



MEDIA FREEDOM REVIEW- AUGUST 2025

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

In August 2025, MRCG monitored the invitation of Thomas Dixon, President of the Guild of Newspaper Editors and followed up on various issues including the withdrawal of frequency by the National Telecommunications Authority from two media outlets, the alleged physical assault of a journalist, a verbal threat against a journalist, a physical assault on a journalist, the invitation of Dr Samura Kamara- the 2023 Presidential Flagbearer of the All Peoples Congress (APC), the arrest and detention of a lecturer for a cybercrime offense, the murder of a journalist in Waterloo, the barring of a journalist from entering Sierra Leone's Parliament, the dismissal and subsequent harassment of a journalist in Makeni and the verbal threat against a freelance journalist in Bo.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Sierra Leone Police, on 18 August 2025, invited Thomas Dixon, Chairman of the Guild of Newspaper Editors and Managing Editor of *New Age Newspaper*, to report at the CID Headquarters in Freetown for questioning regarding an alleged case of cyberstalking and cyberbullying reported by Leone Rock Metal Group. According to the journalist, Leone Rock reported him for cyberbullying and cyberstalking after publishing a [News Alert](#) entitled "Criminal Charges have been filed against the CEO of Leone Rock Metal Group...". The journalist later disclosed in an interview that the company offered to withdraw their complaint, but on the condition that he stop reporting on their affairs, which he declined. In a press release dated 26 August 2025, [SLAJ](#) Dixon was released on bail of NLE 100,000 after several hours of questioning at the CID. ASP Kabba Lavalie, an Officer attached to the Cyber Unit of CID, told MRCG that the matter was under investigation and that the journalist and company were engaging in alternative dispute resolution.

In a follow-up on the matter of *Truth Media* and *G8 Media Group* on the withdrawal of their frequencies by the National Telecommunications Authority (NatCA) in August 2025, just days before their planned launches, the co-owner of *Truth Media*, Amadu Lamrana Bah, [announced](#) on Facebook that *Truth Media* was now fully operational, adding that the radio was on air. The President of SLAJ, Alhaji Manika Kamara, stated that they were still engaged in discussions with NatCA regarding the pending status of *G8 Media Group* to resolve their matter.

Regarding the alleged threat against journalist Kandeh Sesay, Managing Editor of *The Watch Newspaper*, from Anthony Vandy, an alleged member of the First Lady's media team, concerning the purported corrupt properties of the First Lady of Sierra Leone, Fatima Bio, in Gambia on 11 May 2025, the journalist told MRCG that he had yet to report the matter to the police.

Regarding the case of journalist Foday Fofanah, a camera operator at the *Africa Young Voices (AYV)*, who was allegedly assaulted by armed personnel of the Sierra Leone Police on 21 May 2025 at the Old Road Model Road Junction in Freetown after intervening in an incident involving police officers and a commercial

motorbike rider, the matter is still under investigation. Aki Coker, Head of Television at *AYV*, told MRCG that the police have promised to contact them and that they are prepared to present the two witnesses they had identified further. At the time of writing this report, the MRCG made efforts to contact the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), but received no response from them.

Concerning the CID invitation for Dr Samura Kamara, the 2023 Presidential Flagbearer of the All Peoples Congress (APC) Party, for questioning, Amos Lansana, an officer attached to the Cybercrime Unit at the CID Headquarters, told MRCG that Dr Samura Kamara has responded to their invitation and that they are still investigating the matter.

Sheikh Tejan Rogers, a lecturer at Milton Margai Technical University, appeared in court on 17 March 2025, charged with one count of cyberstalking under Section 44(2) (b) of the Cyber Security and Crime Act 2021. He is accused of using his WhatsApp number to create and post recorded audios and text messages in a WhatsApp group called “Maada must stay campaign,” which is alleged to have damaged the reputation of the university’s Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Dr. Philip Kanu. The case was adjourned on 11, 13, and 20 June 2025 at the Pademba Road Magistrate Court No.2. On 20 June 2025, Magistrate John Manso Fornah issued a bench warrant for the defendant, Sheik Tejan Rogers, for failing to appear in court on 20 and 24 June 2025. The accused then appeared in court on 1 July 2025, and Magistrate John Manso Fornah committed the matter to the High Court for further hearing. Joseph Komeh Musa, Senior Assistant Registrar of the High Court of Sierra Leone, informed MRCG that the file is currently with the Law Officers’ Department.

There has been no further progress on the matter of journalist Melvin Tejan Mansaray, a member of the Sierra Leone Parliamentary Press Gallery (SLPPG), who the Speaker of Parliament, Rt barred. Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, from accessing the precincts of parliament based on allegations of “malicious criticism.” The journalist still maintained that the Privileges and Ethics Committee of Parliament has tabled the report regarding his hearing, but a date has not been set for debate.

The matter of journalist Samuel Brima Mattia, Deputy Station Manager of *Voice of Peace and Development (VOPAD) radio FM 96.5*, who was, on 16 January 2025, reportedly murdered by the Station Manager, Joseph M Lamin, and others in Waterloo, Western Rural of Freetown, the primary suspect, Joseph M Lamin, who police said confessed to the crime, along with two others, was charged to court on two counts charges on Conspiracy to murder and murder had come up at the Pademba Magistrate Court No. 1 on 7, 8, 10, and 14 July 2025. Magistrate Mustapha Braima-Jah dismissed the no-case submission by the defence counsels of the three accused and has committed the matter to the High Court. Joseph Komeh Musa, Senior Assistant Registrar of the High Court of Sierra Leone, told MRCG that the file is with the Law Officers’ Department.

Regarding journalist Umu Thoronka, who was dismissed from her job and allegedly attacked and harassed on social media after posting a TikTok [video](#) about a lady's contribution to the Presidential Town Hall Meeting in Freetown on 23 July 2024, there has been no further progress on the matter. The journalist informed MRCG that despite the long wait, she has received no response from IMC and SLAJ regarding her case. She added that she wants to return to the country to address the issue, but fears for her safety. The IMC still maintained that the matter was under investigation.



There is still no progress on the matter of Alie Badara, a freelance journalist, who reportedly received verbal assaults and threatening remarks in May 2024, through a phone call from an unknown individual for a Facebook post he had made on the excesses of the police in their fight against the drug called “Kush” in Bo, Southern Sierra Leone. The journalist informed MRCG that there is still no positive update on his case. He maintained that all his efforts to fight for justice have been futile, and that he believed the police and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) are the main obstacles delaying his case.

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

MRCG is the coordinating Secretariat for media reform, research and capacity building. It comprises Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ), Independent Radio Network (IRN), Guild of Editors (GoE), Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL), Sierra Leone Reporters Union (SLRU), Sport Writers Association of Sierra Leone (SWASAL), Mass Communication (Fourah Bay College), Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC), Independent Media Commission (IMC) and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC).