



media action nepal

ARTICLE19

Statement

UPR Pre-Session on Nepal

Geneva, 28 November 2025

Delivered by :
Laxman Datt Pant
Executive Director
Media Action Nepal

Introduction :

Legal Framework Around Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom, Digital Rights

- Joint UPR Submission –Media Action Nepal & ARTICLE 19

About Us

- **Media Action Nepal** (Est. 2015): Promoting Freedom of Expression & safety of journalists, Right to Information, and media accountability
- Member/Leadership role in key international alliances/networks
- **ARTICLE 19** (Est. 1987): Global advocate for freedom of expression and information
- Joint national consultation (May 2025) with women journalists and CSOs for UPR input

-
- Lack of structured and inclusive national consultations
 - Ensure transparent and participatory consultations in future UPR processes



media action nepal

ARTICLE 19

Thematic Focus

- Freedom of expression, Media freedom and the safety of journalists, with gender and intersectional lens.

-
- Despite constitutional guarantees, the legal environment remains restrictive, and the safety of journalists deteriorated.
 - The recent amendments to the Press and Publication Regulation have emerged as instruments of control, imposing restrictive burdens that undermine independent and digital journalism.
 - Weak implementation of past UPR commitments
 - Restrictive laws: Electronic Transaction Act, Social Media Bill, Media Council Bill
 - 70+ attacks (2023–2025) on journalists
 - Nepal fell 16 ranks in 2025 World Press Freedom Index
 - Gendered risks: harassment, underrepresentation, and pay inequality



media action nepal

ARTICLE 19

Key Challenges

- Criminalization of freedom of expression
- Impunity for attacks on journalists
- Gender-based harassment online/offline
- Labour insecurity and gender pay gap
- Lack of gender-sensitive protection systems



media action nepal

Key Recommendations

ARTICLE 19

- Repeal Section 47 of the ETA,
- Amend the controversial provisions of the Press and Publication Regulation to safeguard the rights of online media and ensure a safe working environment for journalists.
- Withdraw/revise Social Media Bill for transparency and due process
- Investigate attacks with gender lens; resource National Human Rights Commission's safety mechanism
- Ratify ILO Convention 87; enforce Working Journalists Act
- Ensure equal pay, maternity rights, and anti-harassment policies