

Press Council of India

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What is the Press Council of India?

- According to the Press Council Act, the **council shall consist of a chairman and 28 other members**. The Press Council of India is a **statutory body** with a mandate to act as a watchdog to oversee the conduct of the print media.
- The Chairman shall be a person nominated by a committee consisting of the Chairman of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), the Speaker of the House of the People (Lok Sabha). The Chairman and other members shall hold office for a period of **three years**.
 - 13 shall be nominated in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed from among the working journalists of whom six shall be editors of newspapers and the remaining seven shall be working journalists other than editors.
 - 6 shall be nominated in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed from among persons who own or carry on the business of management of newspapers.
 - 1 shall be nominated in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed from among persons who manage news agencies
 - 3 shall be persons having special knowledge or practical experience in respect of education and science, law and literature and culture of which respectively one shall be nominated by the University Grants Commission, one by the Bar Council of India and one by the Sahitya Academy.
 - **5 shall be members of Parliament** of whom three shall be nominated by the Speaker from among the members of the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and

two shall be nominated by the Chairman of the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) from among its members.

Functions of the council

- To build up a code of conduct for newspapers, news agencies and journalists in accordance with high professional standards;
- To encourage the growth of a sense of responsibility and public service among all those engaged in the profession of journalism;
- to keep under review any development likely to restrict the supply and dissemination of news of public interest and importance;
- To undertake studies of foreign newspapers, including those brought out by any embassy or other representative in India of a foreign State, their circulation and impact.
- to keep under review cases of assistance received by any newspaper or news agency in India from any foreign source including such cases as are referred to by the Central Government or are brought to its notice by an individual, association of persons or any other organisation.

Powers of the council

- For the purpose of performing its functions or holding any inquiry under this Act, the Council shall have the **same powers throughout India as are vested in a civil court** while trying a suit under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908
- The Council shall have its own fund; and the fees collected by it, all such sums as may be paid to it by the Central Government and all grants and advances made to it by any authority or person shall be credited to the Fund and all payments by the Council shall be made

therefrom.

- On receipt of a complaint made to it or otherwise, the Council has reason to believe that a newspaper or news agency has offended against the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste or that an editor or working journalist has committed any professional misconduct, the Council may, after giving the newspaper, or news agency, the editor or journalist concerned an opportunity of being heard, **hold an inquiry** in such manner as may be provided by regulations made under this Act.
- If it is satisfied that it is necessary to do so, it may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, **warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist** or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist, as the case may be.