

REPORT

Violations Freedoms Media Yemen



Sept - Oct
2019

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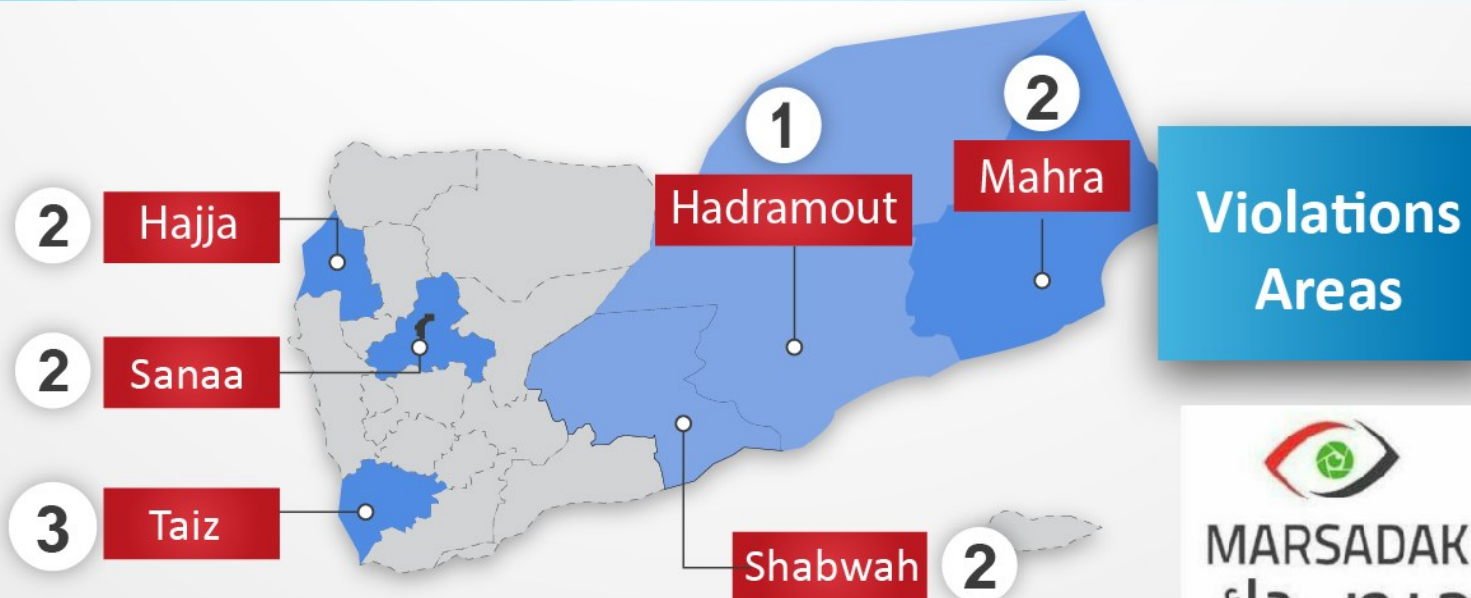
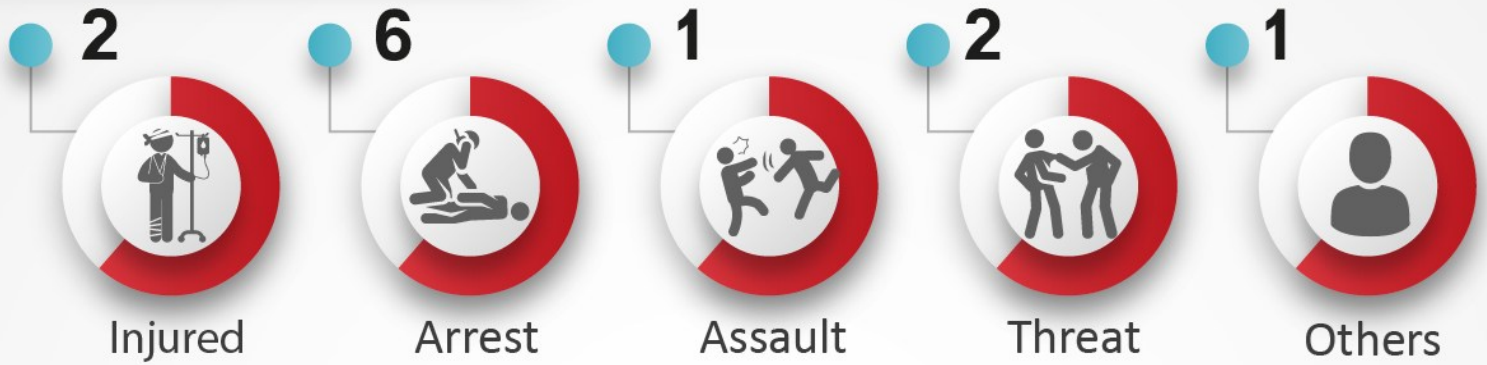
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Violations Cases Against Media in Yemen

September - October 2019

Yemen

12 Cases



Introduction

Media freedom in Yemen currently undergoes additional repression and intimidation of media professionals. Journalists are directly targeted by the various parties to the conflict in Yemen. Freedom of expression has been added to the list of accusations filed at courts in Sana'a.

Illegal practices and imprisonment without trial of journalists have escalated. In Sana'a, the Houthis still refuse to release forcibly disappeared journalists detained in Houthi jails, some of whom have been detained for more than four years. Parties affiliated to the internationally recognized Yemeni government have arrested journalists in areas under its control such as Shabwa and Hadramout.

Monitored cases of violations indicate that all Yemeni provinces have become risky to journalists in one way or another. Moreover, the map of distribution of violations during September and October shows that the internationally recognized government and parties affiliated to it top the list of perpetrators of violations, being responsible for 8 violations, followed by the Houthi group which is involved in 3 cases. This is a cause for concern, urging us to call upon all parties to abide by constitutional provisions guaranteeing freedom of expression and press freedom.

In this report, which monitors the status of media freedom, we call on all advocates of freedom of expression and media freedom inside and outside Yemen to work hard and pressurize all parties in Yemen to respect freedom of expression and to immediately release kidnapped journalists.

The Observatory of Media Freedom urges all media institutions and journalists to ensure they conform to applying the highest levels of professional safety during coverage of wars to preserve their safety and



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

During the reporting period, the report monitors 12 cases of violation perpetrated against individuals (journalists and social media activists) and media institutions.

Violations cases documented by the Media Freedom Observatory are concentrated in the governorates of Sana'a, Shabwa, Hadramout Hajja, Taiz and Al-Mahra.

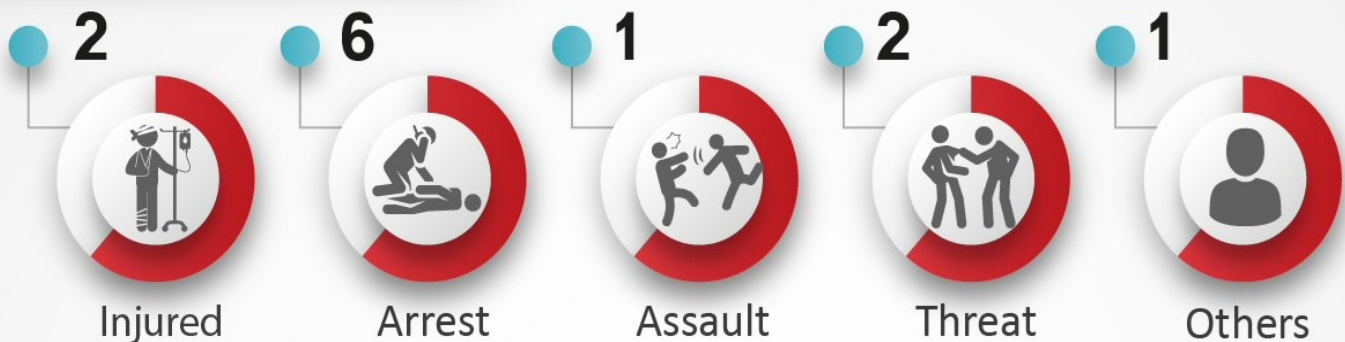
Documented cases varied between 2 casualties, 6 arrests, 2 threats, one case of assault, and a sentence of one year imprisonment and a fine of YR 500,000 passed against journalist Ahmed Al-Asadi, owner of the Sahafatak search engine for publication cases.

Most of the violations monitored by the Observatory were perpetrated by parties affiliated to the Yemeni government, which were involved in 8 cases of the total violations documented during the months of September and October 2019, followed by Houthis who were involved in 3 cases. One case was carried out by unidentified perpetrators.

Types of Violations

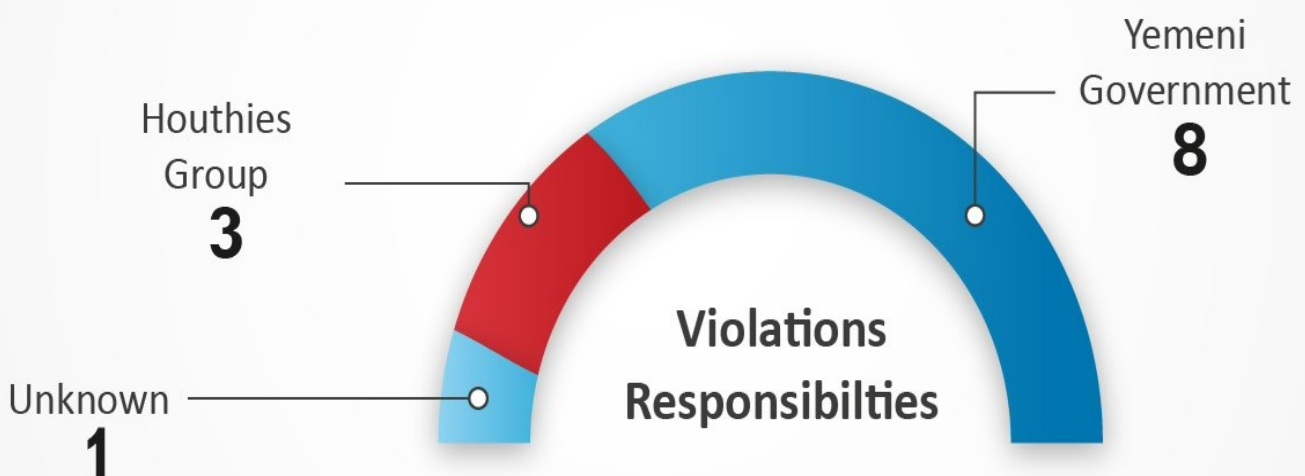
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12 Cases



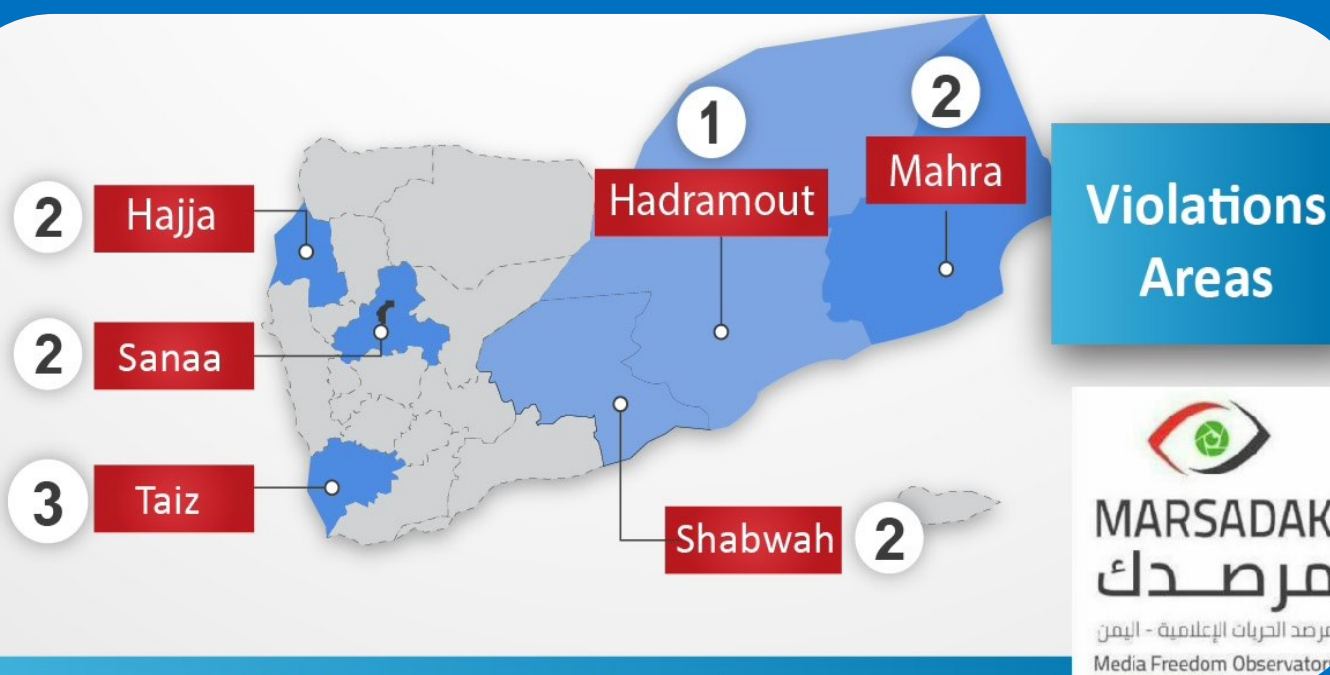
a Responsibility for Violations

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Geographical Distribution of Violations

Violations of media freedom were perpetrated in various Yemeni provinces. Two cases of violations of media freedom were reported in Sana'a, 2 in Shabwa, 1 in Hadramout, 2 in Hajjah, 2 in Al-Mahra and 3 in Taiz.



Casualties

The cases of casualties were recorded by the Observatory during the two-month period (September – October 2019). The two cases targeted journalists (journalists and social media activists) and both took place in Hajjah.



On September 10, Balqees satellite TV reporter, Mohammed Youssef, survived a rocket attack by Houthi militants in Meedi, Hajja governorate. Youssef was injured in the attack and hospitalized. The Media Freedom Observatory urges media institutions and journalists to apply the highest levels of occupational safety measures while covering battles.



On September 11, Saleh al-Ghanimi, who works as a photographer for a number media outlets, was injured by shrapnel which resulted in fractures in his right shoulder. The incident was a result of Houthi militants fired an artillery shell on Hiran area north of Hajjah governorate, while the photographer was covering battles between government and Houthi forces in the area.

Arrests

Six cases of arresting media professionals (journalists and social media activists) were recorded by the Observatory during the months of September and October 2019. These cases took place in Al-Mahra, Taiz, Shabwa and Hadramout governorates.

On September 18, 2019, cameraman Taha Saleh and his assistant, Mohammed Hail, were kidnapped by a military patrol of a security checkpoint in Al-Jahmaliya in Taiz governorate, while documenting a story of a family whose house was destroyed in the war. Both journalists were detained in a building next to Mohammed Ali Othman School. Their camera and mobile phones were confiscated and they were prevented from contacting their families. He was released after five hours of detention.

On September 10, the Media Freedom Observatory received a statement from Al-Ghad Al-Mushreq TV channel stating that the channel's correspondent in Shabwa governorate, Jamal Sheneiter, was detained at a security checkpoint in the Azzan which is controlled by Yemeni government forces. Saleh Musawa, a journalist, was detained at a security checkpoint in al-Mahra governorate for opposing and covering anti-government protests. He was released a week later.

Safwan Al-Munifi, a cameraman, was arrested and forcibly disappeared by security forces in Hadramout governorate on the backdrop of coordinating a public event on World Peace Day. On 23 September, two days after his arrival in Mukalla together with activists from Hadramout governorate for inauguration of the National Youth Conference for Peace, Development and Reconstruction, elements of the Hadramout Governorate Security Forces stormed the hotel where Al-Munifi was staying in Mukalla city and took him to an unknown location.

After the loud outcries of voices calling for the release of the journalist, some media outlets in Hadramout came out with a flash claiming that Al-Mounifi was arrested because he was caught while “promoting the so-called Outcomes of the National Dialogue.”

Assaults



The Media Freedom Observatory received a report from journalist Ahmad Mukeiber, a journalist, stating that he was being pursued by security checkpoints in the Mocha area. One of his relatives, who was suspected to be Ahmed Mukeiber, was detained at a security point in the area and was interrogated on the whereabouts of the journalist. The Observatory condemned the incident and demanded the security and military authorities in Mocha to investigate the incident, punish perpetrators and stop persecuting journalists.



Journalist Khaled Mohsen Dallaq was shot by unidentified assailants on a motorcycle at dawn on September 20, 2019. This came after he received threats from influential individuals on the backdrop of a case under consideration by the Court of the Southeastern Quarter of the Capital. Those powerful individuals had intervened to force his to give up his suit.

Other

The Press and Publications Court at the Capital city of Sana'a issued a ruling on 9 September 2019 convicting journalist and director of the 'Sahafatak' news search engine, Ahmed Al-Asadi, even though he is only a second publisher of news websites content.

Al-Asadi was sentenced to one year of imprisonment effective from the date of the verdict, besides being fined the sum of YR500,000 in damages to the complainant, and shutting down 'Sahafatak' news search engine.

This is the first ruling of its kind and is unprecedented in the history of the judiciary and the Yemeni press. The judge failed to differentiate between a search engine as a news reader and original publisher website which is actually responsible for the material published. He failed to deal with Sahafatak search engine like any other news search engine.

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