

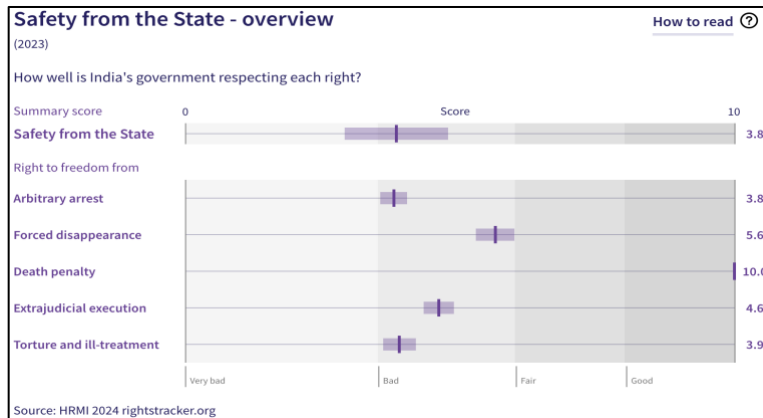
India – Summary Report 2024

In 2024, the Human Rights Measurement Initiative (HRMI) conducted its third annual human rights expert survey in India. Through the survey, local experts and practitioners in India shared their insights on the human rights landscape in the country in 2023. The cumulative expert responses allowed HRMI to produce a comprehensive human rights dataset for India, available freely on the [Rights Tracker](#).¹ This includes scores for nine civil and political rights, five economic and social rights, and additional information about people groups at risk of their violations.

[Civil and political rights](#)²

Safety from the State / Physical Integrity Rights

HRMI’s 2024 data show that violations of civil and political rights continue to be a pressing issue in India. Out of the two categories of civil and political rights, India’s summary score for the five **physical integrity rights**, i.e., **the right to be safe from the State** is **3.8 out of 10**. The score for right to be free from arbitrary arrest is 3.8 out of 10, and is the lowest in this category. This is followed by 3.9 out of 10 for freedom from torture and ill-treatment. The scores for extrajudicial execution and forced disappearance are 4.6 and 5.6 respectively. India scores a 10 out of 10 on freedom from death penalty indicating that no person was formally executed in the country in 2023.



People at risk

A significant number of human rights experts who took the survey identified **human rights advocates, people from religious minorities and faiths, people from oppressed castes, protestors, people from tribal communities, people of particular ethnicities, journalists, and people from certain geographic locations**, among others, as being vulnerable to violations of these rights.

From a range of contextual, qualitative information,³ some responses particularly identified:

- Adivasi peoples from the Central Belt; people from Denotified and Nomadic Tribes (DNTs); and people from tribal communities from the North-Eastern States, especially in Manipur — particularly human rights defenders (HRDs) and activists from these communities
- People from Muslim, Christian, and Sikh communities
- People from Dalit and Bahujan communities, especially women, journalists, activists, HRDs, and political leaders to be at risk of these violations.

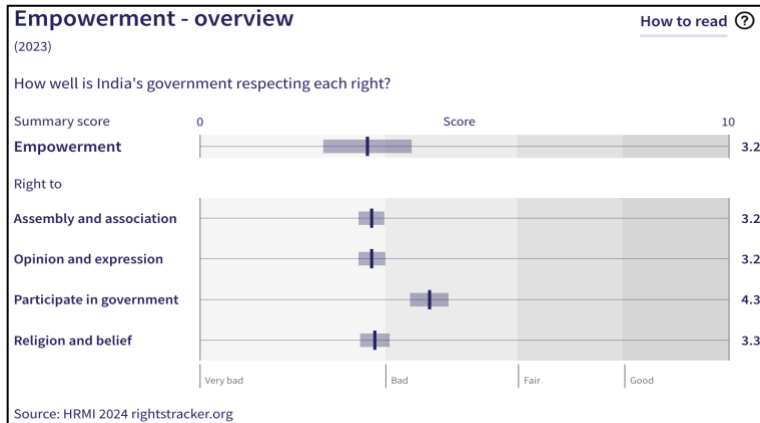
1 All the data are freely available on the [Rights Tracker](#), and more information can be found on the [HRMI website](#).

2 Civil and political rights scores are measured based on the responses received from human rights practitioners from the country through HRMI’s annual human rights expert survey. HRMI’s methodology for constructing CPR scores can be found here: <https://humanrightsmmeasurement.org/methodology/#cpr>.

3 You can explore the rich qualitative information from expert survey responses by clicking ‘Show more information’ under the ‘People at risk’ word clouds for each right. All these data are collectively available in the ‘People at risk’ tab for India: <https://rightstracker.org/country/IND?tab=atrisk>.

Empowerment Rights

India's summary score for the four **empowerment rights** is **3.2 out of 10**. This includes the scores of 3.2 out of 10 each on the freedom of assembly and association, and freedom of opinion and expression. These are the lowest scores across all civil and political rights in India, and fall in the 'very bad' performance range. These are closely followed by a score of 3.3 out of 10 on the freedom of religion and belief, and of 4.3 out of 10 on the freedom of political participation.

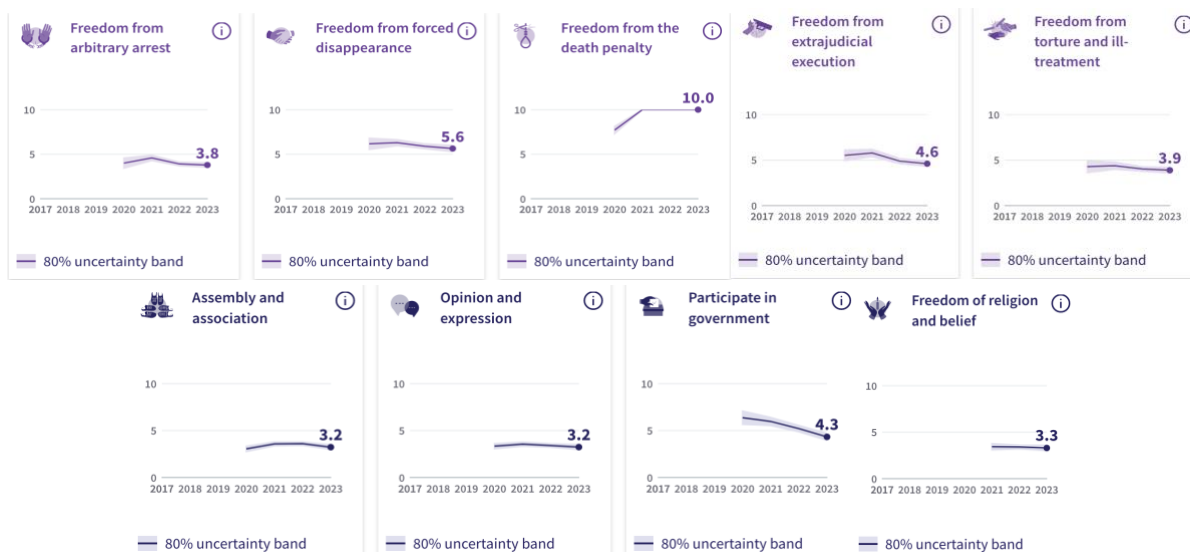


People at risk

Some groups of people most commonly identified by experts to be vulnerable to violations of these rights include **people from particular religious beliefs and practices, human rights advocates, people from oppressed castes, protestors, people from tribal communities, journalists, and political opponents**, among others.

- Survey responses under freedom of religion and belief alluded to various contexts in which people from Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Dalit, and Indigenous communities — together with marginalisations of gender and caste — were at risk of violations of by the State as well as abuses by non-State actors.
- Some responses referred to shrinking civic space with FCRA license revocations and tax raids against independent think tanks, civil society, and media outlets, as well as revocation of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards and denying entry into the country for expressing views critical of the government.
- Some responses shed light on instances of targeting of journalists for their work, including cases of arrest under anti-terror laws such as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.⁴

Overtime graph for civil and political rights

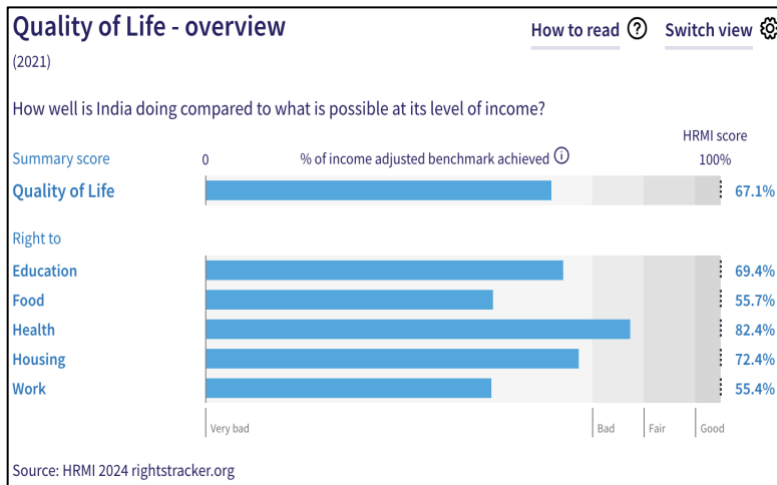


4 *Ibid.*

Looking the scores for each of these rights overtime (please see the image above), we note that there has been a marginal decline in most scores; **however, the score for the freedom to participate in government stands out for a steep decline from 2020 to 2023.** The qualitative information collected through the survey provides an insight into the context and possible reasons for this decline, including lack of meaningful representation of certain communities, crackdown on political opponents by the government, and structural barriers. This is a particularly interesting trend considering that India’s scores on this right in the preceding years were relatively better, and that 2023 was a pre-general election year in India.

Economic and social rights⁵

On **economic and social rights**, India has an **‘income-adjusted’ summary score of 67.1%**. As income-adjusted 100% is attainable within existing resources, this score indicates that the government can do much better even at its current income levels (GDP per capita) to ensure that its people are enjoying their rights to education, food, health, housing, and work. In this category, India scores the lowest on the rights to work (55.4%) and food (55.7%), while it does comparatively better on the right to health (82.4%).



People at risk

Human rights experts from India commonly identified **socio-economically disadvantaged people; people from Dalit, Adivasi, and other tribal communities, especially women and girls; people from minority communities; migrants and refugees; internally displaced people; and homeless people, especially children,** among others, to be at risk of being unable to enjoy these rights.

Some responses noted how women and girls as well as children from socio-economically disadvantaged or marginalised communities such as those living in rural or remote areas, those from conservative backgrounds, Dalit and tribal communities, children of refugees or homeless children, among others are particularly unlikely to enjoy these rights.

The overtime graph for most of these rights shows gradual progress, especially on the right to housing. However, there appears a significant dip on the adult health parameter between 2020 and 2021, perhaps indicating a decline due to COVID-19. However, as these are ‘income-adjusted’ scores, they highlight a significant scope for improvement in India on all these rights.

For further information or comments, please contact HRMI’s Co-Executive Director, Thalia Kehoe Rowden, at thalia.kehoerowden@hrmi.ngo or south_asia@humanrightsmeasurement.org.

5 Economic and social rights scores are measured using the SERF Index. HRMI’s methodology for constructing ESR scores can be found here: <https://humanrightsmeasurement.org/methodology/measuring-economic-social-rights/>.