



**Voices at Risk:**

## **Somalia Press Freedom Report**

By the Federation of Somali Journalists (FESOJ)

**Annual Report**  
**2024-2025**



**THEME OF WORLD PRESS  
FREEDOM DAY 3 May 2025**

**REPORTING IN THE BRAVE  
NEW WORLD:**

**The Impact of Artificial Intelligence  
on Press Freedom and the Media**

Without freedom of speech,  
there is no modern World.

Media should also  
understand its  
responsibility

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## Introduction

From May 2024 to May 2025, Somali journalists and media workers continue to face relentless violations, with authorities showing little regard for their lives or work.

In this FESIJ's annual report, we highlight the difficult circumstances faced by journalists and media professionals in Somalia. As the right to access information and the culture of transparency continued to be eroded, violence, torture, arbitrary detention, injury, threats, intimidation, and censorship have become commonplace, severely damaging the Somali media landscape.

Amid this climate of fear, many journalists have been forced to abandon the profession they love or flee the country entirely. Yet, no meaningful efforts or solutions have been proposed to address these worsening conditions or to end the recurring violations.

The past month has been one of the most intense periods journalists have experienced, marked by arrests and physical abuse. Neither the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) nor Federal Member States (FMS) have respected journalists' rights. There is no legal framework to ensure due process for journalists; instead, they face attacks, endure prolonged imprisonment without trial, and are eventually released without ever appearing in court.

Despite the existence of a provisional constitution and a media law—previously approved by the Federal Parliament and signed by the President—the rights to freedom of expression and press freedom continues to be violated. Security forces arbitrarily interpret the law, leaving Somalia without a coherent strategy to protect journalists or uphold media freedom.

This report also underscores the persistent impunity enjoyed by those who commit human rights abuses against journalists.

It calls on the Federal Government of Somalia and its member states to fulfill their obligation to protect the rights of Somali citizens, particularly freedom of expression and press freedom, and demands an end to the unfounded, often pretextual accusations levied against journalists. Establishing a safe environment where these rights can be exercised without fear is imperative.

Farah Omar  
Secretary-General, FESIJ

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## Executive Summary

The findings of this report highlight the deteriorating environment for press freedom in Somalia, where journalists face violence from both armed groups and state authorities.

From May 2024 to May 2025, the Federation of Somali Journalists (FESoj) documented 65 violations against journalists, including four fatalities: A female journalist who returned from Sweden was killed in Afgoye (Lower Shabelle region).

Another journalist died during clashes between Al-Shabaab and government forces in Lower Shabelle. Two others lost their lives in Mogadishu explosions that reportedly targeted the Somali president.

These repeated violations underscore the persistent threats to press freedom in Somalia. Journalists continue to face arbitrary short-term detentions without justification, only to be released later—a pattern that has become routine despite the judicial system remaining operational. Such actions reflect a broader strategy to intimidate and silence journalists, coercing them into accepting the status quo.





## Recorded Cases



**On April 14, 2024** - Hibo Mahamed Mohamud, a journalist with Bulsho TV in Mogadishu, sustained injuries after a vehicle operated by armed security forces attempted to forcibly disperse a group of protesters.



**On May 9, 2024** – Allale Farah, a journalist who works on social media in the city of Guriceel, was arrested by the local district administration forces in Guriceel. He was later released on bail. Allale had previously been arrested several times.

**On May 11, 2024** – Jubaland police forces in Kismayo arrested journalist Abdulaahi Abdi Hakiin Ismaaciil, a member of the Soyaal Radio media team. He was detained for filming candidate Abdi Ali Rage, who had arrived in Kismayo to run for the presidency of Jubaland. He was staying at Hotel Cascasey at the time of his arrest.



**On June 5, 2024** – Two journalists, Sharmarke and Abdinur Hayi, who work for Jubaland TV, were ordered by the District Commissioner of Dhobley and the police station commander not to send any news to Jubaland TV. The journalists, who refused to comply with the order, were today confronted by armed officers...



**On June 12, 2024** – Abdifitah Hassan Mahamed, a cameraman, and Abdirahman Galal, a journalist with Radio Kulmiye in Mogadishu, went to the Police Training School cemetery on the morning of June 12, 2024, to report on bodies being exhumed from the site. A police officer confiscated their equipment and demanded a \$50 ransom for its return.

Journalists from KNN paid the ransom amount, after which the equipment was returned. The journalists had recorded audio during the negotiation with the police, and ultimately their gear was handed back after the payment was made.



and the Federal Government, was arrested in Garbaharey. The arrest was carried out by the Federal military forces. The following day, he was released without being brought to court.

**On July 6, 2024**, journalist Sa'id Nadara was arrested by the Puntland Police security forces after writing an article about soldiers complaining about not receiving their salaries. The following day, he was released without being charged.



**On August 2, 2024**, Qasim Karam, a journalist working for SMS TV, was injured in an attack and explosion that occurred at Liido Beach. He sustained injuries from the explosion.

**On October 5, 2024**, journalist Luqman Sheikh Abdullahi was detained for two days by the police forces of Luuq district. He was held on suspicion of having written about a clan conflict that occurred in the area.



**On October 18, 2024**, journalist Abdukadir Mohamed Jakarta, who worked for Radio Risaala, was taken from his home by security forces. He was detained for several hours before being released. The reason for his arrest was not clear, but upon his release, he was threatened not to speak to the media.



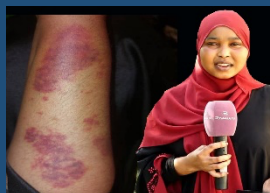
Ibraahim Abdullaahi Guleed



Yahye Mohamud Hirsi

**On October 28, 2024** - the security forces arrested journalist Ibrahim Abdullahi Guled, a reporter, and filmmaker Yahye Mohamud Hirsi, who both work for HIMILO TV. They were seeking a report from businessmen who had been killed in an area outside of Mogadishu. The journalists were held for many hours in a specific location and were later released without any charges being filed against them

**On November 1, 2024** - former journalist Amun Abdullahi was shot and killed in her farm located in Afgooye district. She had been living abroad for some time before returning to her home area, where she was tragically murdered.



**On December 17, 2024**, journalist Shukri Abi was subjected to torture by security forces at the Daljirka Dahson junction while she was covering a protest held by people complaining about land grabbing.

**On 17 January 2025**, Abdiqani Abdullahi Osoble was arrested by government forces after taking a photo of a site in the city of Baladweyne where the forces were carrying out demolitions.



**On January 22, 2025**, blogger Shafi Shacie was arrested in Hargeisa over posts on his social media page criticizing the Somaliland Police Chief.



**On 25 January 2025**, Sharif Mohamud Abdi was imprisoned by the NISA agency for allegedly posting content on his social media that was against the government. A week later, he was released without any charges being brought against him.

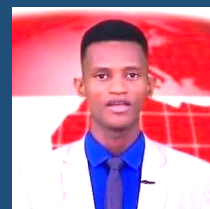


**On February 6, 2025**, three journalists—Ayaanle Cige Ducale, Abdiasis Sulayman, and Said Ali Osman, who write on social media platforms—were arrested by the Burco police in Somaliland. They were accused of writing about the administration of the city of Burco.



**On March 8, 2025** – Police in Galkayo arrested journalist Dalmar Socdal, who is known for posting on social media platforms. The journalist was beaten and then taken away in a military vehicle. Two days later, he was released without any charges being filed. He was reportedly detained for writing on his page about the NIRA agency, which handles civil registration and was operating at the time in the other side of Galkayo, Galmudug.

**On February 9, 2025**, journalist Cumar Guha was arrested at his home in the Muuri area of Lower Shabelle region by government forces stationed in the region. He was released several days later without any charges or legal process. He did not receive any evidence of wrongdoing or a fair trial.



**On March 15, 2025**, Bahja Abdulaahi Salad, a journalist from RTN-TV, was arrested by NISA (National Intelligence and Security Agency) forces. She was held for a few hours at the Wardhigley police station, with the reason for her detention being that she had filmed a location where NISA agents were present.

**On March 5, 2025** – Mohamed Tawane, a journalist from the government radio station who was accompanying government forces, was killed in a clash between the army and Al-Shabaab (AS) in the Awdheghe district of Lower Shabelle region.



**On March 18, 2025** – Police forces in the Xamar Jajab district arrested 16 journalists and cameramen who were seeking news about a bomb explosion at the Xeebta intersection in Mogadishu. They were prevented from taking photos of the scene of the explosion.







**On March 18, 2025** – A bomb explosion occurred at the Elgab-ta in Mogadishu, Somalia intersection, killing two journalists: Ayuub Wardhere and Maxamed Abuukar Daabashe.



**On March 24, 2025** - "The police forces in Afgooye district have arrested journalist Ibrahim Mayow, who works for Dalsan Media. The journalist, who was arrested in Afgoye district, about 30km from Mogadishu, on Monday 24 March has reportedly been transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters in Mogadishu." was covering Monday's Al-Shabaab attack on Afgooye.



**On March 31, 2025** A police officer at Hodan Police Station seized the equipment of journalist Aniso Abdiasis Hussein, journalist Abdulahi Abdukadir Ahmed and cameraman Abdirazak Haji Sidow of Himilo TV in Mogadishu while they were covering a protest by women at the KM4 intersection, protesting the alleged rape of a Somali woman in Nairobi. The protesters stormed the vehicle carrying Anisa, but the two journalists were taken to Hodan Police Station and later released without charge.



Mohamed Afgooye



Ahmed Mohamud Raas



Dahir Dayah



Mohamed Rooraye

**On April 1, 2025** Journalists *Mohamed Rooraye, Ahmed Mohamud Raas, Mohamed Afgooye*, and technician *Dahir Dayax* were arrested by the Mogadishu police. The journalists were accused of compromising security by broadcasting information on 5TV that involved police officers.



**On March 5, 2025** – The Banadir regional police arrested journalist *Ali Adan Mumin*, who publishes content on social media. He was detained over security-related issues concerning posts he made on his social media account. A few days later, he was released without any charges being filed against him.



**On 10 April 2025**, the Wadajir District Police arrested photographer Feysal Omar, who works for the Reuters News Agency. He was trying to take photos of a protest taking place near Aden Adde Airport.



Abukar Sky



Mohamud Sofaysane

**On April 12, 2025** – *Abukar Sheikh Mohamud*, the Director of Shabelle TV, and *Mahmoud Soofaysane*, his Deputy Director, were detained at the Hamarweyne Police Station. It was reported that the station had aired an interview that the government found highly objectionable.



**On April 28, 2025** – Police detained *Abuukar Mohamed Keynaa* and *Cabdirashid Adow Ibrahim* from *Risala TV*, as well as *Bashir Ali Shire* and *Mahad Abdirisak Abdi* from *MM TV*. They were accused of reporting on a mortar attack that had occurred in the area. They were later released without being formally charged.

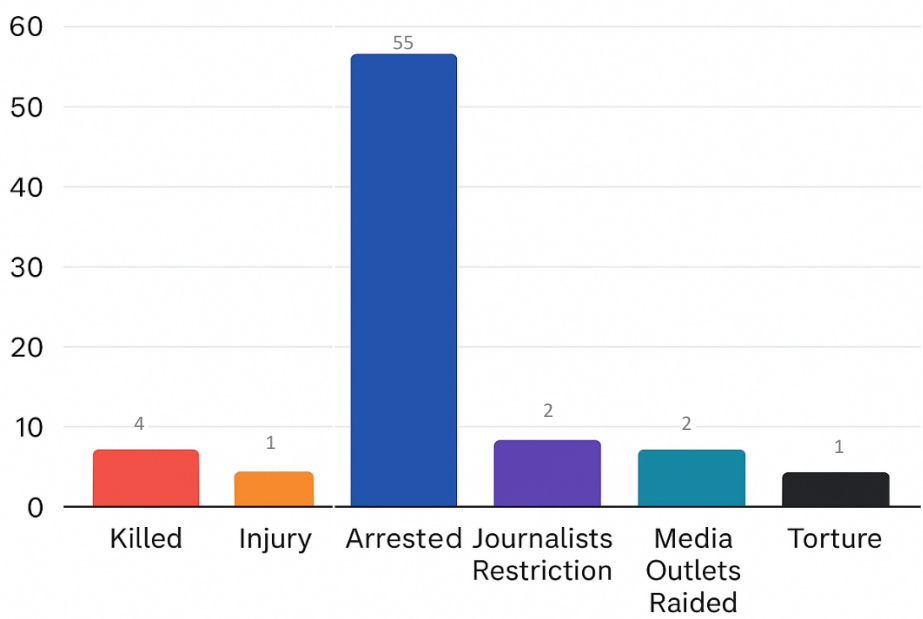
On May 5, 2025, *Bashir Ali Shire* was once again arrested, this time from his home. The security forces who carried out the raid confiscated the TV equipment used for work.



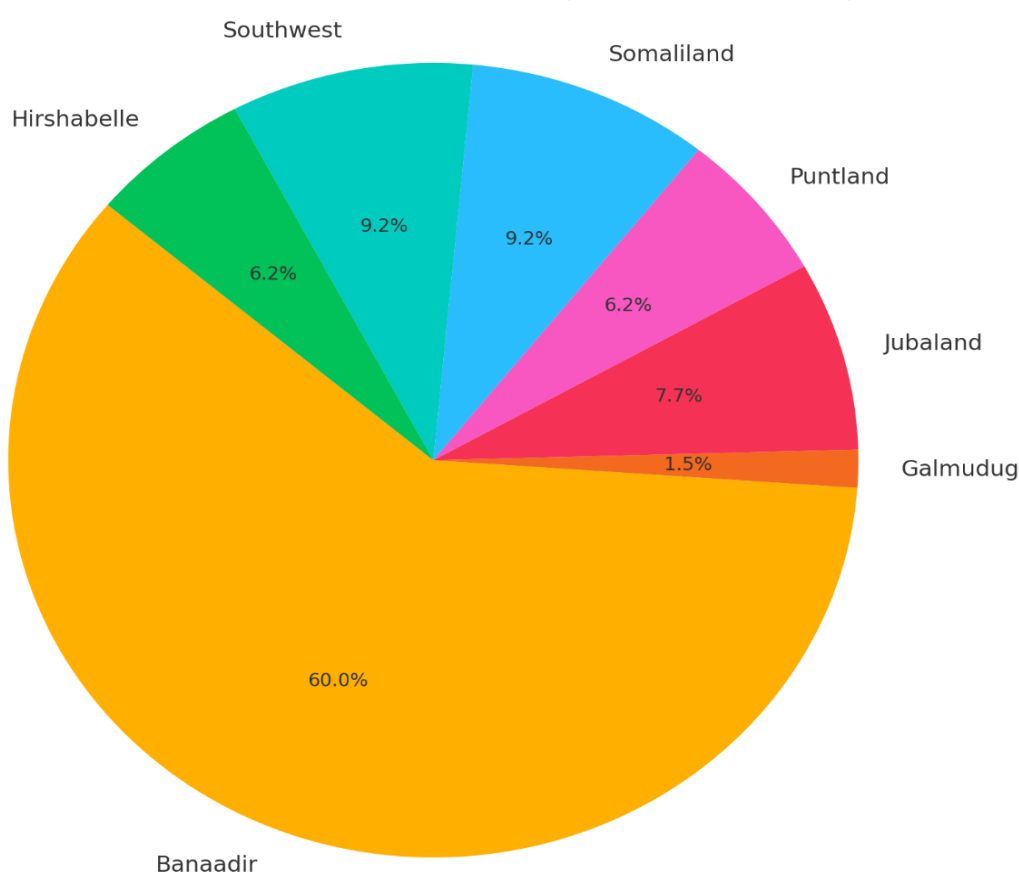
**On 29.4.2025** — *Najib Farah Mohamed, Shukri Abi from Shabelle TV, Dek Moalim Jinow from Saab TV, and Hussein Makaraan from Hiiraanweyn Radio were detained at the Dayniile police station. They were filming footage showing families protesting after their homes had been demolished. The footage they recorded was deleted, and after four hours they were released, having been subjected to threats and intimidation. No charges were filed against them.*



## Violations Against Journalists



## Total Recorded Violations by State (May 2024 – May 2025)



## Conclusion

Finally, it is important to note that between May 2024 and April 2025, Somali journalists faced ongoing threats, with 52 recorded violations, including four deaths, widespread detentions, torture, and targeted attacks. These incidents highlight a troubling trend of impunity and intimidation against the media. Despite constitutional protections, journalists continue to operate under fear, pressure, and violence. Immediate action is needed to safeguard press freedom and ensure accountability for these violations.

## Recommendations

### To the Federal Government of Somalia

- ✓ Publicly condemn all acts of violence, harassment, and intimidation against journalists and media institutions.
- ✓ Conduct prompt, independent, and transparent investigations into all journalist killings and serious violations, ensuring those responsible are held accountable.
- ✓ Enforce full compliance with national media laws and constitutional provisions protecting freedom of expression and the press.
- ✓ Cease the practice of arbitrary arrests and detentions of journalists, and ensure that all legal procedures meet international human rights standards.
- ✓ Ensure accountability for members of law enforcement and security forces involved in abuses, including torture and unlawful use of force.
- ✓ Expedite the operationalization of the National Media Council as an independent body to oversee media affairs and resolve disputes.

### To Federal Member States and Local Authorities

- ✓ Ensure uniform application of national media laws across all federal member states.
- ✓ Create safe and enabling environments for journalists, particularly those operating in conflict-affected regions.

### To Armed Groups and Non-State Actors

- ✓ Immediately cease all acts of violence, threats, and harassment directed at journalists and media workers.
- ✓ Respect international humanitarian law and guarantee the safety of media professionals in areas under their control.
- ✓ End the suppression of independent reporting and allow journalists to operate without fear of retaliation.

### To Somali Journalists

- ✓ Be accurate, fair, and responsible in your reporting, especially on sensitive issues.
- ✓ Use basic safety precautions in high-risk areas and avoid unnecessary exposure to danger.
- ✓ Understand your legal protections and procedures if arrested or harassed.
- ✓ Report violations: Inform your union or relevant bodies if you face threats or attacks.
- ✓ Stand in solidarity with fellow journalists and share resources and information.
- ✓ Be brave but smart—balance truth-telling with personal and public safety.
- ✓ Participate in union efforts to defend press freedom and improve working conditions.
- ✓ Take advantage of training opportunities to strengthen your skills and awareness.

### To Development Partners and International Organizations

- ✓ Condemn all violations against the media and support efforts to hold perpetrators accountable.
- ✓ Provide emergency assistance, protection mechanisms, and safe relocation options for journalists at risk.
- ✓ Support training and capacity-building programs for both journalists and law enforcement on human rights and media freedom.
- ✓ Invest in strengthening independent, resilient media institutions and fostering a culture of free expression in Somalia.

