



MEDIA FREEDOM REVIEW-JUNE 2021

The monthly 'Media Freedom Review' is a publication of the Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG) produced from the monitoring and reporting on freedom of expression, media freedom, internet, digital and online rights, and safety and security of journalists in Sierra Leone.

In June 2021, the MRCG followed incident on alleged verbal attack on a journalist, arrest and detention of a journalist and the enactment of the bill entitled the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021.

BBC sports journalist, Mohamed Fajah Barrie, was allegedly intimidated and verbally attacked on June 13, 2021 by the Adviser to Sierra Leone Sports Minister, Alie Kader in Conakry, Guinea for publishing a story on his Facebook timeline. The story was about Leone Stars players spending several hours at the Sierra Leone-Guinea border crossing point after they were refused entry into Guinea by the Guinean Immigration Authorities for lack of COVID-19 test results. The Sport Writers Association Sierra Leone (SWASAL) in a press release condemned the attack and set up a three-man committee to investigate the issue for further actions.



TV-News 24 journalist, Osman Hardy Jalloh, was allegedly arrested and detained on June 10 2021 for the second time on orders of Magistrate Joseph Toby of Court Number 2 in Kenema, Eastern Region of Sierra Leone. The journalist reportedly published an article on a matter between an Imam and a female chief in Blama. He spent five days at the Kenema Correctional Center. His first arrest and detention was on April 28, 2021, for an article he published, headlined, 'Imam Granted Bail after Five Days in Jail'. The Magistrate said Mr Jalloh was remanded for contempt of court as he did not report the facts.



On June 23, 2021, Parliament passed the bill entitled, 'Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021', into law. The law seeks, to provide for the prevention of the abusive use of computer systems, to provide for the timely and effective collection of electronic evidence for the purpose of investigation and prosecution of cybercrime, to provide for the protection of Critical National Information Infrastructure, to provide for facilitation of international cooperation in dealing with cybercrime matters and to provide for other related matters.

The details of the cases and issues will be published in the MRCG Bi-Annual Press Freedom Report for June to November 2021.

The MRCG's freedom of expression, media freedom and internet and digital rights initiative is funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in the United States of America. The MRCG seeks to strengthen democratic dialogue and accountability, consolidate peace and ensure development through professional, independent and sustainable media, based on the right to freedom of expression and of the press.