokchom Rabina were killed on July 23, 2009.

5. Jagjit Saikia

Name	Jagjit Saikia
Publication / Channel	Amar Asom
Date	20 November 2008

Place	Kokrajhar, Assam
Targeted Killing	Yes

Jagjit Saikia, a district correspondent for the Assamese-language daily *Amar Asom*, was shot dead on 20 November 2008. Unidentified assailants shot Saikia several times at point-blank range near his office.

Saikia frequently wrote about rivalries between armed groups and political organizations fighting over control of Kokrajhar and neighbouring western districts of Assam that have a predominantly ethnic Bodo population.

In January 2009, it was reported that the police arrested the main culprit behind the killing of Saikia.

6. Vikas Ranjan

Name	Vikas Ranjan
Publication / Channel	Hindustan
Date	25 November 2008
Place	Samastipur, Bihar
Targeted Killing	Yes

Vikas Ranjan, a correspondent for the Hindi-language daily *Hindustan*, was shot on 25 November 2008. When Ranjan left his office that evening, three men on motorbikes fired several shots at him. He was declared on arrival at the hospital.

Alok Mohit, editor of the English-language sister-paper, *Hindustan Times*, said that Ranjan wrote about crime and corruption, and he had been receiving threats for some time. Three of his recent reports on counterfeit merchandise and stolen goods trafficking had sparked official inquiries.

The First Information Report says that two unnamed people and two alleged conspirators, Hariom Lal and Vinod Deo, along with an alleged shooter named Pinku Kumar, were involved in the killing. A month later, police arrested Krishna Yadav, for allegedly being a hired killer. In 2009, Lal and Deo filed a petition seeking bail. However, in April 2010, the Patna High Court rejected their plea and ordered them to be taken into custody.

YEAR 2009

1. Anil Mazumdar

Name	Anil Mazumdar
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Publication / Channel	Aji
Date	24 March 2009
Place	Guwahati, Assam
Targeted Killing	Yes

Anil Mazumdar, the editor of an Assamese-language daily *Aji*, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen on 24 March 2009 as he was returning from his office outside his home in Rajgarh in Guwahati. He was declared brought dead on arrival to the hospital.


Mazumdar had been supportive of peace talks between the separatist guerrilla group, United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), which operates in the state, and the government. Days before his killing, security officials had warned journalists in the area that rebel groups could target some of them before an upcoming general election.

The same evening that Mazumdar was killed, suspected militants shot dead a leader with the liberation front who was supportive of peace talks.

Three years after his death, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) took over the case from the Assam police. In 2016, the CBI filed a closure report naming Bijoy Phukan, a deceased ULFA militant, as his killer.

YEAR 2010

1. Hem Chandra Pandey

Name	Hem Chandra Pandey	
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Publication / Channel	Freelance journalist	
Date	02 July 2010	
Place	Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Hem Chandra Pandey, a freelance journalist who contributed to Hindi-language newspapers, was killed on 02 July 2010, in a shootout between Maoists and state police in Adilabad, Andhra Pradesh, southern district of Adilabad, news reports said. In the same shootout, Cherukuri Rajkumar, aka 'Azad', a leader of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) was also killed.

Communist Party spokesperson GudsaUsendi and Pandey's wife Babita said that Pandey was meeting with Azad for an interview, and that they had been set up by the police. Pandey's wife denied that he was involved with Maoists. A press release by the Communist Party's north regional bureau on 03 July said that Pandey was a member although party leaders also called him a journalist in local news reports. But on 04 July, the Maoist party said that Pandey was not a member of the group and he was assassinated as he was a witness to Azad's murder.

The police have maintained that it was an encounter killing. In April 2011, the Supreme Court of India ordered an investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) based on Pandey's wife's petition that claimed this was a 'fake encounter killing'. A year later, the final report submitted to the Supreme Court says that the killing was a 'real' encounter. Babita Pandey continues her quest for justice.

2. Vijay Pratap Singh

Name	Vijay Pratap Singh	
Publication / Channel	Indian Express	
Date	20 July 2010	
Place	Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	No	

Vijay Pratap Singh, a senior correspondent for an English-language daily *Indian Express*, was injured in a bombing on 12 July 2010. He died of his injuries on 20 July 2010. Singh was interviewing Nand Gopal Gupta, minister for institutional finance. As they were stepping out of the house at 10.50am, a bomb, kept in a moped and triggered by a remote-control device exploded.

Two members of the local Samajwadi Party were arrested. The motive was said to be political and business rivalries. Police said they were unable to trace the owner of the second-hand moped used in the bombing. In February 2011, Delhi police and a special task

force from Uttar Pradesh arrested Samajwadi Party Member of Legislative Assembly Vijay Mishra in connection with the bombing.

3. Sushil Pathak

Name	Sushil Pathak
Publication / Channel	Dainik Bhaskar
Date	20 December 2010
Place	Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh
Targeted Killing	Yes


Sushil Pathak, a senior journalist with a Hindi-language daily *Dainik Bhaskar* and general secretary of the Bilaspur Press Club, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh on 20 December 2010. He was returning home from a late shift at work in Bilaspur when he was shot at four times.

Pathak covered several areas, including corruption and politics. A Facebook page "Justice for coal scam whistle blower journalist Sushil Pathak" set up in June 2016 said that Pathak was killed after reporting on allegations of illegal mining in the area. Chhattisgarh based Journalist Nitin Sinha said that Pathak was killed after publishing a sensitive story.

After protests by journalists, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh agreed to calls for an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). The police initially said that Pathak may have been killed because of real estate interests. In 2012, a CBI official investigating this case was arrested on charges of bribery related to this case; he was later acquitted in 2013. In 2016, CBI filed its closure report, and the case remains unsolved.

YEAR 2011

1. Jyotirmoy Dey

Name	Jyotirmoy Dey	
Publication / Channel	Midday	
Date	11 June 2011	

Place	Mumbai, Maharashtra	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


Jyotirmoy Dey, a journalist with an English-language daily *Midday*, was shot dead on 11 June 2011. He was riding on his own motorcycle when he was shot at by multiple men on motorcycles in Powai, a suburb of Mumbai. He died on the scene from five bullet wounds to the head and chest.

Dey was known for his work covering Mumbai's crime world for 22 years and written two books as well. While the motive for the killing was not immediately clear said the police, his colleagues believe he had been targeted for his reporting.

Investigators believe that reputed crime boss Chhota Rajan ordered the killing. In November 2011, Jigna Vora, a former deputy bureau chief of *Asian Age*, was arrested for allegedly playing a part in the conspiracy to kill Dey. In June 2015, a special court of the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act charged 10 suspects, including Vora and an alleged crime boss Rajendra Sadashiv Nikalje, also known as Chhota Rajan, according to reports. Nikalje was deported from Bali to India in November 2015.

On May 2, 2018, a Mumbai court found Nikhalje guilty of ordering Dey's murder. The court convicted and sentenced Nikhalje and eight others to life in prison for murder and criminal conspiracy, according to reports. The court acquitted Vora.

2. Umesh Rajput

Name	Umesh Rajput	
Publication / Channel	Nai Dunia	
Date	23 January 2011	
Place	Raipur, Chhattisgarh	

Targeted Killing	Yes	
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Umesh Rajput, a reporter with the Hindi-language daily *Nai Dunia*, was shot dead by masked gunmen on motorcycles, outside his home near Raipur, on 23 January 2011.

Rajput had frequently written about corruption and exploitation of tribal communities in the region. A note found at the scene of murder said, "*Khabar chaapna band nahikarogetoh mare jaoge*" (If you don't stop publishing news, you will die). Rajput's family said that he had been threatened two weeks before the shooting by a health worker as he had reported on botched eye procedures. They also said that he was killed by a powerful lobby of health professionals.

Since his death, the police have cited various motives including Maoist involvement and personal relationships. Local journalists and family have dismissed this. Police have been unable to provide any evidence to support their claims.

YEAR 2012

1. Chandrika Rai

Name	Chandrika Rai	
Publication / Channel	Navbharat, The Hitavada	
Date	18 February 2012	

Place	Umaria, Madhya Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Chandrika Rai, a journalist with a Hindi-language daily *Navbharat* and *TheHitavada*, an English-language daily, was bludgeoned to death along with his wife and children in their home in Umaria, on 18 February 2012.

Rai had been investigating illegal mining in Umaria. His relatives and advocates believed that his murder may have been related to his work. The police arrested six people and said that Rai had blackmailed the members of a gang responsible for a recent kidnapping and was murdered by the kidnappers. Rai's brother said their family does not believe the murder was related to illegal mining or kidnapping.

Around two years after the murder, the Madhya Pradesh High Court ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the case and asked the agency to complete the probe within 90 days. In 2015, CBI charge-sheeted a local don of Shahdol in Madhya Pradesh Dharnish Singh and two others in connection with the murder

2. Rajesh Mishra

Name	Rajesh Mishra
Publication / Channel	Media Raj
Date	01 March 2012
Place	Rewa, Madhya Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes

Rajesh Mishra, a journalist for a local Hindi-language daily Media Raj, was attacked by two assailants in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh on 01 March 2012. Mishra was hit on the head with an iron rod while he was at a public tea stall in Rewa. He died at a local hospital.

Mishra had written articles on alleged financial irregularities in local schools. Family members say that he had been threatened in the week leading up to the attack.

The police arrested at least four men for carrying out the murder, including Rajneesh Banerjee, who owned the schools Mishra was covering and a rival Hindi-language weekly, *Vindhya Bharat*. The police said that Banerjee had retaliated against Mishra in connection with his reports.

Banerjee was convicted of murder by a court in Rewa and sentenced to life imprisonment. But in an appeal hearing in January 2015, the Madhya Pradesh High Court granted bail to Banerjee citing insufficient evidence.

3. Pawan Kumar

Name	Pawan Kumar
Publication / Channel	Global News Network
Date	13 August 2012
Place	Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh

Targeted Killing	Yes
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Pawan Kumar, a Global News Network journalist, was shot dead in the north-western city of HarDOI on 13 August 2012. He was accompanied by his cameraman Uttam Singh, was working on a report on the drug mafia. He was following a car occupied by drug dealers he believed were about to make a delivery. The driver noticed Kumar was following them, got out of the car and shot him after an altercation.

The police said that they had identified the driver and launched an investigation.

4. RaihanulNayum

Name	RaihanulNayum
Publication / Channel	GanaChabuk
Date	08 September 2012
Place	Dhubri, Assam
Targeted Killing	No

RaihanulNayum, a young reporter with *GanaChabuk*, a weekly newspaper published in west Assam, was stabbed to death on 08 September 2012 when a mob turned violent after a Hindu temple and its deity were damaged by protesters.

5. ChaitaliSantra

Name	ChaitaliSantra
Publication / Channel	Freelance journalist
Date	26 September 2012
Place	Baksara, West Bengal
Targeted Killing	Yes

ChaitaliSantra, a freelance contributor to the Delhi-based weekly *Julm se Jang*, died after opening a parcel bomb containing an explosive device, on 26 September 2012. A courier service had delivered the package in the afternoon. Her husband was injured as well.

Family members said that Santra had made several enemies and had received threatening phone calls. She was also a member of a local human rights organization and had advocated for a neighbour who was a victim of domestic violence, news reports said.

In October 2012, police arrested three suspects in connection with the case. The alleged mastermind, Debashish Dey, was arrested in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, and remanded in custody. Dey allegedly hired Das to kill the journalist because of evidence she had given against him in a marital dispute case.

6. ThangjamDwijamani Singh

Name	ThangjamDwijamani Singh	
Publication / Channel	Prime News	

Date	23 December 2012	
Place	Imphal, Manipur	
Targeted Killing	No	


ThangjamDwijamani Singh, a cameraman with the news division of the satellite-distributed Prime News channel, was shot dead by police while he was covering a protest in Imphal, the capital of Manipur state. He was shot in the chest and died at a local hospital.

The police said that Singh was shot by accident while they were trying to disperse protesters with live ammunition. Five police officers were suspended pending investigation.

In December 2012, the All Manipur Working Journalists' Union and the state government signed a memorandum of understanding in connection with the death of Singh. The memorandum called for the immediate suspension of the police officers allegedly involved in the shooting, pending investigation; for financial assistance to be provided to the cameraman's family; and for the creation of media policies to address the welfare of journalists, including those reporting in conflict situations. The state government announced Rs. 500,000 (US \$7,400) compensation to the family.

YEAR 2013

1. Nemichand Jain

Name	Nemichand Jain	
Publication / Channel	Freelance	
Date	12 February 2013	
Place	Sukma, Chhattisgarh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Nemichand Jain, a veteran freelance reporter, was found dead on 12 February 2013, the morning after he had left home to visit a weekly market in Sukma district. He had been stabbed to death.

The police said that they suspected Maoists were responsible for the murder. Pamphlets at the scene said Jain was killed because he was a police informer. Police did not comment on this allegation. A week after Jain's death, blogger Kamal Shukla wrote that Jain had not been on good terms with local police and denied the possibility that Jain may have been a police informant. He said that Jain's social activism may have led to his murder.

The president of the Chhattisgarh Union of Working Journalists, NRK Pillai said that there was the possibility that Jain may have been pressured by the police to provide information. Other local journalists said they believed local criminals could be responsible for Jain's murder as Jain had exposed tin smuggling in the region, a few days before his murder.

The entire media fraternity in Bastar had passed a resolution announcing the boycott of Maoists and their press releases until they apologised for the murder and punished the guilty. Forty-five days after the murder, the Maoist group said it regretted that its junior members had killed the journalist. It said that a misunderstanding between the junior members and the leadership led to the killing. They also requested Bastar journalists to end their boycott.

The police arrested a few suspects based on a tip off; two were arrested in July 2014, and one in December 2013. According to the police, five Maoists were involved in the killing, two of whom were arrested.

2. Jitendra Singh

Name	Jitendra Singh
Publication / Channel	Prabhat Khabar
Date	27 April 2013
Place	Khunti, Jharkhand
Targeted Killing	Yes

Jitendra Singh, a part-time reporter for a local Hindi daily *Prabhat Khabhar*, was shot dead in Khunti district on 27 April 2013. He and two friends were visiting a construction site on the Pasrabada-Khatanga route, when a group of 10 to 12 Maoists gunned him down. Singh's friends were able to escape.

Singh had written about activities of the rebels for the past 16 years. A letter found in Singh's pocket said that he had been killed because he was carrying out government work without the permission of People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI). Another report suggested that Singh was allegedly killed in a dispute over demand of collection of levy in a contract that was awarded to Singh to build a road between Pasrabada to Khatangahad in Khunti.

Police said they are investigating the murder.

3. Rakesh Sharma


Name	Rakesh Sharma
Publication / Channel	Aaj
Date	23 August 2013
Place	Etawah, Uttar Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes

Rakesh Sharma, a senior reporter for a Hindi-language daily *Aaj*, was shot dead in Etawah by unidentified assailants on a motorcycle on 23 August 2013. Sharma left his home on a cycle after receiving a call from an unknown number, and then was shot at. He was rushed to a nearby medical facility but was declared brought dead.

The police said they were investigating the attack and said the killing may have been prompted by personal enmity. Sharma specialized in crime reporting in the region. Local journalists said they believed Sharma had been targeted by a local gambling mafia for a critical report he had published on illegal gambling operations.

In the weeks surrounding Sharma's murder, journalists reported several cases of their colleagues, who covered politics, business, and corruption, being beaten or threatened by local politicians and criminals.

4. Rajesh Verma


Name	Rajesh Verma	
Publication / Channel	IBN-7	
Date	07 September 2013	
Place	Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	No	

Rajesh Verma, a part-time stringer for the TV news channel IBN 7, was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Muzaffarnagar on 07 September 2013.

He was covering confrontations between Hindus and Muslims in Muzaffarnagar and was killed in the communal clashes.

The police could not identify the perpetrator and said that they were investigating the fatality. Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav announced financial support of Rs. 15,00,000 (US \$23,870) for Verma's family. In February 2016, a Special Investigation Team set up to look at cases related to the Muzaffarnagar riots filed a closure report in Verma's case saying that the accused remain unidentified.

5. Sai Reddy

Name	Sai Reddy	
Publication / Channel	Deshbandhu	
Date	06 December 2013	
Place	Bijapur, Chhattisgarh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


Sai Reddy, a reporter for the Hindi-language newspaper *Deshbandhu*, was beaten and stabbed in Basaguda village of Bijapur district in Chhattisgarh on 06 December 2013. He sustained severe head and neck injuries, and died as he was being transported to a local hospital.

Reddy was a veteran journalist with a deep understanding of local issues and problems, and often criticized the government, Maoist insurgents, security forces, and local police. Before his death, Reddy had been threatened by Maoists and his house was set on fire, which forced him to flee to a neighboring state. He was allowed to return home after issuing an apology to the Maoists. Reddy had also been harassed by the police. In March 2008, he was arrested and accused of being linked to the Maoists. He denied the allegations and was later released on bail.

The police said that they believed Reddy was attacked by a group of Maoist insurgents with sharp weapons. Four months after the murder, the Maoist party released a statement about the killing, saying that a misunderstanding between members and the party leadership led to the killing. The misunderstanding was that Reddy's writing was anti-people. When police arrested Reddy in 2008 on suspicion of being a Maoist, the party changed its perception of him but this was not conveyed to local members, who killed him.

YEAR 2014

1. Tarun Kumar Acharya

Name	Tarun Kumar Acharya	
Publication / Channel	Kanak TV, Sambad	
Date	27 May 2014	
Place	Khallikhote, Odisha	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Tarun Kumar Acharya, a stringer for Kanak TV, a local Oriya-language TV channel, and a reporter for *Sambad*, an Odia-language newspaper, was killed on 28 May 2014. Acharya was on his way home, when assailants stopped him, and slit his throat.

The editor-in-chief of Kanak TV said that he wasn't aware of any threats against Acharya. Subsequent reports said that Acharya had been threatened by the owner of a cashew


processing plant in Khallikote, after the journalist published a report alleging child labour practices at the plant.

Some initial reports suggested that the murder may have been related to a family dispute, but on 08 June 2014, the police arrested the owner of the cashew processing plant, Shyam Sundar Prusty and an alleged accomplice, N Ramesh Reddy, owner of a local light and sound unit, in connection with the murder.

The police accused Prusty of ordering Acharya's murder, paying three friends 50,000 rupees (US\$850), and providing them with three new SIM cards. The police said Prusty confessed to the murder but it's not clear if Prusty has been charged.

In October 2014, police also arrested Sibaram Nayak, a journalist with the Odisha-based Eastern Media group, according to news reports. Police accused Nayak of speaking to Prusty on the phone before and after the murder but did not provide further details regarding Nayak's role in the murder. Nayak was charged but he denied any involvement in the murder.

2. MVN Shankar

Name	MVN Shankar	
Publication / Channel	Andhra Prabha	
Date	26 November 2014	
Place	Guntur, Andhra Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


MVN Shankar, a senior journalist for the Telugu-language daily *Andhra Prabha*, was fatally attacked on 26 November 2014. He was beaten by unidentified assailants with iron rods, when he was returning home after filing a report in Chilakaluripet town in Guntur district. He died at a local hospital a day after.

Shankar frequently reported on the oil mafia, the corruption in the rice mill trade, and corruption in the public distribution system. The Indian Journalists Union said that Shankar was killed for his coverage of a group that had engaged in the illegal sale on the black market of rationed essential items.

In April 2016, the police said that a suspect had been charged in connection with the murder but did not provide further details.

YEAR 2015

1. Jagendra Singh

Name	Jagendra Singh	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	08 June 2015	
Place	Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Jagendra Singh, a freelance journalist in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, who wrote for Hindi-language newspapers and also on his Facebook page *ShahjahanpurSamachar*, he was torched on 01 June 2015, and died on 08 June 2015 from burn injuries. He was set on fire

by local policemen allegedly at the behest of Uttar Pradesh Backward Classes Welfare Minister Ram Murti Verma.

Singh wrote on local politics and current affairs in Hindi-language newspapers and on his two Facebook pages. He often wrote critically about Verma, alleging that he was involved in illegal mining and land grabs. In a Facebook post on 22 May 2015, Singh wrote: "Ram Murti Singh Verma can have me killed. At this time, politician, thugs, and police, all are after me. Writing the truth is bearing heavily on my life. After exposing some of Ram Murti Verma's acts, he had me attacked..."

While being treated in the hospital for burns, he made a statement saying police officer, Sriprakash Rai, had doused him in petrol and set him on fire. The police team, Rai and four or five others, barged into Singh's house and started assaulting him, and then, they poured petrol over him and set him on fire. These policemen were suspended on 13 June 2015.


Singh's son, Raghvendra, filed a police complaint that named Verma and Rai. Police Superintendent Babloo said that Singh killed himself when police attempted to arrest him as Singh was "wanted in a crime".

On 10 June, calling the attack a violation of press freedom, the Chairman of the Press Council of India, Justice CK Prasad, asked the state government to form a Special Investigative Team (SIT) consisting of officers of good character to handle the case.

The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh on 22 June 2015, met the family who were on a dharna (sit-in) for justice and promised them an ex-gratia of Rs30 lakhs.

No arrests were made after Singh's death.

2. Sandeep Kothari


Name	Sandeep Kothari	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	20 June 2015	
Place	Wardha, Maharashtra	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Sandeep Kothari, a freelance reporter for several Hindi-language dailies, was abducted on 19 June 2015, and found dead on 20 June 2015. He was abducted in Madhya Pradesh. At the time of abduction, Kothari and his were beaten up, and the friend was left injured. Kothari's body was found burned and beaten near railroad tracks in Maharashtra state's Wardha district on June 20.

Kothari's family said he could have been killed in connection with his coverage of illegal sand mining in the region. Kothari had reportedly written about illegal mining for the past five years and that he had recently faced jail time in connection with several criminal cases filed against him in alleged retribution. They also said that he may have been killed in connection with a court case he had filed against the owners of mining companies, and he was under pressure to withdraw the case.

The police denied that Kothari was killed in connection with his journalistic work and said they believed he had been killed by business rivals. The police arrested three suspects involved in illegal mining for allegedly kidnapping and setting Kothari on fire, but no one has been convicted.

3. Akshay Singh

Name	Akshay Singh	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	04 July 2015	
Place	Meghnagar, Madhya Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	No	

Akshay Singh, an investigative journalist for the privately-owned Hindi news channel AajTak, died on 04 July 2015. Singh was conducting an interview when he drank from a cup of tea and began coughing and frothing at the mouth, according to reports. He was taken to a local hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival; doctors said he died of a heart attack.

Singh was on the channel's special investigation team to investigate cases related to a high-profile billion-dollar corruption scandal in the state. Police, who uncovered the scandal, known as the Vyapam scam, in 2013, accused hundreds of individuals of rigging exams and giving or taking bribes. The suspects included students, state officials, and members of the Madhya Pradesh Professional Examination Board. According to an official count, it was reported that about two dozen individuals had died in unclear circumstances in connection with the case.

Singh's employer and family members asked that the results of the examination be sent outside the state, for another examination. Delhi's All India Institute of Medical Sciences hospital began an investigation into the journalist's internal organs to determine the cause of his death.

On July 9 2015, India's Supreme Court ordered a central level probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation into the journalist's death and other deaths connected to the Vyapam scam, as well as the scam itself. In January 2017, CBI investigators said that they had completed their probe and they ruled out any chances of a foul play, indicating the death was natural.

4. Raghavendra Dube


Name	Raghavendra Dube
Publication / Channel	Khushboo Ujala
Date	17 July 2015
Place	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Targeted Killing	Yes

Raghavendra Dube, the owner and editor of *Khushboo Ujala*, a local weekly in Mumbai, was found dead near Mira Road police station on 17 July 2015. He had been helping a police investigation into an attack on two other journalists. Half an hour after he left the police station early in the morning, he was beaten and stabbed to death.

The motive of the murder wasn't clear immediately, but Dubey often helped the local police by informing them about bars that were operating illegally. According to the Crime Branch, Dube's murder appeared to be linked to the previous evening's attack on two other journalists, Mumbai Headlines reporter Santosh Mishra, and DabangKhabr reporter Shashi Sharma.

A couple of days after the murder, the Crime Branch arrested Mahesh Shetty, owner of Love Bird bar at Mira Road, and another man for allegedly killing Dube.

5. Hemant Yadav

Name	Hemant Yadav	
Publication / Channel	TV 24	
Date	03 October 2015	
Place	Dheena, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Hemant Yadav, a reporter for the privately-owned Hindi-language news channel TV 24, was shot dead on 03 October 2015. He was returning home from a market in Dheena when two attackers on a motorcycle fired at the journalist and then fled. He was rushed to a hospital but declared dead on arrival.

Local police said that the murder seemed to be a case of revenge. Yadav was reportedly quite active socially and used to take up various causes of locals who approached him. The police said that it was possible that he could have antagonised someone by his activism, which led to his murder.

6. Mithilesh Pandey

Name	Mithilesh Pandey
Publication / Channel	Dainik Jagran
Date	24 October 2015
Place	Gaya, Uttar Pradesh
Targeted Killing	Yes


Mithilesh Pandey, a journalist working with a Hindi-language daily *Dainik Jagran*, was shot dead inside his house by some unidentified men in Gaya on 24 October 2015. Some unknown people barged inside his house and shot him from point blank range. He died on the spot. district.

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.

The police said they will try to arrest the culprits as soon as possible.

YEAR 2016

1. Karun Mishra


Name	Karun Mishra	
Publication / Channel	Jansandesh Times	
Date	13 February 2016	
Place	Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Karun Mishra, the bureau chief of the Hindi-language daily *Jansandesh Times*, was shot at on 13 February 2016. Three gunmen on motorcycles shot Mishra when he was driving to his

home in Ambedkar Nagar on the afternoon. He died from his injuries on the way to the hospital.

On 18 February 2016 police arrested five people in connection with Mishra's murder. The police issued a statement saying that two mining contractors, Rahul Singh and Pawan Singh, were allegedly upset with Mishra's coverage of illegal mining for his paper. The five arrested include the two mining contractors, and the three of the five men they allegedly hired.

2. Rajdev Ranjan

Name	Rajdev Ranjan	
Publication / Channel	Hindustan	
Date	13 May 2016	
Place	Siwan, Bihar	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Rajdev Ranjan, the bureau chief of a Hindi-language national daily newspaper Hindustan, was shot dead on 13 May 2016. Unidentified men shot at him close range as he was returning to his office in Siwan. He was shot in the head and the chest, dying instantly, killing him, according to local media.

Ranjan's widow said that he 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.

The police said Ranjan had no known personal enmity with anyone. In June, the police said they had arrested five suspects in the shooting, who named Laddan Mian as the man who hired them to commit the murder. Mian voluntarily appeared before a court and denied involvement in the killing. An investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) showed that it was a planned murder, and several people were arrested.

In September 2017, CBI informed the Supreme Court that it had concluded the probe into the murder of Ranjan and filed a charge sheet against eight accused including RJD strongman Mohammed Shahabuddin.

3. Kishor Dave


Name	Kishore Dave
Publication / Channel	Jai Hind
Date	22 August 2016
Place	Junagadh, Gujarat
Targeted Killing	Yes

Kishore Dave, bureau chief for the regional daily *Jai Hind* newspaper, was found dead in his office at around 9:30pm on 22 August 2016. He was fatally attacked with six to seven stab wounds to the chest.

Dave's family claimed that his reporting on sexual harassment allegations against the son of a local politician, Ratilal Suraj, was a likely motivation for the attack. Suraj had filed defamation charges on Dave. Dave's brother also said that Dave had received death threats from local leaders, and the family had reported to police before his murder.

The police said that the motive behind Dave's killing was likely personal enmity as Dave was involved in a transport business, and that Dave was murdered in a dispute over money. In August, the police arrested three suspects, and it was reported that the three had confessed to the crime, and that they had burnt Dave's blood-soaked clothes to eliminate incriminating evidence. Police also said they had recovered pieces of Dave's broken mobile phone from the accused.

4. Dharmendra Singh

Name	Dharmendra Singh	
Publication / Channel	Dainik Bhaskar	
Date	12 November 2016	
Place	Sasaram, Bihar	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Dharmendra Singh, a reporter for the national Hindi-language newspaper *Dainik Bhaskar*, was shot dead by three unidentified men near his home in Sasaram, on November 12, 2016. Singh died in an ambulance on the way to a hospital.

The political editor of *Dainik Bhaskar* in Patna, Arun Pandey, said that Singh used to report fearlessly about the illegal stone-cutting that had going on in the Sasaram district for years. He said that Singh lost his life because of his reporting.

Kumar, Singh's friend, said that he believed two jailed men who blamed the reporter for their convictions had ordered the murder. Before Singh died, Kumar said, the journalist told his nephew that a jailed man who blamed the journalist's reporting for his conviction was responsible for the shooting attack.

In the end of November 2016, the police arrested two suspects. One of the arrested men, a sharpshooter Amod Kumar, confessed that he was at the crime spot when Singh was shot dead, but he claimed that a man called Sujeet Singh fired at the journalist. Sujeet Singh has been at large.

YEAR 2017

1. Gauri Lankesh


Name	Gauri Lankesh	
Publication / Channel	Gauri Lankesh Patrike	
Date	05 September 2017	
Place	Bangalore, Karnataka	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Gauri Lankesh, publisher and editor of a Kannada-language weekly *Gauri Lankesh Patrike*, was shot dead on 05 September 2017. As she returned home in Bangalore, at least three unidentified assailants fired at her. She was shot in the head and chest and died immediately.

The weekly tabloid was known for its criticism of right-wing extremism and the establishment; it covered issues including communal violence and caste discrimination.

The police filed a charge-sheet nine months after her murder. In the charge-sheet, Naveen Kumar, the first person to be arrested for Lankesh's murder, confessed that he supplied bullets to a right-wing activist who told him they were for Gauri Lankesh as she was anti-Hindu. In July 2018, the Special Investigation Team (SIT) arrested Waghmare who is accused of shooting Lankesh. Waghmare was trained in the usage of guns by members of a radical Hindutva group. In September 2018, forensic reports confirmed that Waghmare shot and killed Lankesh. So far 12 people, who were connected to Lankesh's murder, have been arrested.

2. Santanu Bhowmik

Name	Santanu Bhowmik	
Publication / Channel	Dinraat	
Date	20 September 2017	
Place	Mandwai, Tripura	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


Shantanu Bhowmik, a reporter for the local Bengali-language news channel Dinraat, was beaten to death on 20 September 2017. He was covering clashes between members of the separatist Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) and the ruling Tripura Rajya

UpajatiGanamukti Parishad party in the northeastern Tripura state near the border with Bangladesh, when a mob used sticks to hit him on his head and legs.

Later that day, the police found Bhowmik's body near a stadium, according to media reports.

The police said that three people were arrested and were being held in police custody on court order in relation to the journalist's death. By December 2017, two more were arrested. In July 2018, CBI booked three tribal leaders, including an MLA, and 300-500 IPFT members for the murder of Bhowmik.

3. Rajesh Mishra


Name	Rajesh Mishra	
Publication / Channel	Dainik Jagran	
Date	21 October 2017	
Place	Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Rajesh Mishra, a stringer for the Hindi-language daily *Dainik Jagran*, was shot dead in Ghazipur on 21 October 2017. He was outside his brother's store in Brahmanpur Chatti. His brother was wounded in the attack as well.

Family members and colleagues said that the murder could be due to Rajesh Mishra's RSS background or journalistic work.

Between 03 December 2017 and 05 January 2018, the police arrested four people--Ajit Yadav, Sunil Yadav, Jhanku Yadav, and Pavan Yadav--in connection with Mishra's murder. Police said that the suspects are members of a gang headed by a man named as Raju Yadav, who is suspected of being the mastermind. The police alleged that Yadav was angry about stories by Mishra that accused him of illegal sand mining and alcohol trafficking, according to reports. Police added that three of those arrested had confessed to being involved in the murder, and they have been charged.

4. Sudip Dutta Bhaumik

Name	Sudip Dutta Bhaumik	
Publication / Channel	SyandanPatrika	
Date	21 November 2017	
Place	West Tripura District, Tripura	

Targeted Killing	Yes	
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Sudip Dutta Bhaumik, an investigative reporter at the Bengali-language daily *Syandan Patrika*, was shot by a guard outside the office of Tapan Debbarma, a commandant in Tripura State Rifles paramilitary force on 21 November 2017. Bhaumik was shot at around 11:30am, but he was taken to the hospital only at around 2:30pm where the doctors declared him brought dead.

Debbarma had invited the journalist to his office to speak with him about a clarification that the commandant wanted for a story Bhaumik wrote on 13 November 2017, alleging financial irregularities in the paramilitary force. Witnesses say that the journalist and commandant argued.

Bhaumik had worked as an investigative journalist for the last 20 years, and specialized in exposing corruption in the police force.

The police detailed the guard, Dharmendra Kumar Singh, who allegedly shot Bhaumik. Debbarma was arrested on 22 November 2017, and charged with murder and criminal conspiracy. A judicial magistrate's court ordered Debbarma and Singh to be held in custody for seven days, pending the investigation.

5. Naveen Gupta

Name	Naveen Gupta	
Publication / Channel	Hindustan	
Date	30 November 2017	
Place	Bilhaur, Uttar Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


Naveen Gupta, a journalist who worked as a stringer for the Hindi-language daily *Hindustan*, in Bilhaur, was shot dead by unknown assailants on 30 November 2017. Naveen Gupta was shot in the head, face, and chest and died on his way to the hospital.

Naveen Gupta's brother, Nitin Gupta, said that two men called out to the journalist as he parked around 6pm inside a complex where Nitin Gupta has a garment store. After talking with the men, Naveen Gupta walked away, and four other men standing a short distance away then shot at the journalist, his brother said. He added that he wasn't aware of Naveen Gupta receiving any threats.

Naveen Gupta had been working on local issues such as damaged roads and utility supplies. As of December 2017, the police said they had not established the motive of the murder.

YEAR 2018

1 Naveen Nischal

Name	Naveen Nishcal	
Publication / Channel	Dainik Bhaskar	
Date	25 March, 2018	
Place	Arrah, Bihar	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Navin Nischal, a stringer for the Hindi-language daily, *Dainik Bhaskar*, was killed on 25 March 2018, after an SUV ran him over in Arrah. Nischal, and freelance journalist Vijay Singh were

riding Nischal's motorbike when an SUV hit them from behind and ran them over. They died at the scene of the crash.

An argument had broken out between Nischal, Singh, and Mohammad Harshu earlier in the day. This could have been because of Nischal's recent reporting on child marriage and on Harshu's role in land divisions angered the village head. Villagers said that the incident was a well-hatched conspiracy to murder the journalists by ramming an SUV on them so that it will look like an accident.

The police arrested the Arrah village head, Mohammad Harshu, who was driving the car that ran over Nischal and Singh. Police have arrested both Harshu and his son, Dablu, who was in the vehicle with his father at the time of the accident.

2. Vijay Singh


Name	Vijay Singh
Publication / Channel	Dainik Bhaskar
Date	25 March, 2018
Place	Arrah, Bihar
Targeted Killing	Yes

Vijay Singh, a stringer for the Hindi-language daily, *Dainik Bhaskar*, was killed on 25 March 2018, after an SUV ran him over in Arrah. Singh and Navin Nischal were riding Nischal's motorbike when an SUV hit them from behind and ran them over. They died at the scene of the crash.

An argument had broken out between Nischal, Singh, and Mohammad Harshu earlier in the day. This could have been because of Nischal's recent reporting on child marriage and on Harshu's role in land divisions angered the village head. Villagers said that the incident was a well-hatched conspiracy to murder the journalists by ramming an SUV on them so that it will look like an accident.

The police arrested the Arrah village head, Mohammad Harshu, who was driving the car that ran over Nischal and Singh. Police have arrested both Harshu and his son, Dablu, who was in the vehicle with his father at the time of the accident.

3. Sandeep Sharma


Name	Sandeep Sharma	
Publication / Channel	News World	
Date	26 March 2018	
Place	Bhind, Madhya Pradesh	
Targeted Killing	No	

Sandeep Sharma, a reporter for the local News World television channel, was killed in Bhand on 26 March 2018. He was riding on his motorbike to a government event when a truck hit him and ran him over. Sharma was taken to a hospital where he was declared dead from injuries sustained in the crash.

The channel's bureau chief, Vikas Purohit, said that both he and Sharma began receiving anonymous death threats after publishing two stories in July and October 2017 on alleged police corruption and illegal sand mining. Purohit also said that about 10 days after News World aired Sharma's October investigation, Sharma was beaten up by a bunch of goons but was saved thanks to the presence of police. According to Purohit, Sharma complained to the police about the beating, but they did not take further action.

The police said that they had arrested the truck driver who hit Sharma. The person arrested was actually employed as the truck's cleaner and not as the driver. The police said that they had formed a special investigation team to investigate the killing.

4. Shujaat Bhukari

Name	Shujaat Bhukari	
Publication / Channel	Rising Kashmir	
Date	14 June 2018	
Place	Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Shujaat Bhukari, editor-in-chief of *Rising Kashmir*, a Srinagar-based newspaper, was shot dead outside his office by unidentified gunmen on 14 June 2018. He was leaving for an iftar party when he was shot dead. He suffered injuries to the head and abdomen. Two police officers, who had been assigned to protect him after an attack in 2000, were also fired at. All three died.


In May 2018, Bhukari had written a piece in which he welcomed the Indian government's decision to suspend military operations against alleged terrorists during the month of Ramadan in Kashmir. He said the ceasefire offered a glimmer of hope to the common people.

An investigation by the special investigation team identified the three gunmen on the bike whose images were captured on CCTV footage.

A fourth suspect who was seen picking up a pistol and leaving was arrested on 15 June 2018. On 27 June 2018, one of the three gunmen was identified as Naveed Jutt, a Pakistani terrorist, who was acting on orders from the Lashkar-e-Taiba leadership. In February 2018, Jutt had escaped from police custody from Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital.

On November 27, 2018, Naveed Jutt, was one of the two militants shot dead in an encounter in Budgam district in a joint operation launched by the state police and the army.

5. Chandan Tiwari

Name	Chandan Tiwari	
Publication / Channel	Aj	
Date	30 October 2018	
Place	Pathalgada, Jharkhand	
Targeted Killing	Yes	


Chandan Tiwari, a reporter for the Hindi-language daily *Aj*, was found critically wounded on 30 October 2018. He was abducted on 29 October 2018, and found injured in a forest about 175 miles from Pathalgada. The police took him to the hospital where he was declared brought dead.

In April, Tiwari filed a police complaint and sought police protection after receiving death threats over the phone, but he had not been provided with protection.

The police believe Tiwari was targeted for exposing the alleged financial irregularities of Singh, who is a private contractor. Tiwari published a story on April 2 about Singh's alleged corruption in a government-funded scheme to support rural employment, and also posted about it on his Facebook page. Variar said that police believe that the contractor plotted to kill Tiwari because of the financial loss he incurred over Tiwari's reporting.

The police identified three people, Pintu Singh, Jamuna Prasad and Musafir Rana, whom they suspected of abducting and killing the journalist. Singh absconded but the police arrested Prasad and Rana.


6. AchyutanandaSahu

Name	AchyutanandaSahu	
Publication / Channel	Doordarshan (DD)	
Date	30 October 2018	
Place	Dantewada, Chhattisgarh	
Targeted Killing	No	

Achyutananda Sahu, a video journalist with the public broadcaster Doordarshan, was killed in Dantewada on 30 October 2018. At the time of the killing, the journalist and two colleagues from Doordarshan were embedded with the police and covering preparations for upcoming elections. He was caught in a firefight between the police and a Maoist militant group. The police said that the media team were caught in the crossfire when Maoists attacked the police.

On 02 November 2018, Maoists' statement on Friday clarified that the attack was to target the security personnel and the cameraman too became the victim. The statement also expressed grief over death of Sahu, and said that the Maoist cadres were not aware that the DD crew accompanying the police.

7. Amit Topno

Name	Amit Topno	
Publication / Channel	Newscode	
Date	8-9 December 2018	
Place	Ghagra, Jharkhand	
Targeted Killing	Yes	

Amit Topno, an Adivasi journalist who had been covering the Pathalgadi movement over tribal land rights, was found dead on 9 December, 2018 under a bridge in Ghagra, in Khunti district, 40 km away from the state capital Ranchi.

Topno was working with the Newscode, and was also a community correspondent of Video Volunteers. He had gone to report on the Pathalgudi resistance, in his home district. He is the second journalist after Chandan Tiwari, to be killed in Pathalgadi and its environs in the past two months. The post-mortem revealed a bullet injury in his head, and a prima facie case of murder has been registered. Journalists in Ranchi had demanded a high-level independent probe into the murder.

(B) CASES FILED AGAINST JOURNALISTS

Year-wise cases filed against journalists in India: 2000 to 2018


Year	Number of cases		STATE/S				
2000	1	2	Manipur				
2001	1		Tamil Nadu				
2002	1		Delhi				
2003	3		Delhi	Tamil Nadu		Tamil Nadu	
2009	1		Orissa				
2010	1		Karnataka				
2011	2		Chhattisgarh	Orissa			
2012	3		Chhattisgarh	Karnataka		Karnataka	
2014	1		Assam				
2015	3		Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarh		Haryana	
2016	4		Assam	Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarh		Karnataka
2017	4		Gujarat	Jammu and Kashmir	Maharashtra		Uttar Pradesh
2018	5		Chhattisgarh	Delhi (2)	Manipur	Gujarat	Jammu and Kashmir
2000-2018	31		ACROSS 12 STATES IN INDIA				

State-wise cases filed against journalists in India: 2000 to 2018

Chhattisgarh	7	2011	2012	2015	2015	2016	2016	2018
Delhi	4	2002	2003	2018	2018			
Gujarat	2	2017	2018					
Haryana	1	2015						
Jammu and Kashmir	2	2017	2018					
Karnataka	4	2010	2012	2012	2016			
Maharashtra	1	2017						
Manipur	2	2000				2018		
Orissa	2	2011						
Tamil Nadu	3	2001	2003	2003				
Uttar Pradesh	1	2017						
Across 12 States in India	31	FROM 2000 TO 2018						

YEAR 2000

1. NongthombamBiren Singh

Name	NongthombamBiren Singh	
Publication / Channel	NaharolgiThoudang	
Date	Arrested on 14 April 2000, and released on 05 May 2000.	
Charges	UAPA, and Sections 121, 121-A, and 124-A of the IPC.	

Status	Case dismissed	
Place	Imphal, Manipur	

Nongthonbam Biren Singh, the editor of the Manipuri-language daily *Naharolgi Thoudang*, was arrested for publishing the text of a speech delivered by a local human rights activist, Thounaojam Iboyaima.

Both Biren Singh and Iboyaima were arrested on 14 April 2000, in Imphal, and detained overnight.

On 15 April 2000, they were charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), as well as sections 121, 121-A, and 124-A of the Indian Penal Code. Section 124-A says, "Whoever by words, either spoken or written...attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government" may be sentenced to life imprisonment.

Biren and Iboyaima were remanded to judicial custody. Their trial was scheduled for 29 April 2000, and on 05 May 2000, a sessions court judge dismissed the charges against both men and ordered their release as the judge said there was no evidence in the newspaper report to suggest that there was criminal intention to incite the public.

In 2002, the year he contested his first election as a member of the Democratic Revolutionary People's Party. In 2017, as a part of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), he became the chief minister of Manipur.

YEAR 2001

1. G Suresh

Name	G Suresh
Publication / Channel	Sun TV
Date	Arrested on 27 June 2001, and released on 29 June 2001.
Charges	Charges ranging from trespassing to physical intimidation.
Status	Unknown
Place	Villupuram, Tamil Nadu

G Suresh, reporter and cameraman for Sun TV was arrested in Villupuram District, Tamil Nadu on 27 June 2001.


Suresh was one of nearly 20 journalists who went to a government-owned rice storage facility to report on a grain scandal. After the broadcast of Suresh's report that embarrassed the Tamil Nadu state government, police went to Suresh's home and arrested him on assorted charges ranging from trespassing to physical intimidation. Late J Jayalalithaa was the then chief minister of Tamil Nadu. Sun TV is owned by the Maran family, political rivals of Jayalalitha.

Journalists in the state protested Suresh's arrest. On the morning of 29 June, a group of 150 journalists gathered to march toward the State Secretariat to protest Suresh's arrest, as well as their rough treatment the previous day. Police dressed in riot gear and armed with tear gas and water pistols halted the demonstration and arrested all the journalists. They were detained at Vepery Police Station for about seven hours. They agreed to be released only after receiving confirmation that Suresh had been released on bail.

On 29 June 2001, Suresh was released on bail, and the detained journalists were also let off too. No further action was taken against the station, Sun TV.

YEAR 2002

1. Iftikhar Gilani

Name	Iftikhar Gilani	
Publication / Channel	Kashmir Times	
Date	Arrested on 09 June 2002, released on 13 January 2003.	
Charges	Official Secrets Act	
Status	Case withdrawn	

Place	New Delhi, India	
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Iftikhar Gilani, the New Delhi bureau chief for the Jammu-based newspaper *Kashmir Times*, was arrested on 09 June 2002. Gilani was arrested under the Official Secrets Act, a draconian law that is a legacy of the British colonial rule, for possessing 'sensitive' documents relating to troop deployment in Jammu and Kashmir. All these documents had been downloaded from the Internet and were freely available.

At around 5:00am on 09 June, officers from various agencies, including the Intelligence Bureau, the Special Branch of Police, and the Income Tax Department, raided Gilani's house in New Delhi. Authorities confiscated Gilani's computer and several documents, including bank statements, and Gilani was arrested at his home around 9:30 p.m.

Iftikhar Gilani's reputation for balanced and independent reporting leads to a surmise that he was targeted unfairly.

In January 2003, the government decided to withdraw its case three days after it rejected a Military Intelligence report clearing him of wrong-doing. Gilani was released on 13 January 2003. His memoir, *My Days in Prison* was published by Penguin Books in 2005, describes his ordeal of being unfairly charged and incarcerated.

YEAR 2003

1. AniruddhaBahal

Name	Aniruddha Bahal
Publication / Channel	Tehelka
Date	Arrested and released on 27 July 2003
Charges	Official Secrets Act
Status	Unknown
Place	New Delhi, India

Anirudh Bahal, editor of *Tehelka*an investigative news portal, and Mathew Samuel, a reporter with *Tehelka*, were charged with conspiracy in connection with a story published on the website in October 2000.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) filed the complaint against the journalists under the Official Secrets Act (OSA), alleging that information in the story came from a secret government file. Two officials from the Home Ministry and Buffalo Networks, which owns the website, also had complaints filed against them.

Other reporters from *Tehelka* claimed that the government had harassed them because of their reporting. Reporter Kumar Badal spent six months in jail in 2002 on alleged poaching charges after doing an undercover story on poaching in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

On 07 August 2003, Bahal was arrested after a CBI officer accused the journalist of having threatened him. Bahal was released on bail the same day.

2. N. Ravi, Malini Parthasarathy, S. Rangarajan, V. Jayanth, and Radha Venkatesan (*The Hindu*), and S. Selvam (*Murasoli*)

Name	N. Ravi, Malini Parthasarathy, S. Rangarajan, V. Jayanth, and Radha Venkatesan, and S. Selvam
Publication / Channel	Hindu, Murasoli
Date	07 November 2003
Charges	Defamation, and breach of privilege.
Status	Case withdrawn
Place	Tamil Nadu


On 07 November 2003, The state assembly of Tamil Nadu sentenced five journalists (the publisher, the editor, the executive editor, and two senior journalists) from the English-language daily *The Hindu* and one journalist (the editor) from the Tamil-language daily *Murasoli* to 15-day jail sentences after finding them guilty of breach of privilege for writing critical articles and an editorial about the chief minister.

The journalists were N. Ravi, Malini Parthasarathy, S. Rangarajan, V. Jayanth, and Radha Venkatesan from *The Hindu*, and S. Selvam from *Murasoli*. The *Hindu* had written critically about the government's crude use of state power after political opponents were arrested and independent journalists were harassed. *Murasoli* had printed a translation of one of the editorials from *The Hindu*.

Journalists from *The Hindu*, as well as from *Murasoli* went into hiding. They sent a petition to the Supreme Court on November 8 asking that the arrest warrants be nullified. India's Supreme Court stayed the arrest of the six journalists on November 10, but the Tamil Nadu government filed a defamation case against *The Hindu* on the same day.

The cases were withdrawn in May 2004.

3. R. R. Gopal

Name	R. R. Gopal	
Publication / Channel	<i>Nakkheeran</i>	
Date	Arrested on 11 April 2003, released on 20 December 2003.	

Charges	POTA	
Status	Charges dropped.	
Place	Tamil Nadu	


R. R. Gopal, editor of the Tamil-language magazine *Nakkheeran*, was the first journalist to be arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) on 11 April 2003. He was accused of aiding a banned Tamil militant group because he allegedly possessed some of the group's leaflets at the time of his arrest.

Gopal denied the charges and accused the chief minister of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha, of trying to punish him for his articles exposing corruption in her administration. He was released on bail on order of the Madras High Court on 20 December 2003.

In July 2005, the Madras High Court dropped the terrorism charges against Gopal.

YEAR 2009

1. Laxman Choudhury

Name	Laxman Choudhury	
Publication / Channel	Sambad	
Date	Arrested on 20 September 2009, released on 03 December 2009.	
Charges	Sections 120B, 121, 121A, and 124A (Sedition) of the IPC and Section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Mohana, Orissa	


Laxman Choudhury, a correspondent for the Oriya-language daily *Sambad*, was arrested in Mohana on 20 September 2009, for alleged involvement with anti-government Maoist groups.

Choudhury was arrested based on a packet of Maoist literature addressed to the journalist, found in the possession of a bus conductor who was also arrested the same day. Chaudhury denied any knowledge of the packet or having any connection with Maoists.

Choudhury was initially denied bail by two lower courts and charged with criminal conspiracy and sedition. It was only on 03 December 2009 that Choudhary was released on bail, ordered by the High Court of Orissa. Until 2009, Choudhury continued to face charges of sedition and suffered significant restrictions on free movement as a bail condition.

YEAR 2010

1. K K Shahina

Name	K K Shahina	
Publication / Channel	Open	
Date	Case filed in late 2010, anticipatory bail granted in July 2011	
Charges	UAPA, criminal conspiracy 120 B, and Section 506, 34	
Status	Case pending	
Place	Coorg, Karnataka	

K K Shahina, an assistant editor at the weekly magazine Open, was named in a charge-sheet filed by the Karnataka Police under UAPA (section 22 A) against KK Shahina, accusing her of criminal conspiracy [120 B], threatening the witnesses to give statements

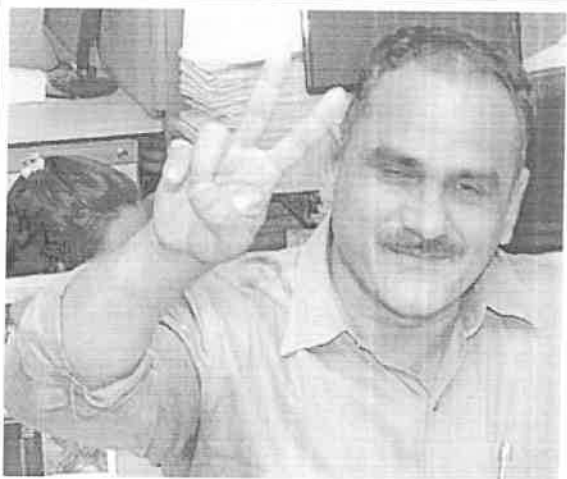
against prosecution [section 506, 34] and under charges of influencing the witness statements in the Bangalore serial bomb blast case. The charge-sheets were filed in two separate courts in Coorg district.

Shahina had successfully exposed the Karnataka Police's fabricated witness statements against Peoples Democratic Party Chairman Abdul Nasar Madani, who was detained under trial accused of involvement in the Bangalore serial bomb blasts. Local journalists believe the charges are intended to discredit Shahina's reporting.

Facing the possibility of arrest since January 2011, Shahina approached the district court for anticipatory bail, but it was only in July 2011 that the Karnataka High Court granted her provisional immunity from arrest.

YEAR 2011

1. Tarakant Dwivedi

Name	Tarakant Dwivedi	
Publication / Channel	<i>Mumbai Mirror</i>	
Date	Arrested on 17 May 2011, released on 22 May 2011.	
Charges	Official Secrets Act	
Status	Case disposed.	
Place	Mohana, Orissa	

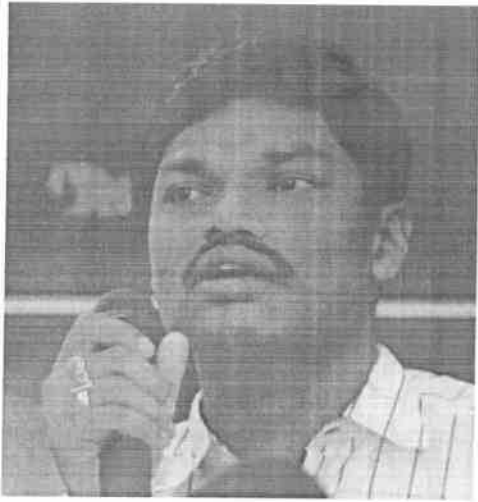
Tarakant Dwivedi, who was then a journalist for *Mumbai Mirror* and wrote under the pen name 'Akela', was arrested under India's Official Secrets Act on 17 May 2011.

Dwivedi was arrested by the Government Railway Police and charged with criminal trespass.

Dwivedi had reported on 28 June 2010, on the poor storage conditions for what local media called sophisticated weapons that had been bought by security forces after the 26 November 2008, terrorist attacks in Mumbai. Dwivedi's report in the tabloid Mumbai Mirror said the weapons were being stored in a space with a leaky roof, and their ability to function might have been compromised.

After his arrest in May 2011, he was released on bail later in the same month. In February 2013, the Bombay High Court disposed the case against Dwivedi alias 'Akela', stating that it could not be challenged further in the higher court.

2. LingaramKodopi

Name	LingaramKodopi	
Publication / Channel	Freelance	
Date	Arrested on 09 September 2011, released on bail on 12 November 2013.	
Charges	Masterminding an attack against a local politician and facilitating a money exchange.	
Status	Case pending	
Place	Dantewada, Chhattisgarh	

LingaramKodopi was arrested from a market in Palnar, Dantewada on 09 September 2011, allegedly while receiving money on behalf of Maoists from a contractor for the Essar Group.

The police accused Kodopi of masterminding an attack against a local politician in 2010 and facilitating a money exchange between Maoists and a representative of a steel company wanting to operate in a Maoist insurgent-controlled area. Kodopi denied the allegations and said the police had targeted him because of his refusal to work for them and because of his work exposing police wrongdoing.

Kodopi was acquitted in May 2013 of the charges of masterminding the attack against a local politician. Kodopi was granted bail in the other cases on 12 November 2013 after being imprisoned for more than two years. His bail conditions forbade him from entering Chhattisgarh state and ordered him to check in weekly with a local police station in Delhi. In December 2013, the bail conditions were relaxed, and the court said that Kodopi would be needing the permission only for travelling abroad.

As of March 2016, the police continued to harass Kodopi. Kodopi said that he was suspicious of the police's motives and feared for his life.

YEAR 2012

1. Sheikh Anwar

Name	Sheikh Anwar
Publication / Channel	Unknown
Date	Arrested on 18 June 2012, and released on
Charges	Special Public Security Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Arms Act, various sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC).
Status	Case dropped
Place	Raipur, Chhattisgarh


Sheikh Anwar was arrested on 18 June 2012, for allegedly procuring weapons and ammunition for Naxals(Maoists) in Chhattisgarh. Anwar was arrested along with an alleged Naxal, and his wife was arrested.

The police alleged that Anwar along with another individual from Andhra Pradesh had procured bullets from police and paramilitary forces in order to supply them to the Naxals.

Anwar and others were slapped with the draconian Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Arms Act, various sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) and put behind bars on charges of having strong Maoist connection.

The Raipur Sessions Court set them free five years later on 22 March 2017. The court said that it didn't find any concrete and sufficient evidence by the police in support of their various charges and sections.

2. Muthi-Ur-Rahman Siddiqui

Name	Muthi-Ur-Rahman Siddiqui	
Publication / Channel	Deccan Herald	
Date	Arrested on 29 August 2012, and released on	
Charges	UAPA	
Status	Case dropped	
Place	Bangalore, Karnataka	

Muthi-Ur-Rahman Siddiqui, a reporter for English-language daily *Deccan Herald* on 29 August 2012. The police accused him of being involved in a terror plot to kill Hindu nationalist leaders and journalists in Bangalore. They held him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Siddiqui was held at the Parappana Agrahara Central Jail. He said later that he had been forced to sign 30 to 40 blank sheets of paper while in custody, which were used by police to fabricate a case against him. The National Investigation Agency that took over the case from the Bangalore police announced that it had found no evidence against Siddiqui.

On 23 February 2013, a court ordered the journalist's immediate release. At a press conference on 26 February 2013, Siddiqui told local journalists that he had been targeted because he was Muslim. He also criticized the police for their bias against minorities and said that some news outlets had branded him the mastermind of a terror cell.

3. Naveen Soorinje

Name	Naveen Soorinje	
Publication / Channel	Kasturi TV	
Date	Arrested on 28 July 2012, released on 23 March 2013.	
Charges	Multiple offenses including rioting, assault etc.	
Status	Charges dropped	

Place	Mangalore, Karnataka	
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Naveen Soorinje, a TV reporter for a Kannada-language channel Kasturi TV, was arrested on 28 July 2012. He was arrested following his report on an attack by right-wing Hindu extremists in July 2012. He was charged with several offenses including rioting, assault and rioting with deadly weapons, and using criminal force on women with the intention of outraging their modesty.

Soorinje covered an attack by a large group of extremists on a party in a homestay in Mangalore in an effort to police women they deemed "morally corrupt" for allegedly staying out late, drinking, and partying with men belonging to a minority religion. In an interview after his release, Soorinje said that most boys and girls attacked in the homestay were Muslims or from backward castes. Soorinje caught the crime on camera, and he said his calls to the police went unanswered. He added that the charges against him were in retaliation for documenting the incident and for accusing the police of complicity.

In January 2013, members of the Karnataka state government provided broad assurances that they would drop charges against Soorinje. Soorinje was freed on bail on 02 March 2013.

YEAR 2014

1. Jaikhlong Brahma

Name	Jaikhlong Brahma	
Publication / Channel	News Live	
Date	Arrested on 02 September 2014, released on 04 December 2014.	
Charges	NSA	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Kokrajhar, Assam	

Jaikhlong Brahma, a senior correspondent with a Guwahati based satellite television channel News Live, was arrested in Kokrajhar on 02 September 2014.


The police accused him of maintaining alleged link with the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), an armed separatist outfit, and allegedly inciting NDFB (Songbijit) militants to commit violence. Brahma refuted the allegations. He said he had been called at the police station for "personal discussion" but was later told that he was under arrest.

Brahma was arrested under section (2) of section (3) of the National Security Act and charged with Sections 120(B)/121/121 (a)/109 of the IPC read with Sections 10/13(b)/18 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2008.

Brahma was released on bail on 04 December 2014 with conditions that include prohibition of going out of the district.

YEAR 2015

1. Somaru Nag

Name	Somaru Nag	
Publication / Channel	<i>Patrika</i>	
Date	Arrested on 16 July 2015, released on 22 July 2016.	
Charges	Arms Act, Section 395, Section 435, and Section 120B of IPC.	
Status	Charges quashed	
Place	Darbha, Chhattisgarh	


Somaru Nag, working with the Hindi daily *Patrika*, was arrested at his family's mobile phone shop on the outskirts of Darbha town on 16 July 2015.

Nag frequently covered rural issues including development and access to water and electricity in the region. A local journalist said that he was not aware of any specific reports that could have been a reason for Nag's arrest. However, he added that the police in the region frequently target journalists who they believe could serve as informants on Maoist operations. Nag's lawyer said that Nag could have been targeted because he was a very local journalist and one of the only tribal journalists working in the vicinity.

The police accused Nag of collaborating with a group of villagers who on 26 June 2015 allegedly set fire to equipment being used to build roads in ChoteKadma. Nag was charged under the Arms Act. He was also charged with banditry under Section 395, arson under Section 435, and criminal conspiracy under Section 120B of the Indian penal code.

On 21 July 2016, Nag was acquitted by a local court, and the additional district judge quashed all charges against Nag, citing lack of evidence. He walked free on 22 July 2016.

2. Santosh Yadav

Name	Santosh Yadav	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	Arrested on 29 September 2015, granted bail on 27 February 2017.	
Charges	Sections under IPC, CSPA, and UAPA.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Darbha, Chhattisgarh	


Santosh Yadav, a freelance journalist, was arrested in Darbha on 29 September 2015. The police charged Yadav with rioting, criminal conspiracy, attempted murder under the IPC. Yadav was also charged with "associating with a terrorist organization" and "supporting and aiding terrorist groups" under the Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act (CSPA), and charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Yadav reported on human rights abuses by the police against tribal communities in the region. He had also helped connect members of his community, whose family members faced arrest, to legal aid groups. His colleagues said the charges were fabricated in connection with his reporting on human rights abuses by local authorities.

The police said that Yadav had links to Maoists rebels and that he had participated in violence between police and Maoists in the state on 21 August 2015. Yadav's lawyer said the police forced the journalist to sign a blank paper which they said was a confession. His lawyer also said that Yadav has been harassed by police several times in recent years. In 2014, police summoned Yadav to the police station, where they stripped him and held him several hours. Yadav had warned police that if they beat him, he would write about it. Yadav's wife said that police had threatened to kill her husband in 2014.

In February 2017, the Supreme Court granted bail to Yadav.

3. Surinder Singh

Name	Surinder Singh	
Publication / Channel	Talking Punjab	
Date	Arrested on 21 October 2015, and acquitted on 07 September 2016.	
Charges	TADA	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Ambala, Haryana	

Surinder Singh, a Sikh journalist, was charged and imprisoned in a 27-year-old case on 21 October 2015. He was arrested on anti-terror charges relating to a complaint filed against him in June 1988.


Singh was held under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, commonly known as TADA, an anti-terror law introduced in the 1980s. The act lapsed in 1995. The complaint made against Singh in 1988 was in connection with his affiliation to the Sikh Students Federation, a student political group.

Singh is a journalist who extensively covers Sikh political issues and has a news programme 'Talking Punjab' on YouTube. His channel features local news, including reports on drug abuse, the government's alleged failure to compensate farmers affected by a pesticide that caused crop damage, and critical reports on the judiciary.

A designated TADA court acquitted Singh on 07 September 2016.

YEAR 2016

1. Prabhat Singh

Name	Prabhat Singh	
Publication / Channel	Patrika	
Date	Arrested on 21 March 2016, released on bail on 26 June 2016.	
Charges	Section 67 of India's IT Act, forgery, and cheating.	
Status	Released on bail	
Place	Bastar, Chhattisgarh	

Prabhat Singh, a reporter for the Hindi daily *Patrika*, was arrested in south Bastar on 21 March 2016. Singh was arrested under Section 67 of India's Information Technology Act in


response to a complaint that he circulated "confrontational material" on the messaging service, WhatsApp. He also faces charges from several cases police have filed against him accusing him of forgery and cheating.

Singh, who had at the time had worked for *Patrika* for more than three years, reports on sensitive stories including an attack last month on human rights activist SoniSori and alleged extrajudicial killings in the state. Singh has denied the previous allegations and said the cases were in reprisal for his critical reporting. Journalists say that has been a sustained campaign to silence critical reporting in parts of the state.

In the complaint that led to Singh's arrest, a journalist at the privately-owned news channel ETV accused him of posting confrontational comments in a WhatsApp group used by many journalists to share news. Earlier in March, Singh filed a complaint with Dantewada police against Samajik Ekta Manch, a vigilante group that has previously harassed journalists, for labeling him an "anti-national" on WhatsApp.

On 26 June 2016, Singh was granted bail by the Bilaspur High Court, and was released after spending 3 months in Jagdalpur Central Jail.

2. Deepak Jaiswal

Name	Deepak Jaiswal	
Publication / Channel	DainikDainandini	
Date	Arrested on 26 March 2016, released on bail in June 2016.	
Charges	Trespassing, assaulting public servants, etc.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Bastar, Chhattisgarh	


Deepak Jaiswal, a journalist for the Hindi-language daily *Dainadini*, was arrested in Bastar on 26 March 2018. Jaiswal is being held on suspicion of trespassing, obstructing public servants from discharging their duties, and assaulting a public servant

Local journalists say that there is a sustained campaign to silence critical reporting in parts of the state.

Jaiswal and Prabhat Singh, another journalist, had written a report on teachers that helped students at a local school cheat in their examinations. The police arrested Jaiswal in connection with a complaint a school principal registered seven months ago. Singh was arrested a week earlier under Section 67 of India's Information Technology Act.

In June 2016, Jaiswal was granted bail.

3. Neha Dixit

Name	Neha Dixit	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	Complaint filed on 04 August 2016.	
Charges	Sec 153A of the Indian Penal Code.	
Status	Granted anticipatory bail	
Place	Guwahati, Assam	


On 04 August 2016, SC Koyal, an assistant solicitor general of the government of India at the Gauhati High Court, and Bijon Mahajan, a spokesman for the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), filed a criminal complaint against the English-language magazine *Outlook*, its publisher, Indranil Roy; its editor, Krishna Prasad; and freelance journalist, Neha Dixit.

The complaint alleged that a 29 July story Dixit wrote for *Outlook* violated Indian laws against inciting hatred between groups. In their complaint, Koyal and Mahajan alleged that a portion of Dixit's report violated section 153A of the Indian Penal Code, which criminalizes promotion of "disharmony or feelings of enmity, hatred or ill-will between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities,"

The story written by Dixit accused members of the Hindu nationalist group Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) of trafficking 31 girls of tribal background in the northeastern state of Assam to other parts of India in an effort to inculcate them with a nationalist ideology.

More than 100 journalists, academics and civil society activists issued statements condemning attempts to silence the media and demanded that the complaint be quashed.

4. Gauri Lankesh

Name	Gauri Lankesh	
Publication / Channel	<i>Gauri Lankesh Patrike</i>	

Date	Convicted on 28 November 2016, and granted bail	
Charges	Defamation	
Status	Lankesh was murdered in September 2017	
Place	Hubbali, Karnataka	


Gauri Lankesh, publisher and editor of a Kannada-language weekly *Gauri Lankesh Patrike*, was sentenced to six months imprisonment on 28 November 2016 in Hubbali.

The weekly tabloid was known for its criticism of right-wing extremism and the establishment; it covered issues including communal violence and caste discrimination.

Two separate cases of criminal defamation were brought by two BJP leaders against the weekly that was published, edited and owned by Lankesh. A fine of Rs 10,000 was imposed in both cases. However, Lankesh was granted bail to appeal in higher courts.

YEAR 2017

1. Poonam Agarwal

Name	Poonam Agarwal	
Publication / Channel	The Quint	
Date	Charged on 28 March 2017, granted anticipatory bail on 26 April 2017.	
Charges	Official Secrets Act, criminal defamation, and abetment of suicide.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Nashik, Maharashtra	


Poonam Agrawal, a journalist for the English-language news website The Quint, was charged under the Official Secrets Act, a 1923 anti-espionage law, on 28 March 2017 by police in Nashik. She has also been charged her with criminal defamation and abetment of a suicide under the Penal Code.

The charges stem from Agrawal's reporting on senior army officers' alleged improper use of subordinate soldiers for personal work. Agrawal is accused of entering a restricted area of

an army cantonment without the permission of authorities and filming the premises besides carrying out a sting operation on Mathew and other jawans. One of the soldiers she taped, Roy Matthews, was found dead on March 2, in what police have determined was a suicide. She was booked under several charges, including abetment of suicide of Mathew.

On 26 April 2017, the Bombay High Court granted anticipatory bail to Agarwal after observing that prima facie no offence is made out against the accused.

2. Kamran Yousuf


Name	Kamran Yousuf	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Photojournalist	
Date	Charged on 05 September 2017, granted bail on 12 March 2018.	
Charges	Sedition, criminal conspiracy, and attempting to wage war against India.	
Status	Trial ongoing	
Place	Kashmir	

Kamran Yousuf, a Kashmiri photojournalist, was arrested on 05 September 2017, and later charged with later charged with sedition, criminal conspiracy, and attempting to wage war against India.

In its charges-sheet, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) claimed the presence of Yousuf at various stone pelting and protest sites as an explanation for his detention. Also, NIA claimed that Yousuf was not a 'real' journalist because he did not cover development work carried out by the army.

Yousuf was granted bail on 12 March 2018.

3. Vinod Verma

Name	Vinod Verma	
Publication / Channel	Freelance Journalist	
Date	Charged on 27 October 2017, released on 04 January 2018.	
Charges	Extortion, intimidation, and publishing sexually explicit material.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh	

Vinod Verma, a freelance journalist and a former editor at the BBC Hindi service, was arrested in Ghaziabad on October 27, 2017, on charges of extortion, intimidation, and publishing sexually explicit material. Verma was taken to Raipur city in Chhattisgarh state following his arrest.


Verma has been accused of using a sex tape in an attempt to extort and blackmail a minister in the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Chhattisgarh.

Verma said that although he did possess a copy of the alleged sex video, he was being framed. Verma and his lawyer say the allegations are in retaliation for previous reporting on corruption and threats against journalists.

Verma, a member of the Editors' Guild of India, has also worked for Hindi daily *Amar Ujala*. At the time of his arrest, he was a social media consultant with the Congress Party, in opposition in the state.

On 04 January 2018, Verma was granted bail under provisions of Section 167(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code as the CBI had failed to produce a charge-sheet within 60 days of his arrest.

4. Rohini Singh and editors of The Wire

Name	Rohini Singh	
Publication / Channel	The Wire	
Date	Case filed on 11 October 2017.	
Charges	Criminal Defamation	
Status	Case pending	
Place	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	

On 11 October 2017, Jay Shah, the son of the ruling BJP party's president Amit Shah, filed a criminal defamation case under sections 500 [criminal defamation], 109 [abetment], 39 [voluntarily causing grievous hurt] and 120B [criminal conspiracy] against the Foundation for Independent Journalism, the non-profit that publishes the website, The Wire; The Wire's founding editors Varadarajan, Sidharth Bhatia, and MK Venu; Rohini Singh, a reporter for The Wire; Pamela Philipose, a public editor; and managing editor Monobina Gupta.


On October 12, an Ahmedabad court issued an injunction barring The Wire from writing about Jay Shah's businesses. This is related to an 08 October report in The Wire about the turnover of Jay Shah's company, Temple Enterprises, since Narendra Modi became prime minister and his father became party leader. The injunction bars The Wire from publishing

further stories on Shah's business for the duration of the criminal defamation trial, but it did not require the news website to remove stories already posted.

A Gujarat court issued a summons for those named in the criminal defamation complaint to appear on 13 November 2017. If convicted, the journalists could be jailed for up to two years, or fined. In April 2018, the Supreme Court asked Shah and The Wire to try to amicably settle the criminal defamation case lodged by the former against the news portal and others. The court also extended its interim order that had asked the Gujarat trial court not to proceed with the defamation case.

YEAR 2018

1. Rachna Khaira


Name	Rachna Khaira	
Publication / Channel	The Tribune	
Date	Complaint filed on 05 January 2018	
Charges	Sections 419, 420, 468 (forgery) and 471 of the IPC, section 66 of the IT act and section 36/ 37 of the Aadhaar Act.	
Status	Unknown	
Place	Delhi	

On 05 January 2018, Indian authorities filed a criminal complaint against the English-language daily *The Tribune* and its reporter Rachna Khaira. This complaint was filed a day after the paper published Khaira's report exposing a possible vulnerability in the country's vast national identity system. The complaint was lodged under sections 419 (cheating by impersonation), 420 (cheating), 468 (forgery) and 471 (using a forged document) of the Indian penal code, section 66 of the IT act (damaging computer systems), and section 36/ 37 of the Aadhaar Act (unauthorized collection and dissemination of information).

The published article said that *The Tribune* paid hackers Rs 500 (US\$8) to buy access to the Aadhar national identity database, which contains personal information of approximately a billion people, and an additional Rs 300 (US\$4.70) for software that would allow the newspaper to receive an identity card for any individual in the system. In a January 7 press release, the UIDAI refuted the Tribune report, calling it "incorrect and misleading."

Indian authorities also filed complaints against three men-- Anil Kumar, Sunil Kumar, and a man identified as Raj-- who Khaira mentions in her report as having helped *The Tribune* to hack into the Aadhar system.

2. Kamal Shukla

Name	Kamal Shukla	
Publication / Channel	The Tribune	
Date	Complaint filed on 05 January 2018	
Charges	Sedition under section 124-A of IPC.	
Status	Granted bail	
Place	Kanker, Chhattisgarh	


On 28 April 2018, an FIR was lodged against Kamal Shukla, a journalist from Chhattisgarh, Shukla was charged with sedition, under section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code.

Shukla heads an organization dedicated to providing protection to the journalists who have been working in the Bastar region. He also edits a local publication, *Bhumkal Samachar*.

On 19 April 2018, Shukla hit the share button on a cartoon he saw on Facebook that lampooned the Union government and the Supreme Court for the apex court's decision to reject petitions calling for an independent investigation into the mysterious death of special Central Bureau of Investigation judge Brijgopal Loya in 2014. Claiming to be offended by the post, a resident of Rajasthan filed an online complaint. This eventually reached the police station in Kanker in North Bastar, where an FIR was filed.

On 26 July 2018, Shukla was granted anticipatory bail by the High Court of Chhattisgarh, Bilaspur. This is the first instance of anticipatory bail having been granted in a case of sedition.

3. Aasif Sultan

Name	Aasif Sultan	
Publication / Channel	Kashmir Narrator	
Date	Detained since 27 August 2018.	
Charges	Charges haven't been made public	
Status	Jailed, Case pending	


Place	Srinagar	
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Aasif Sultan, assistant editor with the magazine *Kashmir Narrator*, was picked up by the police at his home in Srinagar on 27 August 2018. Sultan's father said that Jammu and Kashmir police along with soldiers from Central Reserve Police Force raided their home on the night of August 27 at 11:15 p.m. and continued until 1:45 a.m. the next day. He said that the police took away Sultan along with his laptop, mobile phone, and documents related to his work.

Sultan's editor at the magazine said that Sultan has been subject to repeated interrogation by police in detention. The police have demanded that Sultan reveal the sources for a cover story that he wrote for the magazine on Burhan Wani, the Kashmiri militant leader whose death at the hands of Indian security forces in July 2016 touched off a wave of violent anti-government demonstrations in the disputed region.

The police didn't bring on record that Sultan was arrested for the story on Wani, and said that it had evidence about his links with militants.

4. Priya Ramani


Name	Priya Ramani	
Publication / Channel	Mint Lounge	
Date	Case filed on 15 October 2018	
Charges	Criminal defamation under Sections 499 and 500 of the IPC.	
Status	Case pending	
Place	New Delhi	

On 15 October 2018, journalist-turned-politician M.J. Akbar on Monday filed a criminal defamation case against Priya Ramani, the first woman journalist to publicly accuse him of harassment. The criminal defamation case was filed in the Patiala House court in New Delhi, seeking relief under Sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

Amid the MeToo movement, Ramani named Akbar in a Twitter post on 08 October 2018. She had earlier, in 2017, posted an account without naming Akbar. Soon after, around 10 other women recounted instances of alleged sexual misconduct by Akbar. These include journalists Ghazala Wahab, Suparna Sharma, HarinderBaweja, Anju Bharti and Kanika Gahlaut. Akbar, minister of state for external affairs in the Narendra Modi government, stepped down from his ministerial berth.

The complaint listed instances of the alleged defamatory statements made by Ramani being circulated through print and electronic media, as well as Twitter. Ramani, in a statement shared on her Twitter account, said that she was ready to fight allegations of defamation against her.

5. Seema Mustafa

Name	Seema Mustafa	
Publication / Channel	The Citizen	
Date	Case filed on 23 October 2018	
Charges	Defamation	
Status	Case pending	
Place	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	

On 23 October 2018, Ambani's Reliance Group filed a Rs 7,000 crore defamation suit against founder editor of The Citizen, Seema Mustafa, for its reportage on the Rafale defence deal. The case was filed before the Ahmedabad City Civil Court at Gujarat.

The Citizen, edited by Mustafa, is a non-funded news organisation. Mustafa hasn't given any comments citing the case being sub judice. However, she has rejected Ambani's charges in toto.

6. KishorechandraWangkhem

Name	KishorechandraWangkhem	
Publication / Channel	ISTV	
Date	19 December 2018.	
Charges	National Security Act	
Status	Jailed	
Place	Imphal, Manipur	

KishorechandraWangkhem, a journalist with ISTV, was accused of sedition and attempts to create enmity between groups after he posted a video on social media criticising the state's Bharatiya Janata Party-led government. The video, which uses what has been described as "bad" language, is critical of BJP and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister of Manipur N Biren Singh. He was arrested

on 21 November but released on bail on 25 November by a magistrate's order which said that Wangkhem's actions did not appear to be "an act which is intended to create enmity between different groups of people community, sections etc, nor does it appear to be one which attempts to bring hatred, contempt, dissatisfaction against the government of India or of the state."

A day after he was released on bail, he was rearrested, this time under the draconian National Security Act and sentenced to the maximum period of detention, i.e 12 months, on 19 December. While the All Manipur Working Journalists' Association had passed a resolution not to support any journalist for utterances on social media, other journalists' bodies such as the Indian Journalists' Union, Indian Women's Press Corps, Press Club of India, Press Association and Federation of Press Clubs in India have come out in his support, condemning the "harsh provisions" under which he has been booked be dropped in the interests of the right to freedom of speech and expression.

Conclusion

It is the duty of the state to provide an environment in which journalists are able to carry out their professional duties without fear or favour. Attacks and intimidation of journalists foster a climate of fear that inhibits independent journalistic investigation and can promote self-censorship. Governments must therefore be challenged and held accountable to upholding Article 19 of the Constitution of India which guarantees freedom of expression. The state must respect democratic rights, investigate and follow up every attack and be held accountable when there is official complacency, negligence or, in some cases, even official complicity in attacks on media.

Alongside, the journalist community must collectively push-back against the closing in on democratic spaces and freedom of expression. A crisis response network, for example to file bail applications and provide immediate legal counsel, especially at the district level is sorely required. Even as journalists must educate themselves and become aware of their legal rights and police procedures, a network of lawyers to effectively represent those whose rights are violated must be gradually built from the grass-roots. Legal challenges in lower courts as well as Public Interest Litigation, legal reform challenging criminal defamation, archaic laws on sedition, draconian anti-terror laws; contempt of court, legislative privilege and other means use to place unreasonable restrictions on freedom of expression. The media community and legal community must collectively resist the growing intolerance and shrinking of space for democratic dissent and freedom of speech and expression.