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Press Statement

Journalist bodies condemn attack on Nikhil Wagle

We, the undersigned journalist organizations, express our deep shock and outrage over the attack on senior journalist Mr Nikhil Wagle by members of a political party in Pune on February 9. As per reports, the attackers set upon Mr Wagle's car in which he was traveling with a deliberate intent to cause him serious bodily harm. It was learnt that the attack was in response to certain views he had expressed on a social media platform about certain political persons. That the expression of such views should prompt a murderous attack on him is shocking beyond words. To compound matters, a FIR has also been registered against him under criminal laws.

We believe that is a matter of extreme concern that such attacks on the media rather than abate have only increased in alarming proportions. A healthy democracy is one where difference of opinion including political opinion is tolerated and open to constructive critique. What is happening however, is open intimidation of mediapersons, by both non-state and state actors.

We also appeal that the draconian charges against Mr Wagle for promoting enmity, mischief and defamation be dropped.

We urge the Maharashtra government to ensure that the perpetrators of the February 9 violence are sent a strong message. No one should be allowed to get away with violence. It is the perpetrators of the February 9 violence who need to be acted against.

(Gautam Lahiri)
President
Press Club of India

Sd/-
Indian Women's Press Corps
Press Association