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Information under siege during current crisis:

During times like these when state authorities take important decisions on health, freedom and rights, it is the duty of the state to share information based on facts and true figures. States cannot undermine the importance of social work being done by civic societies and independent organizations to combat the on-going crisis. Then why are we seeing multiple bans on press freedom and access to information? RTI Activists and journalists all over the world have reported long delayed response of freedom of information requests by the government departments. Media and Journalism has been a crucial companion of public authorities in informing public about social scenarios so that they could make informed decisions and build opinions. If public departments are hampering the public information that is vital to individuals for making well informed decisions then state should take immediate steps to remove those barriers in the way of information dissemination. Information gathering should be made easy and available so that public can exercise their rights and perform their duties independently.
Canada
Freedom of information rights give newspapers access to public-sector records, but at a cost
Brampton Guardian
The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act chisels into legislation the right to access records held by public institutions

India
PMO rejects application seeking fund details
Firstpost
Harsha Kandukuri, a law student at Azim Premji University in Bengaluru, filed an RTI application on 1 April, asking for the fund’s trust deed ….

India
Has RTI become football for different departments of government?
India Today
We asked the government to provide a copy of the first and last page of the file through which this extension was granted….

Philippines
Independent journalism and access to information threatened in the Philippines
Ifex
Advocates of free press and expression call on the Philippines government to respect the public's right to know and denounce the stifling ….

Namibia
Mushelenga to table access to information bill
Namibia.com
The bill will encourage public entities to proactively make public information available to enhance transparency, accountability and good governance....

India
During lockdown, Modi govt is disclosing info only on need-to-know basis
Huffpost
The recent directive by the Central Information Commission to the Modi government to release data about migrant workers online is a timely push in right direction, said Nayak in an interview....

Ghana
The RTI Law, A tool to combat corruption or otherwise?
GhanaWeb
Even though the right to information is a basic right enshrined in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, it took decades for the country to promulgate the RTI to provide a legal framework....

Philippines
Quarantine curbs access to information
Philippines Centre for Investigative Journalism
The Philippines is among many governments in the world that had to suspend the processing of freedom-of-information or FOI requests because of the pandemic.

Pakistan
AJK High Court accepts writ petition seeking immediate legislation, implementation of right to information
Urdu Point
The learned court has fixed June 25, the next date of hearing and ordered for issuance of notices to all the respondents made party in to the case.

Indonesia
People with disabilities demand access to information, basic rights during pandemic
The Jakarta Post
In March, a group of deaf people sent an open letter to President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, calling on him to uphold the rights of people with hearing.