



REPORT ON PRESS FREEDOM, INFORMATION, INTERNET AND DIGITAL RIGHTS IN SIERRA LEONE



**Press Freedom in Sierra Leone
June – November 2024**

Thirteenth Edition

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	3
LIST OF ILLUSTRATION	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	6
1. INTRODUCTION.....	9
2. THEMATIC ISSUES.....	10
2.1 Freedom of Expression and of the Press.....	10
2.2 Right to Access Information.....	11
2.3 Internet Freedom and Digital Rights.....	12
2.4 Media and Good Governance.....	12
3. PERFORMANCE OF INSTITUTIONS DEALING WITH FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS	14
4. PERFORMANCE OF MEDIA INSTITUTIONS.....	16
5. POSITION OF THE SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS	19
6. GOVERNMENT’S POSITION ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS.....	21
7. STATUS OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION LAWS IN SIERRA LEONE.....	23
8. CONCLUSION	26
9. RECOMMENDATIONS	27
10. REFERENCES.....	28
11. APPENDICES.....	29
11.1 Reported Cases in the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Editions Respectively of the Press Freedom Reports.....	29

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms & Abbreviations	Meaning
ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
ACR	Annual Compliance Report
AGM	Annual General Meeting
APC	All Peoples Congress
AYV	Africa Young Voices
BAN	Budget Advocacy Network
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporations
BBC-MA SL	BBC Media Action Sierra Leone
CID	Criminal Investigations Department
CDIID	Complaint Discipline and Internal Investigations Department
CHRDI	Campaign of Human Rights and Development International
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CMG	China Media Group
ETU	Eastern Technical University
ECSL	Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone
EWPMSL	Eminent Women Peace Mediators- Sierra Leone
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IGP	Inspector General Police
ILRAJ	Institute for Legal Research and Advocacy for Justice
IMC	Independent Media Commission
LUC	Local Unit Commander
MDAs	Ministries Departments and Agencies
MoICE	Ministry of Information and Civic Education
MRCG	Media Reform Coordinating Group

MP	Member of Parliament
MFWA	Media Foundation for West Africa
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NaTCA	National Telecommunications Authority
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
ONS	Office of National Security
RAIC	Rights to Access Information Commission
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SLAJ	Sierra Leone Association of Journalists
SLAJ-DC	Sierra Leone Association of Journalists Disciplinary Committee
SLAWIJ	Sierra Leone Association of Women in Journalism
SLBC	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation
SLFA	Sierra Leone Football Association
SLRU	Sierra Leone Reporters Union
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SWASAL	Sport Writers Association of Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WIMSAL	Women in the Media Sierra Leone

LIST OF ILLUSTRATION

I. List of Tables

Table 7.1: Specific Acts containing Media Laws and Regulations still in force.....21
Table 7.2: Other Statutes (Acts of Parliament) relating to Media Regulation still in force.....22
Table 7.3: Codes Dealing with Media Regulation still in force.....23
Table 11.1: Status of cases monitored by the MRCG from March 2018 to May 2024.....36
Table 11.2: Abandoned cases monitored by MRCG from March 2018 to May 2024.....50

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report, which addresses issues on ‘Freedom of Expression and of the Press, Access to Information, and Internet Freedom and Digital Rights in Sierra Leone,’ is the **thirteenth** in a series produced by the Media Reform Coordinating Group (MRCG). It is a component of a project titled “**Enhancing Press Freedom and Media Reforms**”, supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in the United States of America. The Report, which covers the period June to November 2024, is the outcome of the monitoring of the exercise and legal guarantees of freedom of expression and the press, and internet freedom and digital rights issues in Sierra Leone, including invitations, intimidations, attacks, assaults, arrests, detentions and prosecution of journalists and other citizens; and also tracks media performance.

This edition is divided into the following areas: Thematic Issues—freedom of Expression and the Press (focusing mainly on the assault, arrest, and detention of journalists and other citizens); right to Access Information, Internet Freedom, and Digital Rights; media and Good Governance; performance of Media Institutions; positions of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists and the Government on the said issues; status of Media and Communication Laws in Sierra Leone; conclusion, Recommendations, References, and Appendices.

The Report was produced by monitoring issues relating to freedom of expression and the press, internet freedom, and digital rights, which were broadcast on radio and television stations, published in newspapers, and posted on social media platforms. Where necessary, individuals who were either reportedly attacked or arrested were interviewed. Officials of institutions named in some of the issues reported were also interviewed.

The cases covered in this Report are:

1. The online attack, harassment and intimidation of the Managing Editor of *Salone Times Newspaper*, Thomas Dixon, by one Anthony Vandy on 5 June 2024.
2. The alleged attack and assault on Munya Bawoh, a journalist working for *All Out Radio* in Kenema, by some police officers in Kenema while investigating a story at the Kenema East Police Station on 7 June 2024.
3. The arrest and detention of lawyer Joy Bayoh Esq at the CID in Freetown for allegedly cyberstalking the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone on 18 June 2024.
4. The defamation matter between two former Leone Stars players, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, vs. the Sierra Leone Football Association (SLFA) in June 2024.
5. The dismissal and alleged attack and harassment of Umu Thoronka, a journalist working for the *SLBC*, for a video she posted about a lady's contribution at the Presidential Town Hall Meeting in Freetown on 23 July 2024.

The MRCG data showed that one of the five cases is still inconclusive.

The MRCG notes that there were still inconclusive cases at the end of the reporting period on cases in the first edition of the Press Freedom Reports (June to November 2018), second edition (December 2018 to 2019), third edition (June to November 2019), fourth edition (December 2019 to May 2020), seventh edition (June to November 2021), eighth edition (December 2021 to May 2022), ninth edition (June to November 2022), tenth edition (December 2022 to May 2023), eleventh edition (June to November 2023), the twelfth edition (December 2023 to May 2024), and the thirteenth edition (June to November 2024). **Eighty-seven** cases were monitored from

the Press Freedom Report's First to the Thirteenth Edition. **Sixty-one** were concluded, settled, resolved or dropped because of lack of progress; **six** were in court, **twenty** were still under police investigation, and **nine** were abandoned due to lack of progress. **See details in the appendices.**

While the MRCG urges media practitioners to abide by the ethical and legal standards of the journalism profession, it also calls on the Government, media organisations, civil society and the public to ensure the safety and security of journalists across the country at all times. The MRCG also notes with concern that issues relating to the safety and security of journalists go beyond politicians and the police, as there were reports of attacks on journalists from local authorities, youth and members of the public. The MRCG reminds media owners and managers that one of its reports shows that most media houses lacked a safety and security policy, and there were concerns about addressing the welfare of journalists.

The MRCG is a coordinating Secretariat comprising the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), the Faculty of Communication, Media and Information Studies (Fourah Bay College), the Independent Media Commission (IMC), the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), the Guild of Editors (GoE), Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL), Independent Radio Network (IRN), Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), Sport Writers Association of Sierra (SWASAL) and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC).

1. INTRODUCTION

This Thirteenth report, produced by the MRCG, is one of the components of a project titled “**Enhancing Press Freedom and Media Reforms,**” supported by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) in the United States of America (USA). The activity continues to track media performance and monitor the exercise and legal guarantees of press freedom and freedom of expression in Sierra Leone, including attacks, intimidations, assaults, arrests, detentions, and prosecutions of journalists and civil society activists, as well as internet and digital rights.

The report covers six months, from June to November 2024. It is divided into the following areas: Thematic Issues focusing mainly on the cases/issues of Freedom of Expression and of the Press; Right to Access Information; Internet Freedom and Digital Rights; Media and Good Governance; Performance of Institutions Dealing with Freedom of Expression and of the Press, Information, Internet Freedom and Digital Rights; Performance of Media Institutions; Position of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists on Freedom of Expression and of the Press, Information, Internet Freedom and Digital Rights; Government’s Position on Freedom of Expression and of the Press, Information, Internet Freedom and Digital Rights; Status of Media and Communication Laws in Sierra Leone; Conclusion; Recommendation; References; and Appendices.

Nine cases and issues were covered on freedom of expression and the press for this report. In addition, this report follows up on cases from the first to the thirteenth editions, from June 2018 to November 2024, that were still inconclusive. **Eighty-seven** cases were monitored from the Press Freedom Report’s First to the Thirteenth Edition. **Sixty-one** were concluded, settled, resolved or dropped because of lack of progress; **six** were in court; **twenty** were still under police investigation/inconclusive; and **nine** were abandoned due to lack of progress. **See details in the appendices.**

Sierra Leone, as a country, has specific statutes (Acts) containing laws, regulations, policies and institutions governing the media space in Sierra Leone. The significant laws used to regulate the media are the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 (Section 25 (1) and Section 11); the Independent Media Commission Act, 2020; the Defamation Ordinance, 1961; and the Independent Media Commission (Print and Electronic Media) Regulations, 2022. In terms of professional aspects, there is the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) Code of Ethics.

The Right to Access Information Act of 2013 provides access to certain information held by public bodies, and the Right to Access Information Regulations of 2022 enhance the Commission's work. The Cyber Security and Crime Act of 2021 also prohibits, prevents, detects, prosecutes, punishes cybercrimes and protects privacy rights.

The report was produced by monitoring issues relating to freedom of expression and the freedom of the press. Two monitors of the MRCG took daily records of significant matters relating to freedom of expression and of the media, right to access information, internet freedom and digital rights by tracking radio, television and newspaper contents, as well as following up on issues on social media platforms like Facebook, X and WhatsApp. Interviews were conducted where necessary, with some individuals who were reportedly attacked, intimidated or arrested. Officials of institutions named in some issues were also interviewed—the MRCG thanked NED for funding the project. Special thanks also go to the authors of the monthly reports, Osman Sesay, Saidu Kamara, Florence Bernard, and Ishiaka Sannoh. Francis Sowa (Ph.D., Esq.) and Augustine S. James wrote this thirteenth biannual report.

2. THEMATIC ISSUES

2.1 Freedom of Expression and the Press

The MRCG monthly media monitoring reports from June to November 2024 documented the following.

On 5 June 2024, the managing editor of the *New Age Newspaper*, Thomas Dixon, was attacked, harassed, and intimidated [online](#) by one Anthony Vandy for his comments on the First Lady, Fatima Maada Bio's speech. The online attacks and threats emanated from the journalist's [Twitter post](#) titled 'The Height Of Arrogance...', where he described the First Lady's speech as 'sheer arrogance.' The journalist told MRCG that he was not reporting the online attacks to the police because the attacks were not something new to him. SLAJ, in a press release, condemned the online intimidation and called for authorities to ensure the safety of journalists both online and offline.

On 7 June 2024, Munya Bawoh, a journalist working for *All Out Radio 90.1 FM* in Kenema, was allegedly attacked and assaulted by some police officers in Kenema while investigating a story at the Kenema East Police Station. According to the journalist, he had gone to the Police Station to do a follow-up on a particular story involving aggrieved visually impaired persons whose colleague was arrested and detained by the police. Upon his arrival, he called on a colleague to meet him at the police station, noting that the call offended the police officers who forcefully took his mobile phone and dragged him to the office of the Divisional Crime Officer. The Divisional Crime Officer and some other police officers reportedly slapped and molested him for allegedly doing a video recording of the visually impaired persons. He continued that with the intervention of [SLAJ](#), he was later released on bail. The Regional Coordinator of the Complaint Discipline Internal Investigations Department (CDIID) of the Kenema East Police Division, Osman Sesay, told MRCG that they have received the complaint of Bawoh and his two witnesses together with his medical report and have started investigating the matter. **In July 2024**, the journalist told MRCG that he was called to a meeting together with the SLAJ Regional and National Executives, the Local Unit Commander (LUC) of Kenema, Edison Vandy and the Mayor of Kenema, Thomas Baio, to settle the matter. He continued that they resolved the following: that the journalist would be under medical observation for ninety days, with his health being taken care of by the police, and that the police in Kenema must apologise for their wrongdoing to the journalist and compensate him for all property lost and destroyed during the incident. The police in charge of the matter, Regional Coordinator, CDIID, Osman Sesay, told MRCG that they were still on the matter with a possibility for it to end soon after the journalist would have made a withdrawal statement. **In August 2024**, the journalist told MRCG that he had made the withdrawal statement and the matter had been resolved. The Regional Coordinator for Complaint Discipline and Internal Investigations Department (CDIID), Osman Sesay in Kenema, confirmed that the matter had been resolved.

On 18 June 2024, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) arrested and detained lawyer Joy Bayoh Esq. at the CID in Freetown for allegedly cyberstalking the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. After a [Facebook post](#) by the lawyer, she told MRCG that she was arrested and detained at the CID because of her tweet on the rule of law and democratic principles. The Police said the lawyer was arrested on an alleged crime of cyberstalking but had been released on bail and the matter dismissed.

In June 2024, MRCG monitored the defamation between former Leone Stars players, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, and the Sierra Leone Football Association (SLFA). The High Court of Sierra Leone ruled in favour of the plaintiffs, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, and ordered the defendant, SLFA, to pay damages worth 3 million dollars (1.5 million dollars each). Hassan Kamara Esq., a lawyer for the plaintiffs, told MRCG that his clients took SLFA to court for defamation of character and damage to their reputations.

In August 2024, Umu Thoronka, a journalist working for the *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)* in Makeni, was dismissed from work and was allegedly attacked and harassed on social media regarding a [TikTok](#)

[Video](#) she had posted about a contribution of a lady at the Presidential Town Hall Meeting in Freetown on 23 July 2024. The journalist told MRCG that she received a phone call from her Station Manager, Sinneh Thoronka, who informed her that she had been dismissed due to her social media post on the Presidential Town Hall. In a [press release](#) dated 12 August 2024, Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL) condemned the summary dismissal of the journalist and the subsequent threats to her life. The release further stated that the dismissal occurred without any prior warning letter, discussion or written explanation, contrary to the provisions of the Employee Act of 2023, which mandates a fair and transparent termination process. The *SLBC*, in a press release dated 20 August 2024, responded that the journalist was not a reporter for *SLBC* Makeni, noting that she initially worked as a freelance contractor for *SLBC* in 2015 for three months, followed by a subsequent contract that extended until 2018 when she ceased serving the Corporation. The release further stated that Ms Thoronka flouted the *SLBC*'s policies by taking *SLBC*'s footage without permission, unduly utilising *SLBC*-branded content on her personal social media platforms, and running commentary on it, bringing the institution's name into disrepute. **In September 2024**, the journalist told MRCG that since she reported the matter to SLAJ, she had not yet received a response from them. SLAJ told MRCG that investigations on the matter were ongoing. The matter was also extensively discussed at SLAJ's Annual General Meeting in Bo with suggestions for possible solutions. **In October and November 2024**, there was no new development on the matter. However, SLAJ's National Secretary General Alhaji Manika Kamara told MRCG that investigations were ongoing.

2.2 Right to Access Information

The Chairman and Information Commissioner of the Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC), Dr Ibrahim Seaga-Shaw, told MRCG that the Commission had continued to issue orders for compliance and had recorded a few information requests for which it was copied. He noted that the Northern region had the highest requests, although some cases were still pending.

In terms of compliance from public institutions regarding information disclosure, the Commission is seeing steady progress in that direction in the sense that, in 2022, the compliance rate was thirteen thousand one hundred and seventeen and in 2023, there was a huge jump, which accounted for about nineteen thousand four hundred and ninety-six, adding that there is progress in the 2024 monitoring. However, they were still monitoring. The Commission has also been receiving reports from MDAs regarding the Proactive disclosure of Information (PDI), which shows that there were signs of progress even though the Commission was not there yet.

“It has almost become a pattern over the past four years that the Northern region always has the highest number of information requests, but in the area of the Commission's intervention in those information requests, the Western and Northern regions are doing much better in compliance and reporting. One of the measures the Commission is putting in place for defaulters of the FOI law is to seek legal actions through the court system, but they cannot do so at the moment because the requester takes such steps, even though they are not doing it. So, we are trying to push for some reforms of the RAIC Act law so the Commission can also have that power to take such legal actions instead of just the requesters,” said Dr. Shaw.

One of the challenges the Commission faces is that public institutions are still thinking in the past by maintaining a culture of secrecy. Therefore, they have yet to adapt to the culture of openness for the disclosure of public information. To address that, the commission is trying very hard to work with the Ministry of Human Resources Management and the Public Service Commission to ensure that the aspect of openness stipulated in the RAIC law is inculcated in public officials. Hence, they know precisely that it is imperative for them to publicly disclose information, failing which they will be taken to task.

He ended by saying that there was still no verdict on the matter between Martha Kagbo and the Bank of Sierra

Leone. Still, the Commission was planning to engage the leadership of the judiciary to express concerns regarding the matter.

2.3 Internet Freedom and Digital Rights

Since the enactment of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021, there have been arrests made pursuant to breach of its provision(s). The Act, among other things, provides for the prohibition, prevention, detection, prosecution and punishment of cybercrimes and the protection of privacy rights. Sierra Leoneans who use social media and mobile phones to communicate may risk being criminally prosecuted for cyberstalking and cyberbullying, based on Section 44 of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021, if they share information or opinions perceived to be abusive, harassing, insulting, or detrimentally affect other people. [Click here to read.](#)

2.4 Media and Good Governance

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), with support from partners, organised the regional consultative meeting and national validation of the National Media and Information Policy, which the MRCG, with support from NED, had drafted in partnership with the Ministry, in [Freetown](#). The Policy applies to Print, Electronic (Broadcasting), Wire Services, Advertising, Public Relations, and Social media. It is central to consolidating the government's gains and ensuring an effective and efficient media and information society. It is also anchored on the various policy directives outlined by the government. The policy broadly sketches the main national and global influences that have led to the present development of the media in Sierra Leone. It is inspired by certain fundamental principles considered vital to accessible, developed, and democratic societies regardless of culture or geography. It has evolved from best practices in international instruments, recommendations in various national studies, and other national media policies, including the Ghana National Media Policy.

The policy, upon approval, would attain a media and information ecosystem that is free, safe, proactive, progressive, and participatory and that can contribute to national transformation and development. It would promote and ensure a free, independent, progressive, and innovative media and information ecosystem, providing timely and accurate information and feedback. It would provide coordinated dissemination of government information through the MoICE, promote access to information and create platforms for discourse on national issues that citizens can appreciate and utilise. It would also ensure adequate gender representation, disability inclusion, ethnic, regional, political, religious and other forms of equitable representation in the media.

The National Fund for Public Interest Media ([NaFPIM](#)), led by the Chairman of the Fund, who also doubles as the SLAJ President, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, on 18 November 2024 briefed the Minister of MoICE, Chernor Bah, on the completion of the first phase and a possible continuation of the second phase of the Fund. The Minister assured the Government's support to the Fund as part of its commitment to strengthening the media in Sierra Leone. The Chairman of the Fund thanked the International Fund for Public Interest Media (IFPIM), the BBC Media Action SL, and the MRCG, as well as the member organisations forming the Board and the Technical Working Group for their support and commitment to promoting public interest media in the country.

3. PERFORMANCE OF INSTITUTIONS DEALING WITH FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

On 18 September 2024, the Independent Media Commission received a complaint from Abdul Rahman Jalloh, a petty trader from Kenema, against Victor Sahr Fayombo, a journalist at *Star Line Radio 98.5*. The dispute arose from a broadcast program on ‘Good Governance,’ aired in late September 2023, where Mr. Fayombo questioned a lease agreement between Mr. Jalloh and the Kaisamba family. Mr. Jalloh accused the journalist of spreading derogatory statements and fanning ethnic rivalry. The IMC Complaint Committee determined that Mr. Fayombo had used his position as a journalist to promote ethnic division, specifically between the Mende and Fula communities. The Committee also found that Mr. Fayombo repeatedly invited listeners to engage in derogatory speech against Mr. Jalloh. The IMC Complaint Committee fully endorsed the following recommendations: Mr Fayombo was to pay a fine of Nle15,000 for breaching the IMC media regulations (2022, Section 19(1) on print and electronic media). The fine was to be paid within 30 days of receiving the ruling.

On 3 October 2024, the IMC’s Complaint Committee received a complaint from Engin Aksu, Second Secretary of the Turkish Embassy, against the Managing Editor of *Parameter Newspaper* on 30 July 2024, in connection with a publication dated 11 March 2024 titled, “TURKISH EMBASSY STAFF ACCUSED OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT and EXTORTION for VISA.” During the deliberation, the committee found out that the managing editor of *Parameter Newspaper* did well in balancing their story. Before publication, an email was sent to the Turkish Embassy on 5 February 2024, but they failed to reply. The Committee also noted that reporters were denied access to the embassy while trying to access information. On 18 September 2024, the IMC Complaint Committee fully endorsed the recommendations of the Complaints Committee as follows: the Committee requested that the Turkish Embassy be more receptive to journalists and stop stonewalling, create access to the public either through their email or website, and the Turkish embassy must always respond to email messages.

On 3 October 2024, the IMC’s Complaint Committee received another complaint from Engin Aksu, Second Secretary of the Turkish Embassy, against the Managing Editor of *Spy Newspaper* on 30 July 2024, in connection with a publication dated 11 March 2024 titled, “TURKISH EMBASSY STAFF ACCUSED OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT and EXTORTION for VISA.” During the deliberation, the committee found out that the managing editor of *Spy Newspaper* did well in balancing their story. Before publication, an email was sent to the Turkish Embassy on 5 February 2024, but they failed to reply. The Committee also noted that reporters were denied access to the embassy while trying to access information. On 18 September 2024, the IMC Complaint Committee fully endorsed the recommendations of the Complaints Committee as follows: the Committee requested that the Turkish Embassy be more receptive to journalists and stop stonewalling, create access to the public either through their email or website, and the Turkish embassy must always respond to email messages.

For the reporting period, Claudia Anthony, Chairperson of the SLAJ Disciplinary Committee, told MRCG that the Committee did not receive or adjudicate any complaints from members of the public against journalists across the country.

4. PERFORMANCE OF MEDIA HOUSE AND SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Improvements in media institutions' outputs are reflected in their contents and programming. However, there were significant concerns that several media institutions continued to publish and broadcast content that breached ethical standards or contravened the country's media laws, the IMC Act and its Regulations.

On 21 June 2024, [SLAJ](#) raised concerns about using cyber law in Sierra Leone to shrink freedom of expression space.

On 2 July 2024, MRCG and the Minority Rights Group (MRG) organised the Second Edition of the Inclusive and Anti-Conflict Journalism Awards 2024 with funding support from the European Union. Three winners emerged from six finalists. The Chief Evaluator, Joshua Nicol, emphasised the need for journalists to report on minority rights issues in the country, as this area is often overlooked in daily reporting.

From 9 to 11 July 2024, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, President of SLAJ, attended the 2nd Regional [Conference](#) on Countering Information Manipulation and Hate Speech in West Africa in Lagos, Nigeria. The program was organised by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD) with funds from Global Affairs Canada.

On 17 and 18 July 2024, the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Plan International, and New York University, held a [two-day](#) regional consultative meeting at the New Brookfields Hotel Conference Hall in Freetown on national civic education policy and strategy, national media and information policy, national film policy, and national records and archives policy.

On 1 August 2024, SLAJ, with funding from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), completed a two-day [workshop](#) on cyber law reform in Sierra Leone at the Association's headquarters in Freetown. The workshop included 40 participants: journalists, bloggers, civil society activists, and legal practitioners. It aimed to critically discuss and develop advocacy campaigns around Sierra Leone's Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021.

On 22 August 2024, the National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD), in collaboration with SLAJ, conducted a one-day [training](#) for 20 media practitioners on disability reporting in connection with the Persons with Disability Act, 2011, at the Harry Yansaneh Hall in Freetown. The training was to increase awareness of disability rights and legal framework as representation on disability-related matters has gained global attention.

On 27 August 2024, SLAJ's national executive paid a courtesy [visit](#) to the newly appointed chairman of the Independent Media Commission (IMC), Joseph Kapuwa Esq. During their meeting, SLAJ's President, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, appealed the decision of the IMC to cancel and suspend the licenses and registrations of media houses that have defaulted in the registration and renewal processes or failed to comply with the IMC complaint rulings. Mr. Nasralla requested that the Commission extend the time for the suspension, cancellation of licenses and registrations until the end of September 2024 so media houses would have ample time to comply with the IMC Act 2020 and Media Regulation of 2022.

On diverse dates in September 2024, the MRCG, with funding support from the Africa Transitional Justice Legacy Fund (ATJLF), under the project 'Engaging Media and Communities to Change the Narrative on Transitional Justice Issues in Sierra Leone' capacitated sixty-six (66) journalists across the country on transitional justice reporting: [F](#), [Makeni training](#), and [Kenema training](#).

On 9 and 12 September 2024, SLAJ [inducted](#) 159 members recommended by the Association’s Credential Committees in Freetown, Makeni, Bo, and Kenema. “I am very pleased to see among some university lecturers, graduates, students and senior practitioners. It’s heartwarming, and I only hope this will continue,” said SLAJ President.

On 13 September 2024, SLAJ President Ahmed Sahid Nasralla attended the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ) [Steering Committee Meeting](#) in Nouakchott, Mauritania, as a Reserve Member of the FAJ Steering Committee (IFJ).

On 30 September 2024, the Sierra Leone Women in Journalism (SLAWIJ) organised its first [Annual General Meeting](#) at the Bank Complex Kingdom in Freetown on the theme ‘Women in Journalism: Challenges and Opportunities.’

From September 26 to 28, 2024, SLAJ held its Annual general meeting in Bo on the theme ‘CHARTING THE WAY FORWARD: New Constitution for an Inclusive and Stronger SLAJ’.

On 8 October 2024, SLAJ [met](#) with Statistics Sierra Leone to discuss its role in the 2025 Housing and Population Census. On 28 October 2024, SLAJ joined the European Union in the [Annual clean-up](#) event at Lumley Beach.

On 22 October 2024, the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE) validated the draft Media and Information Policy with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The policy aims to enhance the media and information ecosystem in Sierra Leone and attain a proactive, progressive, and participatory ecosystem that contributes to national transformation and development.

On 28 October 2024, the Campaign for Human Rights and Development International (CHRDI) requested information from the judiciary relating to the following documents: lists of cases before magistrates and judges for both criminal and civil cases between January and October, list of assigned cases to judges for all High Court call-over sessions between January to October 2024 and kindly requested the Commission to make the Code of Conduct for the Judicial Officers of the Republic of Sierra Leone publicly available on their official website. According to CHRDI, this aligns with the proactive disclosure measures that the judiciary requires by law.

On 1 November 2024, in collaboration with SLAJ and Initiatives for Media Development, the European Union successfully concluded a five-day training program in Kenema, Eastern Sierra Leone, to equip journalists and influencers with essential tools for reporting on environmental issues.

On 16 November 2024, MRCG engaged the Mile 91 Community in a meeting about transitional justice issues. The [meeting](#) was part of an ongoing initiative to raise public awareness about these issues.

On 18 November 2024, members of [NaFPIM](#), including the Fund’s Chairman, met with Mohamed Cherrnor Bah, the Minister of Information and Civic Education. The Minister briefed the public on the completion of the first phase of the fund and assured NaFPIM of the government’s commitment to it.

Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, president of SLAJ, attended the International Debate Best Practices Symposium in Washington, D.C., from November 19 to 22, 2024. He attended the program as Chairman of the National Political Debates Committee (NPDC), a multi-stakeholder group of eleven organisations, including civil society, EMBs, women, people living with disability, youths, and the media.

On 23 November 2024, the IMC regional office in Bo Southern Sierra Leone presided on a complaint from

Hon. Dickson Momoh Rogers of Pujehun District against journalist Alie Badara of One Man Media Network for an alleged broadcast concerning an alleged impregnation of an underaged girl. The IMC Complaint Committee is still investigating the matter whilst MRCC continues to monitor the issue.

5. POSITION OF THE SIERRA LEONE ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

From June to November 2024, SLAJ had improved in several aspects. The SLAJ President, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla, noted the tremendous gains made over the years in promoting and protecting freedom of expression and of the press and media developments in Sierra Leone as the Association held its Annual General Meeting in September 2024, celebrating unwavering dedication, integrity, and excellence in journalism. SLAJ's contributions to democracy, good governance, and national cohesion during times of crisis cannot be overstated. 'As we reflect on our journey, we recognise the importance of looking inward to assess our progress and envision our future. At 53, we honour the remarkable impact SLAJ has had on the media landscape in Sierra Leone and the broader development of our nation. We pay tribute to our founding members, past and current executives, and dedicated members while remembering our fallen colleagues who have shaped our path,' said the SLAJ President. As SLAJ looks ahead, it continues to thrive and inspire future generations of journalists to pursue their profession with courage, integrity, and professionalism.

The arrest of a female lawyer, Joy Precious Bayoh, by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Sierra Leone Police in June 2024 for expressing her views on social media highlighted a troubling trend regarding free expression in Sierra Leone. After questioning the legitimacy of His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio following a contentious election, Joy was detained overnight before being released on bail. Her case raised serious concerns about applying the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021 in ways that threaten civic space. That incident underscored our long-standing concerns regarding the Cyber Security and Crime Law, which we previously articulated in the SLAJ position paper. SLAJ has warned that law enforcement agencies might misuse this legislation to suppress critical and dissenting voices, particularly following the significant repeal of the criminal libel law just a year earlier. Also, the online harassment and intimidation of Thomas Dixon, Amadu Lamrana Bah, and others raised several concerns about journalists' safety in their line of duty. While the Association acknowledged the necessity of addressing online crimes, we remain deeply apprehensive about provisions in the law that could infringe upon fundamental human rights, particularly freedom of expression and the press, as well as privacy. The Association's fears are being validated as the police employ the cyber law in ways reminiscent of the abuses seen with the criminal libel law for decades.

Since 2021, under the MRCG platform, SLAJ has highlighted multiple cases of alleged cyber-related offences, including the arrest of musicians, journalists, and ordinary citizens for expressing their views online. This ongoing trend creates a chilling effect on civic space, hindering free expression and critical discourse. As journalists, our responsibility is to protect this right, for our profession relies on it. While we recognise the Government's efforts in supporting media development, including repealing the criminal libel law and enhanced collaboration with the media sector, these achievements risk becoming hollow if we cannot safeguard the fundamental right to free expression. SLAJ, therefore, calls on all stakeholders to unite to protect civic space and uphold the rights of individuals to express themselves without fear of retribution.

During the reporting period, SLAJ received the annual government subventions for the years 2023 and 2024, totalling SLE 1,500 million (One Million Five Hundred Thousand Leones), with SLE 750,000 (Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand Leones) allocated for each year. This annual subvention was established by His Excellency President Julius Maada Bio in 2018 as part of his commitment to supporting press freedom in Sierra Leone. The initial subvention in 2018 was SLE 150,000 (One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Leones), which has progressively increased in subsequent years to enhance the operational capacity of the Association further. SLAJ is responsible for administering this annual subvention, which supports the activities of its national and regional offices, established committees, affiliate bodies, and subsidiary organisations. It is important to note that the elected officials managing SLAJ's affairs are volunteers and do not receive salaries or stipends from these funds. The

subvention is requested each year through the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE) and is subject to auditing by the Audit Service Sierra Leone. SLAJ extends gratitude to the government for its continued support, which plays a vital role in promoting press freedom and enhancing the capacity of the media in Sierra Leone. The Association remains committed to using these resources effectively (and accounting for them) to advance the interests of its members and contribute to a vibrant and informed society. SLAJ, with funding from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), in August 2024, successfully concluded a workshop focused on Cyber Law reform in Sierra Leone. The training discussed, critiqued, and developed advocacy campaigns regarding the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021, with a focus on some provisions of the law that may infringe on media freedom, free expression, and data rights with participants including journalists, bloggers, civil society activists, and legal practitioners, as part of IFJ's commitment to promoting press freedom and free speech in Sierra Leone. The SLAJ President addressed specific media concerns related to the law and ensured it did not suppress press freedom or free speech, referencing the association's position paper and the concerns raised during its formulation. While acknowledging that the Cyber Security and Crime Act is not inherently flawed, he cautioned that specific provisions, such as those in Section 44, pose risks to freedom of expression and the press.

Again, SLAJ presented a position paper to the SLAJ Constitutional Review Committee to modernise and strengthen the Association's governance framework. Key proposals in the position paper include monthly stipends for elected officials, recognising the time and effort dedicated to their roles; establishment of an electoral court to ensure fair and transparent electoral processes; disclosure of campaign financing for candidates seeking elected positions like the presidency; asset declaration; Integrity Management Committees (IMCs), at both national and regional levels to ensure robust financial and administrative controls within the Association; Logistics and Procurement Committee to supervise all procurement processes and manage the Association's assets, ensuring accountability and transparency. In the interest of promoting gender equality, the national executive also proposed the formation of a Gender Advisory Panel that would comprise SLAJ members and civil society representatives to advise on issues relating to gender equality and women's empowerment and oversee the implementation of the SLAJ Gender Equality Policy for the Media in Sierra Leone.

The draft Constitution was a central topic at SLAJ's AGM 2024. SLAJ encouraged constructive discussions that would shape the future of the Association and enhance its commitment to democracy, transparency, and accountability in the media sector. SLAJ, on 27 August 2024, met with the IMC for a significant courtesy call, marking its first engagement since Joseph Kapuwa Esq became the new IMC Chairman. The main focus was the urgent need for collaboration between the two institutions to reengineer the media industry. As IMC prepares actions against media houses that have failed to comply with registration requirements under the IMC Act of 2020, SLAJ expressed concern about potential suspensions, stressing the importance of balancing press freedom with adherence to the law. SLAJ emphasised that it would not support media outlets violating the IMC Act but sought a collaborative approach to address compliance issues. The need for clear guidelines and oversight on the registration of journalists was emphasised, with concerns about unqualified individuals claiming journalistic credentials.

SLAJ inducted new members following a thorough vetting process by the SLAJ Credentials Committee. The induction ceremonies occurred across multiple cities—Freetown, Makeni, Bo, and Kenema—between September 9th and 12th, 2024. From a pool of 216 candidates interviewed in person and virtually, the Committee approved 159 members, while 54 applications remain under review; three candidates were deemed unqualified. During the induction, SLAJ President Ahmed Sahid Nasralla emphasised the Association's longstanding commitment to defending free speech and press freedom and enhancing its members' welfare and professional development. He provided an overview of SLAJ's history, governance, democratic principles, the ethical standards outlined in the SLAJ Code of Ethics, and the regulations set by the IMC for both print and electronic media. The induction culminated in the new members taking an oath of commitment. They also received official membership acceptance letters, marking their formal entry into the Association.

At the Annual General Meeting, SLAJ lamented the challenges of meeting the demands of a rapidly evolving media landscape. The Association has made significant progress in advocating for media freedom and defending journalist's rights. Still, as it moves forward, it must do more to ensure SLAJ remain relevant, inclusive, and resilient. The media environment is transforming at an unprecedented pace. New technologies, social media, and the rise of young, diverse voices demand that we adapt our structures and constitution to meet these changes. The growth of SLAJ membership, especially among young people, requires that internal systems promote transparency, democracy, and accountability while reflecting the diversity of the media industry. SLAJ must become a model of inclusivity. This includes ensuring equal representation for women journalists, journalists living with disability, those in rural areas, and those working in emerging media sectors. The Association must embrace the full spectrum of the profession to remain strong and united.

The President continued that the digital revolution has changed the media landscape forever. To stay at the forefront, SLAJ must provide its members with the tools, training, and resources needed to thrive in this new environment. We must prioritise digital literacy and equip journalists with the skills to maintain high ethical reporting standards, even as new media platforms challenge traditional practices. SLAJ's strength has always been its solidarity. Together, we have achieved significant victories, such as advocating for the repeal of the criminal libel law. As we face growing threats to press freedom and increasing online attacks on journalists, our unity remains our greatest asset. We must continue to support one another, recognising that an attack on one of us is an attack on all. Invest in training programs to equip young and emerging journalists with the skills needed for a digital-first world. Advocacy for media freedom by fighting for a free and conducive environment for journalists to operate, without fear of harassment or repression, ensure that all voices, regardless of gender, physical status, region, or media type, are heard and valued within SLAJ strengthen SLAJ's financial foundation through innovative funding models, ensuring long-term viability and independence. The road ahead is filled with challenges, but we can overcome them together. SLAJ will remain a powerful force for responsible journalism in Sierra Leone by embracing change, championing inclusivity, and strengthening our solidarity. Let us continue to build an association that serves as a beacon of press freedom and democratic governance, both now and for future generations.

Finally, SLAJ encouraged all journalists and media practitioners in Sierra Leone to actively participate in the SLAJ Media Awards 2024/25, as their work was essential to educating the public, promoting accountability, and contributing to the nation's sustainable development. The UNDP Outstanding Journalist of the Year Award is a new initiative that complements the UNDP's ongoing efforts to support the media's role in advancing human rights, social justice, and sustainable development in Sierra Leone.

6. GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS, INFORMATION, INTERNET FREEDOM AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

In an interview with the Director of Information, Ministry of Information and Civic Education, Emmanuel A B Turay, he highlighted the government's position on Freedom of Expression and of the Press, Right to Access Information, Internet Freedom, and Digital Rights and the government's commitment to enhancing freedom of expression and of the press. He expressed that the Government has always been very committed to freedom of expression as His Excellency President Bio made a commitment to repeal Part 5 of the 1965 Public Order Act of 1965, which he did and also announced that his government would facilitate the first media viability and investment conference, which eventually happened in 2022. Also, the proliferation of various media institutions in the country accounts for over 500 media outlets, including print, electronic, and new media. We are also now experiencing the use of social media with a particular focus on the rate at which people are at liberty to use electronic or print media as a platform to express their views and opinions without hindrance from any government official. Though there are challenges in terms of its regulation for the benefit of society, it has also enhanced people's freedom to express themselves on matters concerning their well-being in society.

One of the steps taken by the government towards enhancing press freedom is that through the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), the government is now working in a concerted effort with the SLAJ and the MRCG to bring some reforms to the media and information sector to augment its professionalism which critics have challenged over the years. Also, in the area of journalists' safety and security, the country's security sector signed an MOU in 2021, which addressed journalists' safety and security in their line of duty. Again, the government, through the IMC Act of 2022, provided a complaint mechanism to mediate on complaint matters between the media and the citizenry as a way of ensuring the country has a professional and vibrant media system operating in the interest of its people. As part of its responsibility to enhance media pluralism, it has also opened up the space for registering and licensing a multiplicity of media outlets, as enshrined in section 11 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone. We now have more media institutions operating in the country than before.

At the international level, Sierra Leone has participated in various programs or events on press freedom, condemning the killing of journalists, cruelty to journalists and all other forms of inhumane treatment that have been perpetrated against journalists. Sierra Leone was also among the first five countries to sign the Global Media Pledge, which seeks to promote press freedom worldwide. To ensure a safe environment for journalists, the Ministry, in collaboration with SLAJ through MRCG, developed a Policy on journalist's safety in their line of work. The development of the policy and its implementation is a process that we are all working towards achieving its success so that journalists' safety and security are enhanced in the practice of their profession.

The Ministry has been working collaboratively with the Ministry of Communication Technology and Innovation (MoCTI), which is charged with the responsibility of overseeing the effective implementation of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021 to ensure it does not affect the work of journalists but rather, enhance the work of the media whilst also protecting the citizenry from cyber-attacks and crimes in the country. The Ministry is still collaborating with other partners on data protection laws to protect people's privacy from cyber invaders. So, the media should not see the Cyber Security and Crime Act of 2021 as another means of muzzling the press.

The Ministry has completed the validation exercise on the draft National Media and Information Policy, which has also been taken to the cabinet for review. Once done, it will help bring healthy sanitation and transformation into the country's media and information ecosystem. The government is still very committed to the National Fund for Public Interest Media (NaFPIM), as the initiative itself was launched by the president when he made the pronouncement after the repeal of Part 5 of the 1965 Public Order Act. The conference had seven (7) key recommendations, and one of the outcomes discussed having a fund to address the issue of media poverty in the country. There are challenges with the funding, but the government still maintains its commitment to counterpart

funding, which it is working on assiduously. The government is more than ready to support the Fund from budgetary allocations and partner organisations. The Fund will also serve as a capacitating and enhancing freedom of expression and of the press, as journalists will be at liberty to practice independently without relying on people for resources. The government will also provide a platform for the waiver system for broadcast and printing equipment to cushion the burden on them so that they can market their products without costing them too much.

The sustainability of the media can be enhanced in various ways, including private media ownership. When applications are made for registration of media outlets at the IMC, their proposals, business plans and sustainability plans are already stated. The Ministry is working to help solicit support in the area of polarisation to help the operations of media outlets, particularly community radio stations, because most of the community radio stations in the country are constantly challenged with problems of power outages to leverage on rural electrification and in turn, they will also support the daily broadcast of the National Grid which is the public service broadcaster in terms of relaying to their channels to get the rural reach thereby networking to promote their sustainability. So, holistically, the sustainability plan for the media landscape is that the government will create an enabling environment for the media to practice and do their work by giving a tax waiver on the cost of broadcast and print materials in the country. Also, the government intends to transform the SLBC by digitising its operations to ensure more efficiency and sustainability to match current and future trends. Also, much work is being done at Leicester Peak to protect the critical information infrastructure from public access and prevent future damage to the country's information infrastructure.

Over the years, MRCG has documented freedom of expression and press freedom cases well, which has significantly helped the government promote free media. However, more penetration into rural communities, with many community radios, is needed. Their studies should also be more widely publicised in the provinces to educate people on media freedom, reforms, and capacity building.

7. STATUS OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION LAWS IN SIERRA LEONE

All media and communication laws and codes remain the same for the reporting period. The Data Protection and Privacy Bill developed by the Ministry of Information and Communication (now the Ministry of Information and Civic Education) has yet to be enacted.

Table 7.1: Specific Acts containing Media Laws and Regulations still in Force

No.	Specific Statutes on Media Laws/Regulation - Acts of Parliament	Year	Status of the law
1.	Undesirable Publications Cap 113 of the Laws of Sierra Leone, 1960	1961	In force
2.	Undesirable Advertisement Ordinance - Cap 114 in the Laws of Sierra Leone, 1960	1960	In force
3.	Defamation Ordinance - Act No. 32	1961	In force
4.	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation Act, 2009 (Act No. 1 of 2010).	2010	In force
5.	The Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act, 2020 (Act No. 5 of 2020)- It repealed and replaced the Independent Media Commission (IMC) Act, 2000 (Act No. 12 of 2000) as amended in 2006 and 2007	2020	In force
6	Cybersecurity and Crime Act 2021	2021	In force

Source (Sowa & Kapuwa, 2015 and updated regularly¹)

¹ Francis Sowa and Joseph Egbenda Kapuwa, Media Laws and Regulations: Review and Update on Sierra Leone's Statutory and Self-Regulatory Models (2015)

Table 7.2: Other Statutes (Acts of Parliament) relating to Media Regulation still in Force

No.	Other Statutes (Acts of Parliament) with laws relating to media regulation	Year	Status of the law
1.	The Treason and State Offences Act, 1963	1963	In force
2.	Criminal Libel - The Public Order Act, 1965 (Act No 46 of 1965)	1965	Repealed
3.	Publication of False News - The Public Order Act	1965	Repealed
4.	Seditious Libel - The Public Order Act	1965	Repealed
5.	Constitution of Sierra Leone - Freedom of Expression and of the Press	1991	In force
6.	Constitution of Sierra Leone - Public Emergency Law	1991	In force, but under review
7.	Constitution of Sierra Leone - Law of Contempt of Parliament	1991	In force
8.	The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	1995	In force
9.	Pharmacy and Drugs Act	2001	In force
10.	The National Electronic Communication Act, 2022 (Act. No. 16 of 2022) repealed and replaced the Telecommunications Act 2006 as amended	2021	In force
11.	The Child Rights Act 2007 (No. 7 2007)	2007	In force
12.	The Anti-Corruption Act, 2008 (Act No No. 12 of 2008) as amended in the Anti-Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2019 (Act No. 9 of 2019).	2008, as amended in 2019	In force
13.	The Copyright Act, 2011 (No. 7 of 2007)	2011	In force
14.	The Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (Act No 00 of 2012) as amended	2012 as amended in 2019	In force
15.	The Right to Access Information Act, 2013 (Act No No. 2 2013)	2013	In force
16.	Public Order (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act. No 4 of 2020)	2020	In force
17.	The Law on Contempt of Court	Common Law	In force

Source (Sowa & Kapuwa, 2015; updated regularly)²

Table 7.3: Codes Dealing with Media Regulation Still in Force

No.	Codes	Year	Status of the law
1.	Code of Conduct of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists	2000 (reviewed 2014/2015)	In force.
2.	The Independent Media Commission (IMC) Media Code of Practice	2007	The section on Advertising is still applicable.
3.	Right to Access Information Regulations 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 9 of 2022)	2022	In force.
4.	Independent Media Commission (Print and Electronic Media) Regulations, 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 11 of 2022)	2022	In force.
5.	Independent Media Commission Elections (Coverage and Reporting) Regulations, 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 17 of 2022)	2022	In force.

Source (Sowa and Kapuwa, 2015; updated regularly)³

8. CONCLUSION

The issues covered in this report relate to freedom of expression, the press, information, internet freedom, digital rights, and the safety and security of journalists in Sierra Leone. The MRCG will continue to re-echo one of the provisions in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Report: “Freedom of expression is the lifeblood of a democracy. A culture of public debate and tolerance for dissenting ideas is the sign of a vibrant and healthy democracy. Restrictions on the freedom of expression represent a fearful state; it reflects a State that has no confidence in its ability to promote and disseminate its doctrines in the marketplace of ideas.”

The MRCG continues to monitor the implementation and the popularisation of the various pieces of legislation: Right to Access Information Regulations 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 9 of 2022); Independent Media Commission (Print and Electronic Media) Regulations, 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 11 of 2022); and the Independent Media Commission Elections (Coverage and Reporting) Regulations, 2022 (Statutory Instrument No. 17 of 2022) by the RAIC and the IMC. The laws have introduced new regulations on the right to access information, media ethics, and coverage and reporting of elections.

It still looks forward to implementing the recommendations of its maiden Journalists’ Welfare report, which revealed genuine concerns journalists across the country raised about their welfare and safety. It also considers the recent online attacks against journalists a way of encumbering press freedom and freedom of expression in the country. It calls on the state authorities to always ensure journalists' safety.

The MRCG still looks forward to the speedy enactment of the Data Protection Law, which will guarantee the privacy and safety of citizens’ data online and offline, and to implementing the Cybersecurity and Crime Act 2021 without hindering freedom of expression and the press.

The safety and Security of journalists are at the heart of MRCG; the organisation hopes that the government, media owners, and security sector will guarantee the safety of journalists in their line of duty. The MRCG also calls on the SLP to speedily investigate all matters before it, as a delay in justice delivery is a denial of justice.

The MRCG commends the government, through the Ministry of Information and Civic Education, for the key steps taken to speedily complete the various consultation and validation processes of the National Media and Information Policy. If approved, the policy would create a free, safe, proactive, progressive, and participatory media and information ecosystem that can support the development and change of the country. A free, independent, forward-thinking, and creative media and information ecosystem that offers fast, accurate information and comment would be encouraged and guaranteed. The Ministry of Information and Civic Education would offer a coordinated distribution of government information, promote access to information, and establish forums to discuss national problems that the public can value and use. Additionally, it would guarantee sufficient representation of women, people with disabilities, and people of other ethnicities, regions, political parties, and religions in the media.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- The government, SLAJ and partners should continue implementing the other Media Viability and Investment Conference recommendations.
- The media stakeholders should work with the Constitutional Review Committee to add a standalone chapter on media development to the National Constitution.
- The government, through the Ministry of Information and Civic Education (MoICE), should speedily wrap up all consultations on the National Media and Information Policy.
- The government and stakeholders should put mechanisms in place to address online attackers.
- The government should speedily enact the Data Protection Law to fully promote citizens' digital rights, protect citizens' data and consumer protection, and block potential loopholes in data exploitation by private entities and government agencies.
- The government must ensure that journalists and citizens continue to enjoy their rights to freedom of expression, including press freedom and assembly, without the fear of being intimidated, harassed, assaulted, arrested, detained, and prosecuted.
- Media owners and employers should ensure that their reporters are paid at least the minimum wage and that their staff receive better conditions of service.
- The Sierra Leone Police to speed up and conclude investigations of all cases against journalists and civil society activists, including those who were assaulted or threatened and those who had been invited and/or detained but released without charge.
- Media owners and managers should develop their in-house safety policy based on the national safety policy for journalists developed by MRCG to ensure their safety.
- The MRCG, SLAJ and other media groups should continue training and building the capacity of journalists to match international best standards of practice through the support of non-governmental organisations by supporting mentorship and fellowship programs for journalists.


10. REFERENCES


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- Turay, E A B. (2024) Director of Information-MoICE [Interview] Interviewed by Patricia Sankoh, 20 November 2024.


11. APPENDICES


11.1 Reported Cases in the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Editions of the Press Freedom Reports.

The table below shows the cases, dates of attack/arrest or invitations and their current status.

The ‘gold columns’ cases have been concluded, settled, resolved, dropped or abandoned. 

Those in ‘blue columns’ are in court. 

Those in the ‘red columns’ are under police investigation/inconclusive/stalled. 

Those in the ‘brown columns’ are abandoned cases. 

From the First to the Thirteenth Edition of the Press Freedom Report, **eighty-seven** cases and issues were monitored. **Sixty-one** were concluded, settled, resolved, or dropped because of lack of progress; **six** were in court, **twenty** were under police investigation/inconclusive, and nine are abandoned.

Table 11.1: Status of cases monitored by MRCG from March 2018 to November 2024

No	Completed Cases Monitored by the MRCG since 2018	Date of Attack/Arrest/Invitation	Status of Cases as at the time of reporting
1	Attack on a reporter of <i>Concord Times Newspaper</i> , Patrick Jaiah Kamara by thugs allegedly on the instruction of former Mayor of the Freetown City Council, Herbert George Williams, Sanusi Bruski and other All Peoples Congress (APC) Party members during the 31 March 2018 Presidential run-off election.	During the 31 March 2018 Presidential run-off Election	Matter resolved out of court after few appearances.
2	Attack on the late Editor of <i>New Age Newspaper</i> , Ibrahim Samura by the then ruling APC party members and supporters allegedly on orders of former Freetown Mayor of the APC, Herbert George Williams, and the APC Public Relation Officer, Abubakar at a polling station in Lumley during the 31 March 2018 Presidential run-off election who later died at the 34 Military Hospital at Wilberforce on 6 June 2018.	31 March 2018 Presidential run-off Election	The two accused had been acquitted and discharged for murder and conspiracy to commit grievous bodily harm by Justice Augustine Musa of the High Court of Sierra Leone in Freetown as the jury returned a verdict of not guilty.
3	Arrest and detention of a civil society activist, Edmond Abu, Executive Director of Native Consortium and Research Centre, by the Sierra Leone Police for staging a peaceful protest in Freetown against the increments in fuel pump price.	17 July 2018	Released on bail and matter not charged to court.

4	Invitation of the Leader and Chairman of the Alliance Democratic Party (ADP) , Mohamed Kamarainba Mansaray and Abdul Fonti Kabia, formerly of <i>AYV</i> , to CID for interview he granted in response to allegation relating to the alleged publication of false news, contrary to the Public Order Act of 1965.	22 July 2018	All charges dropped and matter terminated.
5	Invitation of journalist to Parliament to answer to some questions in connection with a story broadcast on <i>African Young Voices TV</i> , titled “Caught on Camera”, involving a member of parliament, Hon. Veronica Kadie Sesay and two others in a land matter.	September 2018	The <i>AYV</i> Director of News and Current Affairs, Samuel Wise Bangura, appeared before Parliament and was asked to retract and apologize. But he refused/declined and nothing happened after that.
6	Attack on <i>AYV TV</i> journalist, Ransford Metzger, while investigating an alleged corruption matter at the St. Joseph Secondary School in Freetown.	September 2018	Alleged perpetrators arrested and held at the CID, but were released after the journalist and <i>AYV</i> management accepted the apology of the perpetrators.
7	Arrest of Fayia Amara Fayia of <i>Star Radio and Standard Times Newspaper</i> by CID officers outside the <i>AYV</i> media on what the CID said was a post on his Facebook page containing defamatory words against His Excellency the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, Julius Maada Bio.	29 September 2018	Police said since Part 5 of the Public Order Act of 1965 has been repealed, the file has been closed.
8	Harassment of Alhassan Jalloh, Editor of the <i>Unique Newspaper</i> , by police officers attached to the Lumley Police Station in the West end of Freetown, while investigating a fracas between Leonco Filling Station at Lumley and a mosque.	5 November 2018	Mr. Jalloh said the matter was not progressing and he has dropped it and moved on.
9	Arrest and detention of Emmanuel C Thorli, Managing Editor of <i>the Night Watch Newspaper</i> by the Sierra Leone Police on 14 January 2019 on the allegation of publishing false information that several diplomatic passports were illegally given to families of the ruling government officials.	14 January 2019	Police said the matter has been closed because of the repeal of Part 5 of the Public Order Act of 1965.
10	Attacks on and intimidation of civil society leaders, including the Executive Director of Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), Madam Marcella Samba-Sesay, who had publicly expressed critical views on the media about the governance challenges.	3-6 May 2019	Matter ended after several press releases condemning the attack on her.

11	Attack on a civil society activist, Morlai Conteh, President of the National Youth Coalition of Sierra Leone, allegedly by a group of military officers of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) after the main opposition All People's Congress (APC) party did a walkout protest of the ceremony marking the Presidential State Opening of Parliament on 2 May 2019.	2 May 2019	Mr. Conteh said his moves to further the case were fruitless; so he decided to drop it.
12	Arrest and detention of four local journalists- Sallieu Tejan Jalloh, Publisher of the <i>Times SL Newspaper</i> ; David Johnson, Editor of <i>Times SL Newspaper</i> ; Mustapha Sesay, General Editor, <i>Standard Times Newspaper</i> ; and Abu Bakarr Kargbo (Father Bakish), a Senior Staff Writer of <i>Standard Times Newspaper</i> - in Freetown on Friday 28 June 2019. They were charged with eight-count for allegedly publishing defamatory articles in the <i>Times SL Newspaper and the Standard Times Newspaper</i> respectively against Pa Momoh Fofanah Esq, a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of Sierra Leone.	28 June 2019	Journalists discharged.
13	Assault on two female sport journalists (Francess Bernard-Bundor and Easter Marie Samura) of <i>SLBC</i> by Officers of the Sierra Leone Presidential guard on Sunday 8 September 2019 at the National Stadium, during the FIFA 2022 World Cup Preliminary return-leg match between Sierra Leone and Liberia.	8 September 2019	Action taken against the presidential guards. Government refunded the medical expenses by the journalists and their property destroyed or stolen paid for.
14	Arrest and detention of the Managing Editor of the <i>Times Newspaper</i> Sallieu Tejan Jalloh (Sal Tee) on 11 November 2019 in Freetown, by plainclothes police officers in connection with an SMS text message that he sent to the Chief Minister of Sierra Leone, Prof. David Francis enquiring about an alleged payment of US\$ 1.5 million into his private ECOBANK account by SL Mining, which license had been cancelled by the state.	11 November 2019	Police said the matter has been closed because of the decriminalization of Part 5 of the Public Order Act of 1965.
15	Alleged threat by the former Inspector General of Police to arrest Alex Lawrence Koroma, a producer of <i>Radio Democracy FM 98.1</i> 'Good Moring Salon Programme', for a programme he produced on the state of security.	23 February 2020	Arrest not affected.
16	Arrest and detention of Chernor Jalloh, Reporter, <i>Radio Democracy</i> , Yusuf Bangura, Reporter,	5 March 2020	The two journalists were released, while the matter of Mr. Moore was

	<i>Concord Times</i> , and a civil society activist, Thomas Moore Conteh, Executive Director of Citizens Advocacy Network (CAN) by police during a Limkokwing University protest over fee subsidies by the Government of Sierra Leone.		dismissed by the Court.
17	Invitation of the Managing Editor/Publisher of the <i>Nationalist Newspaper</i> , Mohamed Sankoh (AKA, One Drop) by the police in connection with an opinion piece he authored titled ‘Is the Catholic Church in a Mess?’	20 March 2020	Police dropped case against Mr. Sankoh as they said it was a mistaken identity as they mistook Mr. Sankoh for another person.
18	Assault on Stanley Sahr Jimmy, Station Manager, <i>Wusum Radio FM 88.5</i> in Makeni, allegedly by five police officers at the Mena Police Station.	April 2020.	The police said four of the officers were seriously reprimanded in the presence of the complainant and that there was no case against one of the officers. The police said the matter had been closed. Mr. Jimmy confirmed to MRCG that the matter had been settled out of police.
19	Arrest and detention of Adeyemi Jackson of <i>Universal Radio</i> by police in Freetown after reportedly requesting an interview with Dr. Ibrahim Bundu, a medical doctor attached to the Connaught Hospital in Freetown, in relation to an alleged sexual assault matter.	1 May 2020	Police said the matter had been closed.
20	The arrest and detention of Dr. Sylvia Blyden and Hussain Muckson Sesay by CID in Freetown, because of her alleged critical and controversial publications and postings on social media. She was later charged with 10 counts of various offences, ranging from seditious libel, to publication of false news, and defamatory libel, among others.	June 2020	The matter rendered, “Nolle Prosequoi,” as the Government of Sierra Leone dropped all charges against them on the 16 November 2020.
21	On the Police harassing and intimidating the Manager of <i>Lunsar Radio</i> , Mr. Alhaji Foday Labay to produce a recording of a radio program he hosted Prof Sheikh Umaru Kamara, the Community Relations Officer of Sierra Leone Mining Company in Lunsar on 23 April 2020 which led to a strike action calling for the Resignation or replacement of their Paramount Chief.	12 June 2020	The matter had been dismissed.
22	Supreme Court of Sierra Leone ordering the arrest of Lawyer Augustine Sorie-Sengbe Marrah for publishing information on social media about the	28 October 2020	The matter ended when he complied with the Supreme Court ordering him to do a retraction of the said

	ruling on the qualification of lawyers in holding certain offices, which have political undertones and allegedly had the tendency to put the legal profession into disrepute as his post was rated as demeaning to the apex court of the land.		post in an article and write a letter of apology to the judiciary and the presiding judges; and also publish the said letter of apology in the front pages of two widely read newspapers in Sierra Leone.
23	The verbal attack, insult and intimidation of BBC reporter, and Former President of SLAJ Umaru Fofana in December 2020, from social media for his alleged “biased reports on political events in Sierra Leone” from people claiming to be members of the main opposition All Peoples Congress (APC) party.	December 2020	Umaru Fofana said he has decided to move on as he receives such threats frequently. “I find it very harassing and sort of bullying that they can dedicate so much time to attacking and seeking to intimidate me. And the fact that APC party doesn’t distance itself from it, let alone condone, it is irksome. Failing to condemn it is akin to condoning it.”
24	The arrest and detention of Emmanuel C. Thorli, a reporter for the Night Watch Newspaper on 7 February 2021, by the Sierra Leone Police for allegedly taking snapshots of the 7 February 2021, Jui demolition exercise carried out by the police at Jui Junction, Western Area Rural.	7 February 2021	Police said the matter had been closed.
25	The invitation and detention of the Editor-in- Chief and Proprietor, Joseph Turay and Ezekiel Dumbuya, News Editor of the Public Review Newspaper , on 22 March 2021, by officers of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in Freetown for more than five hours, over a matter involving land dispute in the Western Rural Area which police claimed that the newspaper had reported erroneously on.	22 March 2021	The police said none of them was detained. “They were only at CID for statement making; maybe, according to them, they see it as detention,” said the police. Police said the matter has been closed.
26	The arrest and detention of Hassan Gbessay Koroma, a Concord Time Newspaper journalist on 6 May 2021 by the Sierra Leone police for allegedly taking pictures of the Minister of Internal Affairs, David Panda Noah at the Siaka Stevens Street during an operation of him and police chasing commercial bike riders off the Central Business District (CBD) area, an operation that is said to clean the CBD of commercial motor bikes.	6 May 2021	The matter has been closed.
27	The alleged verbal attack on BBC Sports Journalist Mohamed Fajah Barrie by the Adviser to Sierra Leone’s Sports Minister, Alie Kadar for publishing	13 June 2021	The Minister of Sports intervened, mediated and settled the matter between both parties.

	a story on his Facebook timeline relating to 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.		
28	The dismissal of Phebian Swill-Randall from the Sierra Leone Board of Entertainment and Investment by the Ambassador of Entertainment and Investment, Amara Dennis Turay commonly known as ‘Kao De Nero’ for a Facebook post she made on increment in the pump price of fuel in the country.	12 August 2021	Phebian Swill-Randall accepted her dismissal and did not apologize to be reinstated.
29	The arrest and detention of 10 of <i>Star Radio’s</i> journalists for allegedly obstructing the Sierra Leone Police as they went to the media house to investigate alleged illegal electricity connection, a complaint made by the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority (EDSA).	5 October 2021	Station Manager of Star Radio, Abdul Rahman Kamara told the MRCG that the matter had been discharged from court and their meter returned to them.
30	The intimidation of and death threat against Journalist Salieu Tejan Jalloh of <i>Times Newspaper</i> as a result of his publications exposing perpetrators behind the ‘alleged attempted ritual murder of the six virgins.’	8 October 2021	The matter had been settled as the alleged anonymous callers contacted and apologized to the journalist.
31	The raiding of the Editor of <i>Voice of Salone Newspaper</i> , David Johnson on the grounds of ‘insulting statements’ via WhatsApp by the Sierra Leone Police, a complaint filed by Sydney Campbell Esq. On 29 November 2021, the matter came up at the Ross Road Magistrate Court No. 3. The editor was charged with 5 counts.	22 November 2021	The matter had ended as the journalist did a retraction and apologized to Sydney Campbell Esq.
32	The invitation of the National Chairman and Leader of the National Grand Coalition (NGC) Party, Dr. Dennis Bright to the Police Headquarters in Freetown by the Inspector General (IG) of Police due to an interview he granted Radio Democracy 98.1 FM in connection to the proposed 2021 Mid-term Census which the NGC and the Coalition of Progressive Political Parties (CoPP) objected to.	7 December 2021	He was released on the same day after a closed door interview in the presence of his lawyers for close to two hours.
33	The physical assault and detention of Ransford Wright, a journalist of the <i>AYV Media Empire</i> by the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in Freetown.	13 December 2021	The journalist told MRCG that he received the sum of one million Leones (Nle one thousand Leones) from the police as compensation and

			he, through the advice from family members moved on. The Police said the matter had been resolved.
34	The verbal attack and insult against Asmaa James, station manager of <i>Radio Democracy 98.1 FM</i> by Alhaji Amadu Bah, a popular artist known as LAJ in a Facebook live video circulated on social media platforms as a result of a report aired by <i>Radio Democracy</i> on a bench warrant ordered by a magistrate for LAJ.	13 December 2021	The matter had ended after LAJ apologized to Asmaa James and the women of Sierra Leone as he expressed regrets and took full responsibility for his actions. On 22 December 2021, Asmaa James in a Facebook post said she had forgiven LAJ and let go of the matter after some moments of prayers and fasting.
35	The arrest and detention of the 2018 presidential aspirant for the Unity Party, Femi Claudius-Cole at the CID for an alleged negative comment she made on <i>Radio Democracy 98.1 FM</i> in relation to the 2021 mid-term housing and population census.	13 December 2021	The matter had ended as she was later released.
36	The arrest and detention of Pastor Septimus Yambasu for allegedly using obscene and insulting words against President Julius Maada Bio. He was charged for insulting conduct contrary to section 3 (1) of the Public Order Act of 1965 at the Pademba Road Magistrate Court No 1 in Freetown.	14 December 2021	The matter had been resolved and discharged from court and Pastor Yambasu's vehicle returned to him.
37	The arrest and detention of Ahmed Doyle Kamara popularly known as Tazmo Sliz, an entertainer in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone for allegedly insulting and attacking the Fullah Ethnic group in a Facebook live video.	18 December 2021	On Monday 28 February 2022, Magistrate Sahr Kekura of Pademba Road Magistrate Court No 1 in Freetown discharged the matter from court after the complainant, Mohamed Salieu Jalloh on behalf of the Fullah Community accepted Tazmo's apology.
38	The intimidation and humiliation of Amadu Lamrana Bah, Head of Digital Media of the <i>Africa Young Voices (AYV)</i> and the President of the Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), by Airport officials allegedly acting on the orders of 'someone' at the Lungi International Airport as a result of a Facebook post by the journalist on series of difficulties they had encountered at the airport on their flight to Cameroon for the Africa Cup of Nations.	10 January 2022.	The matter had ended as the journalist later boarded the flight to Cameroon.

39	The arrest of Solomon Joe, a journalist working for KISS 104 FM in Bo by two officers from the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in Freetown. They went to Bo and ‘ordered the arrest’ of the journalist for a broadcast concerning a transaction between two businessmen in Bo. He spent one night in police custody.	7 February 2022.	The journalist was released on 8 February 2022 with conditions. That he retracted his story and apologized to the businessman. “I am not going to retract the story because I stand by my story,” said Solomon.
40	The invitation and detention of the Acting Spokesperson for the main opposition All Peoples Congress Party (APC), Sidi Yayah Tunis at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in Freetown for alleged inciting utterances he made during an interview he granted on Radio Democracy 98.1 FM on Monday 7 February 2022.	8 February 2022	The matter had ended as he was released from the CID.
41	SLAJ 17 March 2022 press alert calling on the Judiciary of Sierra Leone to allow media access to cover the opening session of a tribunal set up to investigate the suspended Auditor-General, Mrs. Lara Taylor-Pearce and her deputy after complaint from some journalists that they were denied entry to the proceedings.	17 March 2022	The matter had ended as both parties settled the issue.
42	A complaint from IMC’s Monitoring, Research and Projects Unit (MRPU) against Justice FM Radio in connection with its program, ‘Justice Show’ which was aired on 27 April 2022.	27 April 2022	The IMC temporarily shut down the operations of Justice FM Radio in Freetown for 10 hours connected to an alleged unprofessional conduct, proprietorship and management issues that posed serious confusion to the operations and activities of the radio station.
43	The arrest and detention of Mr. Mohamed Khan, the Interim Chairman of Teachers Solidarity, by police just outside AYV’s premises after Mr. Khan had appeared on their ‘Wake Up Salone’ television program as a guest; and the arrest and detention of Lahai Jah and Joseph C Kailie at the Bo West Police Station by police after allegedly convening a protest without police clearance to convene a meeting of “The Teachers Solidarity Movement”.	26 and 28 April 2022 respectively	The matter had ended as they were released on the same day of arrest.
44	The arrest and incarceration of Mohamed Mansaray popularly known as ‘Blacker’ who reportedly suffers from mental illness and roams the streets of Freetown, and Kadiatu Yankaday a trader, at the Freetown Correctional Centers on 28 April 2022 for allegedly insulting President Bio.	28 April 2022	Presiding Magistrate Rashid Jalloh had discharged the matter from the Pademba Road Magistrate Court No. 4 as no evidence was proffered against the accused. Legal Link, a human rights organization, helped

			to secure the discharge verdict for 'Blacker'
45	Alleged Cyber Stalking and Bullying on President Julius Maada Bio by former APC Minister of Transport and Aviation, Kemoh Sesay. He was alleged to have 'willfully and repeatedly' communicated directly to President Bio in a manner that he knows to be false, for the purpose of causing danger, insult, injury, hatred, criminal intimidation or needless anxiety to the president. He was charged with one count charge of Cyber Stalking and Bullying, contrary to Section 44 (2) (b) of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021.	9 May 2022	The matter was acquitted and discharged from court.
46	The arrest and detention of journalist Sorie Saio Sesay of <i>Okentuhun Radio FM 94.0</i> by police in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone for allegedly "publishing false information" on social media about an incident between the SLP and commercial bike riders in Makeni.	26 May 2022	Sorie was released on bail on 31 May 2022 with the intervention of the SLAJ. He told the MRCCG that even though the police had released him, the CID still has his phone. The Director of Crime Service at the CID headquarters in Freetown, AIG William Fayia Sellu, said that the Cyber Unit of the SLP was still investigating the matter but had ended the matter and returned the journalist's phone.
47	The physical assault of journalist Maada Jesse Jengo, a journalist working for <i>Voice of Peace and Development Radio FM 96.5 (VOPAD)</i> in Waterloo, Western Area Rural by 'four officers of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF)'	2 July 2022	The Station Manager for <i>VOPAD radio</i> , Joseph Lamin, in an interview, told MRCCG on 30 October 2023, that the matter had been resolved. Journalist Jengo also confirmed that with the intervention of his Station Manager, Joseph Lamin and other community stakeholders, they had resolved the matter. The officers had apologised to the journalist and his family. In a press release issued on 8 July 2022, the Office of the Directorate of Defence, Public Relations and Information, Ministry of Defence (MOD) stated that "the MOD regrets the unfortunate occurrence which does not represent the RSLAF core values of good discipline and selfless service."

48	The suspension of the Station Manager of Radio Bintumani 93.1 FM by the Office of National Security (ONS) District Coordinator of Koinadugu, Mr Lawrence Kpangu, after a District Security Committee (DiSeC) meeting.	November 2022	IMC's Complaints Committee Secretary, Fatmata Kamara, told MRCG that they have concluded their ruling on the matter and their findings showed that all allegations against the Station Manager were false and baseless. The Station Manager was reinstated again but he later resigned.
49	The online harassment of Amadu Lamarana Bah, a journalist working for the Africa Young Voices television (AYV) who also doubles as the President of the Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), by the State House Communications Director, Myk Brewa.	19 December 2022	The matter had ended as the journalist moved on with his work and did not make any formal complaint to the police.
50	The arrest and detention of the Executive Director of Native Consortium and Research Centre, Edmond Abu Jnr., for twenty one (21) days at the Pademba Road Correctional Centre, in relation to social media publications and utterances he made on a radio regarding the court matter between his organization and Mobile Network Operators and the National Telecommunications Authority (NatCA).	10 January 2023	The activist was later released from the Pademba Road Correctional Centre in Freetown. On 26 February 2021, the Court granted an Order, restraining Mr. Abu from publication and comments on the case as it was ' <i>sub judice</i> '
51	The complaint by the Inspector General of Police, William F Sellu against Alex Lawrence Koroma, Producer Radio Democracy 98.1 FM , on a radio broadcast against his person on 'Good Morning Salone' Show Monday 22nd May 2023 to the Independent Media Commission (IMC).	May 2023	The radio station's producer did a retraction and the matter was resolved.
52	Civil libel action by the Inspector General of Police, William F. Sellu, through his Lawyer, Demba Barrie, instituted against Radio Democracy FM 98.1 (First Defendant) and Producer Alex Lawrence Koroma (Second Defendant) on the 2nd June, 2023.	13 June 2023	The High Court in July 2023 ordered damages against the radio and Mr. Koroma, retraction of the broadcast, and apology to the Inspector General. The Court ordered the lawyer for the Inspector General "to file a separate Notice of Motion for assessment of damages. Demba Barrie, lawyer who represented the Inspector General of Police, told MRCG that Radio Democracy FM 98.1 and the other parties involved had in March 2024 apologized to the plaintiff and confirmed that the matter had been

			dropped.
53	The attack on the BBC Correspondent in Sierra Leone, Umaru Fofana, by supporters of the All People's Congress (APC) party during the party's press conference at the New Brookfields Hotel in Freetown.	14 June 2023	Mr. Fofana told MRCG that he wished there was a line of action for him to take, "but it's an exercise in futility. I don't think the attackers acted alone. So the party won't take any action against them. Sadly, not even to publicly condemn the action. And I don't trust the police either so I am dropping the matter." The Secretary General of the APC, Lansana Dumbuya Esq., told MRCG that the matter was still being investigated.
54	The matter of the Organizing Secretary of the opposition, APC Party in Bonthe District, Robert Kamara, was arraigned before Principal Magistrate Lyoud Jusu of Court Number One in Bo, for allegedly insulting Dr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.	October 2023	Magistrate Jusu of Court Number One in Bo on 14 December 2023 found the accused guilty and sentenced him to eight (8) months in prison for three counts charge ranging from Cyber Bulling, contrary to Section 44 (1) (a) of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021, Sending False Message by Means of a Computer System, contrary to section 44(2) (a) of the Cyber Security Act 2021, to Sending Insulting Message by Means of Computer System, contrary to Section 44 (2) (b) of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021.
55	The ruling delivered by Justice Momoh Jah Stevens on a matter between Kutubu Koroma, a resident in Maryland, USA and John Akar Foundation and Yada Williams Esq.	21 November 2023	Justice Momoh Jah Stevens ordered Kutubu Koroma, a resident in Maryland, USA to pay NLe 1,500,000 (approximately USSD 63,291.14) as compensation to John Akar Foundation and Yada Williams Esq. and to apologize for his libelous and defamatory publications on social media.
56	The invitation for questioning of Alie Bai Kamara, the Station Manager of Citizen Radio 103.7 FM by the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) in Freetown, who was later detained at the CID.	8 February 2024	The Deputy Station Manager, Ibrahim Kalokoh (DJ Kalux), told MRCG that the invitation and detention of Alie Bai Kamara was related to a broadcast the radio did

			<p>on the incident of the 26 November 2023 ‘attempted coup.’</p> <p>Police confirmed the invitation and detention and said that the matter was investigated for some time. In subsequent follow-ups, police and the journalist confirmed that the matter was resolved in the same month at the CID.</p>
57	<p>The online harassment and intimidation of Amadu Lamrana Bah, a journalist working for the <i>Africa Young Voices television (AYV)</i> who also doubles as the President of the Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU) for a post on his Facebook and X accounts titled ‘Guess who has added to his fleet of brand-new SUVs...’ where he also asked the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) about the various asset declaration categories the Commission had for government officials.</p>	March 2024	<p>In an interview, Mr. Bah told MRCG that he had no intention to report the matter to the police for investigation. The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) was deeply concerned about the insults, intimidation, attacks, and threats and stood in solidarity with journalist Bah, who was in March 2024 recognized as ‘Journalist of the Year 2023’ by SLAJ, and all journalists in Sierra Leone who face threats, intimidation, harassment, and attacks for their commitment to truth and transparency.</p>
58	<p>The online attack, harassment and intimidation of the Managing Editor of <i>Salone Times Newspaper</i>, Thomas Dixon, by one Anthony Vandy.</p>	5 June 2024	<p>The journalist told MRCG that he was not reporting the online attacks to the police because the attacks were not something new to him. SLAJ, in a press release, condemned the online intimidation and called for authorities to ensure the safety of journalists both online and offline.</p>
59	<p>The alleged attack and assault on Munya Bawoh, a journalist working for <i>All Out Radio</i> in Kenema, by some police officers in Kenema while investigating a story at the Kenema East Police Station.</p>	7 June 2024	<p>The Divisional Crime Officer and some other police officers reportedly slapped and molested him for allegedly doing a video recording of the visually impaired persons. He continued that with the intervention of SLAJ, he was later released on bail. The Regional Coordinator of the Complaint Discipline Internal Investigations Department (CDIID) of the Kenema East Police Division, Osman Sesay, told MRCG that they have received</p>

			<p>the complaint of Bawoh and his two witnesses together with his medical report and have started investigating the matter. He continued that they resolved at the following: that the journalist would be under medical observation for ninety days, with his health being taken care of by the police, and that the police in Kenema must apologize for their wrongdoing to the journalist and compensate him for all property lost and destroyed during the incident. The police in charge of the matter, Regional Coordinator, CDIID, Osman Sesay, told MRCG that they were still on the matter with a possibility for it to end soon, after the journalist would have made a withdrawal statement. In August 2024, the journalist told MRCG that he had made the withdrawal statement and the matter had been resolved. The Regional Coordinator for Complaint Discipline and Internal Investigations Department (CDIID), Osman Sesay in Kenema, confirmed that the matter had been resolved.</p>
60	The arrest and detention of lawyer Joy Bayoh Esq, at the CID in Freetown, for allegedly cyberstalking the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.	18 June 2024	The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) arrested and detained lawyer Joy Bayoh Esq, at the CID in Freetown, for allegedly cyberstalking the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. After a Facebook post by the lawyer, she told MRCG that she was arrested and detained at the CID because of her tweet on the rule of law and democratic principles. The Police said the lawyer was arrested on an alleged crime of cyberstalking but had been released on bail and matter dismissed.
61	The defamation matter between two former Leone Stars players, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, vs. the Sierra Leone Football Association (SLFA).	June 2024	MRCG monitored the defamation matter between two former Leone Stars players, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, vs. the Sierra Leone

			<p>Football Association (SLFA). The High Court of Sierra Leone, ruled in favour of the plaintiffs, Ibrahim Koroma and Samuel Barley, and ordered the defendant, SLFA, to pay damages worth 3 million dollars (1.5 million dollars each). Hassan Kamara Esq., a lawyer for the plaintiffs, told MRCG that his clients took SLFA to court for defamation of character and damage to their reputations.</p>
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	Cases monitored by the MRCG that are still in Court since 2018	Date of Attack/ Arrest/ Invitation	Status of Cases as at the time of reporting
1	Attack on the publisher of <i>The Elephant Newspaper</i> , Nimalty Kamara, allegedly by youth of the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) for allegedly criticizing the new regime of President Julius Maada Bio.	10 September 2018	Matter is still at the Kenema High Court. Nimalty told MRCG that there was no progress on the matter.
2	Arrest and detention of Mahmud Tim Kargbo on 20 September 2019 for allegedly publishing a defamatory article against Hon Justice Miatta Samba', an Appeal Court Judge, titled 'Justice Redefined by Miatta Samba', which is said to have accused the judge of corruption and incompetence.	20 September 2019	Granted bail after tendering an apology letter to Hon Justice Miatta Samba; matter was still in Court.
3	Assault on journalist Fayia Amara Fayia of <i>Star Radio and Standard Times Newspaper</i> , allegedly by military officers in Kenema and his subsequent arrest and detention by Police in Kenema.	4 April 2020	The matter is still at the Magistrate Court No. 1 in Kenema. Fayia Amara Fayia told the MRCG that after the intervention of SLAJ, MRCG and MFWA by issuing a petition letter to His Excellency the President, Julius Maada Bio (through the Minister of Information and Communication), the 'matter had died down and I have moved on. "The court is yet to officially discharge the matter and I have not been called in connection with the matter," he said.
4	The alleged physical assault of Alusine Antha, a journalist working for <i>Eagle Africa FM 91.3</i> by some youths in the Waterloo community in connection with a land saga he had gone to cover.	17 February 2022.	The matter was still in court, with no progress.
5	Alimamay N'Jai Sesay on 17 October 2022 appeared before Magistrate Mark Ngegba of Pademba Road Magistrate Court No.1 in Freetown for allegedly sharing Abdul Will Kamara alias Adebayor's audios on social media. He is charged with five counts of various offences in the Cyber Security and Crime Act No.	17 October 2022	Police alleged that the accused person between 1 July 2022 and 10 October 2022, through social media, sent insulting messages created by Abdul Will Kamara alias 'Adebayor' against the Government of Sierra Leone by means of computer system and

	7 of 2021.		network with intent to provoke the breach of peace. The matter is ongoing at the High Court.
6	The attack on the office and staff of Hope FM 93.3 in Makeni, Northern Sierra Leone, by a group of thugs allegedly sent by the landlord of the premise housing the radio.	23 October 2023.	Mr. Stanley Bangura, proprietor of the radio, told MRCG that the matter was in court, adding that the defendants pleaded with him, Ahmed Sahid Nasrallah, Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) President and Umaru Fofana, for an out of court settlement of the matter. He continued that he agreed on one condition, which is for the defendants to reinstate the radio's tenancy and pay for the damaged pieces of office property.

	Cases monitored by MRCG that are still under Police Investigation since 2018	Date of Attack/ Arrest/ Invitation	Status of Cases as at the time of reporting
1	Attack on the former Editor of Awareness Times Newspaper, John Koroma, during a Bye-Election in Tonko Limba, Kambia District, Northern Sierra Leone, on 29 September 2018, allegedly by a team of Sierra Leone Police officers and persons who openly identified themselves as SLPP supporters.	29 September 2018	Matter still with the police and no arrest effected. John Koroma said he availed his witnesses to the police and that statements were obtained from them individually. He said the police had promised to get on to him but have not done so since and that he is gradually forgetting the matter. The police said that Koroma had not been able to identify those that attacked him; and as such, they were constrained to arrest any suspect. They however said that the matter had been kept in view.
2	Attack on two <i>AYV</i> journalists, Augusta Ethel Turay and Bockarie Samai, on the 16 January 2019, allegedly by supporters of the opposition All People’s Congress Party (APC), while covering the visit of officials of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to the home of former President Ernest Koroma in Makeni, Bombali District.	16 January 2019	Matter stalled as police claim complainants were yet to return with their endorsed medical reports; hence they could not take any further action. But Augusta Ethel Turay, said they submitted their medical reports as was requested by the Police; yet there was no progress on the matter. “We submitted the medical reports at the Mena Police Station in Makeni as requested, but up to date, the police did not call us, neither discharged the matter nor charged it to court and so we stopped following the matter.” The police said that they were still waiting for the journalists to take their endorsed medical forms to the police headquarters.
3	Death threat against the <i>BBC’s</i> Umaru Fofana apparently by a member or supporter of the opposition APC in an audio circulated on social media, after an interview he conducted with Sierra Leone’s former Vice President, Victor Bockarie Foh.	17 January 2019	Matter still under investigation according to the Police. However, Umaru Fofana said the Police investigating the matter disclosed the identity of his key witness and he eventually lost confidentiality in them and hence, he has stopped following

			<p>up on the matter.</p> <p>The police in their response said that the matter had been kept in view.</p>
4	<p>Attack on three local journalists – Ibrahim Manasaray, aka ‘Hebro’ of <i>SLBC</i>, Makeni, Abdul M. Jalloh of <i>Amzas Radio</i>, Makeni and Foday Moriba Conteh of <i>Calabash Newspaper</i>, Tonkolili Districts – in the Northern Region of Sierra Leone.</p>	January 2020	<p>The matter was under police investigation as police said journalists are yet to corroborate their witnesses. One of the victims, Abdul M. Jalloh of Hamzas Radio, said there was no progress on the matter and hence they had decided to move on with their different jobs. Police said that the matter had been kept in view for lack of evidence and witness.</p>
5	<p>The arrest and detention of Osman Hardy Jalloh of <i>TV-News24</i> for the second time by Magistrate Joseph Toby of Court No.2 in Kenema on 10 June 2021 for allegedly publishing a story relating to a matter between an Imam and a female chief in Blama.</p>	10 June 2021	<p>The matter is still at the Human Rights Commission-Kenema for further investigation. The new Deputy Director, HRCSL Regional Service East, Tom Sandi, said the complainant was yet to sign and send the admissibility study to the Commission. The owner of <i>TV-News24</i>, who was the lead complainant on the matter, told MRCG that “Hardy is no longer affiliated with Tv-News24, so I can’t speak on his intentions on this matter.” Journalist Osman Hardy Jalloh told MRCG that “my former boss, owner of <i>TV- News24</i>, was pursuing the matter on my behalf; but I am no longer affiliated with the organization. I don’t have the finance to pursue the matter on my own. So, if my former boss said he was no longer pursuing it, then so be it.”</p> <p>Al Mansaray, in March 2023 posted on his channel that he had filed a legal paper against the United State Government through the U.S. State Department for failing to take appropriate action when he alerted them about the abuse of power and unprofessional conduct of Magistrate Toby. However, there had been no new development on the said matter.</p>

6	The verbal attack and threat to the entire editorial team of <i>Salone Compass Newspaper</i> from unknown members of the general public through phone calls.	14 December 2021	The proprietor, Ibrahim Alusine Conteh told the MRCG that the police did nothing towards the issue. He said SLAJ had also not done anything about the official complaints made to them. Police said the matter had been kept in view.
7	An official complaint by Hawanatu Konneh Fofanah at the CID in December 2021 against an anonymous individual who allegedly attacked her personality on Facebook	25 December 2021	Hawanatu said there was no headway on the matter and that she decided to move on with her life. Police said the matter had been kept in view.
8	An alleged ‘assassination attempt’ on journalist Gibril Gottor and his family through a ‘suffocating smell of petrol’ in their house in Kambia, Northern Sierra Leone.	29 April 2022	Gibril Gottor told MRCG that “I am ok and I have taken over my security myself.” In an interview with MRCG, the Police also maintained that they had not yet got a witness or evidence to substantiate the complaint made by Gibril to support their investigation into the matter, so the matter has been kept in view.
9	The alleged physical assault of journalist Abdulia Gbla of <i>Gbla TV online</i> , by a Member of Parliament (MP), Hon. Abdul Muniru Lansana of Constituency 121, in the well of parliament.	28 June 2022	There is still no new development on the matter between journalist Abdulai Gbla of <i>Gbla TV Online</i> and former Honorable Muniru Lansana. Mr. Gbla told MRCG that till date, he had neither received any update from SLAJ nor from Parliament on the matter. SLAJ President, Ahmed Sahid Nasralla said that SLAJ had contacted the Clerk of Parliament on the matter, but he was also yet to get any update from him on the status of the investigation.
10	The physical assault on the Managing Editor of <i>Night Watch Newspaper</i> , Emmanuel Christian Thorli by staff of Njala University, in Waterloo on 11 September 2022.	11 September 2022	Mr Thorli, in October 2023, told MRCG that the matter was still at the police station for investigation, even though he had not honored the police invitation. The Acting Public Relations Officer for Njala University, Ayuba Koroma, still maintained that they had resolved the matter. Police said they were still investigating the matter, although the journalist was yet to honor their invitation.

11	The arrest and detention of Ady Macauley Esq. former Anti-Corruption Commissioner at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).	6 October 2022	The matter was still at the Directorate of Public Prosecution awaiting legal advice.
12	The alleged ‘verbal threat’ on journalist Gibril Gottor, a freelance journalist in Kambia by a police officer at Malal Police Checkpoint in Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District, Northern Sierra Leone.	18 January 2023	The matter is yet to be concluded as the police still maintained that they have not yet got a witness or evidence to substantiate the complaint made by Gibril to aid their investigation of the matter. Gibril told MRCG that he had left Sierra Leone because he feels his life is no longer safe in the country.
13	The alleged attack and assault on Alie Tokowa, the Station Manager of <i>Fountain of Peace Radio (FOP)</i> in Moyamba District, Alie Tokowa, on 28 March 2023 at the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) office in Moyamba district by its supporters.	28 March 2023	Journalist Alie Tokowa maintained that the State had withdrawn the matter from the police, with no progress. He said he had recently reached out to some human rights organizations to solicit help to take legal actions against his attackers but had not received any positive response from them. Police had investigated the matter. State Counsel had withdrawn the file from the police and the matter was now with State Counsel.
14	The complaint from Ibrahim Alusine Kamara, Managing Editor of <i>Salone Compass Newspaper</i> , stating that security officials assaulted him, endangered his life and vandalized his vehicle during an incident at the APC’s press conference on 25 June 2023 at the party’s headquarters in Freetown.	25 June 2023	Mr. Kamara told MRCG that he had not yet received any update from the Independent Police Complaint Board (IPCB) on the matter. The investigating officer at IPCB, Hawalyn Kamara, again told MRCG that a joint force ‘wearing balaclava’ was deployed to the scene on the day the incident occurred and, therefore, their investigation into the matter had stalled due to lack of identification of the exact security officials that assaulted the journalist. The journalist told MRCG that he is still preparing to, through his lawyers, take the leadership of both the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) to court.

15	The online ‘death threat’ against journalist Musa S. Kamara, working for radio <i>Democracy 98.1 FM</i> from anonymous individuals.	20 August 2023	Musa told MRCG that he was yet to receive any update from the police regarding the investigation. Police said they were investigating the matter.
16	The arrest and detention of Emmanuel C Thorli, Managing Editor of <i>Night Watch Newspaper</i> , at the CID in Freetown, allegedly for his news article titled ‘We Cannot Wait For Bio To Continue In Power Until 2028’, which was published on 21 February 2024.	21 February 2024,	Mr. Thorli told MRCG that police detained him because of the news article he published, noting that the police claimed that it was ‘inciting.’ He continued that after spending three days in detention he was released with the condition that he reports to the CID every day, until otherwise instructed by the police. Police confirmed the arrest and detention of the journalist and told MRCG that the matter was still investigated but the journalist had stopped reporting at the police station.
17	The invitation for questioning of Patrick Kai, a journalist working for <i>Calabash newspaper</i> , at the Kenema Police Division in relation to an alleged cybercrime committed against Eastern Technical University (ETU) Sierra Leone.	16 April 2024	The journalist denied the allegation and told MRCG that ETU accused him of being an administrator and informant of a Facebook page known as “Kenema Kotuku,” a page that had been critical of the institution. He was detained for four hours and released on bail pending investigation. ASP Detective Tamba David Alpha told MRCG that the journalist was invited to the cyber unit of the Police Division for an alleged cybercrime reported by the Registrar of ETU and confirmed that Patrick was released on the same day, but the matter was under police investigation.
18	The warrant of arrest issued by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for Justice Boima, CEO of <i>Justice FM and TV</i> , for alleged offences relating to cyber stalking and bullying.	23 May 2024	The journalist told MRCG that his warrant of arrest was in connection with his online publication on an alleged land grabbing by the Deputy Minister of Mines and Mineral Resources, Napoleon Koroma and the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Richard P.G. Robert, Head of Criminal Investigations Department. In an interview with the Deputy Minister, he denied all allegations made by the journalist including the

			journalist’s several audios accusing him of land grabbing, and assured MRCG that he was taking a legal actions against the journalist. ASP Amos Lansana, an officer attached to the Cybercrime Unit at the CID Headquarters and in-charge of the matter confirmed the warrant of arrest for the journalist, and said that they were still searching for him to start proper investigation of the matter.
19	The alleged verbal assaults and threatening remarks against Alie Badara, a freelance journalist in Bo, through a phone call from an unknown individual for a Facebook post he made on the excesses of the police in their fight against the synthetic drug called “Kush” and other illegal substances in Bo, Southern Sierra Leone.	28 May 2024,	The journalist told MRCG that he had been investigating the allegations that, the drugs which were being seized by the police officers in their raids, marked as exhibits, were being sold by some of the same officers. He stated that his Facebook publications (post one and post two) regarding the matter, irritated some group of individuals for which they planned to physically attack him and set his house ablaze. Inspector Moses Tommy Ganda, a police officer attached to the Cyber Unit at the Bo East Police Division, told MRCG that they had received the complaint from the journalist and had started investigations.
20	The dismissal and alleged attack and harassment of Umu Thoronka, a journalist working for the SLBC for a video she posted about a contribution of a lady at the Presidential Town Hall Meeting in Freetown.	23 July 2024	In a press release dated 12 August 2024, Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL) condemned the summary dismissal of the journalist and the subsequent threats to her life. The release further stated that the dismissal occurred without any prior warning letter, discussion or written explanation, contrary to the provisions of the Employee Act of 2023, which mandates a fair and transparent termination process. The <i>SLBC</i> , in a press release dated 20 August 2024, responded that the journalist was not a reporter for <i>SLBC</i> Makeni, noting that she initially worked as a freelance contractor for <i>SLBC</i> in 2015 for a three-month period, followed by a

		<p>subsequent contract that extended until 2018 when she ceased serving the Corporation. The release further stated that Ms Thoronka flouted the <i>SLBC's</i> policies by taking <i>SLBC's</i> footage without permission, unduly utilising <i>SLBC</i>-branded content on her personal social media platforms, and running commentary on the <i>SLBC</i>-branded content, bringing the institution's name into disrepute. In September 2024, the journalist told MRCG that since she reported the matter to SLAJ, she had not yet receive a response from them. SLAJ told MRCG that investigations on the matter were ongoing. The matter was also extensively discussed at SLAJ's Annual General Meeting in Bo with suggestions for possible solutions. In October and November 2024, there was no new development on the matter, however, SLAJ's National Secretary General Alhaji Manika Kamara told MRCG that investigations on the matter were still ongoing.</p>
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Table 11.2: Abandoned cases monitored by MRCG from March 2018 to May 2024

The cases in this table are also found in the ‘cases under police investigation’ and ‘cases in court tables.’ While the court says the cases are still on trial and the police also say they have been ‘Kept In View,’ the affected journalists have abandoned the cases, citing a lack of progress on their matters.

Cases that have been Abandoned by the journalists at the Police and at the Court because of lack of progress since 2018	Date of Attack/ Arrest/ Invitation	Status of Cases as at the time of reporting
Attack on the publisher of <i>The Elephant Newspaper</i> , Nimalty Kamara, allegedly by youth of the ruling Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) for allegedly criticizing the new regime of President Julius Maada Bio.	10 September 2018	Matter is still at the Kenema High Court. Nimalty told MRCG that there was no progress on the matter. The court is yet to discharge the matter.
Attack on the former Editor of <i>Awareness Times Newspaper</i> , John Koroma, during a Bye-Election in Tonko Limba, Kambia District, Northern Sierra Leone, on 29 September 2018, allegedly by a team of Sierra Leone Police officers and persons who openly identified themselves as SLPP supporters.	29 September 2018	Matter still with the police and no arrest effected. John Koroma said he availed his witnesses to the police and that statements were obtained from them individually. He said the police had promised to get on to him but have not done so since and that he has gradually forgotten the matter. The police said that Koroma had not been able to identify those that attacked him; and as such, they were constrained with arresting any suspect. They however said that the matter had been kept in view.
Attack on two <i>AYV</i> journalists, Augusta Ethel Turay and Bockarie Samai, on the 16 January 2019, allegedly by supporters of the opposition All People’s Congress Party (APC), while covering the visit of officials of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to the home of former President Ernest Koroma in Makeni, Bombali District.	16 January 2019	Matter stalled as police claim complainants were yet to return with their endorsed medical reports; hence they could not take any further action. But Augusta Ethel Turay, said they submitted their medical reports as was requested by the Police; yet there was no progress on the matter. “We submitted the medical reports at the Mena Police Station in Makeni as requested, but up to date, the police did not call us, neither discharged the matter nor charged it to court and so we stopped following the matter.” The police said that they were still waiting for the journalists to take their endorsed medical forms to the police headquarters. Police said, the matter is kept in view.

<p>Arrest and detention of Mahmud Tim Kargbo for allegedly publishing a defamatory article against Hon Justice Miatta Samba’, an Appeal Court Judge, titled ‘Justice Redefined by Miatta Samba’, which is said to have accused the judge of corruption and incompetence.</p>	<p>20 September 2019</p>	<p>Granted bail after tendering an apology letter to Hon Justice Miatta Samba; matter was still in Court.</p> <p>The journalist had moved on with his life and has abandoned the matter, but the matter was not officially discharged from court.</p>
<p>Assault on journalist Fayia Amara Fayia of <i>Star Radio and Standard Times Newspaper</i>, allegedly by military officers in Kenema and his subsequent arrest and detention by Police in Kenema.</p>	<p>4 April 2020</p>	<p>The matter is still at the Magistrate Court No. 1 in Kenema. Fayia Amara Fayia told the MRCG that after the intervention of SLAJ, MRCG and MFWA by issuing a petition letter to His Excellency the President, Julius Maada Bio (through the Minister of Information and Communication), the ‘matter had died down and I have moved on. “The court is yet to officially discharge the matter and I have not been called in connection with the matter,” he said.</p>
<p>The alleged physical assault of Alusine Antha, a journalist working for <i>Eagle Africa FM 91.3</i> by some youths in the Waterloo community in connection with a land saga he had gone to cover.</p>	<p>17 February 2022.</p>	<p>The matter was still in court, with no progress. The journalist had moved on long ago. Police said that the matter had been kept in view.</p>
<p>The verbal attack and threat to the entire editorial team of <i>Salone Compass Newspaper</i> from unknown members of the general public through phone calls.</p>	<p>14 December 2021</p>	<p>The proprietor, Ibrahim Alusine Conteh told the MRCG that the police did nothing towards the issue. He said SLAJ had also not done anything about the official complaints made to them. Police said the matter had been kept in view.</p>
<p>An official complaint by Hawanatu Konneh Fofanah at the CID in December 2021 against an anonymous individual who allegedly attacked her personality on Facebook.</p>	<p>25 December 2021</p>	<p>Hawanatu said there was no headway on the matter and that she decided to move on with her life. Police said the matter had been kept in view.</p>
<p>An alleged ‘assassination attempt’ on journalist Gibril Gottor and his family through a ‘suffocating smell of petrol’ in their house in Kambia, Northern Sierra Leone.</p>	<p>29 April 2022</p>	<p>Gibril Gottor told MRCG that “I am ok and I have taken over my security myself.” In an interview with MRCG, the Police also maintained that they had not yet got a witness or evidence to substantiate the complaint made by Gibril to support their investigation into the matter, so the matter had been kept in view.</p>