

# Violations against Freedom of Speech and Expression in Yemen

First Biannual Report  
2023



Violations  
against Freedom of Speech and Expression in Yemen  
First Biannual Report (2023)

Media Freedom Observatory - Yemen



This report was prepared by the Media Freedom Observatory in Yemen. It is a platform affiliated with the Studies and Economic Media Center. The Observatory is devoted to monitoring and documenting cases of violations against the freedom of press and expression in Yemen.

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**Erosion of Press  
Freedom..**

Guilty Until Proven  
Innocent:  
The Journalist's  
Dilemma

## Displacement of Journalists... Continuous bleeding

Hundreds of journalists, both male and female, have been forced to flee their homes in areas under Houthi control. The clampdown on journalists has reached alarming levels, with severe restrictions and censorship tactics being employed to hinder their work. In the wake of the Houthi group's takeover of the capital Sana'a and other provinces, there has been a noticeable decline in the level of freedom. However, it is concerning to note that the assault on media outlets, both independent and partisan, that voice opposition to the group's agendas, continues unabated. Only a dwindling number of independent media outlets, which have chosen to exercise caution in their coverage by avoiding topics that could potentially expose them to persecution and retribution, managed to survive.

The problem did not end at the level of independent media and social media platforms, whose presence has become scarce and marginal. It went even further, tightening the chain around journalists who publish through social media by intensifying their personal surveillance and monitoring their movements using intelligence agencies' specialised tools and programmes. This has prompted dozens of journalists, both male and female, to leave areas controlled by the Houthi forces and relocate to areas under government control, or even leave Yemen entirely, in search of a space for freedom and an acceptable standard of living.

Therefore, dozens of Yemeni journalists have made the difficult decision to depart from regions under the influence of the Houthi group when they found themselves at a dead end in their attempt to steer clear of direct confrontation with the group.

According to our sources, a significant number of journalists of both sexes have sought refuge in government-controlled regions amidst the ongoing conflict. These areas include Taiz, Aden, Marib, Hadramout, Sayoun, and Al-Mahra. Some have made a decision to flee Yemen, seeking refuge in neighbouring nations such as Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, while others migrated to various European countries.

## Endless Bleeding: The Displacement of Journalists

It can be said that in such a situation, independent media and opposition journalists are increasingly losing ground to manipulated and tamed media used as a tool in the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

Ahmed - a pseudonym for a journalist still present in areas under Houthi control, recounts that he's exhausted by the constant harassment carried out by the Houthi group in Sana'a. He says, "Just the feeling that what you say or publish is subject to scrutiny and monitoring is frightening and terrifying. I now think carefully before writing anything or even moving around in Sana'a. You find yourself consumed by the overwhelming concern for not only your own life but also the lives of your family members."

The utterance of a simple murmur by individuals commonly referred to as "supervisors" or neighbourhood leaders possesses the capacity to lead to extended periods of incarceration, lasting many months or even years.

In a recent interview, Adnan, a pseudonym for a journalist who recently departed from Sana'a, shared his harrowing accounts of real and bone-chilling fears. In a stunning turn of events, he decided to sever ties with most of the media outlets he worked for due to the surrounding unfavourable conditions.

Recently, he tirelessly endeavoured to conduct investigative reports and in-depth articles for Arabic and foreign newspapers and websites in addition to conducting some training activities. However, his efforts ultimately proved to be in vain, as he found himself in the clutches of the law, subjected to repeated arrests and intense interrogations.

Hundreds of individuals who were employed by government-funded official media institutions have left their positions. Some even deserted Sana'a and areas under Houthi control. It has come to light that a particular group is systematically removing highly qualified

and experienced staff from official media institutions and replacing them with a handpicked group of employees connected to the Houthi group. These individuals are then granted significant authority to take charge of these media entities.

In a recent statement, Salah, a journalist who wishes to remain anonymous, says, " Despite not primarily focusing on political matters, I decided to leave Sana'a for Taiz due to the escalating risks and mounting harassment targeting journalists. It was a difficult decision but imperative to safeguard my well-being and my family's.

Journalists, undeterred by the numerous obstacles encountered upon their relocation to different regions, valiantly confront issues such as restricted resources and the arduous task of adjusting to densely populated smaller towns. Nonetheless, they managed to liberate themselves from the perpetual grip of fear and terror that once consumed their everyday existence.

"When I first arrived in Taiz, there were a lot of demands on me, such as finding housing and adjusting to a city that is under siege and where the residents face serious service issues. However, these concerns no longer matter to me as much as the feeling of not being pursued anymore. I prefer living anywhere and under any circumstances rather than residing in areas controlled by the Houthi group," said a journalist.

Journalists face interrogation by security and intelligence agencies. Alleged attempts were made to fabricate charges or recruit individuals against their very own colleagues. Amidst the growing constraints, numerous journalists have been compelled to depart in pursuit of liberty and the faint glimmer of hope that enables them to persist in their profession.



## Interrogations and Recruitment!

In the past few weeks, it has become commonplace for journalists to be summoned for questioning periodically by security and intelligence agencies. This is a form of systematic intimidation and a message that conveys, "We are watching you." Additionally, these agencies have restricted the movement of some journalists within their controlled areas and have imposed travel bans abroad unless they obtain security clearance. Typically, these clearances are granted based on information provided by informants affiliated with the Houthi group."

The Media Freedoms Observatory (MARSADAK) has received numerous reports highlighting the unwavering defiance and alarming acts of terror displayed by the security apparatus. In a concerning development, certain journalists have found themselves caught in a cycle of relentless interrogations. Shockingly, some journalists may endure these interrogations every two weeks, only to be granted temporary reprieve with the understanding that they can be summoned back at any given moment. Multiple individuals have been summoned and subsequently incarcerated, their pleas for release falling on deaf ears. Journalist Fahd Al-Arhabi, the director of the Al-Thawra government newspaper's office in Amran Governorate, has found himself at the centre of attention. In the face of arbitrary actions by the Houthi group, he was compelled to step down from his position. In a series of relentless acts, the Houthi group has continued to harass and apprehend him on numerous occasions, resulting in his ongoing detention at the time of this report.

Journalist Samir, a pseudonym, has come forward with his harrowing experiences of being repeatedly summoned and interrogated by the relentless security and intelligence apparatus. In a span of just eight months, he has been summoned a staggering four times. In a surprising turn of events, he faced an intense interrogation during the initial summons, even though his journalistic works were largely unrelated to politics. He found himself confined to the isolation cells of the intelligence agency for an entire week. After providing a

written commitment to appear when summoned, he was eventually released. During the subsequent summonses, he endured rigorous questioning sessions lasting over two hours each. The questioning revolved around the latest developments in his work and the journalists affiliated with the Yemeni government, commonly referred to as the traitor government. These questions are designed to ensure that they are kept well-informed about the activities of journalists.

In a series of systematic practices, the Houthi group has been accused of engaging in harassment and intimidation tactics. One such measure involves imposing restrictions on journalists, preventing them from appearing on foreign or Arabic media platforms without prior approval. In a stunning move, the group has imposed strict regulations on journalists, prohibiting them from capturing news reports or television segments on camera, and even restricting their ability to take personal photos without prior permission from the Ministry of Information under the control of the group.

## Government Journalistic Institutions Kidnapped!

Journalists working in government journalism institutions are facing dire conditions. The Houthis' takeover of the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, in September 2014 has resulted in the suspension of salaries for many of these individuals.

In the face of the group's oppression, numerous journalists, both men and women, have chosen to flee. However, those who have remained steadfast in their commitment to reporting or have been pushed to the fringes find themselves grappling with challenging economic conditions. The non-payment of salaries and the subsequent replacement of employees with journalists and media workers affiliated with the group have led to this situation.

Al-Thawara for Printing and Publishing, a prominent governmental institution, once boasted a workforce of over 800 talented journalists and media workers, is now in the hands of the Houthis. It currently employs a workforce of approximately 200 journalists and employees, with a significant portion of them being recruited after 2015 and sharing an affiliation with the Houthi faction.

Journalists working under the label of "food allowance" at the institution are being provided with meagre amounts. These amounts range from ten thousand Yemeni rials to a maximum of sixty thousand, which is equivalent to a mere \$100. Irregular disbursements of these amounts have been observed from time to time. A staggering 80% of employees at the esteemed Thawara Printing and Publishing Institution are being deprived of their hard-earned salaries. This distressing situation has left these dedicated individuals grappling with severe economic hardships. Amidst the ongoing crisis, numerous individuals find themselves face to face with the daunting challenge of securing job opportunities, particularly in the aftermath of the catastrophe that has wreaked havoc on multiple sectors of the economy.

The difficult humanitarian situation journalists face has had a sig-

nificant impact on their lives and families. In Yemen, the journalistic community has been afflicted with a distressing toll on its members. Numerous individuals have tragically succumbed to heart attacks and strokes. Additionally, many have been plagued by psychological conditions; others have found themselves compelled to engage in street begging, while a significant portion of journalists have opted for freelance opportunities in order to sustain their livelihoods.

**Here are some instances of journalists who have suffered directly as a result of salary suspensions, marginalization, and exclusion from public employment:**

- Mohammed Qayed Al-Azizi was forcibly removed from his humble abode and confined behind bars. There was no reason behind this unfortunate series of events other than his inability to fulfil his mounting rent obligations.
- Yahya Mohammed Al-Rubaie, the esteemed editor-in-chief of the renowned governmental magazine "Ma'een," took on an unexpected role as a motorbike driver due to the suspension of his government salary.
- Hisham Mohammed Al-Hakmi, a prominent figure in the field of journalism, held the position of editor at "Al-Thawra" newspaper in the Amran governorate, and his brother, Majed Al-Hakmi, a linguistic reviewer working for the same newspaper, have embarked on the operation of a modest car wash enterprise.
- Yasser Al-Jabri, a printing technician at Al-Thawara Printing and Publishing Institution, finds innovative ways to make ends meet by collecting and selling plastic water bottles.
- Mohammed Al-Wahbi, a dedicated printing technician at Al-Thawra Printing and Publishing Institution, has sadly passed away. His untimely demise was a result of a heart attack, which struck him amidst the numerous challenges he encountered during his tenure. The suspension of his salary and the lack of job prospects have compounded his hardships.

In the face of mounting persecution and the looming threat of arrest, a significant number of journalists have deserted the journalism profession despite grappling with economic and humanitarian challenges.

## Government-Controlled Areas: From the Frying Pan into the Fire

In internationally recognised government-controlled areas, the free press is encountering a situation that bears a resemblance, albeit to a lesser extent, to the conditions experienced in regions under the influence of the Houthi group. The industry, unfortunately, is plagued by a multitude of arbitrary practices, arrests, summons, trials, obstruction of professional work, and increasingly stringent restrictions on journalists, regardless of gender.

In the first half of this year, a staggering 17 violations have been meticulously documented by MARSADAK in the areas controlled by the Yemeni government. The denial of journalist Ahmed Mahir's release, who has been detained in Aden prisons since August 2022, remains ongoing.

The Southern National Media Authority (SNMA), which is closely associated with the Southern Transitional Council (STC), a group advocating for secession, has announced its oversight of journalists and media outlets operating in Aden declared by the Yemeni government as the provisional capital. In its controlled regions, the authority imposes constraints on the work of journalists and local and foreign media institutions, with no involvement from the Ministry of Information and its affiliated institutions.

As an example, the authority imposes requirements on media institutions and organizations operating in the field of media to register the names of their employees, including journalists, with the authority. In a recent announcement, the authority has declared itself as the responsible entity for granting licences to foreign media delegations seeking entry into Yemen and its provisional capital, Aden.

In a recent development, foreign broadcasting offices that are contracted with Arabic and international media channels have been prohibited by the authority from hosting a range of Yemeni figures, including journalists. In a bold move, certain journalists have been

banned from making appearances on these channels, effectively preventing their participation in any programmes on those platforms. Such offices have been directed by the authority to submit the names of individuals slated to appear on their channels for approval prior to broadcasting. This crucial step must be taken well in advance to ensure compliance with the authority's regulations. The decision to approve or reject the appearance would rest with the authority.

In the same context, the situation of journalists' freedoms in Hadramout Governorate, situated in eastern Yemen, presents a formidable challenge, comparable to other regions under the control of the Yemeni government. The governorate has gained attention for its distinct approach to dealing with journalists, as they are frequently summoned and subjected to trials pertaining to publication-related matters.

Journalists in Ma'rib Governorate are being actively pursued and apprehended by security and judicial authorities due to their media activities. MARSADAK has reported 11 violations, out of a total of 33, against journalists in the first half of this year.

In a groundbreaking development, the Primary Prosecution in Ma'rib has taken decisive action by issuing coercive arrest warrants against five journalists and media outlets. These warrants have been issued on charges directly linked to their publications, effectively categorizing them as fugitives from justice.

Hostility towards independent journalism is on the rise in numerous governorates across Yemen, as security forces, military entities, and armed militias increasingly employ repressive tactics against the press in different regions of the country. The Yemeni Press Law and constitutional texts guaranteeing freedom of expression of opinions are frequently violated by these actions.

## Government Media... Suffering in Salaries and Migration

Yemeni journalists in government-affiliated media outlets are facing tough economic circumstances as they endure a prolonged wait for their salaries, commonly known as the “monthly allowance,” stretching beyond six months.

In the early years of the war, the government resorted to managing its official media institutions, including the Yemeni news agency “Saba”, the Yemeni satellite channel, the Aden channel, and Sana’a Radio, from the then provisional headquarters in the Saudi capital Riyadh. Eventually, the government relocated to Aden in the subsequent years.

The official media institutions and their staff continued to operate from Saudi territory, and the journalists working in these institutions received what is called the “monthly allowance,” which is a sum paid to journalists working in those institutions in Saudi Riyals.

Journalists’ suffering has been further intensified as the disbursement of their financial allowances, specifically allocated for them, faces significant delays. This pressing matter has now emerged as a prominent human rights concern. Employees of these institutions have taken to calling on the government, urging them to fulfil their obligations, find a solution to their predicament, and commit to regular payment of their salaries.

In a challenging turn of events, numerous journalists working in official media institutions have found themselves compelled to explore alternative career paths to sustain their livelihoods and support their families. Amidst salary cuts, many individuals valiantly persevere in their work, driven by the limited alternatives available to them. The arduous task of returning to Yemen further compounds their predicament, leaving them with few viable choices.

Afaf Thabet, a presenter at the Yemen Satellite Channel, based in Riyadh, opens up about the challenges she faces in her daily life. “We are residing in a foreign land, one known for its exorbitant cost of living

in terms of rent and utilities. We can't even meet the educational and living needs of our children. Despite our very low salaries compared to the cost of living, only one month's salary was disbursed during the first half of this year. The extent of their suffering is unimaginable."

Journalists residing in Saudi Arabia continue to face a series of unfulfilled promises, leaving them in a state of uncertainty. The challenges faced by journalists and media professionals in government media institutions have been further intensified, leading them to initiate a social media campaign in a bid to elicit a response from the relevant authorities. In a recent statement, Afaf Thabet expressed their concerns saying, " We tried to highlight our situation but that was risky. Strikes were deliberated upon as a potential course of action, yet executing them poses considerable challenges."

Bushra Al-Amiri, a journalist working in government media institutions from Riyadh, states: "We've exhausted ourselves while demanding our rights and salaries. Everyone gives non-convincing excuses. According to the Ministry of Information, the matter has been brought to the attention of the Prime Minister's office, but their efforts have reportedly yielded no results. It has been claimed that the Prime Minister's office has issued a directive to the Ministry of Finance, instructing them to disburse and regularize salaries. The Ministry of Finance has officially stated that there is a lack of financial liquidity. This is the information that we hear from our managers and from those whom we can reach within the offices of the two ministries and the Prime Minister's office.

Yemeni journalists continue to face persistent struggles from multiple angles. Those who have not experienced the grave perils of assassination or imprisonment, coupled with the arduous trials and relentless harassment, are still susceptible to economic hardships and the unfortunate loss of income and employment prospects.

Yemeni journalists find themselves caught in the crosshairs of a multifaceted crisis. From the ever-looming threat to their personal safety and security to the relentless economic hardships they endure, these media professionals navigate a treacherous landscape fraught with complexities.



# **Violations against Freedom of Speech in Yemen**

**First Biannual Report  
2023**



# Violations Cases Against Media in Yemen

In The First Half 2023

## Violations Against Media

33

1

Against media organizations



broken into

32

Against Individuals

3



detention

8



trial and summons  
journalists

6



assault

2



Arrests

6



incitement

4



Threats

3



Deprivation of  
rights

## Violations Responsibilities

Unknown



3



Houthies Group

13

Yemeni Government



17

## Violations Areas



## Report Methodology

The data and information in this report were collected by a professional team of observers, who are positioned in various Yemeni regions.

In collecting data, the observers relied on different methods, including direct contact with the victims, testimonies of their relatives, media or the reports submitted by the victims or their relatives to MARSADAK. The MARSADAK team reviewed and verified all the observed data and information through a verification mechanism that included at least 3 different sources.

The data and information contained in this report do not mean that all violations against journalists and social media activists in Yemen have been recorded. There are cases of violations that victims or their families were hesitant to report to avoid serious risks and consequences that may be instigated by the violators.

We would also like to point out that for the sake of brevity, we will not cite all the stories of violations, as the report will only present the most prominent stories of violations suffered by journalists in Yemen.

## Executive Summary

The report on media freedom violations in Yemen for the first half of 2023 documented a total of 33 cases of violations against journalists and media institutions. Journalists faced a range of violations, including arrests and brief detentions, as a result of their media activities. Reports have emerged of a concerning trend: deliberate incitement targeting journalists, putting their safety at risk. In a startling development, six journalists have been accused of engaging in espionage activities on behalf of foreign nations. These grave allegations have been propagated by local media outlets associated with the Houthi group.

All warring parties in Yemen are engaged in violations against journalists. Many journalists can no longer work freely, professionally, or report facts without fear for their lives due to the repressive actions taken by these parties.

A number of journalists and media professionals employed in government media institutions have expressed their dissatisfaction with the ongoing negligence displayed by government authorities in meeting their salary obligations. In light of the suspension of their salary payments, individuals have voiced their deep concern regarding the challenging living conditions they are currently facing.

MARSAD has been recently inundated with reports from journalists operating in regions under the control of the Houthi group. These reports shed light on the growing concerns surrounding the alleged arbitrary actions carried out by security and intelligence agencies in the area. Journalists find themselves summoned on a near-daily basis for rigorous interrogations, as their every move is meticulously scrutinised. It appears that there may be an intention to suppress any media outlets that dare to challenge or offer an alternative perspective. Moreover, it has been emphasised that prior authorization and approval are mandatory for all field activities. Journalists are expected to strictly adhere to the prescribed procedures.

In a recent investigation into the state of freedom of opinion and expression in Yemen, it has become abundantly clear that numerous journalists and human rights defenders are facing arbitrary practices that blatantly infringe upon their rights. These actions directly contravene the guarantees of freedom of opinion and expression as enshrined in the Yemeni constitution, laws, and international conventions.

Ensuring that criminals are held accountable for crimes committed against journalists is a crucial guarantee for upholding freedom of expression and ensuring access to information for all citizens. In light of the substantial increase in these violations over the course of the war, with a staggering total of over 2,400 instances, including 52 reported cases of murder, it becomes increasingly imperative to address this matter. The perpetrators of these violations have gone unaccountable, allowing them to act with impunity.

During the first half of this year, our team closely monitored a wide range of violations that were spread across various provinces, including Marib, Sana'a, Hadramout, Taiz, Aden, Ibb, and Amran. The areas under internationally recognized Yemeni government control have emerged as the epicentre of violations against journalists and social media activists. With a total of 17 violations, these areas have taken the lead in the recorded cases, followed by the areas controlled by the Houthi group, where there is no room for independent or oppositional journalism.

In a statement released by MARSAD, it is crucial to highlight that the data and information disclosed in this report should not be misconstrued as exhaustive documentation of all violations. Instead, the victims of violations are hesitating to report their experiences out of fear of facing even harsher repercussions from the very perpetrators responsible.



## Types of Violations

The report documented 33 violations during the first half of the current year including 32 violation cases against individuals (journalists and social media activists) representing 97% of the total cases in addition to one violation incident (3%) against the Journalists Syndicate (forced break into the syndicate premises in Aden).

These violations were categorized as follows: 2 cases of arrests, 3 cases of detention, 6 cases of assault, 8 cases of interrogation and trial of journalists, 4 cases of threats, 6 cases of incitement, 3 cases of depriving detained journalists of their rights, preventing visitation, and denying them medical attention.

Additionally, MARSAD recorded a second instance of intrusion into the Journalists Syndicate building in the city of Aden, occurring in less than five months. The intruders replaced the syndicate's banner with another one and imposed an armed blockade around the building.

## The geographical distribution of violations

Various regions in Yemen have witnessed cases of violations against the media. The report documented 11 cases of violations in the city of Ma'rib, 7 cases in Sana'a Governorate, 5 cases in Hadhramaut City, 4 cases of violations recorded in Taiz, and 4 cases in Aden. As for the Ibb and Amran governorates, one violation case was recorded in each governorate.

## Responsibility for Violations

During the first half of the current year, the Yemeni government topped the list of violations against journalists with a total of 17 recorded cases. Additionally, 13 violations were attributed to the Houthi group (Ansar Allah), and 3 violations were recorded against unidentified entities.



## Arrest

No	Name	Violation Type	Violation Date	Governorate
1	Adel Shaiban	arrest	7/1/2023	Sanaa
2	Fahd Al-Arhabi	arrest	19/6/2023	Amran



### Fahd Al-Arhabi

- **Violation Type:** Arrest
- **Violation Place:** Amran
- **Date:** 05/06/2023
- **Perpetrator:** Houthi group

According to the information provided, the security and intelligence agency of the Houthi group in the governorate of Amran summoned journalist Fahd Al-Arhabi on June 5, 2023, and he has not been seen at home since then.

According to the information obtained by the monitoring team from a person close to the journalist who talked under the condition of anonymity, he said that the journalist was arrested after he published a message on WhatsApp accusing Houthi leaders of looting more than 7,000 bricks belonging to the Amran Cement Factory. Later, a verbal argument ensued between him and some individuals belonging to the Houthi group. He was suddenly summoned by the intelligence apparatus. Upon going there, he has never been seen.

The journalist had previously been arrested on July 12, 2021, for criticizing the group's abusive practices towards citizens in the governorate. The security and intelligence agency regularly summons journalists for questioning to monitor their movements.

This is a usual practice by intelligence agencies against a number of journalists who still live in their controlled territories. They are summoned on daily basis to be investigated and know their movements.

Journalist Fahd Al-Arhabi was arrested on 12 July, 2021, for criticizing the Houthi group's abusive practices towards citizens in the governorate of Amran. His house was raided and his family was terrified with no legal justification.

He had Facebook posts, criticizing the group's practices, which led to his arrest and detention for 25 days. During his detention, he was interrogated, intimidated, and his home and personal phone were searched, and his old phone calls were listened to in search of evidence but in vain.

## Detention

No	Journalist	Violation Type	Violation Date	Governorate
1	Tareq Basloom	Detention	29/1/2023	Hadramout
2	Khalil Al-Tawail	Detention	11/2/2023	Marib
3	Abdullah Ali Bamanif	Detention	23/05/2023	Hadramout



### Tareq Omar Basloom

- **Type of violation:** detention
- **Place of violation:** Hadramout
- **Date of violation:** 29 January 2023
- **Perpetrator:** Yemeni government



Journalist Tareq Omar Basloom was detained in the security prison in Al-Mukalla, the capital of Hadramout Governorate, after being summoned by the Public Funds Prosecution following a complaint filed against him by the Public Works and Roads Office in the Hadramout Coast due to his writings and criticisms of the office's work and projects. Basloom was shocked to find himself detained along with a group of young people upon his arrival at the prosecution's office. The prosecutor's deputy refused to release him despite being previously released on bail in the same case. After more than five hours of detention and the intervention of the prosecutor's chief, he was allowed to go freely. The Public Works Office had lodged a case against Basloom in the Public Funds Prosecution on December 11, 2022, and he was investigated by the prosecution for the same case and released on commercial bail. The security authorities in Hadramout must take responsibility for what journalists are subjected to and work to create a suitable environment for press freedom in the governorate.



### Khalil Al-Tawail

- **Belqees Satellite Channel-Marib**
- **Type of violation:** detention
- **Date of violation:** 29 January 2023
- **Perpetrator:** Yemeni government

Journalist Khalil Al-Tawail, a Belqees TV Channel correspondent in Marib, was detained by security authorities while covering an arts event in front of the Belqees Hotel in Marib on February 10, 2023, and was released hours later.

Al-Tawail confirmed that he was detained while covering an arts event in front of the Belqees Hotel in Marib on the twelfth anniversary of the 11th February Revolution, but he was taken aback to find security

forces detaining him along with a group of young people. The security forces also assaulted other citizens who were attending the event.

This attack on the Belqees TV correspondent is not the first of its kind, as Al Tawail has endured numerous attacks while working as a journalist. The security authorities in the governorate must take responsibility for what journalists go through and work to foster an atmosphere that promotes press freedom.



### Abdullah Ali Bamanif

- **Eastern Dau'an FM Radio Station-Marib and Hadramout**
- **Violation Type:** Detention
- **Date:** 23/05/2023
- **Perpetrator:** Yemeni Government

The security department of the Du'an District in Hadramout Governorate summoned journalist Abdullah Bamanif on 21 May, 2023, based on a complaint filed against him by the director of Sadiq School due to an opinion post on his Facebook page.

Upon reviewing the content of the post, it did not directly target the director or the school itself, but rather discussed the state of education in general. When Bamanif arrived at the security department, he was interrogated, arrested, and held in custody for five hours before being released.

Abdullah Bamanif is the director of Ishraq Du'an Community Radio in the district, a former journalist and presenter on Hadramout TV channel and Nama Radio, and worked in other media outlets in Hadramout.

## Attack

No	Journalist	Violation Type	Violation Date	Governorate
1	Khalil Al Tawail	Attack	12/1/2023	Marib
2	Omar Al Sarori	Attack	12/1/2023	Marib
3	Tawfiq Al Mansori	Attack	19/2/2023	Sana'a
4	Sali Al Mekhlafi	Attack	14/3/2023	Taiz
5	Nawaf Al Hamiri	Attack	29/04/2023	Taiz
6	Waleed Hesham Al-Sada	Attack	05/06/2023	Ibb



### Saly Al Mekhlafi

- **Yemen Shabab Satellite Channel-Taiz**
- **Type of violation:** attack on the property
- **Date of violation:** 14 March 2023
- **Perpetrator:** unidentified individuals

Unknown individuals set fire to the car of journalist Saly Al-Mekhlafi's husband. She provides various reports on the lives and rights of rural people on the Yemen Shabab TV channel.

Al-Mekhlafi confirmed that unknown individuals burned her husband's car after midnight and fled the scene. Despite filing a complaint with the security authority, the perpetrators are still at large.

She also stated that she had been threatened after moving with her husband to the Habashi Mount area to work and cover the lives and rights of rural people. Her work is broadcast in reports on the morning program "Sabahkom Ajmal" on Yemen Shabab TV.

The techniques employed by criminals against journalists, their families, and property are horrifying. The security authorities are responsible for protecting journalists, apprehending the offenders, and bringing them to justice. If successful, the security authorities will be able to deter such attacks and protect the lives of journalists and their families.



### Nawaf Al-Hamiri

- **Journalist- Taiz**
- **Violation Type:** Arrest
- **Date:** 29/4/2023
- **Perpetrator:** Yemeni Government

Journalist Nawaf Al-Hamiri was assaulted by security forces affiliated with the Al-Najda Forces while he was near the Hesab roundabout in the city of Taiz, southwest of the country.

After contacting Al-Hamiri, he confirmed that he was attacked by soldiers affiliated with the Al-Najda Forces. They insulted him without justification, despite identifying himself as a journalist. Upon inquiring about the reason for the sudden attack on an unarmed civilian, he received more insults and threats.



### Omar Al-Sururi

- **Belqees Satellite Channel - Marib**
- **Type of violation:** assault
- **Date of violation:** 12 January 2023
- **Perpetrator:** the Yemeni government



### Khalil Al-Tawil

- **Belqees Satellite Channel - Marib**
- **Type of violation:** assault
- **Date of violation:** 12 January 2023
- **Perpetrator:** the Yemeni government

The Belqees TV crew in Marib, Khalil Al-Tawil and Omar Al-Sururi, were attacked and beaten with rifle butts, and live bullets were fired into the air by Central Bank soldiers in Marib. They were taken to the bank gate to be detained and their camera as well as their mobile phones was confiscated. They were searched and their privacy was violated.

Belqees TV issued a statement condemning the assault on its correspondents in Marib, requesting the local security forces to apprehend the perpetrators, safeguard them from harm, and provide a secure atmosphere for them. Sadly, this is not the first time that Belqees TV reporters in Marib have been attacked and bothered while carrying out their professional duties.



### Waleed Hesham Al-Sada

- **Al-Liwa Newspaper-Ibb**
- **Violation Type:** Assault
- **Date:** 5/06/2023
- **Perpetrator:** Houthi group

The editor-in-chief of Al-Lawaa newspaper, journalist Waleed Al-Sada, was attacked and his car was taken by a prominent figure in Ibb governorate due to publishing issues. Al-Sada reported the incident to the Media Freedoms Observatory, stating that he was attacked, and his life was threatened by a prominent figure who works in the local authority due to issues related to publishing corruption and looting cases. These malpractices are committed by security leaders and officials in the local authority in the governorate.

The incident occurred after a lawsuit was filed against Al-Sada in the Public Funds Prosecution in the governorate and an attempt was made to fabricate false charges.

This is not the first time that Al-Sada has been subjected to harassment and arbitrary practices. He was arrested in 2018. In October 2021, the Eastern Ibb Prosecution issued an indictment against him following a complaint related to publishing, despite the Attorney General's directive that the Prosecution does not to have jurisdiction.

## Threat

No	Name	Violation Type	Violation date	Governorate
1	Ebrahim Al Hussaini	Threat	9/3/2023	Taiz
2	Khaled Dallaq	Threat	6/5/2023	Sana'a
3	Fathi bin Lazraq	Threat	21/05/2023	Aden
4	Ali Uwaidha	Threat	21/05/2023	Marib



### Ebrahim Al Hussaini

- **Journalist- Taiz**
- **Type of violation:** threat
- **Date of violation:** 9 March 2023
- **Perpetrator:** unidentified individuals

Journalist Abdullah Al Hussaini received a death threat from an unknown person via a fixed phone number on March 9 of last year, demanding him to stop his journalistic activity and accusing him of defaming authority commanders in the Shemaitin District, south of Taiz. Al Hussaini was said to report that these commanders were in the habit of taking over the property of a citizen.

Al Hussaini reported that he had been threatened by unknown persons via a fixed phone number, and that he would be returned to prison if he continued his journalistic activity, especially after accusing the head of the security authority in the region of supporting an armed robbery of land belonging to Ali Abdullah Shamsan in "Ash'ar" area in the Shemaitin District, and continuing his campaign condemning the corruption of local, security, and military commanders in the southern countryside of Taiz.

Sadly, this is not the first time that Al Hussaini has been subjected to arbitrary practices, as he was previously arrested and forcibly disappeared in one of the prisons of the Fourth Brigade in the "Al-Aufa" area on the pretext of his journalistic writings criticizing the security situation in the Shemaitin District. In order to silence him, he was also pursued, his salary was suspended, and he was incited against.



### Khaled Dallaq

- **Journalist- Sana'a**
- **Violation Type:** Threat
- **Date:** 06/05/2023

A person named Hussein Abdullah threatened to target the house and family of journalist Khaled Dallaq, a member of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, due to his media activity in exposing corruption in the judiciary and violations against citizens.



Dallaq confirmed that he received a message from Abdullah threatening to kill him and his family with a missile if he continued to write about corruption in the judiciary in the southeastern areas of the capital, Sana'a.

This is not the first time that Dallaq has been threatened and attacked. He has been subjected to arbitrary practices, including arrest in the military area of Al-Hafa, breaking into his house and intimidating his family by Houthi security forces. Furthermore, threats from a military prosecutor accusing him of working for a foreign country were made.

The Houthi group is responsible for protecting Dallaq and his family from these illegal practices, and it is necessary to put an end to all these violations by some military personnel, members of the prosecution, and police departments who fabricate false charges against journalists to stop them from criticizing the living conditions and corruption in security, judicial, and legislative institutions.



### Fathi bin Lazraq

**«Aden Al-Ghad» Newspaper - Aden**

**Type of Violation:** Threat

**Date of Incident:** May 21, 2023

**Perpetrators:** Unknown

Fathi bin Lazraq, the Editor-in-Chief of «Aden Al-Ghad» daily, is currently experiencing persistent arbitrary measures as a result of his engagement in media endeavours and his critique of the socio-economic and security circumstances in Yemen, particularly in the southern areas.

On the 21st of May in the previous year, journalist bin Lazraq encountered threats from unidentified individuals as a result of his journalistic work.





## Ali Uwaidha

- **Journalist- Marib**
- **Violation Type:** Threat
- **Date:** 21/05/2023
- **Perpetrator:** Unknown individual

Journalist Ali Uwaidha, who works for the Source Media Foundation, received a new death threat from one of the smugglers in Marib Governorate, as part of a series of previous threats he has received due to his journalistic writings and his talk about corruption in the oil and gas sector.

The Source Online website reported in a statement that journalist Ali Uwaidha received death threat by one of the influential people in Marib. The security authorities were provided with the phone number from which the threat was made.

The statement called on the security authorities in the governorate to arrest those involved in the threat. The security authorities are held responsible for protecting Uwaida and maintaining his safety so that these people do not continue to harass journalists.

This threat is not the first, for Uwaidha has previously received similar threats from oil smugglers who benefit from leaking quantities of gas for sale in the black market.

## Trials of Journalists

No	Journalist	Governorate
1	Ali Al-Awbathani	Hadramout
2	Khaled Mohsen Al Kathiri	Hadramout
3	Ahmed Maher	Aden
4	Ali Al-Faqih	Marib
5	Mohammed Mosed Al-Salehi	Marib
6	Ahmed Yahya Ayadh	Marib
7	Yemen Shebab Channel	Marib
8	Al-Mahriah TV	Marib



### Ali Al Al-Awbathani

- **Violation type:** interrogation and trial
- **Place of trial:** Hadramout
- **Date of trial:** 9 January 2023
- **Perpetrator:** the Yemeni government

The Public Funds Prosecution in Hadramout Governorate held the second trial session for journalist Ali Salem Al-Awbathani on January 9 of last year, on charges related to posting on his personal Facebook page. The case was lodged against him by the Presidency of Hadramout University, regarding publications that addressed the university's violations. The case was adjourned.

The prosecution had summoned journalist Al-Awbathani on December 19, 2022, and the first investigation was conducted with him on 22 of the same month. He was released on commercial bail before the Public

Funds Prosecution. Hadramout University charged him with “defaming a scientific institution.”

Journalists and media activists in Hadramout Governorate have been frequently targeted on charges related to publication, despite the fact that the Public Funds Prosecution, Criminal Investigation, and Public Prosecution are not competent to summon journalists in publishing cases. Through these practices, the security and judicial authorities in the governorate seek to intimidate and silence journalists from continuing their work freely and professionally.



### Khaled Mohsen Al Kathiri

- **Violation type:** interrogation and trial
- **Place of incident:** Hadramout
- **Perpetrator:** the Yemeni government

The Public Prosecution in Sayoun, Hadramout Governorate, summoned journalist Khaled Mohsen Al-Kathiri on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, to investigate the complaint filed against him by the Youth and Sports Office in Wadi Hadramout and the Desert over journalistic publications that addressed the facilities of the Sayoun Sports Club and the compensation that the club deserves for the facilities that were deducted for the establishment of the Sayoun Olympic Stadium.

Al-Kathiri stated that he attended the Sayoun Primary Prosecution Office on Sunday, February 5, 2023, to view the complaint filed against him by the Director-General of the Youth and Sports Office in a journalistic publication, despite the fact that the prosecution had previously started the investigation and was waiting for the decision according to the law, but the prosecutor did not decide on the case.



### Ahmed Maher

- **Journalist**
- **Violation type:** interrogation and trial
- **Date of trial:** 17 March 2023
- **Place of incident:** Aden
- **Perpetrator:** the Yemeni government
- **Status:** detained since 6 August, 2022

The specialized criminal court in Aden held the first trial session in the case of journalist Ahmed Maher on 17 March 2023. Maher has been detained since August 6 of last year on charges related to publication.

The first trial session for Maher comes after months of obstructing trial procedures and refusing to transfer him from the Bir Ahmed Prison to the court. The criminal court, however, is not competent in media and publication cases.

The journalist's father stated that his son was allowed to attend the first session after being prevented from going to court for 13 sessions. He added that his son stood before the judge and told him about the "injustice and torture" he was subjected to, and his arrest on 6 August, 2022, followed by torture and terror practices against him, his brother, and his family by the leader in the Southern Transitional Council, "Mu-salih Al-Zarhani." Ahmed then asked the judge for his legal right to be acquitted of the charges against him.

The procedures taken were illegal and contrary to Yemeni laws and international human rights law during the detention, disappearance, and torture of journalist Ahmed Maher. He was arrested on August 6, 2022, and then appeared in a video confessing under duress to acts that undermine the security of the state, before being transferred to the Aden-based, incompetent criminal court.



Several officials and media heads in Marib Governorate received orders for compulsory arrest issued by the Marib Primary Prosecution on the basis of publication cases, which were considered as escaping from justice.

Journalists Ali Al-Faqih, deputy editor of Al-Masdar Online, Ahmed Ayed, editor-in-chief of Marib



Press newspaper, and Ahmed Yahya Ayed, editor-in-chief of Marib Press website, Yemen Shabab TV channel, and Al-Mahriah satellite channel, were among those who received the orders. They are accused of fabricating and defaming a public servant. A person called Ali Al-Awash, a former prosecutor, was accused of corruption and nepotism. He employed a number of his relatives illegally.

The Observatory rejected these arbitrary practices against journalists and defenders of rights and freedoms. These actions are considered a flagrant violation of the freedom of opinion and expression guaranteed by the constitution and international conventions.

It confirmed that these methods aim to silence voices and suffocate

media and journalistic freedoms, and to persecute journalists and those with opposite opinions.

The Observatory also confirmed its support for journalists in all legal ways and its readiness to appoint a lawyer to defend them before the judicial authorities until the truth prevails.

## Inciting Campaigns

The Media Freedoms Observatory in Yemen received a press report from a number of journalists about a campaign of incitement against them through media reports published by foreign media outlets and circulated by local media outlets affiliated with the Houthi group, accusing them of spying for foreign countries.

The report claimed that it had obtained secret and leaked information, without clarifying any of that information that would prove the credibility of the report, that a group of journalists, including Mansour, and the television producer Ziyad Hussein, the journalist Waleed Abdel-Mutalib Mohammed Al-Rajhi, the media figure Abdullah Amr Ramadan Masoud, the journalist Rania, and the journalist Haib Dhiban, were working for the British intelligence service with the aim of undermining the political process in Yemen.

The media campaign launched by foreign media outlets and circulated by local media outlets affiliated with the Houthi group aims to cause physical harm, damage reputations of journalists, and it is necessary for human rights organizations active in the field of freedom of opinion and expression to intensify efforts to protect journalists to work professionally.

It is also confirmed that we stand with the journalists in suing these parties by all legal means, locally, regionally, and internationally, as these accusations are direct incitement and a threat to murder.



## Storming into the Yemeni Media Syndicate



Armed men stormed the building of the Yemeni Media Syndicate in Aden for the second time in less than five months. They removed the sign of the Syndicate and replaced it with another one and imposed an armed siege on the building.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate described the attack as a “dangerous” step that threatens the union’s life in the country and its subsequent repercussions on the syndicate’s work. The Syndicate confirmed that its protection as an institute and property is the responsibility of the authorities, which should be done to safeguard the rights, and enhance the status of civil society institutions.

At the same time, the Aden Independent Channel TV, which is affiliated with the Southern Transitional Council, quoted the head of the “Union of Southern Journalists and Media Professionals,” Eidros Bahshwan, as

saying that their union has regained control of its main headquarters, which was under its control during the era of the Southern State.

Several local and international organizations concerned with freedom of opinion and expression condemned the attack on the building of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate in Aden, and called on the concerned authorities and local authorities in the governorate to take urgent measures to ensure the return of the properties to their legitimate owners, enable journalists to regain their rights and resume their work, and hold those responsible for the attack accountable

### Journalists behind the bars <sup>1</sup>

No	Name	Detention Place	Perpetrators	Detention days <sup>2</sup>
1	Wahid Al-Sofi	Sana'a	Houthi group	2984
2	Nabil Al-Saudi	Sana'a	Houthi group	2840
3	Mohammed Al-Hotami	Al Hodeidah	Houthi group	1731
4	Mohammed Al-Moqri	Hadramout	Al Qaeda group	2819
5	Ahmed Maher	Aden	Yemeni government	330
6	Fahd Al-Arhabi	Amran	Houthi group	26

1 - As of 31 June, 2023

2 - Since the day of arrest to 31 June, 2023



## Journalists Released



### Abdul Khaleq Ahmed Abdou Imran

**Occupation:** Editor-in-Chief of “Al-Islah Online” website

**Date and Place of Arrest:** June 9, 2015, Sana’a

**Charges:** spreading false news, disturbing the public security of the state; sentenced to death

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** April 6, 2023, as a part of a prisoner exchange deal between the Yemeni government and the Houthi group.



### Tawfiq Mohammed Thabit Al-Mansouri

**Occupation:** “Al-Masdar” Daily Newspaper

**Date and Place of Arrest:** June 9, 2015, Sana’a

**Charges:** spreading false news, disturbing the public security of the state; sentenced to death

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** April 6, 2023, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the Yemeni government and the Houthi group.

## Journalists Released



### Harith Saleh Saleh Humeid

**Occupation:** “Al-Rabea Net” Website

**Date and Place of Arrest:** June 9, 2015, Sana’a

**Charges:** Spreading false news, disturbing the public security of the state; sentenced to death

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** April 6, 2023, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the Yemeni government and the Houthi group



### Akram Saleh Saad Al-Walidi

**Occupation:** “Al-Rabea Net” Website

**Date and Place of Arrest:** April 6, 2015, Sana’a

**Charges:** Spreading false news, disturbing the public security of the state; sentenced to death

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** April 6, 2023, as part of a prisoner exchange deal between the Yemeni government and the Houthi group

## Journalists Released



### Mohammed Al-Salahi

**Occupation:** “Mega Pixel” Media Office - Al-Hodeidah

**Date and Place of Arrest:** October 21, 2018, Al-Hodeidah

**Charges:** Spreading false news and disturbing public security

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** June 31, 2023



### Mohammed Al-Junaid

**Occupation:** “Mega Pixel” Media Office - Al-Hodeidah

**Date and Place of Arrest:** February 23, 2019, Al-Hodeidah

**Charges:** Spreading false news and disturbing public security

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** June 31, 2023

## Journalists Released



### Abdulrahman Kaled

**Occupation:** Deputy Media Attaché - U.S. Embassy - Sana'a

**Date of Arrest:** February 21, 2022

**Charge:** Working at the U.S. Embassy

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** June 29, 2023



### Nabil Sultan

**Occupation:** Journalist - U.S. Embassy - Sana'a

**Date of Arrest:** November 28, 2021

**Charge:** Working at the U.S. Embassy

**Perpetrators:** Houthi group

**Date of Release:** June 29, 2023



**Studies and Economic Media Center (SEM-C) is one of the Civil society organizations that works on economic field, awareness and promote the economic issues transparency, good governance and participated citizens in decision-making. Also, It works to find a professional media**

<https://economicmedia.net/>







**Yemen Media Freedoms Observatory (MARSADAK) is a monitoring and information platform aimed at disseminating all matters relating to freedoms of opinion and expression in various Yemeni regions in a professional and independent manner, as well as, analyzing and advocating for journalists' issues at the local and international levels.**

<https://marsadak.org/>

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