



# Press Freedom Status For Women Journalists

June 2022

# Objective of report

Every day, worldwide, women journalists face severe threats to their safety. These threats exist online and offline, from misinformation and discrediting campaigns rooted in misogyny and sexism to more serious problems such as harassment from the state. The problems women journalists contend with are not broadly recognized. Newsrooms are often tight-lipped about them; governments take little action to counter violations against women journalists.

CFWIJ's monthly reports are drawn from our daily and feature research that offers a landscape view of what press freedom looks like from a gender angle. Each morning CFWIJ team register new violations against them, marshaling ever more evidence of the severity of the threats they face and the urgent need to raise awareness about these issues. Many of these cases are documented internally by The Coalition, to maintain anonymity and ensure the safety of targeted journalists. Our work shows the incredible courage and conviction women journalists work with in spite of the hurdles they face. Our job is to ensure their circumstances are made visible so accurate resources can be directed for their safety and growth.

This report was developed with the support of Craig Newmark Philanthropies.

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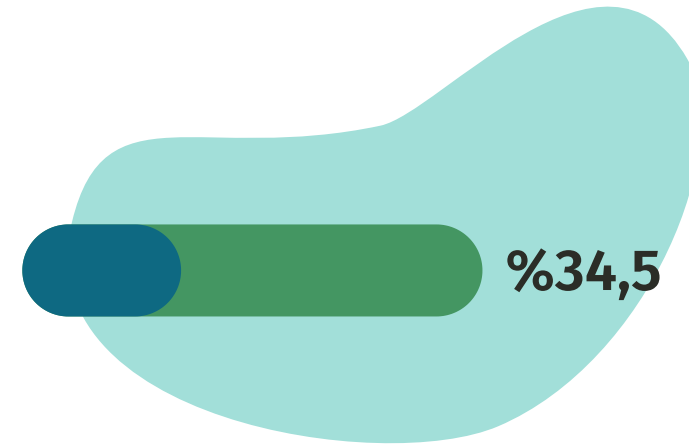
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# Introduction

June 2022 was another challenging month for women journalists around the world. The Coalition For Women In Journalism documented **55** cases of violations. These included detentions, legal harassment and physical assaults in the field, among other attacks on press freedom and women journalists reporting from different parts of the world. Prominent among them were escalating cases of police overreach and legal harassment of women journalists in India and Turkey, where authoritarian states appear relentless in their onslaught on the independent press. In yet another blow to press freedom, Nobel Laureate Maria Ressa's *Rappler* was ordered shut by the authorities in the Philippines.

The month also saw some major wins for press freedom. In the United Kingdom, multi-billionaire Arron Banks lost his libel SLAPP (strategic lawsuit against public participation) against noted journalist Carole Cadwalladr while in Brazil, journalist Patricia Campos Mello won her lawsuit against President Jair Bolsonaro forcing him to pay damages for his deeply sexist remarks. Moreover, the CFWIJ celebrated Pride month with a series of events and panel discussions emphasizing on diversity and empathy in newsrooms.



## Physical Assault

34,5% of cases that are documented in June consist of physical assaults against women and LGBTQ+ journalists.

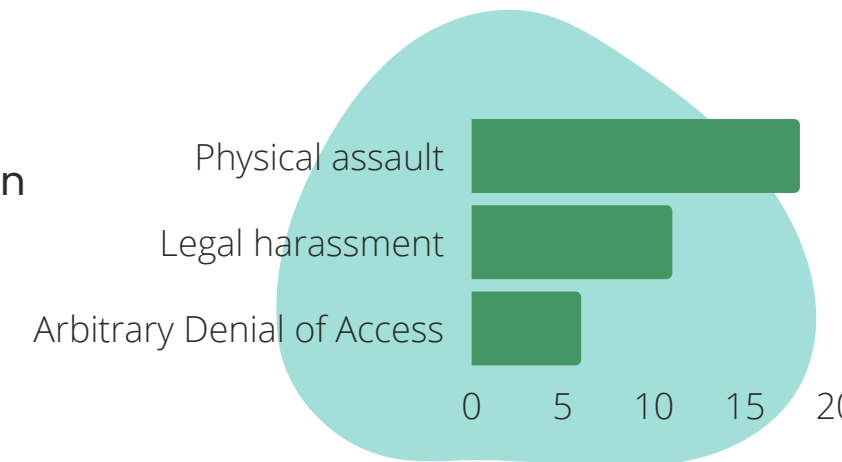
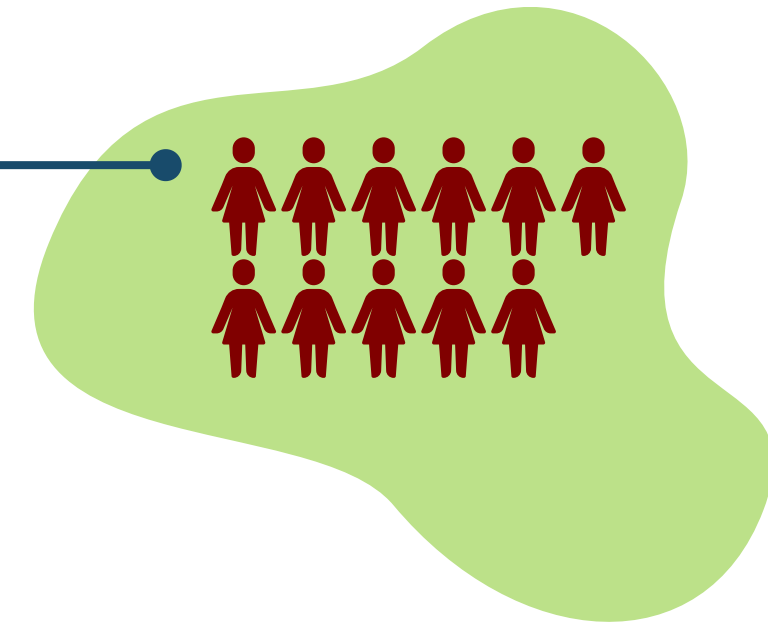


## Top country: Turkey

Turkey was the top country with at least 31 cases against female reporters on June.

## Killed/Murdered

One woman journalist was killed in Palestine. 11 women journalists were killed between Jan-June 2022.



## Top three trends

At least 19 women journalists were physically assaulted. 11 women journalists were subjected to legal harassment. Russia has banned six women journalists from the United Kingdom from entering the country.

### One woman journalist was killed

**Palestine:** Palestinian journalist Ghufran Harun Warasneh was shot dead by Israeli forces at a checkpoint near Arroub refugee camp in Israeli-occupied West Bank on June 1. She was the second Palestinian woman journalist to be killed by Israeli fire in less than a month, after the killing of Shireen Abu Akleh on May 11. An eyewitness told Palestinian news agency *Wafa* that the journalist was walking towards the main road when two soldiers of the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), manning a military checkpoint, beckoned her towards them. One of the IDF soldiers then shot her. Shortly after the killing, the Israeli army claimed “an assailant armed with a knife advanced toward an IDF soldier who was conducting routine security activity”. [Continue reading for more details here](#)

### Six women journalists were imprisoned

**Turkey:** On June 16, four Kurdish women journalists were imprisoned pre-trial on allegations of spreading terrorist propaganda, among others. They were detained for over a week along with 16 of their colleagues after simultaneous police raids in Diyarbakır before the court sent them to jail. On day eight of detention, the court released four journalists and imprisoned 16 others, including *Jin News* Director Safiye Alagaş, Nese Toprak, Elif Ungur and Remziye Temel, pre-trial as the investigating officials collect evidence to support their case. [Read our detailed coverage here](#)

**India:** Journalist Teesta Setalvad was arrested on June 25, while seeking accountability from government higher ups for the 2002 mob violence in Gujarat, which left thousands dead. A day prior to her arrest the Supreme Court threw out a petition, filed by Teesta’s NGO and the widow of a lawmaker killed in the riots, demanding justice. The top court upheld the findings of a special investigation team (SIT) that absolved then Gujarat chief minister and now Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of complicity in the violence. She is currently in prison on judicial remand. [Continue reading for more details here](#)

**Egypt:** Photojournalist Alia Nasreddin Awad was sentenced to 15 years in prison after a mass trial in Cairo on June 28. The journalist was convicted on terrorism and vandalism related charges for filming anti-government protests in Helwan in 2015. The journalist had been in jail since 2017 and stood trial along with nearly hundred other defendants, many of whom were convicted on different charges for attending the protests. [Find our detailed report here](#)



One woman  
journalist was  
killed, six women  
journalists were  
imprisoned



**Brazil:** A civil court ordered journalist Juliana Dal Piva on June 9 to pay 10,000 reais (around US\$ 2,000) in damages to lawyer Frederick Wassef for making public threatening messages he sent her after her coverage of alleged corruption by President Jair Bolsonaro and his family members. In the same verdict, the court ordered Wassef to pay the journalist the same amount for “negative repercussions” caused to her life by his allegations on her work ethic and sexuality. [Read our detailed coverage here](#)

**United Kingdom:** In a major win for press freedom in the UK, multimillionaire Arron Banks lost his libel SLAPP against investigative journalist Carole Cadwalladr. The verdict announced on June 13 marked the end of a three-year-long, often rancorous, legal ordeal for the *The Observer* and *Guardian* journalist. Banks was suing her for a comment she made during a Ted Talk and a tweet, in which she said he was lying about his relationship with the Russian state. Carole was subjected to extreme distress as she circled the courts to face the lawsuit seeking an estimated £750,000 to £1million in damages for defamation in two instances. [Continue reading for our detailed coverage here](#)

**Belarus:** Aksana Kolb, editor of independent Belarusian digital weekly *Novy Chas*, was convicted on charges of “organizing or participating in gross violations of public order” and sentenced to 30 months in an open prison on June 15. After two months in pre-trial detention in a case filed against her over coverage of 2020 anti-government protests, Askana was released to serve her sentence. [Read our detailed coverage here](#)

**Belarus:** Jailed journalists Iryna Leushyna, Iryna Zlobina, Katsiaryna Andreyeva and Iryna Slaunikava stood trial this month on different charges in separate cases related to their work. All four women journalists have been subjected to pre-trial arrests and face trumped up charges as President Alexander Lukashenko’s government continues overreach against the independent press since mass protests against his controversial reelection in August 2020. [Find more details here](#)



11 women journalists  
faced SLAPPs and  
legal harassment

**India:** The Delhi Police booked journalist Saba Naqvi on allegations of “inciting violence” on June 8, amid diplomatic backlash against now suspended ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson’s incendiary remarks against Prophet Muhammad. Saba was named in an FIR along with 31 others, including public figures who openly resort to hate speech for political gains, for retweeting – and deleting shortly after – a viral meme. [Continue reading to know more](#)

**Turkey:** Evrim Kepenek, editor of independent news portal *Bianet*, was due before a court in İzmir on June 22 for the second hearing of an “insult” SLAPP brought against her by a man accused of sexually abusing his six-year-old child. The hearing adjourned till November 1, 2022, with the judge accepting Evrim’s request for absence from court and deciding to wait for the verdict on the claimant, Refik Y. [Find more details here](#)

**Lebanon:** Journalist and CFWIJ fellow Luna Safwan was targeted with two separate defamation SLAPPs by her harasser and his lawyer. For speaking up against her experience of facing sexual harassment, Luna is being sued for defamation. She was among seven women who pursued legal action against Jaafar al-Attar, a well-known local activist, journalist and director for his alleged sexual misconduct in May 2021. It is evident that the defamation lawsuits against Luna are meant to threaten and exhaust her into silence. [Read our detailed report here](#)

**Brazil:** In a major win for women in journalism and press freedom, a court in São Paulo ruled in favor of journalist Patricia Campos Mello in her lawsuit against President Jair Bolsonaro for his deeply vile and sexually charged insults. Announcing the verdict on June 29, the court ordered Bolsonaro to pay 35,000 reais (roughly \$6,700) to Patricia in “moral damages” for making sexist remarks against her in 2020. The Brazilian president had [publicly alleged](#) that Patricia, reporter for daily newspaper *Folha de Sao Paulo*, had offered sexual favors in exchange for information on an investigative piece. Patricia sued the president for his deeply misogynistic remarks and won!




11 women journalists  
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**Turkey:** Journalists Senem Büyüktanır, Seda Taşkın, Cansu Timur, Emel Vural and Öznur Değe were physically obstructed and prevented from covering different protests held in Ankara on June 1 to commemorate the killing of activist Ethem Sarısülük during anti-government protests in 2013. Police resorted to using excessive force to suppress coverage of the demonstrations. [Continue reading here](#)

**Turkey:** On June 25, police physically assaulted and obstructed four women journalists covering protests by human rights defenders and families of persons forcibly disappeared from İstanbul. Resorting to excessive force to quash coverage of the 900th such protest, police physically assaulted Etkin News Agency's Pınar Gayıp, *Evrensel Daily* reporter Eylem Nazlier, *dokuz8 news* reporter Fatoş Erdoğan and journalist Zeynep Kuray. Several other protestors were detained by law enforcement officers. [Know more details here](#)

**Turkey:** At least nine women journalists were physically assaulted and obstructed by the police during İstanbul's annual LGBTQ+ Pride march and Pride Week celebrations in the last week of June. Excessive use of police force and blatant overreach against the press were again on display as law enforcement officials sought to enforce a ban imposed by local authorities. [Find more details here](#)

**United States:** Police physically assaulted and obstructed independent journalist Tina-Desire Berg while she was documenting reproductive rights protests in Los Angeles, California on June 24. Several journalists faced obstructions while covering reaction to the Supreme Court's decision to overturn historic *Roe v. Wade* ruling, which had secured abortion rights in the US in 1973.



19 women  
journalists were  
physically assaulted  
but incurred no  
injuries

**Turkey:** Dicle Firat Journalists Association co-chairperson and Mesopotamia Agency editor Dicle Müftüoğlu was detained for four days after the police raided her home in Diyarbakır on June 3. She was questioned about money she sent to journalists Nedim Türfent and Ziya Ataman, who are both serving prison sentences after being convicted on trumped up terror-related charges. Dicle was released after giving her statement with judicial conditions imposed on her. [Continue reading for more details](#)

**Turkey:** Journalist İnci Hekimoğlu was detained for almost 12 hours after a police raid at her home in İzmir early on June 16. After hours in custody of the İzmir Provincial Security Directorate Anti-Terror Branch, she was released. Officials took her statement and claimed she is under investigation for “spreading terror propaganda” based on her social media posts. It is not yet clear whether such charges have formally been filed against İnci. [Learn more here](#)

**India:** Journalist Teesta Setalvad was arrested while seeking accountability from government higher ups for the 2002 mob violence in Gujarat, which left thousands dead. A day prior to her arrest on June 25, 2022, the Supreme Court upheld the findings of a special investigation team (SIT) that absolved then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi of complicity in the violence. [Find out more here](#)



Four women  
journalists were  
arbitrarily detained



**Turkey:** Etkin News Agency (ETHA) editor Pinar Gayip was threatened with bodily harm by the lawyer of an alleged sexual abuser for her coverage of the case. Pinar has published three reports on developments in the case and the ongoing trial. For naming his client in her reports, the defense lawyer, Semih, has threatened to sue Pinar, accused her of propagating false news, called her a terrorist, discredited her employer publication linking it to terrorist groups and threatened her with bodily harm. [Continue reading for more details](#)

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Bosnian journalist Nataša Miljanović-Zubac's parked car was targeted with arson outside her home in the southern town of Trebinje on June 15. The Trebinje prosecutor's office has opened an investigation into the matter but it is not immediately clear whether the attack was related to her work. Nataša covers crime, corruption and drug trafficking for public broadcaster Republic of Srpska Radio Television (RTRS) and has long since faced threats for her work. [Find more details here](#)

**Tajikistan:** Exiled journalist Anora Sarkorova's mother and brother were briefly detained by officers of the Interior Ministry's Department for Combating Organized Crime. Security officials questioned Anora's family about her journalistic sources and made thinly veiled threats referring to the journalist's minor children.

**Ukraine:** Sevgil Musaieva, and Sonia Lukashova, chief editor and correspondent of the independent Ukrainian news website Ukrainska Pravda, were threatened online and via phone calls after the portal published an investigative report on a recent political officials dismissal. The report pertained to alleged war crimes committed in Ukrainian areas under Russian occupation.



## Five women journalists faced threats and intimidation



**India:** Investigative journalist Rana Ayyub was censored by Twitter at the behest of Indian state authorities whom she seeks to hold accountable. Rana, who faces continued persecution by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Hindu nationalist right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government posted a screenshot on June 26 of a Twitter notice informing her that her tweet is being withheld. The [tweet in question](#) was posted on April 9, 2021 and pertained to a controversial court order allowing a [video-recorded survey of the Gyanvapi mosque](#). It was taken down from the microblogging site in India under the country's Information Technology Act 2000 but remained accessible elsewhere. [Continue reading for more details here](#)

**Pakistan:** Saba Bajeer, a reporter with local broadcaster 24 News HD, was subjected to organized troll attacks and online harassment for a non-consensual video recorded of her and made viral by a passerby while she was in the field. A young man recorded a video of Saba against her wishes while she was on ground setting up to report live from a political rally in Islamabad in May. The perpetrator posted a doctored video clip of Saba on Tik Tok. The video went viral online, subjecting the journalist to vile and sexist abuse by internet trolls. In a video statement posted on Twitter on June 3, Saba detailed the online and offline harassment she faced. The journalist denounced the Federal Investigation Agency's cybercrime department's lax and negligent attitude to her complaint. [Find more details here](#)



## Two Women Journalists Faced Online Attacks and Organized Trolling Campaigns

### Six women journalists were denied access

**Russia:** On June 14, the Russian foreign ministry banned six women journalists from the United Kingdom from entering the country claiming they “are involved in the deliberate dissemination of false and one-sided information”. The complete list issued by the Kremlin authorities included 49 prominent figures from the UK including 29 journalists who have been blacklisted. Among the blacklisted journalists were *Guardian* editor-in-chief Katharine Viner, BBC correspondent Orla Guerin, *Times* military news editor Larisa Brown, Channel 4 News

host and journalist Catherine Newman, Sky News presenter Sophy Ridge and *Guardian* correspondent Emma Graham-Harrison. The move is yet another encroachment on the independent press by the Russian state since it launched its war in Ukraine in February 2022. [Find our detailed coverage here](#)

### Accreditation revoked

**Philippines:** Nobel Peace Prize laureate and journalist Maria Ressa’s independent online news portal Rappler was again ordered shut by the Philippines Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) on June 28. In yet another attack on Maria and her team, the state regulator upheld an earlier order from 2018, invalidating Rappler’s credentials. Maria announced that Rappler will be fighting the decision in court and will continue operations. [Learn more here](#)



Six women  
journalists were  
denied access, one  
news outlet was  
ordered to shut  
down



The Coalition For Women In Journalism

# Is the press really free?

What does the press look like for women journalists?

64

women journalists are behind bars as far June 1, 2022.



11

women journalists were killed this year.



**CFWIJ is working hard to change these  
circumstances everyday.**

**Join us in this mission**



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