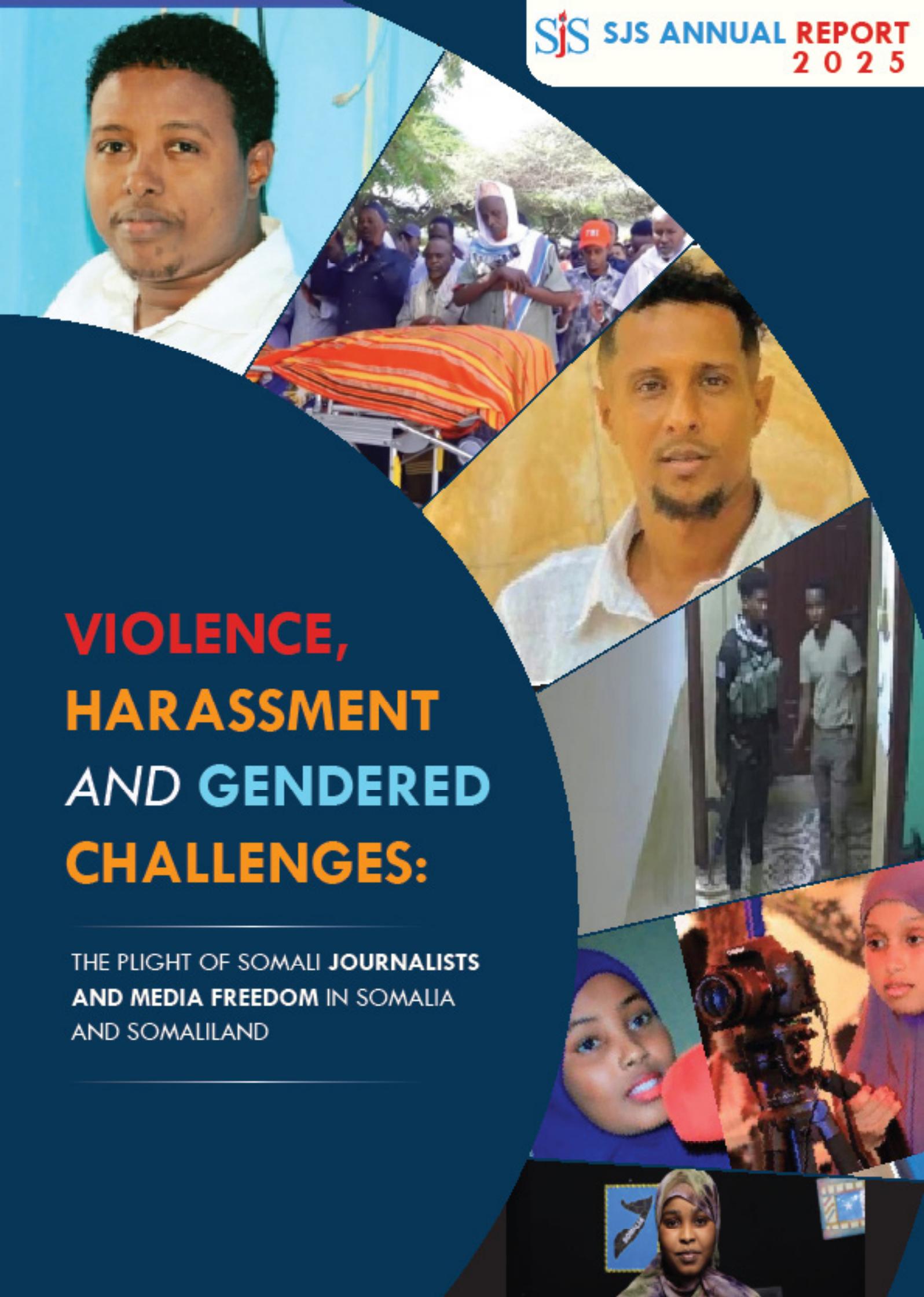


VIOLENCE, HARASSMENT AND GENDERED CHALLENGES:

THE PLIGHT OF SOMALI JOURNALISTS
AND MEDIA FREEDOM IN SOMALIA
AND SOMALILAND





STATE OF PRESS FREEDOM IN SOMALIA AND SOMALILAND



ABOUT THIS REPORT

Since its establishment in 2019, the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) has published an annual report on the State of Press Freedom in Somalia. This report is grounded in SJS's ongoing research and systematic documentation of violations against journalists and media workers across the country. Drawing on a wide range of sources—including journalists, editors, media owners, government representatives, security officials, and legal experts—the report provides analysis and perspectives on the state of press freedom in Somalia and Somaliland. It seeks to inform policymakers, media stakeholders, and international partners about the conditions under which journalists operate and the urgent need for stronger protections for media freedom.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year 2025 was marked by a continued deterioration of media freedom and the safety of journalists in Somalia, with reporters and media workers operating in an increasingly precarious and chilling environment. Documentation by the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) shows that attacks against journalists and media outlets intensified throughout the year, illustrating a pattern of systematic repression and growing hostility toward independent reporting. **Tragically, two journalists were killed in Mogadishu.** Local independent journalist **Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe** died in an Al-Shabaab terrorist bombing targeting a residential area in March, while Abdifatah Abdi Osman, known as Arab, a television technician, was shot dead by a lone gunman in May while on his way to work. During the year, **22 journalists sustained beatings and physical assaults** by state security forces while on duty. Fourteen of the victims were reporters attacked in Mogadishu, including two women. In Somaliland, security forces attacked five journalists, including one who was shot with live ammunition and subsequently beaten.

Throughout 2025, 148 journalists were arrested or arbitrarily detained. In Somaliland, **36 journalists were detained** or arrested in regions such as Erigabo, Sanaag, and Awdal, which experienced heightened inter-clan conflicts. **Mogadishu led with 118 cases of media violations including** arbitrary detentions, primarily carried out by NISA and the police. Five of these incidents were kidnappings. Nearly 90 percent of journalists arrested or arbitrarily detained were not brought to court and were released without charge, often after one or several days in detention. Over 10% of the media violations recorded in 2025 affected women journalists.

Nine cases of media violations were recorded in each of Southwest and Galmudug, while Puntland committed seven violations; Northeastern (formerly SSC-Khaatumo) detained three reporters; Hirshabelle arrested two and Jubaland detained one journalist. The past year also showed a pattern of repression through prosecution and legal harassment. SJS documented nine incidents of legal harassment and Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPP) lawsuit aimed at silencing journalists – including SJS itself – and intimidating them from performing their work. One of these legal harassment cases specifically targeted a woman journalist in Puntland State. In 2025, **a total of nine media stations** were banned or denied access, including five in southwest State of Somalia. Two of the affected outlets in Mogadishu were targeted by Somali security forces. In Somaliland, a local television station was closed over its reporting of the tension between Somalia and Somaliland, and the Hadwanaag news website was suspended again after an earlier lift of a long-standing ban.

Women journalists in Somalia are frequently targeted with online harassment, intimidation, and disinformation campaigns. Throughout the year, SJS documented repeated incidents of both online and offline attacks against women in media. Women journalists in Mogadishu were particularly vulnerable, as the political environment worsened amid heated debates surrounding the 2026 elections. At the same time, forced evictions of vulnerable families increased, causing large-scale displacement in the city. Several women journalists covering these developments

were arrested, leading many to avoid posting opinions on social media or engaging in reporting assignments that might provoke retaliation from local authorities. In Puntland, a woman journalist faced legal threats after conducting street interviews that reportedly angered local authorities in Garowe. Such incidents have contributed to growing fear and self-censorship among women in the media. Somali women journalists and media producers also report a rise in AI-facilitated abuse, including voice cloning, manipulated images, and fake online content used to shame or discredit women journalists. These digital attacks are becoming increasingly common tools to silence female voices in the media.

Women journalists also face structural barriers to leadership and decision-making positions within Somali media organizations. Women currently make up only about 20 percent of professional journalists in Somalia, and many receive lower pay than male

colleagues performing similar work. Key challenges include exclusion from editorial decision-making roles, male-dominated news room management, gender pay gaps, and sexual harassment linked to job security or career advancement. These conditions create hostile workplace environments and prevent many women journalists from advancing to leadership positions within media institutions. To address these challenges, SJS has been actively working to empower women journalists through training, advocacy, and protection initiatives aiming to create a safer, more inclusive, and equitable media environment in Somalia.

Abdalle Mumin

SJS Secretary General

March 5, 2026



2. METHODOLOGY

The SJS Annual State of Press Freedom Report 2025 is based on the Somali Journalists Syndicate's (SJS) continuous monitoring and documentation of violations against journalists and media organizations throughout 2025. SJS collected information through its nationwide network of journalists, media monitors, and regional focal points who track incidents affecting press freedom. Data¹ for the report was gathered through direct interviews and testimonies from journalists who experienced violations, as well as consultations with editors, media owners, lawyers representing journalists, civil society actors, government officials, security personnel, and court representatives. Where possible, SJS also consulted family members of affected journalists to verify details of incidents. Each reported case was verified through multiple sources, including direct communication with victims, media institutions, eyewitness accounts, legal documents, and public records. SJS also reviewed official statements, court proceedings, and media reports to cross-check the accuracy of the information. In addition, SJS conducted field monitoring and documentation across different regions of Somalia, and Somaliland including federal member states, to identify patterns of violations, emerging risks, and trends affecting journalists. The findings were analyzed to provide an overview of the major threats to press freedom and the working conditions of journalists during the reporting period. The purpose of this report is to ensure credible, accurate, and evidence-based reporting that can inform advocacy efforts aimed at strengthening the protection of journalists and promoting press freedom in Somalia and Somaliland.



3. OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA FREEDOM AND JOURNALIST SAFETY IN SOMALIA AND SOMALILAND

Throughout Somalia and Somaliland, the media faced severe pressures in 2025, with professional journalists exposed to threats, harassment, and, in some cases, forced exile amid ongoing conflict, corruption, weak governance, and the persistent threat of terror groups.

Insecurity, forced evictions, the ongoing dispute between Somalia and Somaliland, and tensions between Mogadishu and federal member states remained key triggers for media violations. Reporting on sensitive political, security, or social issues—including human rights abuses and sexual violence against women and girls—often led to arrests, intimidation, and threats. Tragically, two journalists were killed²²

Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe killed in an Al-Shabaab bombing in March 2025, and Abdifatah Abdi Osman (Arab), a television technician, shot by a lone gunman in May 2025.] in Mogadishu. Across the year, 22 journalists were physically attacked, including women journalists in Mogadishu and Somaliland. Arbitrary arrests and detention remained widespread, with 148 journalists arrested in Somalia and Somaliland, including 36 cases of arbitrary detentions and arrests in Somaliland amid inter-clan conflicts. Nearly 90% were released without charge after several days, reflecting systemic arbitrary detention. Women journalists accounted for more than 10% of the media violations recorded in 2025. Legal harassment targeted journalists to intimidate them and restrict freedom of expression. In 2025, nine media outlets were banned or denied access. Women

¹ <https://data.sjsyndicate.org/>

² Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe killed in an Al-Shabaab bombing in March 2025, and Abdifatah Abdi Osman (Arab), a television technician, shot by a lone gunman in May 2025

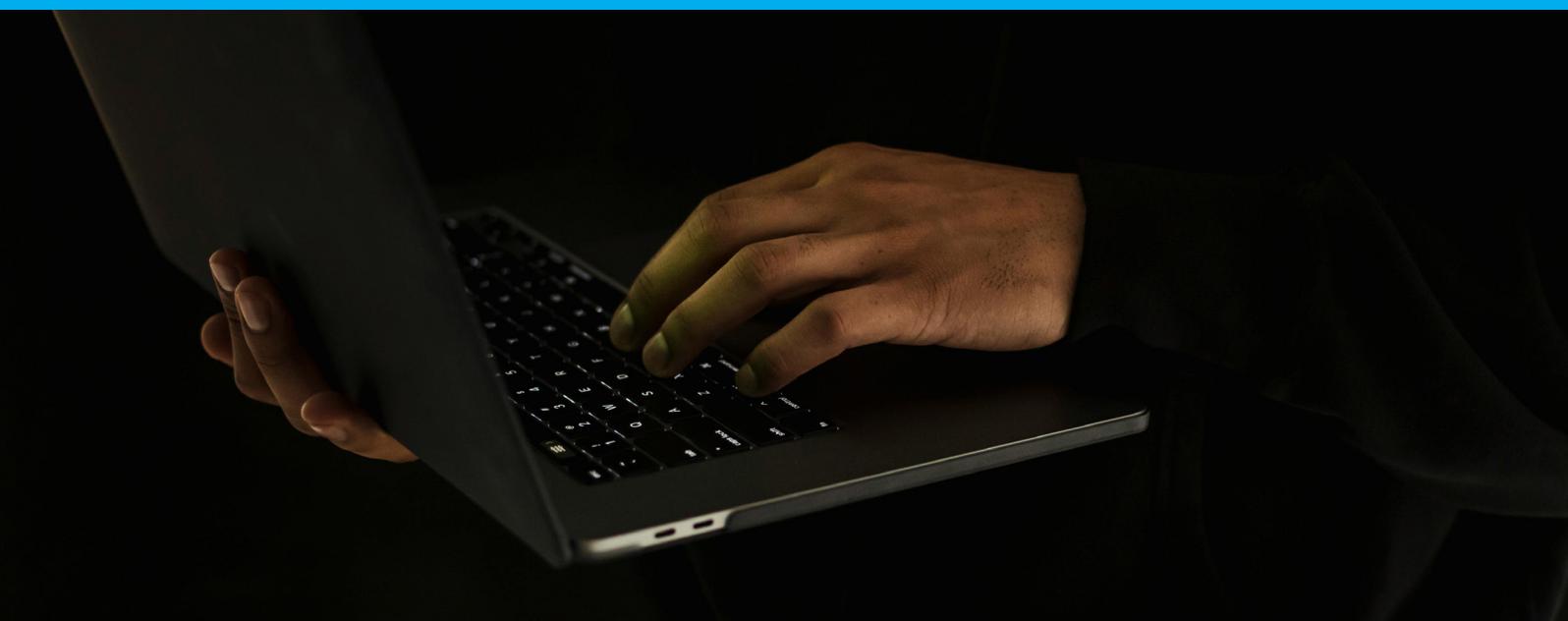


MEDIA VIOLATION BY STATE

NO	STATE NAME	VIOLATIONS	PERCENTAGE	RANK #
1	Banadir	118	63.78%	1
2	Somaliland	36	19.46%	2
3	Galmudug	9	4.86%	3
4	South West	9	4.86%	3
5	Puntland	7	3.78%	5
6	North Eastern	3	1.62%	6
7	Hirshabelle	2	1.08%	7
8	Jubaland	1	0.54%	8

Source: SJS Database.

Women journalists continued to experience disproportionate risks, including online harassment, disinformation, and AI-facilitated abuse such as voice cloning and manipulated images. Self-censorship increased as journalists avoided coverage or social media engagement that could provoke retaliation. Structural professional barriers persisted: women constitute only 20% of journalists, face pay gaps, exclusion from leadership, and harassment tied to career advancement. Male-dominated news room management and limited editorial independence further restricted women's participation in decision-making.





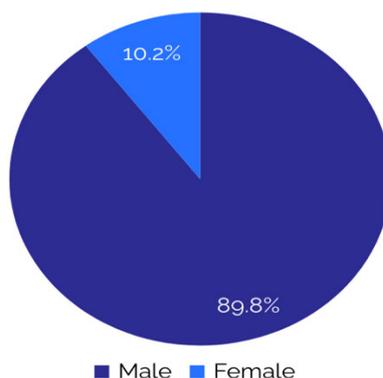
MEDIA VIOLATION BY TYPE

NO	TYPE / CATEGORY	VIOLATIONS	PERCENTAGE	RANK #
1	Arrests	109	33.54%	1
2	Restrictions on Access to Information	57	17.54%	2
3	Equipment Confiscation	40	12.31%	3
4	Arbitrary Detentions	39	12.00%	4
5	Physical Assaults	23	7.08%	5
6	Intimidations And Threats	19	5.85%	6
7	Civil and Criminal Proceedings	11	3.38%	7
8	Kidnappings	5	1.54%	8
9	Censorship / Data Deletion	5	1.54%	8
10	Media Closure	4	1.23%	10
11	Media Raid	4	1.23%	10
12	Killings	2	0.62%	12
13	Enforced Disappearances	2	0.62%	12
14	Torture	2	0.62%	12
15	Hate Speech	1	0.31%	15
16	Injuries	1	0.31%	15
17	Internet Blockage	1	0.31%	15
18	Forced Into Exile	0	0.00%	18

Source: SJS Database.



MEDIA VIOLATION GENDER



Source: SJS Database.



4. VIOLATIONS AGAINST JOURNALISTS

4.1 JOURNALISTS KILLED IN 2025



Mohamed Abukar Mohamed (Dabaashe). | PHOTO/Courtesy.

journalists in Puntland and elsewhere also faced legal threats, highlighting persistent vulnerabilities. On **18 March 2025**, an Al-Shabaab bombing killed a young independent journalist, **Mohamed Abukar Mohamed**³ widely known as Dabaashe, in Mogadishu. Dabaashe, 31, died⁴ when a powerful improvised explosive device (IED) struck outside the building he was living in in the Ceel Gaabta area of the capital. The attack, claimed by Al-Shabaab⁵ targeted a convoy carrying Somalia President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. The president survived the explosion, but several people were killed and others injured, according to media reports. Dabaashe's body was recovered from beneath the rubble of the collapsed building several hours after the blast, his family and colleagues told SJS. He began his journalism career in late 2011 as a trainee at Radio Risaala and later became a full-time reporter. Since 2019, he had been working as an online journalist, reporting mainly through independent Facebook and YouTube platforms. Dabaashe is the first journalist to be killed in Somalia in 2025. His death adds to the long list of journalists and media professionals killed in the country since 1992, many of whose cases remain unresolved.



Abdifatah Abdi Osman (Arab). | PHOTO/Astaan TV.

On **25 May 2025**, **Abdifatah Abdi Osman**,⁶ widely known as Arab, a television technician working for Astaan TV, a privately-owned cable network in Mogadishu was shot dead by a gunman on the morning of Sunday, 25 May 2025, SJS reported at the time. According to colleagues, Arab was on his way to work⁷ at Astaan TV's headquarters in Mogadishu's Hodan district when he was shot by a security guard at a nearby private hotel apartment. Arab was riding his motorbike when the incident occurred. Despite being rushed to the hospital, he was pronounced dead shortly after arrival, a director at the station told SJS. SJS has learned that the police have arrested a middle-aged suspect⁸ believed to be the gunman. An investigation was ongoing, according to the police. Arab, who was approximately 38 years old, is survived by his wife and young son. In addition to his work in media, he was also a respected footballer in Mogadishu.

³ <https://sjsyndrome.org/2025/03/18/somali-journalist-mohamed-abukar-dabashe-killed-in-al-shabaab-bomb-attack-in-mogadishu/>

⁴ https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1902003619789967636

⁵ https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2025/Mar/200754/al_shabaab_attacks_somali_president_s_convoy_in_mogadishu_killing_four.aspx

⁶ <https://sjsyndrome.org/2025/05/26/sjs-condemns-the-murder-of-astan-tv-technician-in-mogadishu-calls-for-full-investigation/>

⁷ <https://hornobserver.com/articles/3338/TV-Technician-Shot-Dead-in-Mogadishu-Police-Arrest-Suspect>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/BanadirPolice/posts/pfbid02RH4soapnsmUPx1aRnzaVWDGr4hfPidu9jERNcBGnW117zkuR4tYzFyfgL86nAnn8>

4.2 INJURIES, BEATINGS, TORTURE, AND OTHER PHYSICAL ASSAULTS

On 25 March 2025, Puntland police in Galkayo, Mudug region, violently⁹ and arrested journalist **Dalmar Isse Ahmed**¹⁰ (popularly known as Dalmar Socdaal) after he published a video on his Facebook page on 13 March showing himself obtaining a national ID card issued by Somalia’s federal government in the southern part of Galkayo, which is under Galmudug administration. In the video, the journalist, who resides in Puntland-controlled North Galkayo, urged people to apply for the ID card. Journalists present at the scene told SJS that during Dalmar’s arrest, the police fired heavy gunfire in a crowded area, putting many civilians at serious risk. Dalmar told SJS that he was held day and night in a small room near a Puntland police checkpoint on the outskirts of Galkayo before being released without trial or charges. He said that after the incident, he fled to Mogadishu out of fear for his safety. Puntland authorities had warned its citizens against obtaining the federal government’s ID card calling it “politically-motivated”. Instead, Puntland announced that it would launch its own separate citizen identification card. Puntland police in Galkayo declined to comment to SJS on why live ammunition was used and why the journalist was arrested.

On 3 August 2025, Three journalists in Mogadishu were physically¹¹ assaulted and forcibly arrested by armed officers from the Turkish-trained Haramcad police unit. **Osman Abdullahi Mohamed (reporter and cameraman, SMS Somali TV), Hussein Isse Mohamed (reporter, SMS Somali TV), and Mahad Mohamed Abdirahman (freelance journalist)** were attacked at the front gate of SMS Somali TV. Officers arriving in two vehicles, including a Toyota Prado Land Cruiser, physically beat the journalists during the arrest. The journalists had just returned from covering forced evictions¹² in Mogadishu, where families were reportedly removed from public land allegedly sold to wealthy businessmen. CCTV footage¹³ from the station confirms the assault and detention. According to the journalists, they were followed during their field assignment. Even after opposition MPs escorted them back to their workplace, two uniformed men—one armed with an AK-47—immediately seized them and forced them into a police truck with a mounted machine gun. The operation was led by Abdi Ali, commander of Mogadishu’s assignment. Even after opposition MPs escorted them back to their workplace, two uniformed men—one armed with an AK-47—immediately seized them and forced them into a police truck with a mounted machine gun. The operation was led by Abdi Ali, commander of Mogadishu’s security checkpoints and a former Al-Shabaab defector previously involved in the March raid on Radio Risaala, as verified by SJS sources and CCTV footage.

9 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/journalists-report-harassment-and-intimidation-in-puntland-and-laas-caanood/>

10 https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1223351443170256&id=100064862343621&rdid=q-VD7if2nttgipZzw#

11 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/06/journalists-targeted-and-arrested-in-mogadishu-for-reporting-on-hassan-sheikhs-forced-evictions/>

12 <https://kaabtv.com/xaafadda-siinaay-ee-muqdisho-oo-qarka-u-saaran-inuu-ka-qarxo-dagaal-xoogan/>

13 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/06/journalists-targeted-and-arrested-in-mogadishu-for-reporting-on-hassan-sheikhs-forced-evictions/>



The raid was captured by the CCTV footage.

On 14 August 2025, Radio Risaala and TV reporter **Abukar Mohamed Keynan** was beaten¹⁴ and physically assaulted while covering an armed clash between rival government forces in Hodan district, Mogadishu. Abukar told SJS that he was struck with the barrel of a gun, slapped, and repeatedly kicked by three armed officers identified as members of the Haramcad unit (Turkish-trained) and the police-military. He was handcuffed, forced to lie on the ground, and left under the sun for two hours, sustaining bruises across his upper body and a swollen upper lip. His cameraman managed to escape, but Abukar could not. The assault occurred at Tarabuunka junction, where Somali government forces attempting to evict families from a former football field in the Horseed area clashed with rival Somali National Army troops opposing the eviction. The operation was led by Abdihakim Eeldheer, a relative of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and commander of the Haramcad unit, while the opposing SNA forces were led by a former military general. The fighting lasted the entire day, resulting in multiple casualties, including civilians, and displacing many families in the area. Abukar was unable to continue reporting for the rest of the day due to injuries and fear.

On 14 August 2025, Police officers in Wadajir district, Mogadishu, detained¹⁵ **Mowlid Osman Bootaan**, a cameraman with Shabelle TV, while he was recording a protest by internally displaced families¹⁶. The families were demonstrating against government-ordered evictions and the alleged sale of their land to private businessmen. According to Mowlid, the Wadajir police station commander ordered the confiscation of his camera and other journalistic equipment. He was held at the station for several hours and released only after the footage on his camera had been deleted.

14 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/15/mogadishu-journalists-face-wave-of-attacks-amid-evictions-and-armed-clashes-in-the-capital>

15 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/15/mogadishu-journalists-face-wave-of-attacks-amid-evictions-and-armed-clashes-in-the-capital/>

16 <https://www.facebook.com/KaabTVNews/posts/pfbid02TRqBxRpHkPD9KZ8YuH7HnwJ3d4776A7kGi-jEL1T16NjdBb9VYwsszmUjkUvU1n7rl>

On 27 August 2025, A woman journalist, **Anisa Ahmed**¹⁷ reported that she was physically assaulted and unlawfully detained by Mogadishu police after being forcibly taken from a police station. Anisa Ahmed, a reporter with the online channel Dalbile TV, told SJS that she was assaulted by armed police officers after reporting to Waaberi police station on the morning of 27 August, following a summons the previous night. She said police confiscated her phone and held her for about an hour before armed officers arrived and forcibly pushed her into a police vehicle. Anisa said that when she asked where she was being taken, two officers physically attacked her, grabbing her by the neck and threatening to strangle her if she resisted. She was then transferred to Dayniile police station, in northwestern Mogadishu, where she was interrogated over her reporting on insecurity and armed robbery. According to her account, Anisa was later locked in a dark cell and held until nearly 6:00 p.m. local time. She was subsequently released without charge.

On 8 September 2025, Two Kalsan TV journalists, **Jafar Mohamed Jimale and Abdimajid Abdirahman** were physically assaulted¹⁸ threatened, and abducted by presidential guards of Galmudug State President **Ahmed Abdi Kaariye “Qoor Qoor”** while covering a protest in Mogadishu, according to accounts¹⁹ given to SJS. Reporter Jafar Mohamed Jimale and cameraman **Abdimajid Abdirahman** said they were beaten, threatened with live gunfire, and forcibly taken by armed guards assigned to President Qoor Qoor. The journalists told SJS they were held for more than three hours inside the president’s residence in the Hodan district, where they were assaulted and later released only after security personnel deleted the footage they had recorded. The attack occurred as the journalists were reporting on a protest by evicted families—mostly women and children—near the residence where President Qoor Qoor was staying. The demonstrators, displaced from the former fire brigade camp in Wadajir district, were protesting forced evictions and accusing the president of failing to fulfill a previous promise to allocate them alternative land for resettlement. In April last year, Qoor Qoor had publicly assured the same families that permanent land would be provided. Galmudug State’s communications team did not respond to calls from SJS seeking comment on the assault and detention of the journalists.



Feysal Abdi Farah, a reporter for Kalsan TV, and Hassan Mohamed Hashi. | PHOTO/SJS/Combined

¹⁷ <https://sjsyndrome.org/2025/08/28/mogadishu-woman-journalist-arrested-and-physically-assaulted-after-exposing-armed-robbery-by-uniformed-men/>

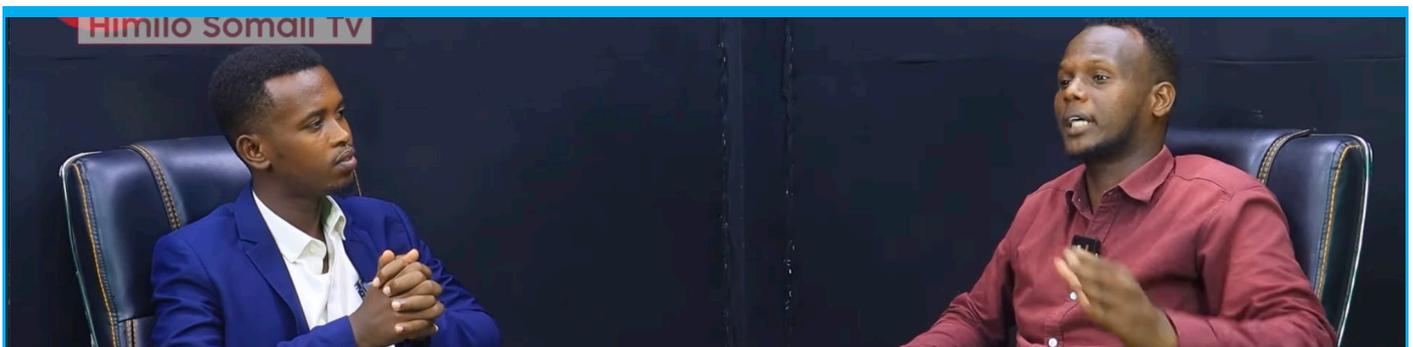
¹⁸ <https://sjsyndrome.org/2025/09/12/journalists-covering-protests-and-market-reporting-attacked-by-nisa-and-galmudug-presidents-guards/>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1162343939327087&set=a.450072453887576>

On 27 September 2025, Four journalists were beaten and kicked²⁰ by Somaliland police in Erigabo, Sanaag region²¹ after attempting to question the Minister of Education during an official visit, as SJS reported at the time. The incident occurred on Saturday, 27 September, as reporters covered Education Minister Ismail Yusuf Duale's visit to local schools, where three schools had reportedly been closed. When the journalists sought clarification from the minister regarding the closures, police officers allegedly assaulted them. Those beaten²² and briefly detained were Sa'id Muse Farah (known as Sa'id Qurbawi) of Sabar TV, Ibrahim Abdi Adan (known as Murti), Mohamed Yusuf Ilkacase, and Sa'id Abdirahman. According to SJS interviews, the four were kicked and physically assaulted before being taken to a local police station, where they were held for seven hours and later released without charge. A fifth reporter, Aidarus Jama Mohamed, escaped arrest but told SJS he suffered bruises to his back and legs after falling from a police vehicle during the incident.

On 6 October 2025, Somaliland police officers in Hargeisa beat²³ and fired a live bullet at journalist Abdale Abaas, who works for the online media outlet Gallyaydh TV in Hargeisa. Hassan Gallyaydh, the founder of the television station, stated that the journalist was on duty, filming the opening ceremony of a new business at Hargeisa City Centre, when three police officers attacked²⁴ him and fired at him. Fortunately, the journalist and other people at the scene escaped unharmed. Gallyaydh TV reported that they had informed the police commander about the incident, but no action has been reported at the time of this reporting.

On 21 November 2025, Police in Mogadishu, Somalia, physically assaulted²⁵ and later arrested Himilo Somali TV camera journalist **Abdullahi Mohamed Ali**, known as Saawey, while he was reporting on a protest against forced evictions in the Yaaqshiid district. Abdullahi was covering a demonstration by local residents opposing planned land grabbing when armed police opened fire to disperse the crowd, killing two civilians, including a 20-year-old man, according to media reports. Eyewitnesses told SJS that police beat Abdullahi and arrested him, while his colleague, Omar Yusuf Mohamed, managed to escape. Officers initially held Abdullahi at a police post before transferring him to the Yaaqshiid District Police Station, where he remained in custody until Monday afternoon. During detention, a police prosecutor forcibly interrogated him without legal representation.



source:himilo somali tv

20 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/29/somaliland-10-journalists-arrested-in-three-weeks/>

21 <https://www.facebook.com/100089053753798/videos/1183010757293106>

22 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=805944282384023&set=a.107258902252568>

23 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

24 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1374503370706794&set=a.269556941201448>

25 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/24/journalist-covering-forced-evictions-protest-in-mogadishu-arrested-and-taken-to-court-as-crackdown-on-independent-media-continues/>



Source: Radio MarkaFM

On 29 November 2025, The founder and director of Marka FM, **Ahmed Omar**, said he was summoned²⁶ to the district commissioner's office, where he was physically assaulted²⁷ by the commissioner. On the same day, authorities in Marka, the capital of the Lower Shabelle region, shut down Marka FM, a privately owned radio station. According to Ahmed Omar, the closure order was issued by the Marka District Commissioner, Osman Muse, after the station reported²⁸ on a gunfight between forces loyal to the commissioner and those aligned with the head of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) in Marka.

On 8 December 2025, Somali Bantu journalist **Sharif Shuriye Hashi**²⁹ was beaten, injured, and denied medical treatment following his arrest by police in Jowhar, Hirshabelle State. Sharif, a 35-year-old reporter for Universal Somali TV, was arrested³⁰ from his home in Jowhar on Monday, 8 December, by officers from the Hirshabelle State police. According to local journalists, the arrest³¹ was led by Hassan Jabshe, Deputy Commander of the Jowhar Police Station. During the arrest, Sharif told SJS that he was beaten and handcuffed with a rope, sustaining injuries including swelling at the back of his head. He said he continues to suffer severe pain and has been denied access to medical care while in detention. A family member expressed deep concern over his deteriorating health due to the alleged abuse and lack of treatment. Sharif's newly wedded wife, **Hamdi Muse Digow**, also 35, was arrested on the same day. Both remained in police custody as of end year. SJS expressed grave concern over the reported unlawful arrest, ethnicity-based discrimination, and alleged torture of the journalist.

On 11 December 2025, Two reporters **Qasim Abdille Barrow** and his colleague, cameraman **Mohamed Adan** of Somali Cable TV were beaten³² and briefly arrested³³ by police and members of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) in Yaaqshiid district while reporting on a car accident that killed at least one person. The journalists said they were beaten³⁴ with pistols before being arrested and having their equipment seized.

26 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/04/markafm-radio-shut-down-after-reporting-on-gunfight-and-bomb-explosion/>

27 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/04/markafm-radio-shut-down-after-reporting-on-gunfight-and-bomb-explosion/>

28 <https://www.caasimada.net/dagaal-maanta-ka-dhacay-degmada-marka-yuu-u-dhexeeyay/>

29 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/14/critical-somali-bantu-journalist-beaten-arrested-with-his-wife-and-falsely-accused-of-illegitimate-marriage/>

30 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1192248209536998>

31 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1192248209536998>

32 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

33 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

34 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

On 11 December 2025, A cameraman with Somali Media Services (SMS), **Ali Yasin Ali, and Hussein Isse Mohamed**, a reporter, told SJS that they were beaten³⁵ with a gun by a soldier and briefly detained alongside Risaala TV cameraman Salman Abdirizak Shire, RTNTV cameraman Mohamed Abdukadir, Universal Somali TV reporter Abshir Abdullahi Amin, and Saab TV reporter Deeq Moalim Jinow.

On 11 December 2025, Woman journalist, **Iqro Abdullahi Abdirahman** and her unnamed camera operator were covering the incident for the online news channel Hirasho TV. Iqro said a soldier grabbed her and twisted³⁶ her arm during the arrest. The journalists were taken to Dayniile Police Station, where officers warned them not to report on the bombings.

4.3 ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS

On 25 January 2025, Freelance online journalist **Sharif Abdi** was arrested³⁷ without a court order³⁸ by officers from the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) in Mogadishu. Armed NISA officers initially raided³⁹ his home in Waberi district but failed to find him. According to family members, the officers tracked his mobile phone and later that night detained him in Mogadishu's city center. Sharif was reportedly taken to the notorious NISA detention facility known as Godka Jila'ow, where he was held incommunicado. Family members who attempted to visit him were denied access and were not informed about his condition. The journalist, who reports primarily on security operations in the Hiiraan region through Facebook, had recently published reports critical of NISA Director Abdullahi Mohamed Ali (Sambalolshe), including coverage of tensions between the NISA leadership and local clan elders over a planned military operation against Al-Shabaab. After being held without charge for over two weeks, Sharif Abdi was released on 9 February 2025.

On 25 February 2025, Somaliland's Togdheer Governor, **Mohamud Ali Saleban (Ramaax)**, ordered the detention of three local journalists in Burao: Said Ali Osman (Said Xaaleys) of Sky Cable TV, Ayanle Ige Duale of Sahan TV, and Abdiasis Saleban Sulub of KF Media. Said Ali Osman was detained⁴⁰ after interviewing Governor Ramaax on the same day and asking about his relationship with local clan militias in the region. During the interview, the governor was seen walking away from the camera in protest of the question, which he did not answer. The clan militia groups, known locally as SSB and G36, which were involved in recent conflicts in the Sanaag and Sool regions, were reportedly integrated into the Somaliland army following an announcement by President Abdirahman Irro. Ayanle Ige Duale and Abdiasis Saleban

35 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

36 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

37 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/10/two-journalists-illegally-held-separately-by-nisa-and-clan-militia-freed/>

38 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/02/nisa-chief-must-immediately-free-journalist-sharif-abdi-from-unlawful-detention-in-mogadishu/>

39 https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1883203310368248125

40 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/04/sjs-urges-somaliland-to-lift-universal-tv-ban-and-calls-for-press-freedom-in-southwest-state/>

Ayanle Ige Duale and Abdiasis Saleban Sulub were detained⁴¹ after publishing reports⁴² on their respective Facebook accounts alleging that “the Togdheer regional administration and other officials had used bulldozers to destroy water reservoirs, claiming they were demolishing illegally occupied land”. The journalists further alleged that, “while rural areas of the Togdheer region were suffering from severe drought and widespread water shortages, the authorities responsible for water provision were instead destroying the very sources that the thirsty population relied on”. According to the detained journalists and others who spoke to SJS, the three journalists were released after spending 24 hours in Burao police cells. They were not charged.

On 1 March 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁴³ journalist **Qayraan Aadan** after he published vox-pop interviews on his Facebook page featuring members of local clans who were criticizing the Somaliland government’s efforts to nationalize clan militias in the Sanaag region. Local journalists and Qayraan himself told SJS that the arrest was ordered by the Somaliland Minister of Defense, who was reportedly displeased with the journalist’s reporting. A representative of SOLJA told SJS that the arrest was unlawful and confirmed that Qayraan was released on 4 March 2025, after spending three days in a cell in Erigabo. Following his release, Qayraan told SJS that his Facebook page⁴⁴ which had over 40,000 followers, was suspended due to multiple copyright claims—an act he believes was a deliberate attempt to suppress his critical reporting in the region.

On 8 March 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁴⁵ local journalist **Mohamed Suute**, who publishes on Facebook, after he posted vox-pop interviews⁴⁶ with members of local clans criticizing the Somaliland government’s efforts to nationalize clan militias in the Sanaag region. His arrest was carried out without any warrant. He was released on 10 March 2025 without charge, following pressure from local journalists. This was the second time Mohamed Suute was arrested in 2025, indicating an increasing crackdown by local authorities on online criticism.



Journalist Ahmed Dool (right) is seen escorted by a police officer on 3 August with his hands chained. Despite hopes that President Abdirahman Irro’s election in November last year would bring greater freedoms, attacks on free expression in Somaliland have escalated. | PHOTO/Courtesy/SJS.

41 https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0omkneMbnfYaFqKPHPBKDDiVE2LK4b-6BGxVDDd2uY1hmNQoBPGMxuihTMvkW14sptl&id=100063935220962

42 <https://www.facebook.com/100063935220962/posts/1088275993313565/?mibextid=rS40aB7S9Ucbx-w6v>

43 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

44 <https://www.facebook.com/people/Weriye-Qayraan-Aadan/61559929365241/>

45 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1093455019463573&set=a.464090039066744>

46 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>



Journalist Bahjo Abdullahi Salad. | PHOTO/SJS/ Courtesy.

On 15 March 2025, Journalist **Bahjo Abdullahi Salad** was arrested⁴⁷ in Mogadishu by members of the Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) following her reporting⁴⁸ on a video showing rubbish and leftover food dumped in Wardhiigley district. In her report, reviewed by SJS, Bahjo highlighted the health risks posed to residents—particularly children—and called on government officials to “clear their rubbish.” The event she covered had also been attended by Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre and was presented as a public relations effort to showcase improved security⁴⁹ in Mogadishu. After the clip went viral, NISA officers raided

Bahjo’s home and took her to Wardhiigley Police Station, where she was interrogated for four hours before being released following protests by fellow journalists. Bahjo’s arrest comes amid a broader crackdown on media freedom in Somalia. On 6 March, Information Minister Daud Aweys announced new restrictions prohibiting media outlets and the public from reporting on security failures, warning of legal consequences for violations. The same day, Banadir Regional Police Commissioner Mahdi Omar Mumin (Moalim Mahdi) threatened to detain anyone reporting on security issues “in a hot and dark cell.”

On 18 March 2025, Armed police officers led by Commander **Abdi Ali** forcibly entered⁵⁰ **Risaala Media’s station** in Mogadishu’s Hamar Jajab district at midday, ordered⁵¹ the station off air, and arrested all five journalists present. The detained journalists—Ali Ibrahim Abdullahi Suheyfa (reporter), Hamda Hassan Ahmed (reporter), Mohamed Said Nur (cameraman), **Liban Abdullahi Hussein (radi technician), and Abdalla Sharif Ali (cameraman)**—were taken to Hamar Jajab Police Station, where they were subjected⁵² targeting President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud’s convoy near the entrance of the presidential palace, an attack that resulted in casualties including journalist **Mohamed Abukar Dabashe**, a former Radio Risaala reporter, becoming the first journalist killed in Somalia in 2025. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. While in detention, the journalists said Banadir Regional Police Commissioner Mahdi Omar Mumin (Moalim Mahdi) visited them and questioned why the station had reported on the attack. The officers who raided the station reportedly did not present a court warrant. Risaala Media’s management said the order for the raid and arrests came from Commissioner Moalim Mahdi. Although the five journalists have since been released, and the Radio Risaala and TV resumed broadcasting later in the day.

47 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/16/female-journalist-detained-for-exposing-health-hazard-from-government-officials-rubbish-amid-media-crackdown-in-mogadishu/>

48 <https://www.facebook.com/AbdalleMumin/videos/500141273157735>

49 <https://hornobserver.com/articles/3239/Somalia-3-civilians-killed-in-an-AlShabab-ambush-at-La-foole-area-South-of-Mogadishu>

50 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/18/somali-police-shut-down-an-independent-radio-station-and-arrested-five-journalists-after-reporting-on-the-bombing-attack-on-the-presidents-convoy-in-mogadishu/>

51 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/18/somali-police-shut-down-an-independent-radio-station-and-arrested-five-journalists-after-reporting-on-the-bombing-attack-on-the-presidents-convoy-in-mogadishu/>

52 https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1902003619789967636

On 18 March 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁵³ journalist **Abdiladif Sa'id Asayr** after he published vox-pop interviews and Facebook posts featuring members of local clans who were displeased with the Somaliland government's actions to exclude certain clan militias in the Sanaag region from recruitment into the Somaliland army. Journalists in the region told SJS that the arrest was ordered⁵⁴ by the Somaliland Minister of Defense, who was reportedly displeased with the journalist's report. Abdiladif was released a few days later. However, on 30 May 2025, Abdiladif was arrested again—this time in Hargeisa—reportedly on the orders of the Director General of the Somaliland Ministry of Interior. The arrest followed a Facebook post -now deleted- by the journalist alleging that the Director General had failed to contribute to development efforts in his home region of Sanaag. Abdiladif was released after spending four days in detention in Hargeisa. The Director General could not be reached for comment by SJS.



Journalists arrested on the aftermath of Mogadishu bombing on 18 March 2025. | PHOTO: Courtesy: SJS

On 18 March 2025, The Somali police in Mogadishu briefly arrested 19 journalists⁵⁵ from local and international media in the aftermath of an Al-Shabaab bombing attack that targeted President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's convoy outside Villa Somalia, the presidential palace. The attack resulted in multiple casualties, including journalist **Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe**⁵⁶ Following the attack, Mogadishu police launched a crackdown on journalists who had gone to the scene to report on the incident. The 19 journalists were detained, loaded onto a police truck, and transported to Hamar Jajab police station. At

the station, police confiscated their equipment and deleted their footage and photos before releasing them. The arrested journalists are: **Farah Mohamed Adam** – Cameraman, **Somali Cable TV**; **Abdiihafid Nor Barre** – Reporter, **Somali Cable TV**; **Nor Hassan Ali** – Cameraman, **RTN TV**; **Hamdaan Sheikh Ahmed** – Reporter, **RTN TV**; **Farhan Abdirisak Dahir** – Cameraman, **Himilo TV**; **Abdullahi Abdulkadir Dahir** – Reporter, **Himilo TV**; **Salman Abdirisak Shire** – Cameraman, **Somali People TV**; **Qasim Abdulle Barrow** – Reporter, **Somali People TV**; **Salah Osman Bille** – Cameraman, **RNN TV**; **Abdullahi Yusuf Hassan** – Reporter, **RNN TV**; **Ayanle Abdi Nuur** – Cameraman, **Goobjoog TV**; **Rowdo Hassan Abdi** – Reporter, **Goobjoog TV**; **Abdinasir Abukar Hared** – Cameraman, **Al Jazeera Arabic**; **Abdirahman Hussein** – Camerajournalist, **Reuters**; **Farah Abdi Warsame** – Photographer, **Associated Press**; **Abukar Mohamed Muhidin** – Photographer, **Anadolu Agency**; **Ismail Hussein Ismail** – Cameraman, **Dalsan TV**; **Abdisalan Jule Shakir** – Reporter, **Dalsan TV**; and **Abdirahman Mohamed Waaberi** – reporter for **Daljir Media**.

53 <https://www.facebook.com/SOLJAORG/posts/pfbid035MyiFo2qp5KcpkUKaiSLHGi4KEcYFmnlJRF7n-pftEezqyjM3AECuBqVpDZyPgGRPl>

54 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

55 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/19/in-a-new-crackdown-on-free-press-somali-police-arrest-19-journalists-reporting-on-al-shabaab-attack-on-presidents-convoy/>

56 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/18/somali-journalist-mohamed-abukar-dabashe-killed-in-al-shabaab-bomb-attack-in-mogadishu/>

On 25 March 2025, Puntland police in Galkayo, Mudug region, violently assaulted⁵⁷ and arrested journalist **Dalmar Isse Ahmed**⁵⁸ (popularly known as Dalmar Socdaal) after he published⁵⁹ a video on his Facebook page on 13 March showing himself obtaining a national ID card issued by Somalia's federal government in the southern part of Galkayo, which is under Galmudug administration. In the video, the journalist, who resides in Puntland-controlled North Galkayo, urged people to apply for the ID card. Journalists present at the scene told SJS that during Dalmar's arrest, the police fired heavy gunfire in a crowded area, putting many civilians at serious risk. Dalmar told SJS that he was held day and night in a small room near a Puntland police checkpoint on the outskirts of Galkayo before being released without trial or charges. He said that after the incident, he fled to Mogadishu out of fear for his safety.

On 28 March 2025, Five journalists in Mogadishu were attacked⁶⁰ and briefly detained by police while covering a women's protest demanding justice⁶¹ for two Somali girls who were victims of sexual violence. At around 2:30 PM local time, Hodan district police, led by Officer Amin Abukar 'Muniish,' confronted the protestors—who were marching from KM4 to Maka Al-Mukarama chanting "We want justice, and we do not consent to be raped"—and forcibly dispersed⁶² them. Police then targeted the journalists, ordering them to stop recording interviews with the protest organizers.

Four male journalists—**Abdirazak Haji Sidow Nor** (cameraman for Himilo TV), **Abdullahi Abdukadir Ahmed** (reporter for Himilo TV), **Abdirizak Abdullahi Adan** (reporter for Radio Mustaqbal), and **Abdirahman Barre Hussein** (cameraman for Radio Mustaqbal)—were arrested and taken to Hodan district police station. Female journalist Anisa Abdiaziz Hussein, reporting for Himilo TV, was later detained as well. At the station, the journalists told SJS that their camera equipment was confiscated and interviews deleted. The male journalists were held in a narrow cell with other detainees, while Anisa was held separately. Police reportedly told them they would only be released if they agreed not to cover protests in the future. All five journalists were eventually released, and their equipment returned.



Armed officers from the Mogadishu police and NISA were seen dispersing women protesting against sexual violence in Mogadishu, while also arresting journalists covering the event on 29 March 2025. | PHOTO / Courtesy SJS.

57 https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1223351443170256&id=100064862343621&rdid=q-VD7if2nttgipZzw

58 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/journalists-report-harassment-and-intimidation-in-puntland-and-laascaanood/>

59 <https://www.facebook.com/dalmar.socdaal/videos/1557998074884675>

60 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/29/somali-police-arrest-journalists-disperse-women-protest-against-sexual-violence/>

61 <https://www.facebook.com/HimiloSomali/videos/3899823133629076>

62 <https://www.facebook.com/Mohabulbul/posts/pfbid02acVtgDKyipmFRc9UaBK2esoP1vVgm3DbDU-ZL1TfTe3Rnhz897VJrxGkcg5bFi1UHI>

On 11 May 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁶³ journalist **Mohamed Abdi Hassan (known as Onkod)** after he published a video report in which local clan members in Jiidali village, Sanaag region, threatened⁶⁴ to take action against armed men in the area whom they accused of blocking the movement of commercial trucks along the road. A representative of the Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA) told SJS that authorities accused the journalist of “inciting violence,” but he was released after three days in detention without being charged.

On 20 March 2025, the Somaliland Intelligence Agency detained⁶⁵ local journalist Yusuf Abdalle Yusuf, who publishes for the YouTube-based Xog Ogaal News⁶⁶. According to local media, national intelligence officers raided his hotel in Hargeisa and detained him around midday. On 16 March, Yusuf had reported on the Xog Ogaal YouTube channel that some clan militias in El Afweyn, Sanaag region, had refused to join Somaliland forces and had instead mobilized themselves in a remote rural area. Following his detention, Yusuf was held at the intelligence headquarters for four hours, during which he was questioned before being released. Local media reported⁶⁷ that he was warned not to speak publicly about his detention or the officers involved.

On 22 May 2025, Somali police in Mogadishu briefly arrested⁶⁸ three journalists: **Abdullahi Yusuf Hassan** (reporter for RNN TV), Mohamed Hassan Geedi (cameraman for RNN TV), and Yahye Mohamud Hersi (cameraman for Himilo Somali TV). Two of the journalists told SJS that after their arrest, they were handed over to officers from the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA), who then transferred them to the Hodan District Administration office, where they were detained⁶⁹. **Anisa Abdiaziz Hussein**, a reporter for Himilo Somali TV who was with the arrested journalists, told SJS she fled on foot after witnessing armed men attacking the journalists. The journalists had been covering a protest by local women meatsellers at the Zoobe Junction in Mogadishu, who were demonstrating against the demolition of their makeshift stalls. According to the journalists, NISA officers confiscated their equipment and deleted the footage they had recorded. An editor at Himilo Somali TV told SJS they later received a threatening phone call from a NISA officer warning them not to broadcast anything related to the women’s protest or the demolitions. All three journalists said they were released later that afternoon under the condition that they do not publish any content about the protest or the demolitions.

63 <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1147562140719527&set=a.464090042400077>

64 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

65 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

66 <https://www.youtube.com/@Xogogaalnews/videos>

67 <https://www.facebook.com/Haldoornews2/posts/pfbid02fgYxfor2o9KYnirA55uhFaKFAUfPNRLPB-D4rg1KNZLKKTUSK9jgB3FvTibCJhpEXl>

68 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/24/15-journalists-arrested-in-two-days-amid-crackdown-on-media-covering-public-opinion-and-political-tensions-in-mogadishu/>

69 <https://www.facebook.com/HimiloSomali/posts/pfbid02941AjxdjGw1HFMMeaLr6mUCQk7uz-Ko3zHAwJncFmWArUeysxqAshMw69N6ZeJCrzl>

On 23 May 2025, Galmudug police officers in South Galkayo arrested⁷⁰ online reporter Ali Maalin Nuur after he published a news report on his Facebook page⁷¹ about truck drivers and their vehicles being held at a roadblock outside Galkayo city, Mudug region. In the now-deleted video clip, the journalist reported that armed men at the roadblock—identified as members of the Galmudug security forces—that armed men at the roadblock—identified as members of the Galmudug security forces—had been demanding additional payments from the truck drivers, causing the trucks to be stranded for several days. Armed police officers raided the journalist’s house on that night and arrested him. Ali Maalin Nuur told SJS that his arrest was ordered by the Governor of Mudug in Galmudug, Abdinasir Abdulkadir Abdulle. He told SJS that he was detained overnight at the South Galkayo police station, and his name was not recorded in the occurrence book (OB). He was released on the following day after being forced by the officers to delete the video from his Facebook page, which he did.

On 24 May 2025, Agents of Somalia’s National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) briefly detained⁷² four journalists in Mogadishu: Abdinasir Abduqadir Salah and Abdinasir Sayid Ali from Shabelle TV, and Abdirahman Abdulle Rooble and Hassan Ahmed Takow from SYL TV. The journalists were collecting vox-pop interviews from the public on Maka Al-Mukarama Street, asking for opinions on the coalition of opposition politicians who had held an event in Mogadishu the previous day, Friday. They were taken to an open area near the Waberi Police Station, where they were interrogated, threatened, and ordered to delete their footage. Two of the journalists told SJS they were threatened with violence if they continued reporting critically on President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud. All four journalists were released without being officially booked or charged at the police station. Somali Cable TV. Four others—**Ja’far Abdirisak Mohamed, Shukri Hashi, Ayanle Abdinur, and Sundus Ali Botan**—were working for Goobjoog Media, while the seventh journalist, **Abdirahman Ahmed Hassan**, is a cameraman for Five Somali TV. The journalists had been gathering public views on the political developments in Mogadishu and the recent statement by opposition politicians concerning the 2026 election. Somali Cable TV reported that their journalists were stopped by NISA officers and told they were “not allowed to conduct public opinion on the streets.” All seven journalists had their equipment confiscated and their recorded material deleted. They were also warned not to conduct further interviews with the public. As a result, the journalists returned to their respective media outlets without completing their assignments.

On 29 May 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁷³ local journalist **Warsame Kaafi Abdirashid Aden** after he published a vox-pop interview⁷⁴ with a woman who alleged that she had been physically assaulted by the chairman of the Erigabo-based Sanaag Appeals Court. The interview was posted on 14 May on the journalist’s Facebook page, which had 26,000 followers. Warsame reported that the woman was the second to accuse the Sanaag Appeals Court chairman of physical assault following another woman⁷⁵ who came out in January with similar allegation. Warsame told SJS that instead of investigating

70 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/24/15-journalists-arrested-in-two-days-amid-crackdown-on-media-covering-public-opinion-and-political-tensions-in-mogadishu/>

71 <https://www.facebook.com/calimaalin.cmaalin>

72 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/24/15-journalists-arrested-in-two-days-amid-crackdown-on-media-covering-public-opinion-and-political-tensions-in-mogadishu/>

73 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

74 <https://www.facebook.com/fadxi.fadjacayl/videos/2375430392802812>

75 <https://www.facebook.com/fadxi.fadjacayl/videos/623409016749941/>

the abuse allegations against the court official, he was arrested and held at Erigabo Prison for four days before being released without charge. He told SJS that his arrest was ordered by the appeals court chairman, who was upset by the report. The recent woman he interviewed was also ar-

rested⁷⁶ and held at a prison outside Erigabo, according to Warsame and local sources.

On 30 May 2025, Southwest State police officers in Wanla-Weyn, Lower Shabelle, raided the privately owned Radio Wanlaweyn FM and arrested⁷⁷ its director, **Ismail Khalif Ahmed**, following the station's publication of a report alleging that the district administration was demanding forced "payments" from residents to fund the construction of Wanlaweyn Hospital. According to the now-deleted report, local residents resisted the payments, citing a lack of trust in district authorities.



Ja'far Abdirisak Mohamed, Shukri Hashi, Ayanle Abdinur, and Sundus Ali Botan. | PHOTO/Combined/SJS.

Ismail told the SJS that he was detained on orders from the Wanlaweyn District Police Commissioner and the District Commissioner. He was held overnight, interrogated, and threatened. He said police warned he would remain in custody unless the report was removed and a public apology issued. The station subsequently deleted both the original report and a follow-up post about Ismail's arrest after police specifically demanded their removal.

On 31 May, Radio Wanlaweyn FM published a public apology on its Facebook page, expressing regret if the earlier post had caused offense.

On 9 June 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested⁷⁸ journalist **Sa'id Muse Farah** (known as Sa'id Qurbawi) for interviewing employees of the Erigabo TB Hospital who had raised complaints⁷⁹ against the hospital's director and that the hospital could not deliver essential services to the patients including food and treatment. The journalist was released on bail the following day. However, on 14 June, the Erigabo court fined him 800 Somaliland Shillings (approximately US\$ 80) for publishing a critical report about the hospital director. Sa'id Qurbawi told SJS that he paid around \$100 to secure his release, but insisted that his reporting and interviews were in the public interest. He also told SJS that the hospital director influenced the court's decision in his favor.

⁷⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=2533907270340925&set=a.101596396905370>

⁷⁷ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/01/eu-trained-police-raid-local-radio-arrest-journalist-in-lower-shabelle-turkish-trained-haramcad-forces-attack-three-journalists-in-mogadishu/>

⁷⁸ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

⁷⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/100089053753798/videos/1337694640818844>



Above from top left to the right: Yasir Ahmed Abdillahi, Abdirisaaq Qaasim, Sa'id Muse Farah (Qurbawi), Warsame Kaafi Abdirashid Aden, Mohamed Abdi Hassan (Onakod), Abdiqadir Mohamed Aw-Hassan, Yusuf Abdalle Yusuf, Abdiladif Sa'id Asayr, Mohamed Suute. | Photo/SJS.

On 22 June 2025, Somaliland police in the port town of Berbera arrested⁸⁰ local journalist⁸¹ **Abdirisaaq Qaasim**, who works for Saab TV. His arrest followed allegations that he had anonymously published a report on a Facebook page not officially linked to him. The post mentioned two Somaliland officials: Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Sa'id Mire and MP Mohamed Khadar. The following morning, on 23 June, police transferred the journalist to Hargeisa, where he was held for a week in Hargeisa Central Prison.

On 25 June, the same Facebook page published an apology statement referring to an earlier post critical of **MP Mohamed Khadar and Deputy Speaker Sa'id Mire**. However, the original article was no longer available as of the date of the apology. A journalist at Saab TV told SJS that Abdirisaaq Qaasim was released on 25 June and that the case was resolved through clan negotiations. Both Deputy Speaker Mire and MP Khadar did not respond to SJS's attempts to seek their comments.

On 1 July 2025, Somaliland police in Hargeisa arrested⁸² journalist **Yasir Ahmed Abdillahi** while he was staying at a hotel in downtown Hargeisa. On 30 June, he had published a video on his Facebook page, which has over 102,000 followers, commenting on Somaliland President Abdirahman Abdillahi Irro's visit to Doha, Qatar, describing it as "low level" and stating that "Qatar welcomed the Somaliland president as a regional leader of Somaliland instead of president of Somaliland." Yasir told SJS that Somaliland Attorney General charged him with being "anti-Somaliland." but on 4 July, the Maroodi Jeh court in Hargeisa gave his freedom⁸³ after finding no evidence against him.

80 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

81 <https://www.facebook.com/saabtv/posts/ciidamada-booliska-somaliland-ayaa-xabsiga-dhigey-suxu-fi-cabdirisaaq-qaasim-oo-a/763851215987542/>

82 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

83 <https://www.facebook.com/BadriKozar/posts/pfbid02ibicdjvqmcL3YSj6HDp9XTq8NxhDyHk57Gtk-fyvKmxBvrehPu8iPVB9XS6r8hZ3l>

On 30 July 2025, SSC-Khaatumo (now Northeastern) authorities in Laascaanood briefly arrested⁸⁴ freelance journalist **Mohamed Muse Tarsan**⁸⁵ who also reports for Somali National TV, after he conducted a live Facebook broadcast covering a protest by Warsangali clan delegates at the SSC Khaatumo state formation conference in Laascaanood, which has since been renamed⁸⁶ Northeast Somalia State. Tarsan told SJS that he was held in detention for about eight hours before being released, and that those who arrested him wanted to suppress his “reporting and independent views” regarding the political developments in Laascaanood. The video, which was initially livestreamed on Tarsan’s Facebook, has since been deleted. The delegates reportedly protested against the number of parliamentary seats allocated to their clan in the new state assembly, as the federal government pushed for the completion of the new state which concluded⁸⁷ in late August 2025.

On 3 August 2025, Armed officers from the Turkish-trained Haramcad police unit forcibly arrested⁸⁸ three journalists in Mogadishu. At 5:07 PM local time, **Osman Abdullahi Mohamed (reporter and cameraman, SMS Somali TV), Hussein Isse Mohamed (reporter, SMS Somali TV), and Mahad Mohamed Abdirahman (freelance journalist)** were taken from the front gate of SMS Somali TV. The officers arrived in two vehicles, including a Toyota Prado Land Cruiser, and physically assaulted the journalists during the arrest. The journalists had just returned from covering ongoing forced evictions in Mogadishu, where families were reportedly being removed from public land allegedly sold to wealthy businessmen. CCTV footage from the TV station confirmed the arrest. The journalists told SJS that they had been followed during their field assignment. Even though opposition MPs escorted them back to their workplace, just one minute after arriving at the station gate, two uniformed men—one visibly armed with an AK-47—detained them and placed them in a police truck equipped with a mounted machine gun. The arrest was led by Abdi Ali, commander of Mogadishu’s security checkpoints, who previously participated in the March raid on Radio Risaala. Ali is a former Al-Shabaab defector now serving in the Somali police, according to SJS sources corroborated by CCTV footage. They were held at Hamar Jajab Police Station, but their detention was not officially recorded. Mahad Mohamed Abdirahman was released the same evening, while Osman Abdullahi Mohamed and Hussein Isse Mohamed remained in custody until Tuesday afternoon. All footage recorded during the assignment was confiscated and deleted, preventing the story from being published.

84 <https://www.facebook.com/MMTarsan/posts/pfbid0fCWJCzqr6XCUaQTsjJckUuecnyJCL-5g4477HyupAnXoiQcT1JTHmZcMFkXQUi37v1>

85 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/journalists-report-harassment-and-intimidation-in-puntland-and-laascaanood/>

86 <https://wardheernews.com/the-sixth-federal-member-state-emerges-from-las-anod-as-conference-approves-constitution-flag-and-seat-allocation/>

87 <https://www.radiodalsan.com/somalias-new-north-east-state-parliament-announced-83-mps-appointed-in-historic-power-shift/>

88 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/06/journalists-targeted-and-arrested-in-mogadishu-for-reporting-on-hassan-sheikhs-forced-evictions/>



Hashim Omar Hassan (left) and Hassan Yusuf Qasaaro (right). | PHOTO/SJS

On 5 August 2025, Galmudug police arrested⁸⁹ two journalists - SJS member **Hashim Omar Hassan and Hassan Yusuf Qasaaro**- in Adaado were arrested after reporting on the alleged rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl⁹⁰ They were taken into custody at Adaado Police Station following their coverage of the case, which involved the discovery of the child’s strangled body on the night of 4 August. The journalists reported, citing police sources, that the girl had been “subjected to prolonged sexual abuse” and that her death appeared to be a murder. A woman claiming to be the victim’s mother later appeared in a video⁹¹ online giving a contradictory statement. Police subsequently arrested her along with other suspects. Sources told SJS that a local government official had pressured both the journalists and the woman to suppress the true details of the case. The journalists have been released and told SJS that authorities attempted to cover up the incident to “protect the reputation of the local government.”

On 3 September 2025, Security personnel attached to the Northeast State president, Abdukadir Firdhiye arrested⁹² journalist **Sharma’arke Abdi Mahdi**, who runs the Facebook news page, Khaatumo TV, which covers local news. **Sharma’arke said** he was assisting another journalist during an event where President Abdukadir Firdhiye launched a voter registration drive in Laascaanood. The officers arrested Sharma’arke by force and beat him with punches and kicks. The journalist was taken to the police station, where he was held incommunicado until late evening without the knowledge of his family or colleagues. This sparked concern, leading fellow journalists to search for him until they eventually found him detained at the station. Journalists who visited him told SJS that officers working for President Firdhiye accused Sharma’arke of recording video clips about the president, which the journalist denied. He was released during the night without charge.

89 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/06/journalists-reporting-on-alleged-rape-and-murder-of-young-girl-arrested-in-central-somalia/>

90 <https://www.facebook.com/HaashimOmarHassan/posts/pfbid0hHwYMqWirKuWbEnqmo12c-BLk4eteGqQNov5rV3Wt6E9PkuD42HDAEUqYiJyRAsoZl>

91 <https://www.facebook.com/HaashimOmarHassan/videos/1260399305828007>

92 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/04/local-reporter-arrested-another-summoned-by-police-in-laascaanood/>



Mohamed Muse Yusuf (known as Mohamed Koronto) on the left and Sharma'arke Abdi Mahdi, (on the right). | PHOTO/ SJS.

On 12 September 2025, Somaliland police in Buroa arrested journalist **Abdiaziz Saleban Sulub**, also known as Abdiaziz Awl, a reporter for KF Media TV, an online media outlet based in Somaliland. Initially, there was no clear explanation for his arrest. However, SJS later found⁹³ that Abdiaziz Awl's arrest followed his reporting on allegations that the Governor of Togdheer Region, Mahamoud Ali Salebaan (Ramaax), had paid a smaller amount than the official government donation intended for a family in Buroa whose house had been destroyed by fire. The Governor was accused of diverting part of the funds sent from Somaliland's central authorities in Hargeisa. Governor Ramaax did not comment on his alleged role in the journalist's arrest and reportedly interfered with the journalist's release, blocking his freedom even after an initial court verdict on 27 September that acquitted Abdiaziz Awl due to a lack of evidence to justify his detention. On 7 October 2025, the Togdheer Appeals Court in Buroa, Somaliland sentenced Abdiaziz Awl, to one year in prison and imposed a fine⁹⁴ of two million Somaliland shillings (approximately USD 200). On 8 October, the journalist was released after paying fines instead of the jail term according to his lawyers.

On 30 September 2025, Somaliland police in Hargeisa arrested⁹⁵ journalist **Abdirahman Abdullahi Isse, known as Jumbo**, who writes on Facebook. He was detained at the CID headquarters in connection with his Facebook posts about security incidents in Hargeisa. He was released on 4 October without being charged.

93 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/29/somaliland-10-journalists-arrested-in-three-weeks/>

94 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/774060182277811>

95 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

On 6 October 2025, Somaliland police officers in Hargeisa beat and fired a live bullet at journalist Abdale Abaas, who works for the online media outlet Gallydh TV in Hargeisa. **Hassan Gallydh**, the founder of the television station, stated⁹⁶ that the journalist was on duty, filming the opening ceremony of a new business at Hargeisa City Centre, when three police officers attacked him and fired at him. Fortunately, the journalist and other people at the scene escaped unharmed. Gallydh TV reported that they had informed the police commander about the incident, but no action has been reported so far.

On 13 October 2025, Somaliland police in Erigabo arrested journalist **Abdirahman Mohamed Dalmar, known as Hiddig**, in Erigabo town, Sanaag region, after he conducted interviews with two family members who complained that blood money (diya) owed to them for relatives killed in clan violence had not been paid. Abdirahman was held in a police cell for 10 days without charge before being released, Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA) reported. Journalists in Erigabo told SJS that his arrest was intended to intimidate other journalists and silence independent reporting in the region.

On 16 October 2025, Local journalist **Kaafiin Mohamed Abdi**, a reporter with Somali Cable TV and Galmudug TV⁹⁷ was arrested by Galmudug police in southern Galkayo after he went to collect interviews about roadblocks set up by local security forces, where truck drivers were being forced to pay money. He was released the following day.

On 19 October 2025, Somali police officers in Mogadishu arrested⁹⁸ Daash Somali TV journalist **Hibo Mohamed Mohamud and her cameraman Sakariye Ahmed Hassan** at Siinaay Market, where armed police were carrying out forced evictions affecting the local community. The journalists were conducting vox pop interviews when they were stopped and detained. They were held at Wardhiigley Police Station for about three hours before being released without charge.

On 19 October 2025, A cameraman working for Arlaadi Media, **Mohamed Abdukadir**, was briefly arrested⁹⁹ while covering a forced eviction taking place in the Wadajir neighborhood of Mogadishu. He was detained at the police station and released without charge after about an hour.

On 25 October 2025, Police at Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport detained¹⁰⁰ Somali Cable TV journalist Abdi Hafid Nor, who was traveling to Bakool region for assignment that day. Abdi Hafid told SJS that he was accompanying government officials when airport police stopped and detained him at the airport police station. He said officers informed him that Banadir Regional Police Commander Mahdi Omar Muumin, also known as Moalim Mahdi, had ordered his arrest due to his coverage of activities by the Somali opposition coalition in Mogadishu. Abdi Hafid was held at the airport police station for about

96 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1374503370706794&set=a.269556941201448>

97 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

98 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

99 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

100 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

An hour before some of the government officials he was traveling with intervened in the matter. He was later released and allowed to continue his journey.

On 28 October 2025, Somaliland police in Tog Wajaale arrested four journalists — **Hamse Abdirashid, Farhan Abdi Aw-Isse, Abdisamad Bade, and Sayid Hanad Mohamed Madar**. Local media reports indicate that the four journalists had travelled from Hargeisa to Wajaale ahead of the grand opening of a new agricultural project inaugurated by President Abdirahman Abdillahi Irro. The journalists had interviewed local clan elders in Wajaale who raised concerns about the project, claiming that land belonging to the local community was being taken over. There was also a protest in the area prior to the president's visit. The four journalists were released the following day.

On 2 November 2025, Somali police in Mogadishu's Wadajir District arrested¹⁰¹ six local journalists while they were covering the shooting of a young schoolboy. The journalists had arrived at the scene shortly after the boy was allegedly killed by a Somalia National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) soldier during an exchange of gunfire. Banadir Regional Police Commander Mahdi Omar Muumin, known as Moalim Mahdi, reportedly ordered¹⁰² the arrests before the journalists could conduct interviews. Those detained included Hirasho TV reporter Ibrahim Hassan Ahmed and cameraman **Abdi Khani Said Mohamed; Daash Somali TV reporter Hibo Mohamed Mohamud and cameraman Sakariye Ahmed Hassan; M24 TV reporter Mohamed Abdi Hassan; and Five Somali TV reporter Osman Hassan Mokoma**. The journalists were held at Wadajir Police Station for approximately three hours and were released without being allowed to report the story. Journalists told SJS that Banadir Regional Police Commander Mahdi Omar Muumin known as Moalim Mahdi ordered their arrest before they could begin recording interviews. The journalists were held at Wadajir Police Station for about three hours and later released without being allowed to report the story.

On 21 November 2025, Police in Mogadishu, Somalia, arrested and physically assaulted¹⁰³ Himilo Somali TV camerajournalist Abdullahi Mohamed Ali, known as Saawey, while he was reporting on a protest against forced evictions in the Yaaqshiid district. Abdullahi was covering a demonstration by local residents opposing planned land grabbing when armed police opened fire to disperse the crowd, killing two civilians, including a 20-year-old man, according to media reports. Eyewitnesses told SJS that police beat Abdullahi and arrested him, while his colleague, Omar Yusuf Mohamed, managed to escape. Officers initially held Abdullahi at a police post before transferring him to the Yaaqshiid District Police Station, where he remained in custody until Monday afternoon. During detention, a police prosecutor forcibly interrogated him without legal representation.

101 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

102 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/02/journalists-in-somalia-and-somaliland-face-arrests-and-attacks-even-on-the-international-day-to-end-impunity/>

103 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/11/24/journalist-covering-forced-evictions-protest-in-mogadishu-arrested-and-taken-to-court-as-crackdown-on-independent-media-continues/>

On 24 November, Abdullahi appeared before the Banadir Regional Court, where authorities charged him with “mobilising the protestors” and “inciting the public.” The court released him due to insufficient evidence. Abdullahi told SJS that police specifically targeted him because of his affiliation with Himilo Media, and that Police Prosecutor Nuradin Mohamed Hussein (Jimale) had confiscated his phone and forced him to surrender his passwords, repeatedly stating that Banadir Police Commander Mahdi Omar Muumin (“Moalim Mahdi”) “hates journalists working for Himilo Media.” Although Abdullahi was released, Himilo Media reported that police retained his equipment—including a digital video camera, microphones, tripod, and lighting gear—on the orders of Commander Moalim Mahdi.

On 29 November 2025, Somaliland police in Hargeisa arrested¹⁰⁴ journalist **Mohamed Abdi Abdillahi**, known as **Andar**, and held him for two days at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) without a warrant. Police detained¹⁰⁵ Mohamed Andar, a reporter for MM Somali TV and active on Facebook, after he posted a report stating that “local youth in the city had complained about foreign individuals allegedly engaging in sexual activity while being guarded by police officers.” The post was later removed from his page. During his detention, officers threatened to press charges, but eventually released him without charge. A representative of the Somaliland Journalists Association confirmed to SJS that the Somaliland Police Command withdrew all accusations against him. Separately, on 4 November, police in Hargeisa also arrested Mohamed Andar and his cameraman, Ahmed Heersare, while they were interviewing disabled former Somaliland army members protesting insufficient welfare support. Both journalists were briefly detained and released the same day, unable to complete their reporting.

On 8 December 2025, Hirshabelle police in Jowhar arrested¹⁰⁶ journalist Sharif Shuriye Hashi and his wife, Hamdi Muse Digow, and allegedly subjected Sharif to severe physical assault, ethnicity-based discrimination, and torture, the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) reported. Sharif, 35, a reporter for Universal Somali TV, told SJS that police beat him, handcuffed him with a rope, and caused swelling at the back of his head. He said he continues to suffer severe pain and has been denied access to medical care. A family member also expressed deep concern about his deteriorating health while in detention. Hamdi, also 35, was arrested the same day, and both remain in police custody¹⁰⁷

On 13 December, Jowhar police presented Sharif and Hamdi before the Jowhar District Court, alleging that their marriage in September 2025 was “illegitimate¹⁰⁸” because Sharif belongs to the Jareer (Bantu) community and Hamdi to the Hawiye/Hawadle clan. Sharif and Hamdi insisted they were legally married, presented witnesses, and submitted documentation of their nikah, including a mobile money payment used during the ceremony.

104 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/04/somaliland-police-free-journalist-mohamed-andar-after-withdrawing-charges-against-him/>

105 <https://kaabtv.com/booliska-hargeysa-oo-xiray-wariye-maxamed-andar/>

106 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/14/critical-somali-bantu-journalist-beaten-arrested-with-his-wife-and-falsely-accused-of-illegitimate-marriage/>

107 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1192248209536998>

108 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1192248209536998>

During the court proceedings, a local sheikh initially identified as officiating the marriage later recanted his statement. Hamdi told a local journalist that their arrest was influenced by pressure from her clan, adding that she was being detained for marrying a man she had been in a relationship with for ten years. A clan elder confirmed that elders from both communities attempted to resolve the matter after the hearing, but discussions failed as Hamdi's family reportedly opposed intermarriage with the Bantu community. Deputy Police Commander Hassan Jabshe, who led Sharif's arrest and belongs to Hamdi's clan, along with the Jowhar police command, declined to comment to SJS. Sharif Shuriye Hashi, from the historically marginalized Jareer (Bantu) community in southern Somalia, began his journalism career in Buloburte and later worked for City FM in Jowhar before joining Universal Somali TV as a correspondent.

On 11 December 2025, Eight local journalists were briefly arrested¹⁰⁹ by police and members of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) in Yaaqshiid district while reporting on a car accident that killed at least one person. **Qasim Abdille Barrow** and his colleague, cameraman Mohamed Adan of Somali Cable TV, said they were beaten with pistols before being arrested and having their equipment seized. **Khadar Abdirahim Ibrahim of Himilo Media and his colleague, cameraman Abdirisak Haji Sidow**, were also arrested and had their equipment confiscated. **Ali Yasin Ali**, a cameraman with Somali Media Services (SMS), and **Hussein Isse Mohamed, a reporter**, told SJS that they were beaten with a gun by a soldier and briefly detained alongside Risaala TV cameraman **Salman Abdirizak Shire**, RTN TV cameraman **Mohamed Abdukadir**, Universal Somali TV reporter **Abshir Abdullahi Amin**, and Saab TV reporter **Deeq Moalim Jinow**.

On 11 December 2025, Five journalists from local media outlets were covering two bomb explosions¹¹⁰ in Mogadishu's Dayniile and Daaru Salaam districts, when police briefly arrested them and confiscated their equipment, preventing the journalists from their right to access information. The journalists—**Ja'far Mohamed Jimale (reporter)**, **Sumayo Ali Hussein (reporter)**, and **Abdirahman Mohamed Ahmed (cameraman)**—were reporting for **Kalsan TV**, while **Iqro Abdullahi Abdirahman** and her unnamed camera operator were covering the incident for the online news channel Hirasho TV. Iqro said she was held by a soldier who twisted her arm during the arrest. The journalists were taken to the Dayniile Police Station, where police officers warned them not to report on the bombings.

Journalists said one of the two explosions¹¹¹ targeted a local school in Dayniile neighborhood where an event related to the preparations for the disputed Mogadishu elections was taking place, killing at least one person and injuring several others. The second blast targeted another school in Daaru Salaam district, injuring an unknown number of people. Somalia's Minister of Education, Farah Abdukadir, announced that schools would be used as polling stations for the vote scheduled for 25 December, despite objections from educational institutions citing serious security risks.

109 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

110 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/journalists-in-mogadishu-face-increased-attacks-and-arrests-ahead-of-a-disputed-local-election/>

111 <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1427418625439868>

On 28 December 2025, Somalia's Jubaland intelligence officers in Doolow town, Gedo region, arrested¹¹² and unlawfully detained local journalist **Ali Mohamed Diriye** for a day and night before being released on 29 December. Ali Mohamed Diriye, also known as Ali Yare, is a reporter with Radio Gedo, a local station based in the border town of Doolow. On the morning of 28 December, while having tea at a café in the town, armed officers from the Jubaland intelligence services arrived and immediately arrested him. Ali told SJS that officers confiscated his mobile phone, forcibly stripped him of his clothing, leaving him in his underwear, and detained him in a small container room. He said he was held there until the morning of 29 December without access to food, drinking water, or sanitary facilities.

Ali, originally from Beled-Hawo in the Gedo region near the Kenyan border, said his arrest came on the same day Radio Gedo published a video showing a fire that destroyed market stalls in Doolow. In addition to his work with Radio Gedo, Ali contributes to Mogadishu-based Kalsan TV. He has recently reported extensively on the Beled-Hawo conflict, where weeks of fighting between Jubaland forces and Federal Government troops in July and August left dozens dead and displaced local communities. In early November, he reported on the arrest¹¹³ of a local military officer by Ethiopian forces backing the Jubaland administration.

4.4 ABDUCTIONS, DISAPPEARANCES, INTIMIDATION, AND OTHER THREATS



On 7 February 2025, A government-affiliated clan militia in Lower Shabelle kidnapped¹¹⁴ journalist **Omar Yusuf Mohamed (Omar Guux)**, who reports for Nabad Somali TV, a Facebook-based news platform. Omar was covering local community complaints about militia raids¹¹⁵ and detentions targeting civilians in and around KM50 in the Lower Shabelle region. Omar Guux told SJS that he was locked in an abandoned makeshift house in KM50 before being released later the same Friday. He said the militia interrogated him about his report on the disappearance of a local clan elder who was taken after the militia raided his home on 31 January. The clan elder was released two weeks later.

On 24 March 2025, Local journalist **Ibrahim Mohamed Mayow** was abducted in Afgooye, about 30 km from Mogadishu, while reporting from the town. As documented by SJS at the time, Mayow, a reporter for the Mogadishu-based Dalsan TV, was covering¹¹⁶ an Al-Shabaab mortar attack on Afgooye¹¹⁷

112 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/31/journalist-freed-after-overnight-unlawful-detention-by-doolow-authorities-in-jubaland/>

113 <https://www.facebook.com/reel/2386317151800619>

114 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/10/two-journalists-illegally-held-separately-by-nisa-and-clan-militia-freed/>

115 https://www.hiiraan.com/news4/2025/Jan/199877/inter_clan_conflict_erupts_on_hiiran_middle_shabelle_border.aspx

116 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/25/after-surviving-al-shabaab-attack-journalist-ibrahim-mayow-abducted-by-somali-police/>

117 <https://www.facebook.com/dalsantv/videos/1657512984854712>

when he was reportedly summoned by armed officers linked to Banadir Regional Police Commissioner Mahdi Omar Muumin (commonly known as Moalim Mahdi). Shortly afterward, he disappeared, and his whereabouts were initially unknown. A local journalist told SJS that Mayow was called by Moalim Mahdi after Dalsan TV published a video showing the aftermath of the mortar attack, which struck residential areas in Afgooye, a key agricultural town in Lower Shabelle. Moalim Mahdi, a former Al-Shabaab defector now serving as Mogadishu police chief, was reportedly present in Afgooye during the attack. When local reporters visited Afgooye police station to inquire about Mayow, officers denied holding him and claimed no knowledge of his arrest. Dalsan TV later posted¹¹⁸ on Facebook that Mayow had been taken into custody by Afgooye district police and reportedly transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters in Mogadishu. A Dalsan journalist told SJS that his location remained unconfirmed at the time. This was not the first time Mayow faced danger. On 14 March 2025, he survived an Al-Shabaab attack in Awdheegle district, Lower Shabelle, while covering a Somali National Army (SNA) Gorgor unit base. Though he escaped, he lost his camera equipment during the incident. After two weeks in disappearance, Mayow was released when police officers reportedly placed him in a vehicle and left him in the middle of Maka Al Mukarama Road in Mogadishu.

On 5 May 2025, Armed agents from the Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) raided¹¹⁹ the home and media studio of journalists **Bashir Ali Shire and Mohamed Omar Baakaay** in Mogadishu's Shibis district. During the raid¹²⁰ Bashir Ali Shire, a reporter for MM Somali TV, was blindfolded and arrested. The agents confiscated his phone, an external hard drive, and CCTV storage equipment from his residence¹²¹ Mohamed Omar Baakaay was not at home at the time, but his brother, Anas Omar Mohamud, was arrested. Bashir told SJS that the armed agents threatened them with pistols, took them to a secluded street corner in Shibis, and beat Anas with the pistols while kicking him, interrogating him about Mohamed's whereabouts. At dawn, both were taken to Shibis Police Station and later released around midday, though they were required to leave their contact details in case they were needed again. Mohamed Omar Baakaay's passport, ID card, and mobile phone were seized during the raid. The incident followed threats made the previous day by Kaaraan District Commissioner Farah Adani, an official appointed by the Mogadishu Mayor. On 4 May, Commissioner Adani broadcast statements on multiple platforms calling for violence against Baakaay, urging government supporters to "take machetes and sticks"¹²² and asserting they were authorized to "break the journalist's bones and enter his house." He also labeled Baakaay a "drug addict and worse than the terrorists," challenging supporters to "bring him in handcuffs."

118 <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=1085944766893740&set=a.603910051763883>

119 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/06/mogadishu-journalists-residence-raided-one-arrested-after-district-official-calls-for-attacks-with-machetes-and-sticks/>

120 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/06/mogadishu-journalists-residence-raided-one-arrested-after-district-official-calls-for-attacks-with-machetes-and-sticks/>

121 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/03/world-press-freedom-day-2025-alarming-escalation-attacks-on-journalists-and-media-in-somalia-and-somaliland/>

122 <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialSomaliCableTV/videos/683268974349306>

On 3 July 2025, A female journalist **Shukri Aabi Abdi** in Mogadishu was forcibly stopped¹²³ and held at a voter registration site in a controversial voter registration exercise by individuals believed to be affiliated with Somalia's disputed electoral commission. The incident occurred shortly after 8:00 a.m. when Shukri¹²⁴ was on her way to work. The tuk-tuk she was traveling in was stopped by armed men believed to be from the national intelligence service between Buulo Xuubey and Ceel Qalaw in Wadajir district. The men questioned her about whether she had registered as a voter. She told them she had not and had no intention of doing so. Despite her refusal, she was forcibly taken to a nearby school building, where she saw other pedestrians who had also been detained from the streets. As a result journalistic ID card and phone were confiscated by the officers while she was kept in the building without consent. She was held for several hours while her personal details, including her photograph and full name, were recorded without her consent. She was later released but was unable to report to work and returned home.

On 18 August 2025, At around 6:00 p.m. local time, NISA officers stopped¹²⁵ a tuk-tuk taxi in which journalist Omar Yusuf Mohamed known as 'Guux' of Himilo Media was traveling at a security checkpoint in the Walaalaha area of Dharkeenley district. After verifying his journalist ID, the officers detained him, subjected him to verbal threats, and harassed him. Omar told SJS that the officers referenced his recent reporting on sensitive issues, including insecurity¹²⁶ in Mogadishu, forced evictions of vulnerable families in Siinaay, Dayniile, and Hodan districts linked to President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, and the ongoing forced voter registration process in the city. He was held for nearly an hour before being released. This incident adds to a growing pattern of harassment and intimidation of journalists in Somalia.



Omar Yusuf Mohamed (Omar Guux). | PHOTO/SJS.

123 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/05/journalist-seized-by-nisa-forced-into-voter-registration/>

124 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjsplsH5AdQ>

125 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/himilo-somali-tv-reporter-stopped-harassed-and-detained-at-nisa-checkpoint-in-mogadishu/>

126 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/himilo-somali-tv-reporter-stopped-harassed-and-detained-at-nisa-checkpoint-in-mogadishu/>



Somali journalist Ibrahim Mohamed Mayow.
| PHOTO/ Courtesy/Facebook

On 14 September 2025, Dalbile TV journalist Anisa Ahmed was harassed and threatened¹²⁷ while reporting on forced evictions in Dayniile district, Mogadishu. Anisa and her cameraman were covering the eviction of families occupying former government land in Dayniile’s Oodweyne neighborhood, during which gunfire killed at least one civilian and injured¹²⁸ four others. NISA commander Abdirahman Ali Mohamud stopped Anisa on-site, questioning her about returning to the area and referencing her previous arrest in the district. While her cameraman left safely, Anisa was reportedly threatened with “disappearance.” Later that day, Anisa posted an audio recording of her interaction with the NISA commander on Facebook. That evening, she received a call from Mohamed Kafi Sheikh Abukar, a NISA media-monitoring officer reinstated in June 2025 despite prior allegations of misconduct¹²⁹. In a recorded WhatsApp call¹³⁰ Mohamed Kafi pressured Anisa to delete her Facebook post, offering her¹³¹ and her family “access to the roads in Mogadishu” in return, and questioned her about her residence and previous attendance at Ministry of Information seminars.

On 16 November 2025, Five journalists was stopped by officers from the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) while collecting vox-pop interviews about the disputed elections in Somalia. The group included **Abdullahi Mohamed Ali and Abdullahi Abdulkadir Ahmed (both working for Himilo Media), Abdirahman Mohamed Waaberi (freelancer), and Ali Hassan Guure (cameraman from Risaala Media) along with his colleague Hamda Hassan Ahmed**. The journalists were initially taken toward a nearby police station but were released before reaching it. The journalists told SJS that they were told to pay the taxi fare incurred for their transportation to and from the police station, and they were released only after they paid the fare.

4.5 JUDICIAL HARASSMENT, COURT CASES, AND LEGAL THREATS

On 28 January 2025, a Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation (SLAPP) letter¹³² was sent to SJS Secretary General Abdalle Mumin by a London-based law firm hired by Premier Bank Limited Somalia. The letter threatened Mr. Mumin with a defamation lawsuit if he did not withdraw social media posts criticizing their client, Premier Bank. The letter also accused Mr. Mumin of authoring news articles that exposed alleged corrupt links between Premier Bank and Somali government officials—articles that Mr. Mumin denies writing. In what appeared to be an attempt to intimidate Mr. Mumin and pressure him to forfeit his right to freedom of expression,

127 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/20/mogadishu-journalist-anisa-ahmed-harassed-threatened-and-forced-to-apologize-to-nisa/>

128 <https://x.com/KaabTV/status/1967185032340000823>

129 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2024-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/somalia/>

130 <https://www.facebook.com/sjsyndicate/videos/2859762320883877>

131 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/20/mogadishu-journalist-anisa-ahmed-harassed-threatened-and-forced-to-apologize-to-nisa/#:~:text=investigations%20into%20allegations>

132 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/22/sjs-and-rfk-human-rights-issue-statement-of-support-for-somali-journalist-abdalle-mumin-facing-slapp-threat/>

the law firm Taylor Hampton demanded an immediate response and warned of financially ruinous consequences if he failed to comply and remove the posts. Beginning in October 2022, when Mr. Mumin criticized the Somali government's restrictions on journalists' abilities to report news, he was arbitrarily arrested three times, detained, and tortured by Somali state security forces. In September 2023, SJS and RFKHR submitted a communication¹³³ to the UN Human Rights Committee for the human rights violations Mr. Mumin faced. Seemingly at the behest of government officials, the Premier Bank suspended SJS' bank account¹³⁴ shortly afterward, in retaliation for Mr. Mumin and SJS' attempt to seek justice. Following this, Mr. Mumin's lawyers from the Good Law Project in the UK responded to the letter. After several months, Mr. Mumin's legal team filed a formal complaint with the UK Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) regarding the conduct of Taylor Hampton, alleging violations of UK legal and professional standards.

On 9 June 2025, Police in Erigabo arrested journalist **Sa'id Muse Farah**¹³⁵ known as Sa'id Qurbawi, after he interviewed staff at Erigabo TB Hospital who complained about the hospital's director and the lack of essential services, including food and medical treatment for patients. He was released on bail the following day. On 14 June, the Erigabo court fined¹³⁶ him 800 Somaliland Shillings (approximately US\$80) over his critical reporting on the hospital director. Sa'id told SJS that he ultimately paid around US\$100 to secure his release. He maintains that his reporting was in the public interest and alleges that the hospital director influenced the court's decision, raising concerns about the misuse of judicial proceedings to penalise legitimate journalism.

On 1 July 2025, journalist **Yasir Ahmed Abdillahi**¹³⁷ was arrested by Somaliland police in Hargeisa after publishing a Facebook video commenting on President Abdirahman Abdillahi Irro's visit to Doha, Qatar. Yasir was charged by the Attorney General with being "anti-Somaliland" over remarks in which he described the visit as "low level" and claimed the president was received as a regional leader rather than head of state. On 4 July, the Maroodi Jheh Regional Court in Hargeisa reviewed the case and ordered Regional Court in Hargeisa reviewed the case and ordered Yasir's release, citing a lack of evidence to support the charge. The court's decision underscored the absence of a legal basis for prosecuting the journalist over his commentary.

133 <https://rfkhumanrights.org/press/somali-journalists-syndicate-and-rfk-human-rights-submit-communication-to-un-human-rights-committee-for-somali-journalist-abdalle-ahmed-mumin/>

134 <https://cpj.org/2024/04/somali-authorities-investigate-media-rights-group-freeze-its-accounts/>

135 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

136 https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0p5CBMMV2tAE4jG7b5qiwtzJs2MGgcTx-vi6t4CLMxAkjKEDK86W88eAMsvJ8biBkQl&id=100089053753798

137 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

On 4 July 2025, the Maroodi-Jeh Regional Court in Hargeisa sentenced¹³⁸ freelance journalist **Abdiqadir Mohamed Aw-Hassan** to six months in prison for “insulting the president,” following his arrest in May. **Abdiqadir** had been detained on 23 May after allegedly sharing — and later deleting — a satirical video clip said to depict President Abdirahman Abdillahi Irro in women’s clothing. Authorities treated the clip as a criminal offense, and he was held at Hargeisa’s Criminal Investigation Prison pending trial. The six-month sentence has raised concerns about the criminalisation of satire and online expression. According to a source who attended the hearing, the Somaliland Attorney General’s Office announced plans to appeal the verdict, with a further court session expected to review the case.

On 22 July 2025, the Puntland Intelligence and Security Agency (PISA) summoned¹³⁹ Puntland-based on-line journalist **Mohamud Nadif Shire** after he published a series of news reports about Puntland’s ongoing counter-terrorism operation in Cal Miskaad. His reports included one telling soldiers opening fire¹⁴⁰ on civilians in Garowe; complaints by the Puntland soldiers about lack of care; grievances from soldiers over unpaid dues, and coverage of the recent conflict in the Sanaag region¹⁴¹ involving Puntland maritime police force. These reports, which SJS reviewed, span from June to July of this year. Shire, who runs a Facebook page with a following of 236,000¹⁴² told SJS that he received a summoning order from PISA via phone call on 22 July.

He was interrogated by PISA officers in Bosaso city on 24 July and instructed to report to the security agency’s office once every week. According to Mohamud, the questions he faced during the interrogation were intimidating and mainly focused on his reporting of security issues in the region.

On 2 September 2025, Police officers in Laascaanood summoned¹⁴³ Daljir Media reporter **Mohamed Muse Yusuf (known as Mohamed Koronto)** shortly after his interview with the regional Minister of Information, Najib Barkhadle, was published by Daljir Media. In the interview¹⁴⁴ reviewed by SJS, Mr. Barkhadle criticized the process of Northeast State’s formation, which was rebranded from SSC-Khaatumo under the backing of the Somali federal government. He described the process as “hastened and lacking major consensus.” He also condemned the federal Minister of Interior, who had recently called on Laascaanood authorities to crush opposition groups. Mohamed Koronto told SJS that when he reported to the Laascaanood police station alongside colleague journalists, he was harassed by criminal investigation officers, who told him they did not like the interview he conducted with Mr. Barkhadle, who is now regarded as an opposition figure. Mr. Barkhadle’s interview came three days after President, Abdukadir Ahmed Aw-Ali Firdhiye, was re-elected in a vote held in Laascaanood.

138 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/07/14/somaliland-crackdown-on-independent-reporting-10-journalists-arrested-in-five-months/>

139 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/08/18/journalists-report-harassment-and-intimidation-in-puntland-and-laascaanood/>

140 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1281267323572955&set=a.222440122789019>

141 <https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1275721764127511&set=a.222440122789019>

142 <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100050690985385>

143 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/04/local-reporter-arrested-another-summoned-by-police-in-laascaanood/>

144 <https://www.facebook.com/DaljirMultimedia/videos/1816347568956995>

On 9 September 2025, The Puntland Attorney General's Office summoned¹⁴⁵ journalists **Suways Jama Mohamud** (Puntland State TV/Suways Media¹⁴⁶ and **Hassan Abdi Ali (Hassan Heykal, Milgo Media)** over an unspecified matter reportedly filed by the Ministry of Information. No written charges were provided. Suways had previously faced threats and unlawful suspension over critical reporting on armed group clashes in Sool region. Heykal had been intimidated after publishing an interview with a tuk-tuk driver alleging abuse by Vice President Ilyas Ahmed Lugatoor's security guards. Between 14 and 18 September, both journalists were questioned by the AG about multiple news reports and social media posts criticizing government officials. They were instructed¹⁴⁷ to prepare responses to accusations of "criticism of government officials and incitement." According to their lawyer, both journalists were instructed to prepare responses to accusations including "criticism of government officials and incitement." No written charges were provided. The AG's Office did not respond when asked why the journalists were not given a written document about the accusations against them, instead of only oral statements.



Suways Jama Mohamud and Hassan Abdi Ali (Hassan Heykal). | PHOTO/SJS.

On 7 October 2025, The Togdheer Appeals Court in Burao, Somaliland, sentenced journalist **Abdiaziz Saleban Sulub**, also known as **Abdiaziz Awl**, a reporter for the online outlet KF Media TV, to one year in prison and fined¹⁴⁸ him two million Somaliland shillings (approximately USD 200). He was released the following day after paying the fine, avoiding the jail term, according to his lawyers. Abdiaziz had been arrested¹⁴⁹ on 12 September by Somaliland police in Burao, initially without explanation. SJS later found¹⁵⁰ that his arrest was linked to reporting allegations that Togdheer Governor Mahamoud Ali Salebaan (Ramaax) had misappropriated part of government donations intended for a family whose house had been destroyed by fire. The Governor did not comment on the allegations but reportedly interfered with Abdiaziz's release, blocking his freedom even after an initial court verdict on 27 September acquitted him due to lack of evidence.

¹⁴⁵ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/20/two-puntland-journalists-face-legal-threats-over-critical-reporting/>

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/Suwaysgacayte01/videos/1229313822124356>

¹⁴⁷ https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2279921249184703&id=100015005498918&rdid=ZN-HEEYT4LN80PKYZ#

¹⁴⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/reel/774060182277811>

¹⁴⁹ https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2279921249184703&id=100015005498918&rdid=ZN-HEEYT4LN80PKYZ#

¹⁵⁰ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/29/somaliland-10-journalists-arrested-in-three-weeks/>

On 20 December 2025, The Puntland Mudug Regional Prosecutor dropped¹⁵¹ a summons against **Mohamed Abdul Aziz, director of Radio Gaalkacyo**, after a local journalists' advocacy campaign supported by SJS. On 17 December, Mudug Regional Prosecutor Muxubo Faysal Axmed had issued a summons¹⁵² ordering Mohamed Abdul Aziz, director of the oldest community-owned radio station in Gaalkayo, to appear before the Prosecutor's Office in response to a complaint filed by Mudug Governor Faysal Sheikh Ali. The summons instructed him to report on 20 December at 10:00 a.m. When Mohamed appeared at the Prosecutor's Office, he told SJS that he was questioned and that the prosecutor addressed the ongoing media advocacy campaign. He said the prosecutor subsequently informed him that the case had been discontinued, effectively ending the legal threat against him.

On 12 October 2025, Somali police arrested two journalists from Himilo Somali TV (Himilo Media) — **Ahmed Mohamed Adan (Director) and reporter Khadar Abdirahim Ibrahim** — in Mogadishu. The arrests followed a police raid on the station's studio and underscore the increasing threats to media freedom and the safety of journalists, particularly those reporting on human rights abuses affecting vulnerable populations. Armed officers, acting under orders from Somali Police Commissioner Asad Osman Abdullahi and Banadir Regional Police Commander Mahdi Omar Muumin (Moalim Mahdi), initially raided Himilo Media's studio on Maka al-Mukarama Avenue. When the journalists locked themselves inside, the police temporarily withdrew. Later, officers from Waberi Police Station summoned both journalists to the station. Upon arrival, they were detained; authorities claimed their arrest was linked to reports covering forced evictions in Mogadishu. Ahmed Mohamed Adan was released without charge later that evening. However, Khadar Abdirahim Ibrahim remained in detention and later arraigned at the Banadir Regional Court where he was charged with four charges: two under the Somali Penal Code—Article 220 (“Insulting the Honour and Reputation of the Head of State”) and Article 452 (paragraph 3) (“Defamation through Media”)—and two under the Somali Media Law (2020): Article 18 (“Registration of Journalists by the Ministry of Information”) and Article 29 (“Dissemination of False Information”). he was freed on 15 October after SJS lawyers defended his case¹⁵³ The court could not find any evidence for the all charges.

On 21 November 2025, police in Mogadishu subjected Himilo Somali TV camerajournalist **Abdullahi Mohamed Ali (Saawey)** to judicial harassment after he covered a protest against forced evictions in Yaaqshiid district. While reporting on the demonstration, police opened fire on protesters, reportedly killing two civilians. Instead of investigating the shootings, officers beat and arrested Abdullahi. He was detained at Yaaqshiid District Police Station and interrogated without a lawyer. On 24 November, he was charged before the Banadir Regional Court with “mobilising protesters” and “inciting the public” — charges widely seen as criminalising his journalism. The court released him for lack of evidence. Despite his release, authorities confiscated his phone, forced him to surrender passwords, and continue to withhold his professional equipment, raising serious concerns about ongoing intimidation and misuse of the legal system to silence independent media.

On 12 February 2025, Somaliland's Ministry of Information,

151 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/radio-markafm-reopens-puntlands-mudug-prosecutor-drops-summons-bantu-journalist-still-detained-in-hirshabelle/>

152 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/18/puntland-mudug-prosecutor-summons-radio-gaalkacyo-director-over-district-council-dispute-reporting/>

153 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/10/15/mogadishu-court-frees-himilo-media-journalist-after-four-days-in-jail-for-reporting-forced-evictions-of-vulnerable-families/>

4.6 RAID ON MEDIA STATIONS AND CLOSURE

No.	Media Station	Incident Type	Location
1	Universal Somali TV	Closure	Hargeisa, Somaliland
2	Radio Risaala	Raid and closure	Mogadishu
3	Radio Wanla-Weyn FM	Raid	Wanla-Weyn, Lower Shabelle
4	Studio of Independent Journalist Mohamed Baakaay	Raid and equipment seized	Mogadishu
5	Jubaland TV	Raid and equipment seized	Mogadishu
6	Himilo Media	Raid	Mogadishu
7	Radio MarkaFM	Closure	Marka, Lower Shabelle
8	Home and Studio of Journalist Mohamed Bulbul	Raid	Mogadishu

Source: SJS Data.

JAMHUURIYADA SOMALILAND
Wasaaradda Warfaafinta, Dhaqanka & Wacyiigelinta

REPUBLIC OF SOMALILAND
Ministry of Information, Culture & National Guidance

XAFIISKA WASIIRKA

Ref: WWDH&W/X/W/025/02/2025 Date: 12/Feb/2025

Ku: Xeer Ilaaliyaha Guud ee Qaranka JSL. =Hargeysa=
 OG: Taliyaha Cidanka Booliska JSL. =Hargeysa=
 OG: Agaasimaha Guud ee W/Warfaafinta. =Hargeysa=
 OG: Wasiir-ku-xigeenka W/Warfaafinta. =Hargeysa=
 OG: Wasiirka W/Arrimaha Gudaha JSL. =Hargeysa=
 OG: Madaxweynaha JSL. =Hargeysa=

Mudane: Cabdirahmaan Maxamed Cabdilaahi.

Ujeeddo: Kala-Nogosho Rugsadeed Telefishanka Universal.

Mudane Xeer Ilaaliyaha,

Aniga oo tix-raacaya warqada Ref: **WWW/XW/76-10/2010**, kuna taariikhaysnayd **21/10/2010** ee Wasaaradda Warfaafinta Dhaqanka iyo Wacyiigelinta ku siiyay Oggolaanshaha Rugsada uu kaga hawlgalayey Gudaha Somaliland Telefishanka Magaciisu yahay Universal TV.

- Waxa ay ku xad-gudbeen qodobadii heshiiskii ay galeen oo Mulkiilaha Universal TV uu la isgalay Xukuumadda JSL gaar ahaan Wasaaradda Warfaafinta, Dhaqanka iyo Wacyiigelinta.
- Waxa kale oo uu ku xad-gudbey Qaranimada JSL oo ah mid aan gorgortan galayn cidna aan loogu dul-qaadnayn.
- Tixraaca warqadii u danbaysay oo sumadeedu tahay Ref: **WWDH&W/X/W/377/06/2020** kuna taariikhaysnayd **27/06/2020** Ujeeddadeeduna tahay Rugsad kala noqosho.

Haddaba, laga bilaabo maanta oo ay taariikhdu tahay **12/February/2025**, dhamaan markii aanu aragnay sida badheedhka ah ee Universal TV, ugu xad-gudbeen Qaranimada iyo Jiritaanka Jamhuuriyadda Somaliland, waxa aannu kala noqonay Rugsadii warbaahineed ee uu kaga hawlgalayey gudaha JSL.

A. Waxa la farayaa dhamaan Telefishanada Local-ka ah ee kala ah **Astaan Tv, True Cable Tv, Hornsat Cable**, in ay ka saaraan Telefishanada ay baahiyaan muuq-baahiyaha Universal TV.
B. Waxa dhamaanba la joojiyey isticmaalka calaamada Universal TV (Loogada).
C. Waxa kale oo la joojiyey in shirkadaha ganacsi ee ka diwaan-gashan Jamhuuriyadda Somaliland ay xayaysis ku sameystaan Universal TV.

Sidaa daraadeed, waxa aan rajanayaa in aad wax ka qaban doortaan.

ALLAA MAHAD LEH

Mudane: **Ahmed-yasiin Sh. Ali Ayaanle**
Wasiirka Wasaaradda Warfaafinta Dhaqanka iyo Wacyiigelinta
Ahna AF-hayeenka Xukuumadda JSL.

Mobile: 00-252-63-445-6809, 063-479-3133 Email: ministermoir@SID.gov.org Hargeysa S/Land

Culture and National Guidance ordered the closure¹⁵⁴ of the privately owned Universal TV following a 11 February report¹⁵⁵ about President Abdirahman Abdillahi Irro’s visit to the United Arab Emirates, where he attended the World Governments Summit in Dubai and reiterated Somaliland’s push for international recognition. In the report reviewed by SJS, the journalist referenced Somaliland’s unrecognized status and suggested that the president’s invitation to the UAE could be seen as a “breach of Somalia’s territorial integrity.” A directive signed by Information Minister Ahmed-Yaasin Sheikh Ali Ayanle accused Universal TV of violating its agreement with Somaliland and undermining “Somaliland’s nationhood.” The ministry ordered cable providers to drop the channel, banned the use of its logo, and instructed advertisers end cooperation with the station. The move appears to be punitive, reflecting Somaliland authorities’ intolerance of critical media coverage.

Somaliland Ministry of Information order date 12 February 2025.

154 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/04/sjs-urges-somaliland-to-lift-universal-tv-ban-and-calls-for-press-freedom-in-southwest-state/>

155 <https://www.facebook.com/universalsomalitv/videos/1062397295927115>



Somali police raided the Risaala Media in Mogadishu on 18 March, 2025. | PHOTO/ CCTV

On 18 March 2025, Somali police raided and shut down¹⁵⁶ Radio Risaala, an independent radio in Mogadishu, ordering the station off air while arresting five of its journalists. Armed police officers, led by Commander Abdi Ali, forcibly entered Risaala Media's station in the Hamar Jajab district at midday on Tuesday. They ordered the station off air before arresting all five journalists present. The radio station and its affiliated outlets, including Risaala TV, went off air shortly afterward. The detained journalists—Ali Ibrahim Abdullahi Suheyfa (reporter), Hamda Hassan Ahmed (reporter), Mohamed Said Nur (cameraman), Liban Abdullahi Hussein (radio technician), and

Abdalla Sharif Ali (cameraman)—were taken to Hamar Jajab Police Station, where they were subjected to intense interrogation over their coverage of that day's bombing in Mogadishu. Risaala Media was the first outlet to report on bombing attack¹⁵⁷ targeting President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's convoy near the entrance of the presidential palace, which resulted in casualties including journalist Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe¹⁵⁸ a former colleague of Radio Risaala. The attack was claimed by Al-Shabaab. The journalists said that while in detention, Banadir Regional Police Commissioner Mahdi Omar Mumin (popularly known as Moalim Mahdi) visited them and questioned why the station had reported on the attack. The police officers who raided the station reportedly did not present a court warrant. Risaala Media's management said the order for the raid and arrests came from Commissioner Moalim Mahdi. Both Moalim Mahdi and Abdi Ali are former Al-Shabaab defectors who have since been integrated into the Somali police. The station resumed broadcasting later that day, and the detained journalists were released.

On 26 March 2025, Mogadishu police raided¹⁵⁹ the residence of Mohamed Ibrahim Bulbul, Secretary of Information and Human Rights at the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS). At around 8:40 PM local time, approximately ten armed police officers arrived at Bulbul's home in Mogadishu, questioned family members about his whereabouts, and harassed them for several hours. Bulbul was not at home at the time. Later that night, a known police informant was seen near the residence. The raid follows Bulbul's reporting on sensitive issues. On 8 March, he published¹⁶⁰ a four-part Facebook interview with a former inmate of the Somalia National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA)'s notorious Godka Jila'ow detention facility, where prisoners, including journalists and government critics, face torture and sexual violence



Photo shows bomb attack in Mogadishu on 18 March 2025. Photo | Radio Risaala.

156 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/18/somali-police-shut-down-an-independent-radio-station-and-arrested-five-journalists-after-reporting-on-the-bombing-attack-on-the-presidents-convoy-in-mogadishu/>

157 <https://www.facebook.com/risaalatelevision/videos/660180109725439>

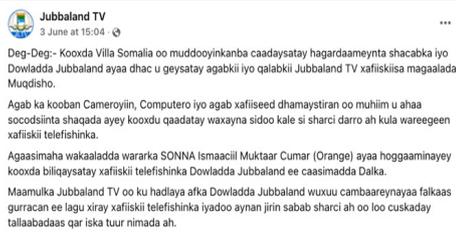
158 https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1902003619789967636

159 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/27/intensified-crackdown-on-journalists-mogadisu-police-raid-home-of-sjs-secretary-of-information-mohamed-bulbul-in-mogadishu/>

160 <https://www.facebook.com/Mohabulbul/videos/1428136004815235>

After the interview was published, Bulbul reportedly received calls from police and NISA officers demanding its removal, which he refused. Bulbul has also reported on growing Al-Shabaab activity near Mogadishu, highlighting potential threats to civilians and calling for government action. His reporting came after the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu issued a security alert¹⁶¹ on 4 March warning of potential imminent attacks, and the U.S. Embassy in Kenya announced¹⁶² on 27 February the suspension of official use of Mogadishu's Aden Adde International Airport. On 24 March, Mogadishu Police Commander Mahdi Omar Mumin (Moalim Mahdi¹⁶³) personally contacted Bulbul, urging him to stop reporting on police and security failures in the capital. The 26 March raid appears to be part of increasing pressure on journalists covering sensitive security issues in Mogadishu.

On 5 May 2025, Armed agents from Somalia's National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) raided¹⁶⁴ the home and media studio of journalists Bashir Ali Shire and Mohamed Omar Baakaay in Shibis district, Mogadishu. Agents blindfolded and arrested Bashir, confiscating equipment including an external hard drive, CCTV storage devices, and his phone. Although Baakaay was not present, officers arrested his brother, Anas Omar Mohamud, and reportedly beat him while demanding information about the journalist's whereabouts. The two detainees were later released, but Baakaay remains in hiding, fearing further violence. His passport, ID card, and phone were seized during the raid. The operation occurred one day after a district commissioner publicly called for violence against Baakaay.



Jubaland TV Facebook.

[Jubaland TV Facebook.](#)

On 30 May 2025, Southwest State police officers in Wanla-Weyn, Lower Shabelle, raided¹⁶⁵ the privately owned Radio Wanlaweyn FM and arrested its director, Ismail Khalif Ahmed, following the station's publication of a report alleging that the district administration was demanding forced "payments" from residents to fund the construction of Wanlaweyn Hospital. According to the now-deleted report, local residents resisted the payments, citing a lack of trust in district authorities. Ismail told the SJS that he was detained on orders from the Wanlaweyn District Police Commissioner and the District Commissioner. He was held overnight, interrogated, and threatened. He said police warned he would remain in custody unless the report was removed and a public apology issued. The station subsequently deleted both the original report and a follow-up post about Ismail's arrest after police specifically demanded their removal. On 31 May, Radio Wanlaweyn FM published a public apology on its Facebook page, expressing regret if the earlier post had caused offense.

¹⁶¹ <https://so.usembassy.gov/security-alert-for-u-s-citizens-march-4-2025/>

¹⁶² <https://ke.usembassy.gov/security-alert-for-u-s-citizens-february-27-2025/>

¹⁶³ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/25/after-surviving-al-shabaab-attack-journalist-ibrahim-mayow-abducted-by-somali-police/>

¹⁶⁴ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/06/mogadishu-journalists-residence-raided-one-arrested-after-district-official-calls-for-attacks-with-machetes-and-sticks/>

¹⁶⁵ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/01/eu-trained-police-raid-local-radio-arrest-journalist-in-lower-shabelle-turkish-trained-haramcad-forces-attack-three-journalists-in-mogadishu/>

On 3 June 2025, Jubbaland TV reported that representatives from the Somali Ministry of Information in Mogadishu had “looted¹⁶⁶ its equipment, including cameras, computers, and office supplies essential to the operation of its studio in the capital. A journalist working for the station told SJS that the Jubbaland TV office was unlawfully taken over during the raid. Jubbaland TV, which is owned by the Jubbaland state administration, had been operating an office and studio within the premises of the Federal Ministry of Information in Mogadishu. Since October 2024, tensions between Jubbaland and Somalia’s federal government have intensified¹⁶⁷ evolving from political disagreements into electoral disputes, legal confrontations¹⁶⁸ and ultimately armed clashes that erupted in December. The dispute has also led to the suspension of flights to several towns in Jubbaland.

On 6 June 2025, Puntland State Police in Galkayo arrested¹⁶⁹ Mohamed Abdul Aziz, Director of Radio Galkayo, and freelance cameraman Ahmed Abdiqani Yusuf at Awale Football Stadium, where Eid-ul-Adha prayers were being held. Mohamed Abdul Aziz told SJS that he had attended the prayers but was also aware of a planned youth protest against local authorities. Shortly before his arrest, he received a warning call from Mudug Police Commissioner Mohamud Abdihakim, instructing Radio Galkayo to stop covering the youth demonstrations. Three young protesters were also detained¹⁷⁰ The Governor of Mudug later accused the youth of attempting to organize an unauthorized protest. Radio Galkayo condemned the arrests as illegal. Since mid-May 2025, youth in Galkayo have been mobilizing to demand improved sanitation, better drainage, completion of Galkayo Airport, and resolution of the stalled Galkayo-Xarfo road project. The two journalists were released the following day after spending a night in police custody.

On 12 June 2025, The Somali National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) raided¹⁷¹ the offices of the privately owned online platform Himilo Somali TV in Mogadishu in an apparent attempt to force the removal of an interview critical of the disputed federal electoral commission. At around 9:00 a.m., fourteen armed NISA officers arrived at the station’s studio on Maka Al-Mukarama Road. Eight officers entered the premises while six remained at the gate. Staff members said the armed officers intimidated those inside, prompting journalists to lock themselves in an office and refuse to open the door. NISA agents then contacted the station’s manager, who was not present at the time, and demanded the removal of an interview¹⁷² aired earlier that morning. In the interview reviewed by SJS, a young man alleged that he had been abducted by individuals affiliated with the disputed electoral commission and forcibly registered as a voter without his consent.

166 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/09/galkayo-police-arrest-two-journalists-somali-ministry-of-information-officials-raid-and-loot-jubaland-state-tv-equipment-in-mogadishu/>

167 <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/somali-leaders-face-reciprocal-arrest-warrants-over-disputed-regional-election-2024-11-28/>

168 <https://apnews.com/article/somalia-federal-forces-jubbaland-fighting-ee77a6fa38e4acdf281a-26c28e74570a>

169 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/09/galkayo-police-arrest-two-journalists-somali-ministry-of-information-officials-raid-and-loot-jubaland-state-tv-equipment-in-mogadishu/>

170 <https://www.facebook.com/radiogaalkacyo/posts/pfbid02izdhsxHARdxceT4sRcpEwd3iJDYADXmrZsH-6LbKPSHs8pSR5e3roujrENpFatVLml>

171 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/13/somali-intelligence-agents-raid-media-outlet-after-reports-of-forced-voter-registration/>

172 <https://www.facebook.com/HimiloSomali/videos/2448166495541260>

He said he later tore up the registration documents in protest. A senior manager at Himilo Somali TV said NISA¹⁷³ officers also demanded the contact details of the interviewee, which the station declined to provide. The officers later left but threatened to pursue the station's editor. The interview remained online at the time of publication.

On 29 November 2025, Local authorities in Marka, the capital of Lower Shabelle, ordered¹⁷⁴ the closure of Marka FM, a privately owned radio station. According to the station's founder and manager, Ahmed Omar, the closure order was issued by the Marka District Commissioner, Osman Muse, after the station reported on a gunfight between forces loyal to the district commissioner and those aligned with the head of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) in Marka. On 8 December 2025, Radio Marka FM has resumed¹⁷⁵ operations after the ban was lifted.

4.7 ONLINE ATTACKS, CENSORSHIP, DENIAL OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

On 8 February 2025, journalists from a dozen of media houses were invited to cover a joint press conference¹⁷⁶ featuring Minister of Security General Abdullahi Sheikh Ismail Fartaag, Minister of Religious Affairs Mukhtar Robow Ali, and Attorney General Sulayman Mohamoud. During the briefing, RTN TV journalist Mohamed Abduqadir Hajir raised critical questions regarding the closure of major business hubs in Mogadishu due to escalating insecurity and alleged 'extortion', a concern publicly raised by the business community in a 7 February communiqué. This widespread market closure had paralyzed economic activity in the capital. When RTN TV journalist Hajir directed his questions to the Minister of Security, Deputy Minister Al-Adaala interrupted with harassment and humiliation telling him publicly "to stop" and that he "should not ask such questions". Shortly afterward, a security officer stepped forward, removed journalists' microphones from the podium, and cut off the recording. This incident follows a pattern of intimidation against the same RTN TV journalist. Late January, Hajir and his team were harassed and threatened with detention after interviewing a police officer who spoke out about the demolition of his family's home and his inability to relocate due to unpaid salaries. The police officer was among thousands of vulnerable residents at the ex-Carwada Qaranka¹⁷⁷ site, Mogadishu, who were forcibly evicted by the government in collaboration with Premier Bank. As a result of these threats, RTN TV was forced to delete the interview, although it was later republished by other platforms¹⁷⁸. Similarly, Radio Risaala's management informed SJS that their journalists have faced continuous threats and bans from public offices by Abdirahman Al-Adaala, who has abused his authority as Deputy Minister of Information. The Ministry of Information even refused to renew Radio Risaala's registration, forcing the station to seek registration from another government ministry,

173 https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1933103324347138502

174 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/04/markafm-radio-shut-down-after-reporting-on-gunfight-and-bomb-explosion/>

175 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/12/23/radio-markafm-reopens-puntlands-mudug-prosecutor-drops-summons-bantu-journalist-still-detained-in-hirshabelle/>

176 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/10/deputy-minister-al-adaalas-actions-endanger-the-security-of-vulnerable-journalists-and-pose-a-threat-to-media-freedom-in-somalia/>

177 <https://hornobserver.com/articles/3157/Thousands-Left-Homeless-as-Premier-Bank-and-Corrupt-Somali-Politicians-Drive-Forced-Evictions-in-Mogadishu>

178 <https://www.facebook.com/Dirir.Co/videos/547928231626642>



Deputy Minister Abdirahman Al-Adaala threatens journalist Mohamed Abduqadir Hajir as he halts critical questioning during a press conference by government ministers in Mogadishu on Saturday, February 8, 2025. | PHOTO: Screengrab.

On 27 February 2025, Authorities in Somalia’s Southwest State ordered three local media stations—Arlaadi Media, Voice of Baay and Bakool, and Radio Warsan—to halt¹⁷⁹ their planned Ramadan radio contest, which was scheduled to start on Saturday, 1 March. The official who issued the directive was Isak Hassan Mohamed, who was then the chairman of the youth committee for the Baidoa district administration but has since been promoted to a member of the Southwest State Assembly, during an appointment¹⁸⁰ on 27 February. The three media representatives told SJS that no reason was provided for the order, except that the district official complained that the “Ramadan contest was organized without his knowledge.” Mr. Isak did not respond to SJS when contacted for clarification. However, SJS was informed by officials at the Southwest State media that a separate Ramadan radio contest had been organized by the state media. Sources SJS spoke to suggested that the independent media contest might have attracted a larger audience, which concerned the authorities, as it could lead to a decline in state media listenership. The issue was later resolved, and the three media houses informed SJS that they have since begun the contest without further restrictions on Saturday 1 March.

On 6 March 2025, Somalia’s Minister of Information Daud Aweis threatened¹⁸¹ that journalists and other members of the public who report on the media about government security failures including Al-Shabaab attacks and criticize government officials would face “severe punishment¹⁸² That was two days after U.S embassies in Mogadishu and Nairobi issued security alerts about possible terror attacks in Mogadishu which Somali journalists widely quoted. Roughly 12 days later, journalist Mohamed Abukar Dabaashe was killed in Mogadishu. Throughout the rest of March and into late April, attacks targeting journalists in Mogadishu continued unabated.

On 24 May 2025, Anisa Ahmed Mohamed and Masud Abdirahman Yusuf, both working for Dalbile

179 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/04/sjs-urges-somaliland-to-lift-universal-tv-ban-and-calls-for-press-freedom-in-southwest-state/>

180 <https://radiatorisaala.com/xildhibaan-cali-saciid-fiqi-oo-markale-loo-doortay-guddoomiyaha-baarla-maanka-koofur-galbeed/>

181 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/03/world-press-freedom-day-2025-alarming-escalation-attacks-on-journalists-and-media-in-somalia-and-somaliland/>

182 https://x.com/sjs_Somalia/status/1918581893231968505/photo/1

online TV, were conducting interviews when plain-clothed, armed NISA officers interrupted¹⁸³ [and chased them away from Maka Al-Mukarama Street. After the journalists left the area, the officers followed them to another location and again disrupted an interview they were conducting with members of the public. The journalists had been asking people for their views on the current political tension, following a recent statement by opposition groups condemning President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud's actions in relation to the 2026 election.

On 28 May 2025, Turkish-trained Haramcad forces in Mogadishu's Kaxda district targeted¹⁸⁴ and stopped three journalists: Nuh Farah Mahad (reporter, RTN TV), Mohamed Abdukadir (cameraman, RTN TV), and Mohamed Abdi Hassan (reporter, Five Somali TV). The journalists were covering a protest by local elders who said they had been excluded from the controversial voter registration process recently launched by the federal government in Mogadishu. According to interviews conducted by SJS, the journalists were confronted shortly after leaving the elders' press conference. Armed Haramcad officers detained the journalists for nearly an hour, threatened them, and attempted to seize their equipment. A group of clan elders intervened, enabling the journalists to secure their release.

On 9 August 2025, The Maroodi Jeex Regional Appeals Court in Hargeisa, Somaliland, reinstated¹⁸⁵ the suspension of independent news websites Hadhwanaagnews.com, Hadhwanaagnews.ca, and Hadhwanaagtv.com, and sentenced journalists affiliated with Hadhwanaag News to six months in prison and a fine of 500,000 Somaliland Shillings (approximately \$50) each, in absentia. The court also ordered all local internet service providers to block the websites¹⁸⁶. The ruling reverses a previous decision issued on 8 February 2025 by the Maroodi Jeex Regional Court, which had lifted the suspension on the grounds that the case had concluded. The original ban dates back to 5 September 2019, when the Maroodi Jeex Regional Court ordered the shutdown of Hadhwanaag News following a lawsuit filed by then-Central Bank Governor Ali Ibrahim Jama (Ali Baghdadi). Hadhwanaag News had published reports and photos alleging that Ali Baghdadi was constructing commercial buildings¹⁸⁷ in Hargeisa under concealed ownership while serving in office. After the 2019 suspension order, several Hadhwanaag journalists were arrested, detained, and later forced to flee the country amid escalating threats. Additional arrests linked to similar reporting occurred in 2021. Although Ali Baghdadi was removed from office in September 2021, the legal pressure on Hadhwanaag News has persisted. The latest Appeals Court decision reinstates the ban and prison sentences, marking a renewed escalation in the prolonged legal campaign against the outlet and its exiled journalists.

183 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/05/24/15-journalists-arrested-in-two-days-amid-crackdown-on-media-covering-public-opinion-and-political-tensions-in-mogadishu/>

184 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/06/01/eu-trained-police-raid-local-radio-arrest-journalist-in-lower-shabelle-turkish-trained-haramcad-forces-attack-three-journalists-in-mogadishu/>

185 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/29/somaliland-court-reinstates-hadhwanaag-news-website-suspension-journalists-sentenced-in-absentia/>

186 <https://hadhwanaagnews.ca/articles/6309/Ururka-Mareegaha-Somaliland-Oo-War-Ka-Soo-Saaray-Hab-dhaqanka-Cali-Baqdaadi-Iyo-Xayiraada-Hadhwanaag>

187 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRl9liOznGU>



On 8 February 2025, the Maroodi Jeez Regional Court lifted the suspension on Hadhwanaag News.



On 9 August 2025, the Maroodi Jeez Appeals Court issued a new suspension order against Hadhwanaag News.

5. SOMALIA'S DEPUTY MINISTER OF INFORMATION AL-ADAALA: LEADING SOMALIA'S ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS



Figure 1 Somalia's Deputy Minister of Information, Abdirahman Yusuf Omar known as 'Al-Adaala'.

Media freedom in Somalia continues to face serious threats from public officials who misuse their authority to intimidate, silence, and endanger journalists. Among the most persistent figures associated with attacks on press freedom is Somalia's Deputy Minister of Information, Abdirahman Yusuf Omar known as 'Al-Adaala', whose actions have repeatedly targeted independent media, the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS), and journalists working within state media institutions. **On 8 February 2025**, Al-Adaala publicly harassed¹⁸⁸ and obstructed journalists during a press conference in Mogadishu attended by senior government officials. When a reporter from RTN TV asked critical questions about the closure of major markets in Mogadishu due to insecurity and alleged extortion affecting the capital's business

community, Al-Adaala interrupted the journalist and ordered him to stop asking such questions. Moments later,

188 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/10/deputy-minister-al-adaalas-actions-endanger-the-security-of-vulnerable-journalists-and-pose-a-threat-to-media-freedom-in-somalia/>

a security officer stepped forward, removed journalists' microphones, and halted the recording. The incident represented a direct interference with journalists performing their professional duties and demonstrated an attempt to prevent scrutiny of government actions.

This incident followed a pattern of intimidation against the same journalist. In late January 2025, the RTN TV reporter was threatened with detention after interviewing a police officer who complained about the demolition of his family home during forced evictions in Mogadishu. The officer was among thousands of vulnerable residents displaced during demolitions linked to land disputes involving powerful political and financial interests. Following threats, the media outlet was pressured to delete the interview, highlighting the climate of fear facing journalists reporting on public interest issues.

Al-Adaala's intimidation has also targeted independent media institutions. Radio Risaala reported to SJS that its journalists were repeatedly threatened and denied access to government offices under his orders. The Ministry of Information also refused to renew the station's registration, forcing the outlet to seek registration from another government institution in order to continue operating. The Somali Media Association, which represents more than 30 independent media houses nationwide, has similarly reported restrictions¹⁸⁹ and harassment linked to directives issued under Al-Adaala's authority.

The repression has also extended to journalists working inside the state media system. In April 2024, state media journalist and presenter Sugaal Moalim Mohamud was suspended¹⁹⁰ and his salary halted after reporting on alleged mismanagement and corruption within the Ministry of Defense. In July 2024, another state media journalist, Abdulkadir Isse Ali, was dismissed¹⁹¹ denied access to state media facilities, and had his salary cut after publishing a report exposing alleged corruption involving Al-Adaala. Both journalists had previously faced threats from Al-Shabaab due to their work in state media, making their dismissal even more dangerous by increasing their vulnerability.

Women journalists have also been affected by this hostile environment. Several women reporters working in state media have reported intimidation, harassment, and threats linked to their professional roles and reporting activities. Some of these journalists were eventually forced to flee the country after facing sustained pressure and security risks. Such actions not only silence critical voices but also disproportionately affect women journalists who already face structural barriers in Somalia's male-dominated media environment.

189 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/10/deputy-minister-al-adaalas-actions-endanger-the-security-of-vulnerable-journalists-and-pose-a-threat-to-media-freedom-in-somalia/>

190 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2024/04/30/somalia-state-media-journalist-suspended-salary-cut-due-to-facebook-post/>

191 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2024/07/07/senior-journalists-reporting-blocked-amid-rising-intimidation-and-censorship-on-state-media-journalists-in-somalia/>

Al-Adaala's hostility toward media freedom has also included direct threats against journalist organizations. In October 2022¹⁹² officers from the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) raided¹⁹³ the offices of the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) in Mogadishu and abducted¹⁹⁴ its Secretary General, Abdalle Mumin, after SJS opposed¹⁹⁵ a directive issued by Al-Adaala that sought to impose restrictions on journalists. On the same day, Al-Adaala reportedly threatened SJS leadership in a phone call, further demonstrating the pattern of intimidation aimed at silencing independent press freedom advocacy.

Serious allegations have also been raised regarding Al-Adaala's links to extremist networks and corruption within government institutions. Somali security sources and journalists have repeatedly questioned his alleged past associations with individuals linked to Al-Shabaab-affiliated networks, particularly during periods when propaganda and messaging linked to militant narratives circulated through media channels under his influence. While these allegations require full and transparent investigation, they have further deepened public concern about his role in shaping government media policy.

In addition, Al-Adaala has faced persistent accusations of corruption¹⁹⁶ and abuse of authority. In July 2019, when he was serving as acting Director General of the Ministry of Information, two nonprofit media organizations had their names publicly published¹⁹⁷ by state media following a letter signed by Al-Adaala accusing them of "violating national culture and religious values." The accusations exposed the organizations' staff to serious security risks in Somalia. According to the organizations, they were later forced to pay bribes in order to continue operating despite being legally registered and despite the accusations being unfounded.

Taken together, these incidents reveal a consistent pattern of harassment, censorship, intimidation, corruption allegations, and abuse of power aimed at silencing journalists and restricting media freedom in Somalia. By targeting independent reporters, state media journalists, and women journalists alike, Al-Adaala's actions undermine the safety of journalists and the public's right to access information. The continued lack of accountability for such conduct emboldens further violations. Naming and exposing officials responsible for these abuses is therefore essential to protecting press freedom and ensuring that those who attack journalists are held accountable under the law. Somalia's authorities, as well as international partners supporting democratic governance, must urgently investigate these allegations and ensure that no public official remains above the law when it comes to the protection of journalists and freedom of expression.

192 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2022/10/11/somali-media-fraternity-strongly-condemns-the-arrest-of-abdalle-ahmed-mumin-and-calls-for-his-immediate-release/>

193 <https://www.facebook.com/sjsyndicate/videos/787801842445295>

194 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2022/10/11/somali-media-fraternity-strongly-condemns-the-arrest-of-abdalle-ahmed-mumin-and-calls-for-his-immediate-release/>

195 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2022/10/10/somali-media-fraternity-expresses-concern-about-the-somalia-govts-directive-that-may-restrict-free-expression-and-media-freedom/>

196 <https://www.facebook.com/AbdulkadirIssEAli/videos/1218555442844193>

197 <https://www.facebook.com/sntvnews/posts/pfbid02QqfvwnbRRyArZRbtUM82EjdYLtBfojpbijRSDb-WeEbFzyRaffqFW6rJVzobj97d7l>

6. WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

Women journalists in Somalia are frequently targeted with online harassment, intimidation, and disinformation campaigns. Throughout the year, the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) documented repeated incidents of both online and offline attacks against women working in the media. Women journalists in Mogadishu are particularly vulnerable as the political environment has worsened amid heated political debates surrounding the 2026 elections. At the same time, forced evictions targeting vulnerable families have increased, causing large-scale displacement in the city. In several cases, journalists covering these developments—including women reporters—have been arrested¹⁹⁸. As a result, many women journalists now avoid posting opinions on social media or engaging in reporting assignments that may trigger retaliation from local authorities.



In Puntland, a woman journalist faced legal threats¹⁹⁹ after conducting street interviews that reportedly angered local authorities in Garowe. Such incidents contribute to growing fear and self-censorship among women in the media. Somali women journalists and media producers also report increasing cases of AI-facilitated abuse, including voice cloning, manipulated images, and fake online content used to shame or discredit women journalists. These forms of digital attacks are becoming more common tools to silence female voices in the media. Women journalists also face structural barriers to leadership and decision-making positions within Somali media organizations. Women currently make up only about 20 percent²⁰⁰ of professional journalists in Somalia, and many receive lower pay than their male colleagues for similar work.

Key challenges include exclusion from editorial decision-making roles, male-dominated newsroom management, gender pay gaps between male and female journalists, and sexual harassment linked to job security or career advancement. These conditions contribute to hostile workplace environments and prevent many women journalists from advancing to leadership positions within media institutions. To address these challenges, SJS has been actively working to empower women journalists through training, advocacy, and protection initiatives.

198 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/03/16/female-journalist-detained-for-exposing-health-hazard-from-government-officials-rubbish-amid-media-crackdown-in-mogadishu/>

199 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/09/20/two-puntland-journalists-face-legal-threats-over-critical-reporting/>

200 <https://sjsyndicate.org/2025/02/06/empowering-women-journalists-sjs-completes-training-on-security-and-human-rights-reporting/>

7. REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF MEDIA VIOLATIONS 2025

7.1 MEDIA WORKERS KILLED IN SOMALIA – 2025

Name	Media Role	Affiliation	Location	Date of Killing	Circumstances
1. Mohamed Abukar Mohamed (Dabaashe)	Online journalist	Independent/freelancer	Mogadishu	18 March 2025	Killed by Al-Shabaab bombing
2. Abdifatah Abdi Osman (Arab)	TV Technician	Astaan TV	Mogadishu	25 May 2025	Murdered by a lone gunman after an argument. Motive not yet clear

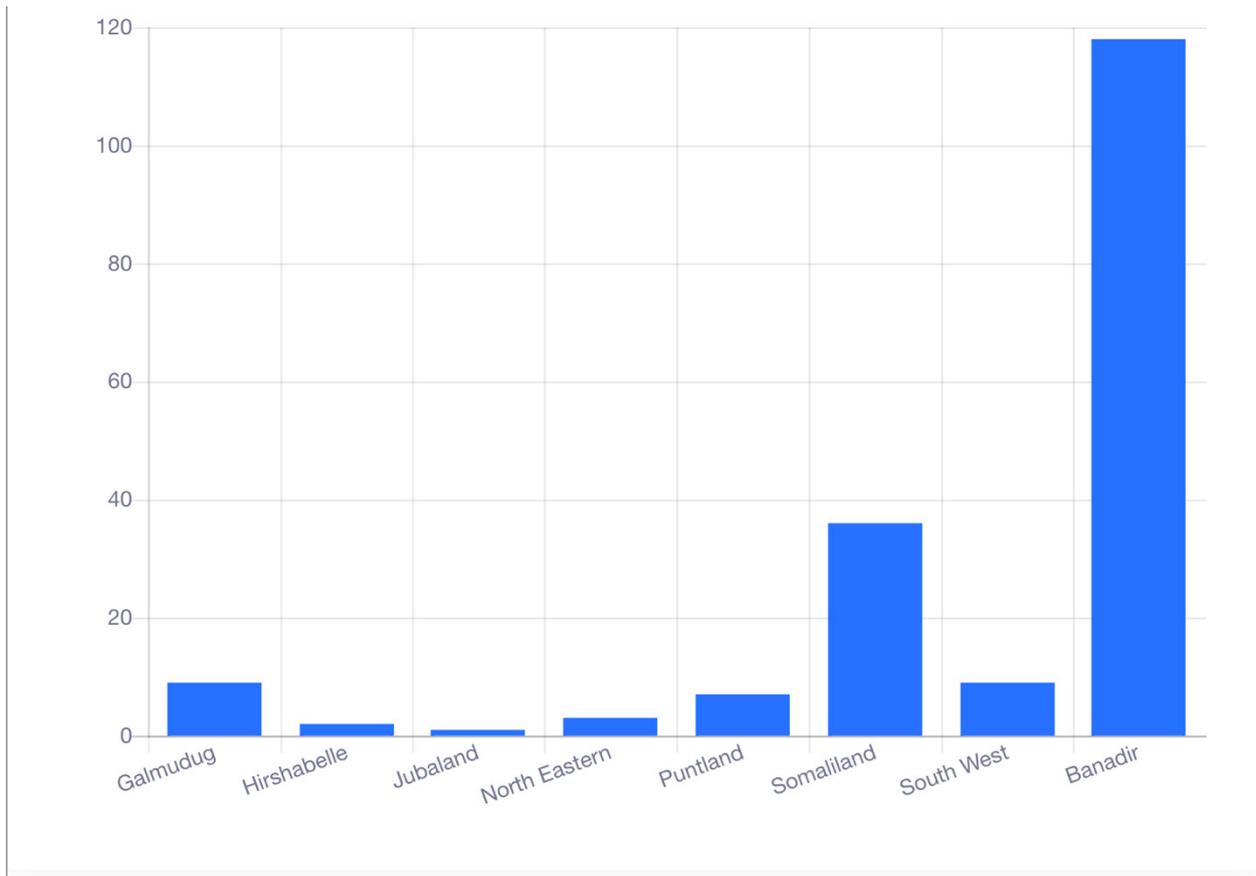
Source: SJS Database.

7.2 MEDIA VIOLATION BY TYPE (2025)

NO	TYPE / CATEGORY	VIOLATIONS	PERCENTAGE	RANK #
1	Arrests	109	33.54%	1
2	Restrictions on Access to Information	57	17.54%	2
3	Equipment Confiscation	40	12.31%	3
4	Arbitrary Detentions	39	12.00%	4
5	Physical Assaults	23	7.08%	5
6	Intimidations And Threats	19	5.85%	6
7	Civil and Criminal Proceedings	11	3.38%	7
8	Kidnappings	5	1.54%	8
9	Censorship / Data Deletion	5	1.54%	8
10	Media Closure	4	1.23%	10
11	Media Raid	4	1.23%	10
12	Killings	2	0.62%	12
13	Enforced Disappearances	2	0.62%	12
14	Torture	2	0.62%	12
15	Hate Speech	1	0.31%	15
16	Injuries	1	0.31%	15
17	Internet Blockage	1	0.31%	15
18	Forced Into Exile	0	0.00%	18

Source: SJS Database.

7.3 ARRESTS OF JOURNALISTS IN SOMALIA BY FEDERAL MEMBER STATE (2025)



Source: SJS Database.

8. SJS ACTIVITIES THROUGHOUT 2025

In 2025, SJS had another active and productive year. The year began with a new round of women’s empowerment training that brought together more than 20 women journalists from South, Central, and Northeastern regions of Somalia. The participants received training in journalism skills, advocacy, and professional development aimed at strengthening the role of women in the media sector. During the year, SJS provided legal support and mentorship to 21 local journalists facing challenges related to their reporting. The organization also defended two major cases in court, working with lawyers and advocacy partners to protect press freedom and journalists’ rights. Overall, 43 journalists benefited from SJS training programs throughout the year.



SJS has successfully concluded a two-day training on climate change and climate justice reporting in Mogadishu between 30 – 31 December, 2025. | PHOTO/SJS.

Later in the year, SJS successfully launched a two-year program aimed at building climate-informed journalism across Somalia and Somaliland. The training²⁰¹ brought together 10 local reporters from across Somalia and Somaliland, regions that are severely affected by climate change. Thirty percent of the participants were women.



Baraarug campaign hosted a listening forum in Puntland in September 2025. | PHOTO/SJS/Baraarug

Additionally, SJS expanded its outreach to youth and women through the Baraarug digital media campaign, which achieved significant impact, reaching over 10.4 million people²⁰² across 2024 and 2025. This initiative has helped amplify public awareness on social issues, governance, and human rights through digital media engagement.

²⁰¹ <https://sjsyndicate.org/2026/01/03/sjs-begins-two-year-program-to-build-climate-informed-journalism-across-somalia-and-somaliland/>

²⁰² <https://sjsyndicate.org/baraarug/>

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the documented violations against journalists and media outlets in 2025—including arbitrary arrests, physical assaults, censorship, denial of access to information, legal harassment, misuse of the Penal Code, and persistent impunity—the Somali Journalists Syndicate (SJS) issues the following recommendations:

9.1 TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF SOMALIA

The Federal Government of Somalia should:

- Publicly commit to upholding press freedom in line with the Provisional Constitution and international human rights obligations.
- End the use of the Penal Code and other criminal provisions to prosecute journalists for their professional work, and initiate legal reforms to decriminalize defamation and other speech-related offenses.
- Issue clear directives prohibiting security agencies and public officials from intimidating, detaining, or interfering with journalists.
- Ensure transparent, timely access to public information and cease arbitrary restrictions on reporting, including on electoral processes, security operations, and forced evictions.
- Establish an independent mechanism to investigate crimes against journalists and guarantee accountability.

9.2 TO FEDERAL MEMBER STATES

Somalia's Federal Member States should:

- Immediately cease arbitrary arrests, threats, and harassment of journalists at state level.
- Refrain from suspending media outlets or revoking licenses without due process and judicial oversight.
- Ensure that regional ministries of information do not use administrative or legal measures to silence criticism.
- Guarantee journalists' access to cover public interest issues, including protests, elections, and security operations.

9.3 TO THE JUDICIARY

We urge the judiciary to:

- Uphold constitutional protections for freedom of expression and media freedom in all rulings.
- Reject cases that criminalize legitimate journalistic work under vague or overly broad legal provisions.
- Ensure due process guarantees, including written charges, access to legal counsel, and public hearings.
- Resist political interference in judicial proceedings involving journalists and media houses.

9.4 TO SECURITY FORCES IN SOMALIA

The Somali security forces should:

- Immediately end arbitrary detention, physical assaults, equipment confiscation, and forced deletion of journalistic materials.
- Respect journalists' right to report from public spaces, including during protests, security operations, and evictions.
- Ensure that any interaction with journalists is conducted lawfully and proportionately.
- Hold officers accountable for abuses against media workers.

9.5 TO THE SOMALILAND AUTHORITIES

Somaliland government should:

- Immediately end the suspension of independent media outlets and lift all arbitrary bans imposed on news websites and broadcasters.
- Refrain from using criminal law, including provisions on defamation, false news, or “anti-national propaganda,” to prosecute journalists for legitimate reporting.
- Ensure that no journalist is sentenced in absentia for exercising their right to freedom of expression. Guarantee due process rights, including clear written charges, access to legal counsel, and public, fair trials.
- Investigate allegations of political interference in judicial proceedings involving media outlets and journalists.
- Cease harassment, intimidation, and surveillance of journalists, including those operating in exile.
- Establish an independent mechanism to investigate attacks and threats against media workers and ensure accountability.
- Align media and criminal laws with international human rights standards protecting freedom of expression.

9.6 TO THE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS SUPPORTING SOMALIA AND SOMALILAND

The international partners should:

- Publicly and consistently raise concerns about press freedom violations in bilateral and multilateral engagements.
- Condition security sector and justice sector support on measurable improvements in human rights protections, including journalists' safety.
- Support independent investigations into attacks against journalists and strengthen accountability mechanisms.
- Increase support for independent media, safety training, and emergency assistance for journalists at risk.

9.7 TO THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA HOUSES

Independent media house should:

- Strengthen internal safety protocols for reporters covering high-risk assignments.
- Provide legal support and institutional backing to journalists facing harassment or prosecution.
- Promote ethical journalism standards in their reporting to counter disinformation and reinforce public trust.
- Enhance solidarity within the media community to collectively resist censorship and unlawful interference.

10. CONCLUSION

The year 2025 was marked by intensified legal, physical, and professional challenges for journalists in Somalia and Somaliland. Attacks, arbitrary arrests and detentions, censorship and denial of access, media restrictions, and harassment were widespread, with women journalists disproportionately affected. Insecurity, forced evictions, political tensions, and the Somalia-Somaliland dispute remained the primary triggers for violations, particularly against those reporting on human rights abuses, including sexual violence. Despite these violations, accountability remained weak or absent. Most journalists arrested were released without charge, perpetrators of violence rarely faced consequences, and legal threats such as SLAPP lawsuits continued to intimidate media professionals. This persistent lack of accountability undermines press freedom and contributes to a climate of fear and self-censorship. The outlook for 2026 remains challenging. Ongoing conflict, weak governance, corruption, political tensions, and the continued threat of extremist groups are likely to perpetuate violations. It is, therefore, important to strengthen advocacy efforts, protection mechanisms, and targeted support for women journalists and those representing minority communities across Somalia and Somaliland, as this will be crucial to enhancing press freedom, ensuring accountability, and building a safer, more inclusive media environment in Somalia and Somaliland.



**SOMALI
JOURNALISTS
SYNDICATE**