



Committee to Protect Journalists

December 8, 2025

Sent via email

Shri Narendra Modi

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India
South Block, Raisina Hill
New Delhi, 110011
India

Dear Prime Minister Modi,

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, nonprofit press freedom organization, writes to request your urgent attention to the matter of journalists imprisoned in India ahead of International Human Rights Day on December 10.

India currently holds two journalists in prison on a combination of security, anti-terror, and state-level criminal charges, [CPJ data](#) shows. One of those is [Rupesh Kumar Singh](#), an independent journalist from the state of Jharkhand, who has been imprisoned for more than three years, most recently at Patna's Adarsh Central Jail. According to Singh's family, he has faced poor-quality and insufficient food; inadequate medical attention despite high cholesterol and other health concerns; long hours of confinement in his cell with no access to open spaces; and restricted access to the canteen and other basic facilities.

While we recognize the number of imprisoned journalists in India has decreased from a historic high of seven between 2021 and 2023, at least 15 journalists have been investigated since 2014 under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, an anti-terror law that allows for detention without trial or charge for up to 180 days.

As India is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it is incumbent upon the government to uphold its international and domestic human rights obligations. India's Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a), and successive governments have recognized the critical role that an independent press plays in strengthening democratic institutions.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have said that "democracy is in our DNA" and "the entire country runs on" basic democratic principles. We urge your government to uphold these values, including the right of journalists to report safely.

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CEO

Jodie Ginsberg

Vice CHAIR

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Maria Teresa Ronderos

Jacqueline Simmons BLOOMBERG

Nika Soon-Shiong
FUND FOR GUARANTEED INCOME

Roger Widmann

Jon Williams

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Press Freedom Center
P.O. Box 2675
New York, NY 10108
Phone: +1 (212) 465-1004
Fax: +1 (212) 465-9568
info@cpj.org



Committee to Protect Journalists

Continued detention and harassment of journalists risks eroding India's reputation as the world's largest democracy and a leading voice of the Global South.

To mark International Human Rights Day, we ask that your government take steps to allow all journalists imprisoned in India to return to their families and continue their work without fear of reprisal.

Our advocacy is supported by more than 1,500 journalists, representing over 100 countries, who joined CPJ in a [solidarity action](#) at this year's Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Malaysia to call on governments around the world to free imprisoned journalists and end impunity for those who attack the press.

Your personal attention to this matter would further demonstrate India's dedication to humane governance, justice, and open public discourse.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your reply and welcome continued dialogue with the relevant offices of the government of India.

Sincerely,

Beh Lih Yi
Asia-Pacific Director
Committee to Protect Journalists

CC:

Shri Amit Shah
Union Home Minister
Government of India

Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw
Minister of Information & Broadcasting
Government of India

Justice (Retired) V Ramasubramanian
Chairperson,
National Human Rights Commission of India

Justice (Retired) Ranjana Prakash Desai
Chairperson
Press Council of India