

# REPORT

# Violations Freedoms Media

## First Half Of 2019



Media Freedom Observatory — Yemen

## Table of Contents

<b>3</b>	infographic
<b>4</b>	Introduction
<b>5</b>	Report Methodology
<b>6</b>	Executive Summary
<b>7</b>	Types of Violations
<b>8</b>	Responsibility for violations
<b>9</b>	Geographic Distribution of Violations
<b>10</b>	Violation Details

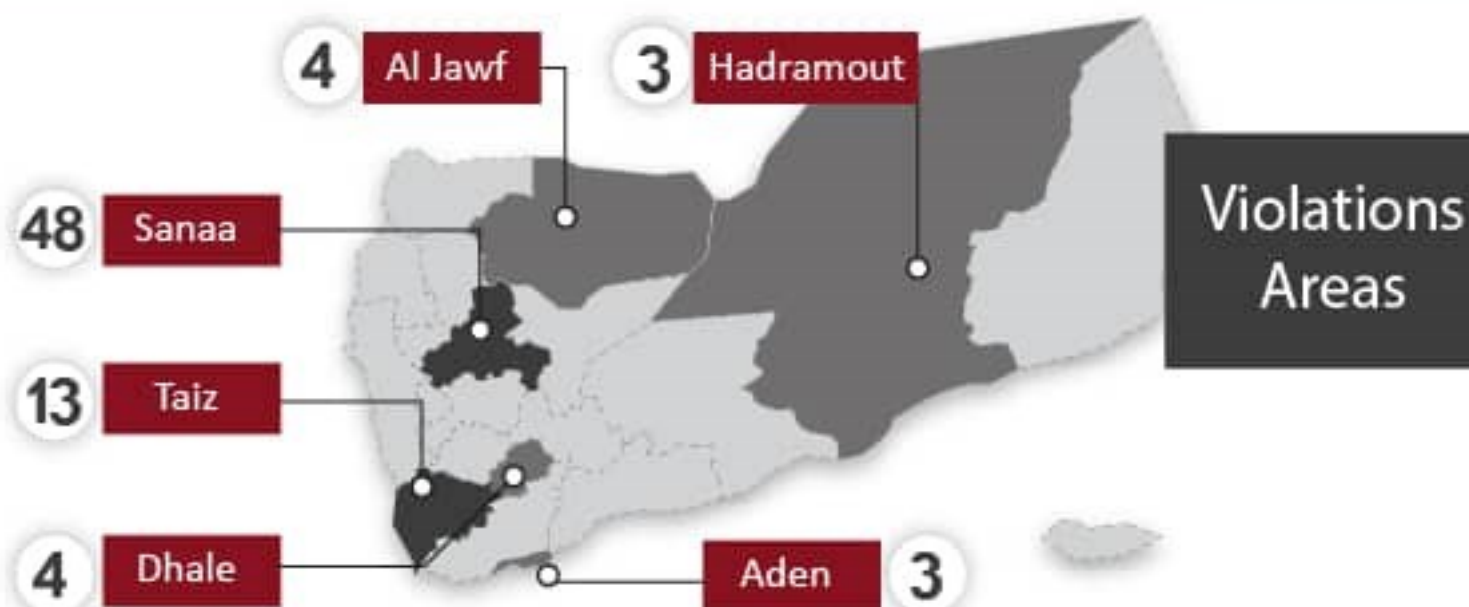
# Violations Cases Against Media in Yemen

During First Half of 2019

**75** Cases



## Violations Responsibilities



Yemeni media pays heavily for the war in Yemen. As the margin of press freedom diminishes increasingly day by day, Yemeni journalists pay a heavy price for their profession.

The serious restrictions imposed on freedom of expression and the silencing of dissent by all parties of

the conflict since 2014 constitute an infringement of freedom of information guaranteed by the Yemeni constitution and law, as well as by all international conventions. Therefore, a collective effort is required to protect the gains that have been achieved and to bring perpetrator of any violations to justice.

Targeting of journalists has terribly escalated over the last five years, to the extent that journalists cannot freely cover events in Yemen, several media outlets have closed, and hundreds of journalists have been killed and displaced.

The Houthi group tops the list of perpetrators of violations, being involved in 49 violations over the period January-June 2019. Seventeen journalists are still being held by Houthis, some of whom have been detained for more than three years. Similarly, violations of media freedom continue in areas controlled by the internationally recognized government.

In this report, YMFO monitors and documents violations of media freedom, recording 75 violations during the first half of 2019, including 1 murder, 18 assaults, 6 injuries, 5 arrests, 4 threats, 1 kidnapping, and 40 other cases. Besides, media institutions were targeted in 5 cases.

While we demand all parties to stop such arbitrary practices immediately, we appeal to all free people in Yemen and abroad to work towards the immediate release of all detained journalists and to fight incitement campaigns and targeting of journalists and social media activists.

## Report Methodology

Data in this report were collected by a professional team of SEMC-affiliated observers, distributed in the five main governorates

Observers relied on direct contact with the victims, victim relatives' testimonies, media releases, and reporting of violations to the Observatory. The team reviewed and verified all data and information monitored through a verification mechanism comprising at least 3 different sources.

Data contained in this report do not suggest that all violations have been monitored. In fact, many cases are not reported due to fears of further consequences inflicted on the victims by the oppressors.

This report does not cite all stories of violations for the sheer reason of keeping the report short. Only stories of the most important violation are covered in this report.

# Executive summary

The Report documents 75 violations in which both individuals (journalists and social media activists) and media institutions were targeted during the six-month reporting period.

In terms of geographical distribution, violations were perpetrated in Sana'a, Taiz, al-Dhali', al-Jawf, Hadramout, and Aden.

Various types of violations were recorded, including 1 murder, 18 assaults, 6 injuries, 5 arrests, 4 threats, 1 kidnapping and 40 other cases.

Two-thirds of documented violations were perpetrated by Houthi militants. Houthi authorities have referred 10 journalists who had been detained for nearly four years to the Specialized Criminal Court. The journalists had been subjected to physical and psychological abuse, and were denied family visits.

### Types of Violations

During the reporting period, 75 violations of media freedom were documented. Individuals (journalists and social media activists) were targeted in 70 cases (94%). Various forms of abuse were perpetrated, including 1 murder, 18 assaults, 5 arrests, 4 threats, 1 kidnapping and 40 other cases. The remaining 5 cases (6%) targeted media institutions.

**75** Cases





### Responsibility for Violations

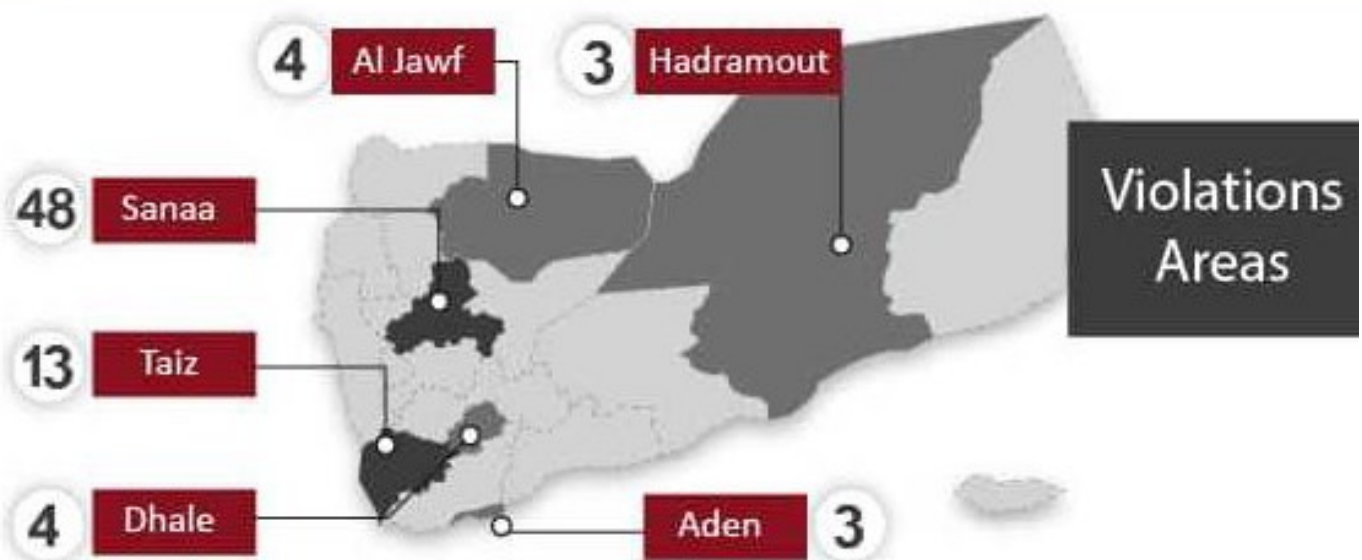
The Houthi group tops the list of perpetrators of violations of media freedom, being involved in 49 violations. Vassals of the Yemeni government were implicated in 14 cases, whereas anonymous perpetrators were involved in 11 cases. Finally, Saudi-led coalition forces are responsible for a single violation.





### Geographical Distribution of Violations

Violations of media freedom were perpetrated in various parts of the country. Sana'a witnessed the majority of documented violations (48 cases), followed by Taiz (13 cases), Dhali' and al-Jawf (4 cases each), and finally Hadramout, and Aden (3 cases each).



### Killings

A single murder was documented during the reporting period. On 28 January 2019, Ziad al-Sharabi, a montage technician at Abu Dhabi Channel, was killed in a vehicle-borne bomb explosion in a marketplace in Mocha, Taiz governorate.



### Kidnappings

Fuad Sharha, a journalist, was kidnapped by Houthi gunmen in northern 60th St. in Sana'a. According to Sharha's family, the journalist was stopped by Houthi gunmen in Amran Roundabout. He was forced to get into their vehicle, and taken to an unknown destination.

### Injuries

**Six casualties among journalists and social media activists were documented in January-June 2019, evenly distributed between Taiz and Dhali’.**



During the reporting period, 6 journalists were injured while performing their work. Abu Dhabi Channel correspondent, Faisal al-Thabhani, and his colleague Mohammed al-Shamiri, were wounded in a bomb explosion in Mocha, Taiz governorate.

On January 9, Mohammed al-Naqib and Nabil al-Junaid were seriously wounded in a Houthi drone blowup at al-Anad base in al-Dhali’. The drone targeted a military ceremony that was being held at the military base.

Editor of the Fourth Dimension news website, Majid al-Shuaibi, was injured in a Houthi sniper’s fire while covering battles in Qa’taba, Dhali’ governorate.

On 30 May, Ahmad al-Basha, a journalist, was slightly injured in a blast while covering events in the northern front in Taiz.

### Assaults

**Journalists and social media activists were targeted in 18 assaults; 10 incidents took place in Sana'a and a single incident in each of al-Dhali' and Taiz.**

On 25 January, cameraman Nabil al-Quaiti was assaulted by Aden Security policemen commanded by officer Faisal Muthanna in the Khor Maksar area while broadcasting a live FB video on his mobile phone in front of the Aden Hotel. He was transferred to the Police office where he was detained for a few hours and his camera and ID cards were confiscated.

On May 16, Abdullah Sabri's house was targeted in a Saudi-led coalition airstrike, leaving two of his sons dead, while he and his father were injured.

Aden Channel correspondent, Rafiq al-Sami'e, and his colleagues Osama Mohammed, Ihab Saleh and Shuja' al-Mudhaffar, were assaulted and robbed of their possessions in the desert midway between Mareb and al-Jawf. Their vehicle was directly targeted by fire and they were forced to get out of the car. Their camera and other belongings were confiscated.

On 28 March, Director of the Education Office in Qataba, Abdulbasset al-Marih assaulted Yemen Shabab Channel correspondent, Abdulaziz al-Laith, in al-Dhali' town, against the backdrop of the latter's coverage of battles in Beit al-Shawkani front in Qataba west of al-Dhali'.





## Other Cases

In addition to the above violations, 40 other cases were documented. Houthi authorities issued a circular restricting property rights of natural and legal persons, referred to as ‘traitors’, including 25 journalists and media institutions, in an initial step to seize property of blacklisted persons. In Hadramout, Sabri Salimin ben Makhashin was banned from traveling abroad and detained along with his family by security forces. This incident comes only a few days after ben Makhashin’s release from the prison of the Military Intelligence Division in Mukalla where he was detained for two months against the backdrop of his press articles and social media posts in which he was critical of the situation in Hadramout.

Al-Arabi al-Jadeed website reporter in Taiz, Wajdi al-Salimi received a call from a Criminal Investigation officer ordering him to report at the office for the purpose of interrogation on charges of abusing the army; failing that, he would be fetched by force. Al-Salimi, Jamal al-Asmar and Marzouq al-Jabri had been detained for two hours at the 145th military camp, commanded by Aden-based government vassals against the backdrop of documenting a humanitarian case in the governorate. Moreover, 10 journalists have been referred by Houthi authorities to the Specialized Criminal Court where – after four years of enforced disappearance - they are being tried on charges of collaboration with foreign governments.



### Media Freedom in Crisis

Media freedom in Yemen goes through an unprecedented crisis and suffers systematic arbitrary practices. YMFO has documented 2041 violations targeting journalists and media institutions, including 44 murders. Many journalists have been kidnapped and inhumanely tortured. More than 400 journalists are displaced. Yemen ranks 168th in 2019 World Press Freedom Index.

About 1,000 journalists and other personnel of official media organizations are still facing a stifling crisis as they have gone unpaid since 2016, when Houthis ceased to pay public servants' salaries. Moreover, 10 journalists, who have been detained for nearly 5 years in Political Security prison in Sana'a, have suffered beating and torture individually and collectively, placed in solitary confinement, and denied visits by relatives.



# Media Freedom Observatory — Yemen

[Www.Marsadak.org](http://Www.Marsadak.org)



The Media Freedom Observatory Platform  
is a professional and independent  
monitoring and information platform that  
contains maps and information on press  
violations and freedom of expression  
throughout yemen