

## 2021 ends with the decrease in journo-killings globally: PEC



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Press Emblem Campaign (PEC), the global media safety and rights body, wishes all media workers around the world a happy, secure and prosperous new year. The bygone year witnessed the killing of 79 media employees by assailants in 29 countries marking an improvement in the journo-murder index by 14% (where 92 were killed in 2020).

PEC recently confirmed the death of Burmese journalist A Kay Sai (also known as Sai Win Aung) due to serious head injuries from a shell operated by the Myanmar military junta in the Maekheewar village of Karen State on 25 December last. Sai (38) was trapped in the crossfire between the junta forces and KNLA rebels before finally being hit by artillery from Tatmadaw.

“We strongly condemn the killing of journalists by the Burmese military personnel. Prior to him, Yangon-based freelance photojournalist Ko Soe Naing died under military custody on 14 December. PEC condolences their demise and urges the military dictator Min Aung Hlaing to deliver justice to the bereaved families,” said Blaise Lempen, secretary-general of PEC.

Myanmar (also known as Burma or Brahmadesh) is witnessing a series of unpleasant incidents since the 1 February 2021 military coup that deposed the democratically elected Aung San Suu Kyi-led government in Naypietaw, where the media fraternity also faces unprecedented atrocities. Military personnel have detained nearly 125 journalists in the last 11 months and nearly 30 are still behind bars.

Afghanistan emerged as the most dangerous country for journalists with 12 casualties in 2021, followed by Mexico (10 dead), Pakistan (7), India (6), the Philippines, Yemen (4 each), Democratic Republic of Congo (3), Myanmar, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Burkina-Faso, Turkey (2 each), etc. “India has otherwise lost a huge number of scribes to Covid-19 complications since March 2020, only following Brazil (294 corona-media casualties). India (279) is followed by Peru (198), Mexico (122), Colombia (79), Bangladesh (68), USA (66), Italy (60), Venezuela (59), Argentina (46), Indonesia (42), Iran (34), United Kingdom (33), Turkey (29), Pakistan (27), Nepal (23) etc,” said Nava Thakuria, PEC’s Asia representative.

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