



MEDIA FREEDOM REVIEW- SEPTEMBER 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 September 2025, MRCG monitored the intimidation of journalist Christian Conteh, Managing Editor of **Sierra Check** and Editor at **Truth Media**. The MRCG also followed up on the invitation of Thomas Dixon, President of the Guild of Newspaper Editors and other issues including the withdrawal of frequency by the National Telecommunications Authority from **G8 Media Group**, an alleged physical assault of a journalist, verbal threat against a journalist, physical assault of 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.

On 2 September 2025, Christian Conteh, Editor at **Truth Newspaper** and Managing Editor at **Sierra Check**, was reportedly intimidated by some unknown police personnel whilst he was investigating a story about a corpse lying at the Lumley Beach Road. According to the journalist, after he had discovered where the dead body was lying, he reached into his pocket intending to document the scene where the dead body was lying, when five officers, two in plain clothes, rushed toward him and grabbed his hands, ruffled his clothes, and demanded his phone. He added that a female officer who was among the five officers snatched his two phones from him and stormed off toward a police van, and at the police station, he was threatened with detention by an unknown officer. Later, the officer gave him his phone after they had deleted a few photos he had taken from the scene. The journalist told MRCG that he does not intend to report the matter as long as he was not hurt or lost any of his property.

In a follow up on the matter of Thomas Dixon, the President of Guild of Newspaper Editors and Editor of **New Age Newspaper** who was on 18 August 2025, invited by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Sierra Leone Police for questioning regarding an alleged case of cyberstalking and cyberbullying reported by Leone Rock, the journalist said that since he was granted bail, he had not been called to report to CID and the Company has also not spoken to him on the matter. Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Kabba Lavalie, an officer attached to the Cyber Unit at the CID, told MRCG that the matter has been resolved and that Leone Rock Company has withdrawn the matter from the police.

In a follow-up on the matter of **G8 Media Group** on the withdrawal of their frequencies by the National Telecommunications Authority (NatCA) on 30 July 2025, just days before their planned launch, the President of SLAJ, Alhaji Manika Kamara, told MRCG that that they were still having an engagement with NaTCA on the pending status of **G8 Media Group** for the allocation of a frequency.

On the alleged threat of journalist Kandeh Sesay, Managing Editor of **the Watch Newspaper**, from Anthony Vandy, a member of the First Lady of Sierra Leone, Mrs. Fatima Bio's media team, regarding the alleged

corrupt property of the First Lady of Sierra Leone, Fatima Bio, in Gambia on 11 May 2025, the journalist told MRCG that he was still yet to report the matter to the police.

Regarding the case of journalist Foday Fofanah, a camera operator for 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 after intervening in an incident involving police officers and a commercial motorbike rider during which female street vendors' goods were destroyed Fofanah expressed concern for the woman's loss. He was physically attacked by the officers and sustained multiple injuries. The matter is still under investigation. Aki Coker, Head of Television at *AYV*, told MRCG that the police had promised to call them and that they were ready to present their two identified witnesses further. The Deputy Head of Media, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Bobson Senu, told MRCG that they were still waiting for *AYV* to present their witnesses before they could further the investigation.

Concerning the CID invitation of Dr Samura Kamara, the 2023 Presidential Flagbearer of the All Peoples Congress (APC) Party, for questioning, following an initial invitation by the Cyber Unit of the CID, 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 were still investigating the matter.

In the matter between Dr. Turad Senesie, Minister of Lands, Housing and Country Planning, and Mrs. Admire Jalloh (Nee Bio), also known as Mama of Freetown, on September 5, 2025, the Honourable Justice Andrew Samuel Curtis Johnson ordered that an interim measure is hereby granted by the Court, restraining the Defendant, Mrs. Admire Jalloh (Nee Bio), whether by herself, her servants, agents, or otherwise, from publishing, republishing, or disseminating any material that libels or slanders the Plaintiff, Dr. Turad Senesie, in any news or social media platform, or by any means whatsoever, pending the hearing and determination of this application. The order, Notice of Motion, and Affidavit in Support were to be served on the Defendant/Applicant. The matter was adjourned to 10, 11, and 12 September 2025. On 15 September 2025, Mrs Admire Jalloh, during a live Facebook session, apologised to the Minister and expressed regret for her actions. She stated she had also apologised personally to the Minister. Alfred Kamanda, Esq, the counsel representing the Applicant, informed MRCG that they had discontinued the case.

On the matter of Tejan Sheikh Rogers, lecturer of Milton Margai Technology University who appeared in court on 17 March 2025, on one count charge for cyber stalking, under section 44 (2) b of the Cyber Security and Crime Act of 2021, for allegedly using his WhatsApp number to create and post recorded audios and text messages in a What Sapp group called "Maada must stay campaign" deemed to have damaged the reputation of the university's Vice Chancellor and Principal Vice Chancellor and Principal. Dr. Philip Kanu. The Matter had come up 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 before the court on 20 and 24 June 2025, respectively. On 1 July 2025, the accused appeared in court, and Magistrate John Manso Fornah committed the matter to the High Court for further hearing.

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. Hon. Segepoh Solomon Thomas, barred from accessing the precincts of parliament based on allegations of "malicious criticism." The journalist still maintained that the Privileges and Ethics Committee of Parliament had tabled the report regarding his hearing. Still, a date has not been set for debate on the matter. He told MRCG that

he plans to write an open letter to President Bio expressing his dissatisfaction due to the lack of progress regarding his matter.

On 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. The matter had come up at the Pa Demba 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.

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 maintains that the matter is under investigation. On 19 September 2025, Women in the Media Sierra Leone (WIMSAL) and RFK Human Rights submitted a [petition](#) to the Community Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on behalf of Umu Thoronka, regarding the sexual harassment she experienced and her subsequent dismissal.



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 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).