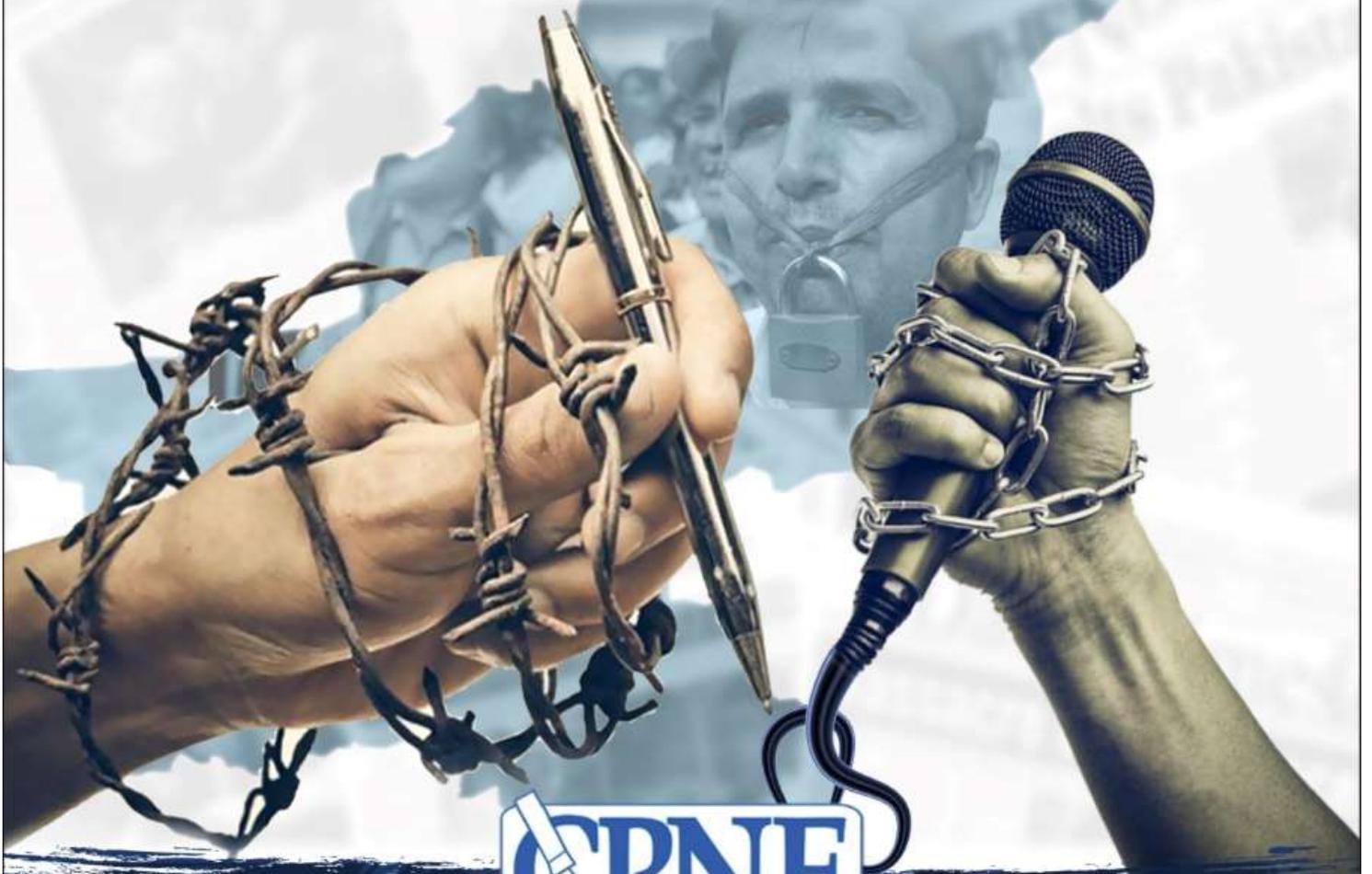


PAKISTAN

Media Freedom

REPORT 2021



Council of Pakistan
Newspaper Editors

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CPNE – Pakistan Media Freedom Report Year 2021:

According to World Press Freedom Report, freedom of media and freedom of expression in Pakistan on latest world index ranked 145th, three points worse off, compared in year 2019. With each passing day, freedom of media, freedom of expression and right to access information in Pakistan was continuously tried to be suppressed through one or the other pretext or ploy. According to CPNE's "Pakistan Media Freedom Report 2021", at least five media persons were killed during performance of their duties. These statistics were derived from Media Monitoring Desk set up at CPNE Secretariat, various media sources, newspapers and news websites. Such persistence did not stop here, however, and in order to frighten, threaten and harass those who raised the voice of the right and the truth, various trickeries were used, sometimes by trolling on social media, and yet at other times efforts were made to scare them by targeting with torture their household.

Those journalists who did not lose courage, were not only threatened to be killed but attacks were made to kill them. In year 2021, attacks were made to kill journalists but they were survived miraculously. When some elements failed in silencing the media persons, then they targeted media and press clubs. Sometimes they were hit, and sometimes they were raided. In year 2021, a dangerous tendency of physical attacks and threats against media persons was observed that is a cause of concern. This year more than 40 media persons were intimidated and threatened, by adopting various methods, besides prohibitions that were imposed by media management and PEMRA.

In year 2021, many media persons were harassed online. Unfortunately, however, there is no suitable method of work to record the data concerning attacks on media persons in our country. In year 2021, many trends were run on social media against media persons and media organizations. According to various media reports, in September News One's anchorperson Ghareeda Farooqi and in October senior anchor Aasema Shirazi were targeted with severe criticism by supporters of political parties and ministers. Aasema Shirazi had written a column for BBC Urdu. Both of them were faced with criticism by both the supporters of political parties as well as ministers.

In year 2021, heavy risks were faced against freedom of the press, freedom of expression and access to information, on different occasions, including the following incidents:

- In governmental circles, echoes were heard of Pakistan Media Development Authority (PMDA) to monitor media institutions. Against enforcing of this black law, tough opposition was built by press organizations, media stakeholders and press clubs on every platform to ward off this disputed law. As a result of joint struggle of all media stakeholders, the government asked for recommendations of the stakeholders.
- Freedom of expression was subjected to prohibitions when efforts were made by governmental institutions to control the media through advertisements. Confessions by Muslim League on release of advertisements and rewards to a few favorite media institutions and journalists sharply damaged the prestige of free and impartial media in the country. Besides, with the cover of dummy newspapers, small and local newspapers were removed from media list, and thus misused.
- Freedom of expression suffered losses when under the pretext of fake news and to control digital media, attention was focused on formulating rules and regulations. Without any doubt, all media institutions including CPNE are ready to talk to government about fake news on a condition of providing a clear and comprehensive description about fake news so that the voice of the righteous and the truth not be

suppressed. That, if irregularities exist in any office, those be brought forward; there must be freedom to criticize, to question those offices, so that they're reformed and establishing of an open and free atmosphere in the country be ascertained.

- Media freedom and freedom of expression were endangered at that time when Islamabad high court decided to impose criminal charges on three journalists as well in the case of statement on oath of Gilgit Baltistan's former chief justice Rana Shamim.

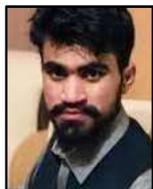
Media persons who were killed during performance of their duties:

According to available statistics, five journalists and media workers were killed, from January 2021 up to December 2021, whereas other media practitioners are continuously compelled to self-censorship.



Name: Ajay Kumar Lalwani

On 17 March, in Sukkur's Saleh-Pat area, a murderous attack was made on a young journalist, of 31 years, Ajay Kumar Lalwani. He could not bear the injuries and passed away. The murdered person's case was lodged against six unidentified persons at Saleh-Pat police station, but no arrest was made. Ajay Kumar Lalwani used to work with Royal News Channel and also a local newspaper. He was a fierce flag-bearer of human rights, freedom of expression and freedom of the press and media, and was hit and killed as a result of this struggle. Before his death, he was investigating a case of murder of Irfan Jatoi, a student of Sindh University, Jam-Shoro, in a fake police encounter staged, and he had also received threats against his life. Aside this, the journalist's family is also faced with pressures and threats to stop the investigations in this case.



Name: Abdul Wahid Raisani

On 24 April 2021, in Quetta's Qambarani Road, near Bank Colony, unknown armed persons opened firing and severely injured Daily Azadi Quetta Newspaper's worker Abdul Wahid Raisani. However, before reaching hospital, he could not bear the injuries and lost his life.



Name: Shahid Zehri

On 18 October 2021, in Baluchistan's industrial area Hub, a 35-year old reporter Shahid Zehri was killed at a time when was coming from Hub to Karachi. His vehicle was attacked with hand bomb. Shahid Zehri had kept working for "GNN" for some time. In last days he was associated with private television "Metro One". He was on target of separatists who suspected that he was giving news about them to agencies. Separatists martyred him in a bomb blast and that very day, they issued a press release and took responsibility on having killed Shahid Zehri. However, no arrest was made.



Name: Nazim Jokhio

On 02 November 2021 in Karachi's Memon Goth, a dead body of social media activist Nazim Jokhio was found. According to his family, Nazim Jokhio had uploaded a video of hunting of bustard by member of provincial assembly from Pakistan People's Party Jam Owais and his guests who had arrived from an Arab land. After that video's surfacing publicly, Jam Owais called Nazim Jokhio at farm house and demanded that he dislodge that video. Upon refusal, he tortured and killed Nazim Jokhio. Later he threw away his dead body in bushes near farm house.



Name: Mohammad Zada Agarwal

On 08 November 2021 in Khyber Pakhtoon Khwah's district Malakand Sakhakot, its young social media activist YouTuber Mohammad Zada Agarwal was killed by bullets of some unknown motorcyclists at some distance near his house. A few days before his death, he had raised an effective voice before Deputy Commissioner in an open kutchery (court) against narcotic drug smugglers.

Journalists who committed suicide due to economic crisis:

Media institutions underwent extreme financial crisis due to non-payment of the dues since many years owed by federal and provincial governments and private advertisers payable to media institutions. Victimized by financial turmoil, many media offices including newspapers were shut down, whereas many other offices faced the financial disasters by forced layoff, delay in payment of salaries and cuts therein, of journalists and media employees, every now and then, whereas a large number of journalists became jobless due to closure of offices. Due to increasing inflation in the country, many journalists and media employees are victimized by intense mental pressures and traumatic conditions. Miserable with these very financial disorders, two journalists became so disheartened that they committed suicide, which includes those dismissed two years ago, Faheem Mughal, and Muzaffargarh's Ali Raza.

- Faheem Ahmad Mughal belongs to Karachi's Federal B. Area. After dismissal from employment, the deceased was running rickshaw to meet expenses. But recent increasing prices of petroleum products made him so fed up that he hanged himself on 25 November 2021 and committed suicide.
- In Muzaffargarh's Kot Addu district, resident of Canal Colony journalist Ali Raza, distressed by a worsening situation hurled himself on railway track right in front of his house and committed suicide on 8 December 2021.

Negative effects of Corona pandemic on media, and journalists who lost lives in year 2021:

Like in year 2020, year 2021 was also most difficult year for journalists and media employees due to third and fourth wave of Corona virus pandemic. For journalists and media employees, it was necessary to be in front rank and file to perform their duties in which they were confronted with different and extreme hardships. For this reason, many journalists, cameramen and other persons fast became victim to this terrible disease up to now, whereas many who kept on fighting against this pandemic have already lost their lives. In spite of the act that provincial governments provided vaccination facilities for journalists and media employees and their families at Arts Council and associated press clubs, according to statistics available during year 2021, nine journalists, reporters and media employees fell victim to Corona virus and died, which was a horrific situation. In year 2021, details of journalists who lost their lives due to Corona pandemic countrywide follow:

- On 26 March 2021 senior journalist Sohail Abdul Naser performing his duties of reporting on defense affairs from Islamabad lost his battle against Corona virus. He was associated with Nawa-e-Waqt Islamabad.
- On 26 March 2021 Jaohar Majeed, journalist associated with Ausaf Newspaper Rawalpindi died of Corona virus affliction. He was hospitalized after afflicted with contagious disease for treatment at Rawalpindi Institute of Urology.
- On 11 April 2021, a young columnist and famous poetess Kiran Wiqar from Okara died of Corona virus in Lahore whereas just a month before her death, her brother and mother had lost their lives because of this disease.
- On 22 April 2021, in Rawalpindi, native journalist Altaf Quraishi and his spouse died after catching Corona virus.

- On 29 April 2021, famous journalist Mirza Khurram Baig died of Corona virus pandemic disease. He served in The News as city editor, besides having been a business editor, and head of sports desk at Dawn TV.
- On 2 August 2021, CPNE's member and owner and chief editor of Ummat Newspaper and Takbeer Weekly Rafiq Afghan caught Corona virus at 64 and later on died.
- On 12 August 2021, journalist Saleem Somroo associated with Awami Awaz Newspaper died at Karachi Lyari hospital due to Corona virus. He was admitted to hospital, a few days before his death, due to pain in breathing.
- On 14 September 2021, the country's famous novelist and journalist Tariq Ismail Sagar died due to Corona virus. Before passing away, he was attached as a columnist with the country's reputed newspapers.
- On 3 November 2021 in Lahore, senior journalist, analyst and Pakistan Newspaper's group executive editor Quadratullah Chaudhry died after Corona virus illness. He was under treatment at Services Hospital, Lahore.

Journalists targeted with threats and pressures:

Substantial numbers of journalists, social media activists and other media workers were being targeted by various influential sources, sometimes for publishing news and sometimes for stopping the publishing of news, by deploying numerous trickeries. Sometimes, murderous attacks were instigated to silence them and sometimes threatening calls are made. Unfortunately, many journalists waiting for legal prosecutions against those attacks and intimidation are compelled to impose self-censorship on themselves. However, there still exist many bold journalists who are engaged in activities to advance the right and the truth forward without fear. Seven such journalists were intimidated and threatened with murderous attacks in the current year. Complaints were lodged against these attacks in concerned police stations but no arrest was made, whereas in some cases journalists and their families were made a target of torture, though, despite presence of all witnesses, police refused to register a First Information Report.

❖ Journalists who were made targets of attacks:

- On 19 February 2021 social media activist Naseebullah Zahri associated with YouTube channel Qallat Voice, who used to regularly unmask on the media illegal occupations of the mafias and anti-State activities of the separatists was, as a result, confronted with murderous attacks by unknown persons which injured him. The separatists had also assumed responsibility of attacks on him. However, no arrest was made.
- On 20 April 2021 in Islamabad, PEMRA's former chairman and senior journalist Absar Alam was fired upon in an attack to kill in which he got injured. FIR was registered in related police station on this attack, but despite all evidence being present, no accused person was arrested up to now.
- On 03 May 2021 in Rawalpindi, unknown motorbike riders fired upon and injured sub editor Arshad Iqbal of Khyber News. The hit occurred at a time when journalist Arshad Iqbal was going from office to home.

- On 26 May 2021 in Islamabad, journalist and YouTuber blogger Asad Ali Toor was made target of torture by three unidentified persons at his house. Despite the CCTV of the incident raised in public view, the journalist is waiting for legal action.
- On 13 August 2021 in Dadu district Sanghar, journalist Ghulam Qadir Shar, while he was going from office to his, was made a target of torture. As a result, he bore deep wounds on his head. According to the report, he had filed news against a wadera (feudal lord), because of which wadera's son kidnapped and tortured him. When Ghulam Qadir Shar's condition worsened, his family had him treated in a Hyderabad hospital and was also later shifted to a Karachi hospital.
- A 22 August 2021 report indicated in Mirpur Mathelo city of Ghotki district, Sindh a journalist Shafqat Abbasi associated with Mehran TV had some personal dispute on some dealing with local Mirani tribe's people. On the day of the incident, he was sitting in a hotel when Miran tribal people ambushed him and opened fire in which he was injured. Notwithstanding the incident having been reported, a legal action is still awaited up to now.
- On 11 September 2021 in Sanghar, two journalists Mir Altaf Talpar and Ghulam Qadir Malkani were hit. This attack took place at a time when he was returning after hearing a legal case.

❖ **Incidents of physical torture on journalists:**

- On 12 January 2021 in D-Chowk, Islamabad, editor and reporter of Metro Watch Newspaper Zahid Farooq Malik was stopped from coverage of protest of teachers of a government school and was subjected to torture. He said despite his identifying himself as journalist, policemen stopped him from coverage, shoved and hit and injured him.
- On 17 January 2021, reporter Munawwar Hussain of 92 News and reporter Noman Maiman of Sindh TV underwent torture in Mehrabpooor area of Naoshehro Feroze. On publication of news of cock-fight staging (murgh baazi) and gambling, cock-fight stager waderas (feudal lords) attacked his office. Many people barged into his office and tortured him, hit and damaged and ransacked his office. Police in district Naoshehro Feroze did not make any report, on dispute of jurisdiction grounds.
- On 18 January 2021, Geo News cameraman Naser Mughal covering murder case of Barrister Fahd Malik was tortured outside accountability court of justice in Islamabad. When he was making footage of accused persons coming out of the court, then handcuffed accused and their lawyers attacked him and snatched his mobile, and tore apart his clothes. As a result of this hit, journalist Naser Mughal was badly wounded.
- On 23 January 2021, Malik Ehtesham, reporter of Qaomi Lalkaar, and cameraman Munawwar Abbas were arrested at a time when they were distributing copies of newspapers in Bani Gala area. As per FIR, a special report was published in those newspapers about Park View Housing Scheme. An armed man snatched away his camera and tortured him.
- On 8 February 2021, attack was staged by infuriated lawyers on ARY affiliated journalist Jahangir Baloch, who was recording a lawyers' protest demonstration, in Islamabad. A case was registered about attack on office of chief justice while a

mention is made in that same police report about attack on the journalist. However, no action was seen.

- On 11 February 2021 in Lahore, Zain Madni Hussaini, reporter of City 42, was harassed by Punjab police. This incident occurred at a time when he was covering complains of people about traffic issues during PSL cricket matches. DSP misbehaved against him and his cameraman, snatched his camera, and threatened him. Despite a report already lodged on the case, action was not taken.
- On 16 February 2021, in Karachi, Mohammad Rehan associated with Bol News was tortured during his coverage of by-elections and fight between political parties, due to which his face was wounded, but police refused to lodge a complaint.
- On 19 March 2021 in Lahore, 7News Channel's Director News Amer Sohail was hit and threatened. This event happened as a result of releasing a video about an extra judicial killing by police. He said police staged a fake demonstration. During this time, protest demonstrators attacked his vehicle.
- On 03 April 2021, in Karachi, Bol News reporter Kamran Minhas was hit and wounded as a result of publishing news against parking mafia but police refused to register a case.
- On 13 April 2021, during coverage of protest demonstrations of Tehreek Labbaikh Pakistan (TLP) in different cities of Punjab, journalists and media employees and camera persons were made target of torture by police men. Tortured included 92 News correspondent Mohammad Asif from Multan, Photo journalist Sadaqat Mughal and Amjad Hussain of Jahan e Pakistan from Lahore, and reporter Qamar Butt of ARY News.
- On 25 May 2021, in Karachi, ARY's reporter Afzal Parwaiz, DSNG operator Umar, cameraman Nadeem and driver Mujeeb were made a target of torture by hotel workers due to their coverage of violation of Covid-2019 regulations in that private hotel.
- On 28 May 2021, during coverage of an illegal torture cell in Mirpur Mathelo, police made target of torture Awaz TV's Latif Weisar and Khalid Weisar, whereas from Times News journalist Barkat Mirani and cameraman.
- On 27 June 2021, in Karachi, reporter Simin Nawaz and her cameraman from 24 News Channel were stopped by Dr. Anila and guards during Covid-2019 coverage of at Karachi Expo Center and made them target of torture while keeping them in illegal detention on behalf of management.
- On 04 July 2021 Bhong Press Club's president and journalist Asghar Jafri was detained and severely tortured by Rahim Yar Khan police. Reportedly, on pressure from an influential political personality, a false case was registered against him. Later on, he was freed on 07 July 2021.
- On 04 July 2021, in Islamabad, senior photo journalist Sultan Bashir was tortured and injured during coverage of students' ongoing protest demonstration before Higher Education Commission.
- On 16 July 2021, in Peshawar, GTV News reporter Abdul Rahman and cameraman Ashfaq Hussain were subjected to torture by a group of shop keepers whereby he was severely wounded, and broke his camera too.

- On 18 July 2021, Khyber district's journalist Mehrab Shah Afridi was made target of torture in Landi Kotal Press Club compound and was threatened against his life. He said that he had interviewed MPA Shafiq Sher Afridi regarding street lights in the area, due to which opponents of the MPA tortured him.
- On 17 August 2021, in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK), Samaa TV reporter Maqsood Ahmad Sufi was severely injured in Muzaffargarh on making a video about an alleged police torture on a youngster. Meanwhile, another such incident also occurred on 24 May 2021 where Samaa TV cameraman faced torture by Haripur police on making a video about police.
- On 26 August 2021 during an incident Mehrabpur's journalist Qamar Muneer Arain was tortured. He had made a coverage against land mafia due to which the journalist was attacked and severely wounded. Besides journalist Saleem Mughal's motorbike was also stolen.
- On 30 August 2021, Geo News reporter Tariq Abul hassan and journalist Nabil Akhtar were manhandled by police men when he was recording the protest of families of missing persons outside Governor House in Karachi. Both the journalists were performing their duties when police men in plain clothes tortured them and snatched away their mobile phones.
- On 10 September 2021, in Jacobabad, Sindh TV's district reporter Zain Sarki were subjected to torture by CIA police incharge Ali Hassan Mehr and his two private guards when he was recording a suspicious activity taking place in CIA office as a result of which he was tortured and his camera and mobile phone was snatched.
- On 27 September 2021, in DI Khan, situated within limits of Thaana University, firing of unknown persons on home of Samaa TV's correspondent Ahmad Mughal and Bol News Channel's reporter Saifullah Mughal, injured spouse of Ahmad Mughal, whereas Ahmad Mughal's son said attackers were informing about their affiliation with Tehreek e Taliban e Pakistan (TTP).
- In September 2021, journalist Naseeb Yar Chugharzai of Nawa e Pakistan Newspaper and TNN received threats from traffic police when he published news about problems faced by people due to worsening traffic situation in Bunair markets, due to which traffic warden threatened to kill him.
- On 12 October 2021, in Lahore, Jang Newspaper reporter Tajamul Gormani was tortured by lawyers in his house against making photos of an illegal construction house.
- On 22 October 2021, in Islamabad, Nafees Arain of 24 News and Rana Usman of Aaj News were hit when they were recording TLP protest.
- On 24 November 2021, in Lahore, unknown persons attacked the vehicle of journalist Ambareen Fatima of Nawa e Waqt. The attack occurred when she took her children with her outside home at night. Attacker made life threatening warnings. She was attacked a few days after publishing of a report by her husband Ahmad Noorani on news website Fact Focus concerning an alleged audio of former chief justice Saqib Nisar.

- On 09 December 2021, Dawn Newspaper’s photo journalist Faisal Mujeeb was targeted, during performance of his media duties, by Sindh Rangers. He was covering MQM party’s martyrs day.
- On 19 December 2021, Karachi Union of Journalists’ senior vice president Javed Qureshi received life threatening warnings by a local office bearer of a political party. He said the issue of his agency office is under hearing by court. However, second party is trying to continuously pressurize him with illegal tactics.

❖ **False allegation cases, arrest and forced detention of journalists:**

- On 23 February 2021, Abdul Jabbar, reporter of Nawa e Waqt was arrested at Quetta Press Club under PECA law. Police said he was arrested after complain of a government officer against the journalist’s post on facebook.
- On 02 March 2021, in Muzaffarabad, capital city of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), police lodged false cases and detained five journalists including GNN TV’s Sardar Naeem Chughtai, Dunya News reporter Syed Taqi ul Hassan, Awaz Newspaper reporter Hamza Kamal, Daily Country News reporter Siddiq Lon and Nawaz Dar associated with YJF Web TV. All these journalists were covering demolition of an under construction plaza which allegedly belonged to family of prime minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.
- On 30 March 2021, reporter Noor Islam associated with Riyasat Newspaper and KNN Channel was arrested under Pakistan Penal Code Section 385 and 386 and under Anti-Terrorism Act 7 on indicating local police being involved in crimes and identifying of narcotic drugs sale in the area under jurisdiction of Manghopir police station, Karachi. According to his family, he was receiving threatening phone calls from police and criminal groups. Later, he was freed.
- On 03 April 2021, free-lance journalist Shahid Aslam’s mobile phone and laptop was snatched at office of Senior Member Board of Revenue (SMBR) and arrested at a time when he had reached that office to know his viewpoint about Cooperative Department Secretary Babar Hayat Tarar, who was accused of wrong doings.
- On 24 May 2021, senior photo journalist Fareed Khan working for an international wire service was arrested during coverage of Covid-2019 lockdown in F B Area, Karachi.
- On 25 May 2021, SHO Saudabad Rana Haseeb detained Dawn News reporter Syed Waseem on covering a private hospital, although police officer did not inform of any reason for this detention.
- On 5 June 2021, Punjab police detained Bol News representative Ahmad Nawaz in a false case. He had done an investigative report on embezzlement in government’s developmental schemes of Qasim Langarana, Personal Assistant to MNA Jafar Leghari. As its result he was tortured at home and arrested in district Rajanpur’s Jampur area.
- On 07 August 2021, in Lahore, Cyber Crime Wing, FIA arrested two journalists Amer Mir and Imran Shafqat. According to reports, Amer Mir had left his house to go to office when FIA’s Cyber Crime Wing detained him. FIA also arrested journalist Imran Shafqat, also from Lahore. Later, both were released on bail.

- On 13 September 2021, Amjad Hussain Baracha, chief reporter of Ausaf Newspaper, was arrested when he gave a news on social media platform against DIG Police, Gilgit. Police raided his house and detained him in Hunza Valley of Gilgit Baltistan, compelled him to delete his tweet, and freed him after he deleted his tweet.
- On 22 September 2021, columnist senior journalist Waris Raza was detained in Karachi's Gulshan e Iqbal area. He was released 14 hours after his detention.

❖ **Incidents of kidnapping and abduction of journalists:**

- On 18 February 2021, Saifullah Jan, correspondent of Associated Press of Pakistan and Islam Newspaper was kidnapped from Charsada. Kidnappers locked him up in a local office of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and subjected him to torture.
- On 13 April 2021, Malik Naveed associated with Koh e Noor channel was kidnapped from his house in Gujranwala.
- On 05 November 2021, in Karachi's Baldia town, Syed Zeid, chief editor of People's Life newspaper and community journalist, was kidnapped by unknown persons from his house. Despite an FIR registered, kidnappers were not arrested. Whereabouts of Syed Zeid are unknown.
- On 14 November 2021, a murderous attack was made on Wihari's investigative journalist Zahid Hans. After he miraculously escaped from this attack, effort was made to kidnap him. Upon resistance, he was deeply wounded. He had given a news about molestation of a child by a police man, due to which that police man was dismissed from job.

❖ **Incidents of threatening phone calls received by journalists:**

- On 21 January 2021, in Lahore, Ahmad Faraz, crime reporter of Geo News started receiving life threatening phone calls from Punjab police officials at a time when he had given a news on Twitter about violations of merit policy in the police department of spouse of superintendent (who herself is also a superintendent).
- On 23 January 2021, Koh e Noor TV's reporter Mohammad Faisal and Malik Junaid started receiving threats from a leader of the ruling party when they published report of kidnapping of a girl.
- On 25 February 2021, Cameraman Shiraz Gardezi of Geo News received threats upon giving news of delay in an under construction road in backward areas of Bagh, Azad Kashmir.
- 02 March 2021, two YouTubers Taher Naseer and Farhan Hussain faced threats on doing a show on Channel Watch Time regarding Rawalpindi's investment companies and money exchangers.
- On 03 April 2021, Arsalan Haidar, Editor of Takmeel Newspaper, received threats against covering irregularities in department of Punjab Higher Education Commission.
- On 11 April 2021, Saleem Bukhari, editor of Sarkar Newspaper, Rawalpindi received threats against his life upon publishing public complaints against incharge of survey department of Chak Laala.

- On 11 May 2021, Samaa Newspaper’s Bureau Chief Raja Waheed Janjua was given threats against his life by Secretary Rawalpindi upon giving news of corruption in Senate Housing Society.
- On 17 June 2021, in Dera Ghazi Khan, Javed Siddiqi, correspondent of Nawa e Waqt received threatening calls from Laadi gang chieftain.
- On 11 July 2021, Bakhtullah Jan Hasrat, reporter of Express newspaper received life threatening warnings.
- On 02 September 2021, spokesman of chief minister of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa Mohammad Asif Khan issued threats against Mutee Ullah Jan upon posting on social media regarding inferior construction works in his constituency.
- On 14 September 2021, Samaa News journalist Manzar Shugri received threats from police as a result of posting against police on facebook.
- On 17 September 2021, Sukhur Electric Power Company’s lineman threatened he will kill Dunya News journalist Saleem Mughal. He had published news against lineman in cases of corruption in FIA.
- On 10 October 2021, Maqsood Ahmad, journalist associated with Awami Awaz, received threats from land mafia upon coverage against illegal occupation in Bhambur’s area Dhabeji.
- On 23 October 2021, Dawn News reporter Taher Naseer received threatening calls at a time when he had published corruption practiced in Islamabad.
- On 29 October 2021, in Islamabad, Malik Siddiq Awan, chief editor of Sarkar Newspaper receiving threats against his life.

❖ **Incidents of harassing the journalists:**

- On 25 September 2021, senior journalist and News One’s anchorperson Ghareeda Farooqi was made a target of online campaign. On controversial video of a Muslim League leader having become viral and tweet for its investigation was the reason she faced online harassment and trolling.
- On 19 October 2021, senior journalist and Aaj News anchor person Asima Shirazi was faced with online campaign a few days after her column for BBC Urdu online edition. Prime Minister Imran Khan’s advisor for political relations Dr. Shahbaz Gul while criticizing the journalist in a news conference had said that her article was a “personal attack” on prime minister’s family.
- On 13 December 2021 in Islamabad, workers of Pakistan Muslim League (N) mistreated and harassed women journalists who had come to attend wedding of Junaid Safdar and Ayesha Saif.

❖ **Attacks, robberies and raids on houses of journalists:**

- On 21 February 2021, in Mirzapur near Shikarpur, police conducted raids at house of Samaa TV Bureau Chief Sahil Jogi. During this time, the journalist and his spouse were made targets of torture and their phones were confiscated. Consequently, police officials took a position that they were searching for an accused named “Rahed Jogi”.

- On 24 April 2021, supporters of Jamiat Ulema Islam (F) attacked employees of Karachi Press Club after armed guards of Maulana Umar Sadeq stopped them from entering the press club.
- On 05 August 2021, an enraged tribal group attacked Pashtu language Khyber News Channel office and reporter Hazrat Khan Mehmand. According to report, the tribal group was supporter of local businessman. They were angry as a result of a news published against them and attacked journalist Hazrat Khan Mehmand and office of local channel.
- On 12 October 2021, DSP Cantonment Ehsan Shah raided Peshawar Press Club to stop press conference of Khwaja Sara (LGBT) community and ransacked it.

❖ **Cases against journalists:**

- On 11 March 2021, a case was lodged against journalist Ghulam Akbar Marwat when he did a coverage in irregularities practiced in food department of Lucky Marwat.
- On 15 March 2021, in Sukkur, serious cases were registered on behalf of the state in Sukkur's Site area police station against four journalists during coverage of a sit-in protesting extra judicial killing of student Irfan Jatoi. This included sections 120, 121, 123 and 7 ATC. Those journalists included Samaa TV's Sahil Jogi, Ab Tak News Bureau Chief Phulpoto, Today TV's Adam Shambani, Koshish Newspaper's special reporter Arshaad Andhad and his father, Hilal e Pakistan's reporter Rustam Andhad. After that, Anti-Terror Court removed sections of rebellion and terrorism against the state and transferred the case to session court, cases which are under hearing in additional session court in Sukkur, whereas those mentioned journalists have secured bails before arrests.
- On 21 March 2021, on behalf of FIA, former chairman Absar Alam was summoned.
- On 18 May 2021, health department registered case against six journalists against posting on social media about non-availability Covid-2019 vaccine on social media.
- On 03 July 2021, FIA sent a notice to TV anchor Nadeem Malik when he broadcasted information about corruption of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Samaa TV in his talk-show Nadeem Malik Live.
- On 19 July 2021, in Shikarpur, police registered a case against Shikarpur Press Club's former president and Ab-Tak reporter Sultan Rind. This case was registered when he published alleged corruption in developmental scheme run on state fund by personal assistant to Sindh minister Imtiaz Shaikh.
- In September 2021, Swat police nominated journalist Hayat Mohammad Kalami associated with Chaand newspaper, Dawn newspaper and Rose TV, in two different cases. As a result of publishing a report on robbing the tourists in Swat, as serious a case as 7 ATC was registered against him. Journalist Hayat Mohammad Kalami had already secured bail before arrest.
- On 29 September 2021, journalist Tanveer Awan was arrested on charges of fake "honor" case by Islamabad police. He faced the case as a result of his post on his Facebook.
- On 2nd October 2021, a case registered against reporter of Samaa TV Danial Umar for reporting Kulsoom Nawaz (Late)'s Vaccination report.

- On 30 December 2021, Islamabad High court started judicial inquiry into contempt of court case against journalists associated with The News Ansar Abbasi, Amer Ghouri and the newspaper's owner and editor-in-chief Mir Shakil ur Rehman on having published a letter of oath / affidavit related to exertion of pressure of former judge.

❖ **Journalists facing online and offline censorship and prohibitions:**

- On 25 January 2021, Deputy Commissioner of South Waziristan Akhoundzada Mohammad Yaha stopped a journalist from entering South Waziristan compound where district administration had assembled to solve social problems emerging through social media platform.
- On 11 March 2021, Peshawar High Court issued orders to block Tik-Tok Application upon which Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) blocked the mentioned App. It was later restored.
- On 24 April 2021, National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) closed more than 19 thousand accounts Among those, more than 9 thousand accounts were involved in spreading religious hatred and more than 10 thousand accounts were involved in spreading terrorism.
- On 21 July 2021, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) once again blocked as per a court order the Tik-Tok App, which was later restored five months later, on 20 November 2021.
- From 20 to 24 October 2021, due to sit-ins by Tehreek Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in various areas in Lahore, Ministry of Interior suspended mobile internet service in various areas of Lahore including Samanabad town. Similar situation continued for three days in TLP sit-ins in Islamabad.
- On 21 December 2021, a talk-show of Hum News hosted by Mohammad Maalik was stopped after its first 15 minutes, in which senior journalist Hamid Mir was invited.

PEMRA's orders:

- On 21 January 2021, PEMRA suspended license of Bol TV as a result of presenting analysis on legal affairs and imposed a fine of Rupees 10 lacs (one million).
- On 21 March 2021, PEMRA issued "Show Cause" notices to 14 channels including Hum News upon giving news related to transfers of ministers of Punjab and KPK and increase in prices of petroleum products.
- On 21 April 2021, PEMRA issued guidelines to TV channels not to carry statements of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) without verification from NAB.
- On 21 April and 21 October 2021, PEMRA imposed ban on coverage of TLP.
- On 21 April 2021, PEMRA issued guidelines to all TV channels to rely on news of Ministry of Information or other cabinet members for information concerning decisions of cabinet meetings.
- On 31 May 2021, Geo News imposed a prohibition on Hamid Mir show. The ban was enforced after his expressions of viewpoints against the government and establishment in protest demonstrations outside National Press Club.

Pakistan Media Development Authority (PMDA):

Federal government announced formation of Pakistan Media Development Authority (PMDA) for monitoring the affairs of media institutions. This was opposed by all media organizations including CPNE and, in press/media circles, the powers and jurisdiction of this suggested Authority was likened to Press and Publications Ordinance that was enacted about 60 years ago during military dictatorship era. Federal Minister of Information and Broadcasting Fawad Chaudhry has indicated in his various statements an issue that all laws exist through which media is controlled throughout the country. These include: Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) controls social media too. As for print media, Press Council is there to attend to complains and offer amends. Electronic media is observed by PEMRA. Implementation of labor regulations is the task of Tribunal for Newspaper Employees (ITNE), whereas Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) keeps an eye on registration affairs. A suggestion is to bring all these under a single PDMA umbrella for which reason all relevant powers will be vested in this Authority. This Authority's chairman will be a grade 21 or grade 22 governmental officer whose selection will be made by president of the country, whereas this Authority will have one each representative in every province whose selection will also be made by the president in the light of federation government's recommendations. Besides that, secretary of interior and secretary of information will also be included in this committee. However, in this matter, it is the principled stance of all media stakeholders including CPNE that there are separate rules and regulations on media's all platforms: print, electronic and digital. And that prevalent laws are also existing for it. However, a new Authority or a new law, is not absolutely necessary, though grounds exist for effective legislating of laws related to fake news as well as social media. Also, in PMDA's imposed laws, severe restrictions, punishments, imprisonment and fines on violations of rules and regulations are also suggested. Through this law, effort is being made to forcibly deflate the freedom of press, freedom of expressions of opinions and right to access information. This is the reason that all press/media organizations, media stakeholders and press clubs are name this controversial law as "black law" and it is being vehemently opposed on every platform. As a result of joint struggle of all media stakeholders, the government has asked the stakeholders for their recommendations. All media organizations including CPNE are ready to talk to the government on condition that a clear and comprehensive definition be presented on fake news.

Digital Media Policy:

Last year, media wing formed under Ministry of Information of Pakistan, the government is formulating a new digital media advertisement policy at the start of current year for distribution of governmental advertisements on different digital platforms. After approval of this new policy by prime minister of Pakistan, federal government will issue advertisements via Ministry of Information to various online platforms. Under this policy, along with news websites, journalists, bloggers and social media activists will be able to register themselves individually with Ministry of Information.

Journalists Protection Bill:

At the outset of current year, two such bills were presented in Pakistan's National Assembly and Sindh's Provincial Assembly which were demanded by Pakistani journalist's community since many decades past. These bills concerned protection of journalists and media office bearers working in Pakistan. These bills were approved a month before end of year 2021 on federal level and legally practicable, though in federally approved bill of "Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act 2021" there was further room for improvement related to cameramen and photographers. Journalists Protection Bill was formulated with cooperation of journalists and legal experts headed by Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari.

Comparatively, a similar kind of another bill "Sindh Protection of Journalists and Medical Practitioners Bill 2021" was also introduced by Sindh government in Provincial Assembly on 28 May 2021. It was later rejected by Sindh governor. According to Mr. Saeed Ghani the rules for Sindh Protection of Journalists Act 2021 will be prepared soon. A committee comprising of senior journalists will cooperate with Department of Information for preparing these rules. In both these bills, journalists have exceptions/exemptions for not disclosing their source of information and the protection of life and property of journalists is deemed as responsibility of the state under Article 19 of the Constitution. Other provinces must also legislate similarly for the sake of protection of freedom of press and protection to journalists, whereas according to bill approved by the National Assembly, the government will make this fact a certainty that any law related to terrorism or national security, existing or in future, will not be misused to create difficulty in meeting media's responsibility or to silence the journalists.

Review of progress in former cases:

- Pakistan National Assembly's Standing Committee for Information had formed a 9-member Joint Investigation Team (JIT) on murdered journalist in Sindh province Aziz Memon, last year, under which eight accused persons were nominated, out of which four were arrested last year. Following that, due to lack of trust by family of the murdered journalist, a new 4-member JIT was established in June of current year to arrest accused persons wanted in Aziz Memon murder case. Meanwhile, on 15 December 2021, leaders of two political parties were called by model court related to murder case of journalist Aziz Memon of Mehrabpour, Naoshehro Feroze. On 28 December 2021, they presented themselves to court and recorded their statements, after which the hearing was postponed until 4 January.
- Sindh High Court had annulled on 02 April 2020 a death sentence to central accused person Umar Saeed Shaikh in murder case of Daniel Pearl. After that family of the murdered person had approached the Supreme Court of Pakistan against that decision of the Sindh High Court, whereas decision from Sindh government was also challenged in the supreme court. Upon that, in the beginning of current year, the supreme court rejecting the Sindh government's appeals in Daniel Pearl murder case had ordered for immediate release of Umar Shaikh.
- In Karachi, accused persons involved in murder case of journalist Wali Khan Babar ten years ago, were arrested nine years later on 15 June 2020. All six accused persons freed in March of current year by an acquittal decision. Journalist Wali Khan Babar was martyred by firing in Liaqatabad on 13 January 2011. On 1st March 2014, anti-terror court in Kandh Kot had pronounced a punishment of death sentence for accused persons on the run, Faisal Mota

and Kamran, and life imprisonment for other four accused persons. Thereafter, it was annulled.

- On 30 April 2019, unknown persons had fired bullets and killed Malik Amanullah Khan, a local journalist and Parowa Press Club chairman, belonging to Dera Ghazi Khan District. According to report of international organization Reporters Without Borders (RSF), he was murdered as a result of performance of his professional responsibilities in broad daylight, but no progress was made in this case and the act of investigation was frozen.
- On 04 May 2010, journalist Ali Sher associated with Sindhi language newspaper Awaami Aawaaz was targeted by bullets outside Pad Eden Press Club. Evidently, he had also requested for police protection against threats as a result of performing his media duties. He was killed just four days after killing of Malik Amanullah Khan. On 05 May 2019, according to police report, journalist Ali Sher was killed by his cousin Habib due to a personal enmity, as a result of which he was arrested.
- On 17 June 2019, young blogger Mohammad Bilal Khan received phone calls from unknown persons asking him to come to Islamabad's G- 9/4 area. When he reached there along with his paternal uncle, he was attacked and severely tortured as a result of which he died and his uncle was severely wounded. Thereafter, Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari having condemned the incident had demanded to give exemplary punishment to the accused persons. Despite registration of a report, no progress was known in this case and the matter was frozen.
- On 30 August 2019, in Sarae Alamgir, a reporter Waseem Baig, associated with 92 News, was murdered at the hands of unknown persons, but his killers are still out of reach of police up to now. He was killed by three unknown persons who shot him with six bullets. According to the investigating police officer, Mirza Waseem was receiving threatening calls as a result of publishing news of extortion mafia.
- The case of the first journalist woman, Urooj Iqbal, killed on 24 November 2019, was closed when her family was receiving constant threats by her alleged killer, due to which they were compelled to compromise. A report published by Reporters Sans Frontier on 12 August 2020, she was allegedly killed by firing of bullets by her former husband Dilawar Ali who is owner of a newspaper too, for her not leaving the media profession and her launching of a new newspaper to rival him. This is a tragic story of a sad murder of a woman journalist Iqbal Urooj killed due to her professional rivalry. RSF said in its investigative report that Dilawar Ali had deep relations with police and local politicians who gave him protection and exception, whereas Dilawar Ali issued threats to family of Urooj Iqbal, on strength of his contacts, and pressurized to end the case.
- Journalist Zulfiqar Mundarani was killed on 26 May 2020 in Dodapour area of Garhi Khairoo, Jacobabad, as a result of his giving news about narcotic drug smugglers. His murder case was registered against central accused person Syed Imam Ali Shah, policeman Mumtaz Dayo, Akbar Dayo and Ghulam Ali Dayo. All those six accused persons were arrested on 28 May 2020, but accused person Syed Imam Ali Shah, Mumtaz Dayo, Akbar Dayo and Ghulam Ali Dayo, having received provisional bail from Sindh High Court in Larkana, were freed. After that, additional judge of Jacobabad session court Zulfiqar Ali Shaikh had rejected the bails of all four accused persons and had ordered to arrest them again. However, the case against the arrested accused is currently underway. Murdered journalist Zulfiqar Mundarani is waiting for justice.

- Journalist Shaheena Shaheen, murdered on 05 September 2020 in Turbat city, Baluchistan, by her husband Mehrab Gachki, in the name of “ghairat”, for the sake of “honor”! Their wedding survived only five months. According to police, Shaheena Shaheen’s husband fled after committing that crime, whereas her Mamu, maternal uncle, registered a complaint. However, the accused person was not punished up to now.
- On 07 December 2020, in Dera Ismail Khan City of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa province, unknown persons killed journalist Qais Javeed. He was made a target of firing after having barged into his house. Journalist Qais Javeed, belonging to minority brotherhood, had given news against a local Jirga (tribal court) due to which he became a target of revenge. Though, police did start investigations into the case, however, later on this matter went into cold storage.
- On 26 February 2020, in Swat district of Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa province, social worker, journalist and member of peace committee Javidullah Khan, who became target of bullets of unknown persons, was 14th person in his family who was targeted and killed. DSP Swat Mohammad Shaokat said Javidullah Khan who was victimized by target killing. This is an incident of terrorism. This family’s many members had also become target of terrorism. Javidullah Khan was member of peace committee too. Investigations are still going on after passage of about two years after the killing.
- On 23 July 2020, a journalist who belonged to Barkahan area of Baluchistan, who upheld his pen high and wrote against corruption, namely Anwar Jan Khetran, was fired upon and killed. Consequently, in an FIR registered after the incident, his brother had accused two body guards of provincial minister of Baluchistan Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran, but they strongly rejected it. Later, a JIT was formed to investigate the case. It arrested on 9 November, an important accused person nominated in the murder who was also wanted by Levies in a previous murder case, due to which accused person was handed over to them. However, subject matter is freezed.
- On 25 September 2020, journalist Abid Hussain Abedi was killed in Malikwal district of Malakand, due to reason of performing his media obligations, by two unknown persons who made him target of revengeful act. Report of case was registered at Malikwal police station. During the investigations, police arrested an accused person involved in the killing.
- On 19 November 2020 in outskirts of Bahu Khoso area of Jacobabad, two unknown persons killed Press Club’s general secretary Noor Hasan Lanjwani. Report of the case was lodged in police station Dilmurad. Later, SSP Tariq Nawaz formed a JIT for investigations as a result of which main accused person Ehsan son of Sultan Malekani involved in murder of journalist Noorul Hassan Lanjwani was arrested.
- On 22 December 2020, in Gujrat of Kot Addu, unknown motorcycle riders fired and killed Pakistan Newspaper’s representative Malik Nizam Taani. Report of the case was registered in local police station but investigations were freezed.
