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by

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International News Article

In the article "Everything Changed Overnight": Afghan Reporters Face an Intolerant Regime," the author highlights a complex issue touching on press freedom and violence targeted at journalists. The Taliban pledged to honor media freedom, but the current administration has demonstrated inhibition, even violently attacking Afghan reporters. Favorite shows have been pulled from the broadcasting and television network cut a series of stories about a pregnant law enforcement officer shot dead by the Taliban from a news piece. A radio editor instructed his coworkers to remove anti-Taliban applause from coverage of capital protests.

Afghanistan's thriving independent media and news industry, once heralded as a shining example and regarded as one of the nation's most important milestones over the last couple of decades, was suddenly changed following the Taliban's power grab of the state. Just under a month after the Taliban took over control of Kabul and immediately started imposing their hard-liner Islamist laws, its longevity is troubled by physical attacks, self-censorship, and a shrinking journalist demography. The Taliban's clampdown on the freedom of the press became more apparent on Wednesday when two Afghan reporters were arrested and brutally assaulted while covering a mass demonstrations in Kabul. Images of both reporters' backs badly bruised and puncture wounds from being beaten continually with cords sparked international condemnation.

More than a dozen Afghan reporters, media professionals, and activists have proceeded to cover the country under the twilight of panic, harassment, and self-censorship while still having difficulties delivering information even after the Taliban publishing almost nothing. The Taliban has not yet released detailed guidance to the mainstream press. However, they have stated that all Afghan channels must focus media attention on Sharia jurisprudence and national security

interests. Both are broad and vague and can easily lead to the mistreatment of reporters crucial to the new administration.

The issue of press freedom is not unique to Afghanistan, as numerous cases have been documented worldwide. Journalists face continuous threats, intimidation, and some are even killed for being critical of different administrations in their countries. A good example is the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a journalist, and critic of the Saudi Arabian government. The state of the freedom of the press is under attack all over the world. Journalist resentment has devolved into violent behavior, leading to a rise in panic. Most governments consider it safe for news reporters to work in proper conditions, but total security decreases. Authoritarian governments are toughening their control on the mainstream press worldwide, which is very concerning. In principle and application, information is an entitlement, but this is no longer the case. This is a worldwide issue affecting countries ranging from Latin America to Europe to eastern and African countries. News reporters are no longer safe in protests. They are frequently the focus of law enforcement officers. They are unable to cover protests professionally. They are unable to offer information, depriving people of their right to information.

The fact that World Press Freedom Day is celebrated annually is ironic because some countries that participate in the initiative do not apply the resolutions arrived back home. Though many countries are keen on making progress, the most significant challenge lies ahead. Things need to shift. The public and government authorities' attitudes toward the role of the press must start changing. Numerous autocracies rely on the mainstream press to serve as their spokesperson. If the media does not do this, they will continue to categorize and classify it, robbing the media of licensing and the right to broadcast to the people. Moving forward, we must ask three essential questions:

1. Should there be limits to the freedom of the press?
2. Should journalists be offered protection when covering sensitive issues like public demonstrations?
3. What is press freedom? Furthermore, what does it mean in different jurisdictions?

Appendix

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/11/world/afghanistan-journalists-reporters.html>

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