

## Human Rights Organizations Condemn Indian Police Raids on Newslick Offices and Journalists' Homes

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This morning, we were shocked and horrified to learn that Delhi police have raided the offices of Indian media portal *Newslick*, as well as the homes of several journalists who contributed to the outlet, and arrested Editor in Chief Prabir Purkayastha as part of the Modi regime's politically motivated campaign to silence one of the last news outlets willing to criticize India's increasingly authoritarian government. These raids are just the latest example of the extreme measures the Indian government is willing to take in its quest to muzzle dissent and clamp down on press freedom. According to Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index, India currently stands at 161st out of 180 countries—ranking worse than Venezuela and Afghanistan for press freedom, and falling just barely ahead of authoritarian regimes such as Russia, Turkey, and Egypt. The raids were roundly denounced by [the Press Club of India](#), [the Editors Guild of India](#), and the [opposition INDIA Alliance](#).

As organizations dedicated to fighting for justice, equality, and human rights in India and around the world, we unequivocally condemn this indefensible assault on India's already-beleaguered press, and call for the immediate release of those who were arrested. In addition, we call on the international community—particularly the United States—to take a strong stance against the Modi government's ongoing attacks on human rights and press freedom. India claims to be the “world's largest democracy,” but there are few things a government can do that are more undemocratic than raiding independent media outlets, confiscating phones and laptops, and arresting journalists simply for criticizing those in power.

We would be remiss not to point out that with these raids, history is repeating itself—Prabir Purkayastha, *Newslick*'s Editor in Chief who was arrested Tuesday morning, previously spent time in prison during the Emergency of 1975-1977, when Indira Gandhi's government suspended civil liberties, censored the press, and imprisoned its opponents *en masse* in order to consolidate political power. Over the last several years, observers both in India and abroad have warned about how India under Narendra Modi is increasingly being governed as if it were in a state of perpetual “undeclared emergency.” Today's unconscionable raids are a chilling reminder of why those warnings should not go unheeded.