

### Overviews

According to a media case report, thirteen journalists were detained in various locations and regions in Somaliland during the first six months of 2023. The majority of these journalists were arrested due to their social media posts. No warrant of arrest was issued for any of the detained journalists; instead, they were held without permission. The report also emphasized the overall limited press freedom in the country, citing the deterioration of independent media outlets and the arbitrary detention of journalists. SOLJA called upon the government to take measures to safeguard freedom of expression and guarantee that journalists are not arrested or detained without proper legal procedures.

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In comparison, the detention rate reveals that during the latter half of 2022, a total of eight (8) journalists were detained. However, in the initial six months of 2023, this number increased to thirteen (13) individuals and increasingly reached Seventeen (17) Journalists so far.

This surge demonstrates that political impasses regarding expired presidential terms, election delays, and deadlocks between opposition political parties and the ruling government have had a significant influence, further exacerbating the arbitrary detention of journalists. Consequently, the government appears to be increasingly sensitive and less tolerant of criticism and the exercise of freedom of expression.

In addition, both the government and law enforcement agencies exert considerable efforts in media monitoring and censorship. This places a burden on journalists, compelling them to refrain from sharing sensitive information that might attract the government's attention. Notably, the government's practice of arresting journalists based on their social media posts serves as evidence of their regular surveillance of these accounts.

Moreover, the recent conflict in Las'anod between the Somaliland military forces and local militias has significantly curtailed and limited the extent of freedom of expression in Somaliland. The government has repeatedly asserted that the media is interfering with and intensifying the conflict, transforming it into a full-fledged war for undisclosed reasons, and has pledged to take strict measures against any perceived efforts to destabilize the country. Consequently, the government suspended the operations of SomNews TV and conducted an investigation at its premises under the guise of security precautions

While there is no documented record of journalist detentions specifically in the Sool region, it is evident that the government, particularly the police, closely monitors journalists operating throughout all regions of Somaliland.

Acknowledging the current state of the media landscape and the government's lack of tolerance towards freedom of expression, the Somaliland Journalists Association (SOLJA) plays a

crucial role in exerting maximum effort to create an enabling environment for journalists within the country. SOLJA stands alongside journalists during detentions, provides legal aid support, and applies pressure on the government to uphold and promote freedom of expression, as guaranteed by Article 32 of the Somaliland constitution

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### **Group of four Journalists**

On 9 March 2023, Wariye Jacfar Cawil Heri, Mohamed Abdi Omer Wadiin, Farhan Abdi Aw-essa, and Hamse Abdirashid were arrested collectively.

Their detainment followed their coverage of a news story highlighting the community's grievances concerning the scarcity of water resources. Subsequently, the Somaliland Ministry of Water ordered their arrest. Fortunately, the journalists were released the following day after their equipment was thoroughly inspected, video clips were reviewed, and no formal warrant or court order was issued against them.

### **Abdiladif Sa'ed**

On April 23, 2023, Abdiladif was apprehended in Erigavo town of the Sanaag Region following the governor's order for his detention. It is worth noting that Abdiladif had solely shared the governor's speech on his social media account. SOLJA advocacy efforts, he was released just one day after his arrest

### **Busharo Ali Moh'ed (Baanday)**

On May 15, 2023, Busharo, a journalist, was apprehended by the Somaliland police in Tog-Wajale, a border town in the Gabiley Region. Subsequently, she was transferred to Hargeisa Central Prison. The grounds for her arrest were allegedly related to the dissemination of propaganda against Somaliland's national security and sovereignty. The prosecutor has formally accused her, and she currently remains in custody. Busharo's case has garnered international attention, with human rights groups demanding her immediate release, citing her imprisonment as a violation of her right to freedom of expression. Despite being held on multiple remand orders, she is scheduled to appear in court. The Somaliland Journalists Association has provided legal aid support by hiring a lawyer for her defense. Sentenced to 1 year in jail. She was released on 15 Aug, 2023 after bought at the same day.

### **Yusuf Dool Ibrahim**

On May 16, 2023, Mr. Yusuf was arrested and subsequently sued by a charitable organization headquartered in Hargeisa. The organization lodged a complaint alleging that he had disseminated false information regarding their activities. Following the legal proceedings, he was sentenced to one year of imprisonment and fined 450,000 SL Shillings on June 14, 2023.

### **Ali Isma'il Aare**

On May 14, 2023, the Borama administration detained Ali Aare for purportedly making comments on social media regarding a delegation from Muqdisho organized as Irir Samaale Alliance. However, he has not been presented before a court in the past month. Human rights groups have strongly condemned his detention and are urging for his immediate release. It is

important to note that Ali Aare has not been formally charged with any criminal offense by the government.

### **Mukhtar Nux Ibrahim**

On May 21, 2023, Mukhtar was arrested by the Somaliland Police in Gabiley following a critical social media post he made on his Facebook account, which was deemed as being critical of the ruling government. As a result, he was detained in jail for a duration of four days without any formal charges filed against him. Throughout this period, his family and friends were prohibited from visiting him. The authorities in Gabiley ordered his detention based on allegations of creating conflict among the officers in Kala Baydh Customs. Fortunately, SOLJA intervened and successfully mediated his case, leading to its resolution on May 26, 2023.

### **Abdikarin Essa Abdilahi**

After covering a news story on May 23, 2023, in which the community expressed their dissatisfaction with the local government's services, the reporter was subjected to detention upon the orders of the Mayor of Sheikh District. However, he was released on bail the next day. Ultimately, he regained his freedom on May 24, 2023.

### **Warsame Abdirashid Aden**

On May 28, 2023, Warsame was arrested in Erigavo and subsequently detained upon the governor's orders. His arrest was prompted by a Facebook post in which Mr. Warsame shared a video originally broadcasted by other media outlets, depicting a shootout that took place in the Ceeryaan neighbourhood near Erigavo town a year prior. The incident involved allegations against the governor's staff bodyguard. Ultimately, on June 4, 2023, Warsame was released on bail.

### **Khalid Yusuf Hassan (Fantastic)**

On June 13, 2023, Khalid Fantastic was arrested by the Somaliland police in Hargeisa. The reason for his detention was directly linked to his reporting and dissemination of an informative news story regarding the unfulfilled promises made by the manager of Berbera Port.

### **Abdiqani Hussein Abokor (Baylood)**

Journalist Abdiqani a deputy director of Horyaal Tv was arrested in Hargeisa on Jun 27 after Somaliland National Commission filed a sue against Abdiqani and Horyaal Tv. Both cases were come to an end and released by mediation on 4th July 2023.

### **Ibrahim Ahamed Muse**

On May 02 November 2023, the El-Afweyne District of Sanaag region's administration arrested Journalist Ibrahim Ahamed Muse after local police caught him during his daily reporting routine. Sahan Television's reporter was in custody since the 2nd day and he was released the evening of 3rd Nov. 2023

## Farhan Mustafe Ibrahim

On November 05, 2023, Farhan was arrested in Burao City of Togdheer. The Police forcibly detained him without a warrant upon the governor's orders. lastly, on November 7, 2023, Farhan was released on bail.

### Media Cases Report 2023

	Date	Name	Institution	Released on
1	8 Mar, 2023	Wariye Jacfar Cawil Heri	Sahan Tv	9 Mar, 2023
2	8 Mar, 2023	Mohamed Abdi Omer Wadiin	Horyaal Tv	9 Mar, 2023
3	8 Mar, 2023	Farhan Abdi Aw-Ciise	Horn Cable Tv	9 Mar, 2023
4	8 Mar, 2023	Hamse Abdirashid	MM Tv	9 Mar, 2023
5	23 Apr, 2023	Abdiladif Sa'ed	Bulsho Tv	24 Apr, 2023
6	15 May, 2023	Busharo Ali Moh'ed (Baanday)	Freelancer	15 Aug, 2023 - Sent. 1 year
7	16 May, 2023	Yusuf Dool Ibrahim	Radio Hargeisa	15 Jun,2023
8	14 May, 2023	Cali Ismaaciil Aare	Freelancer	
9	21 May, 2023	Muktar Nux Ibrahim	Bulsho Tv	26 May, 2023
10	23 May, 2023	Abdikarin Essa Abdilahi	CBA Tv	24 May, 2023
11	28 May,2023	Warsame Abdirashid Aden	Freelancer	04 june,2023
12	13 Jun, 2023	Khalid Fantastic	Freelancer	20 june, 2023
13	27 Jun, 2023	Abdiqani Hussein Abokor (Baylood)	Horyaal Tv	04, July, 2023
14	02 Nov, 2023	Ibraahim Ahmed Muse (El-afweyn)	Sahan Tv	03, Nov, 2023
15	05 Nov, 2023	Farhan Mustafe Ibrahim (Bura'o)	MM Tv	07, Nov, 2023
16	16 Aug, 2023	Abdirahman Hiiraan	Freelancer	04, Dec, 2023
17	12 Dec, 2023	Mohamed Adan Ismail (Jiglan)	Freelancer	20, Dec, 2023