



# **PRESS FREEDOM VIOLATIONS 2021 REPORT**

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## INTRODUCTION

**A**lthough freedom of expression is guaranteed and protected under all major human rights instruments, it is amongst the rights that have not been honored and often breached by various authorities. Freedom of expression contains freedom of opinion, the right to receive information and the freedom of press.

Amongst international and regional instruments that protect freedom of expression are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – 1966, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989, African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) – 1981, and the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community. Furthermore, Tanzania's Constitution, which is the mother law of the nation provides for freedom of expression.

A number of reports have shown that major violators of this freedom are mainly states and their authorities, which has raised questions as to whether this freedom should always remain at the mercy of states.

Despite ratification and the commitment to adhere to the right to freedom of expression, Tanzania has continued to experience various forms of violations of this fundamental right. The situation in the country is a result of the current legal, policy and administrative framework that has seen enactment and implementation of draconian laws or segments of laws, as well as administrative blessings that suppress such freedoms.

Amongst the laws that have contributed to the diminishing of press freedom are Cyber Crimes Act, 2015, the Media Services Act, 2016, the Electronic and Postal Communications Act (Online Content Regulations), (2018, 2020) and the Statistics Act, 2015. The effects of these laws and their regulations have negative consequences for the media industry and the public at large, thus putting freedom of expression at crossroads.

## OVERVIEW

### ***26 Press freedom violation recorded on MCT Database in 2021***

In 2021, a total of 26 press freedom violations in Tanzania were recorded in the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) database. The incidences were reported through media coverage, social media and telephone calls.

Some of the press freedom violations are rooted in the legal regime itself, while other violations are due to administrative actions and blatant impunity from authorities and other non-state actors.

It is worth noting that in the recent past, laws have been passed which contradict the Constitution as well as the regional and international treaty commitments.

The myriad of laws which constrict civic and media space and freedom of expression both online and offline include the Cybercrimes Act, 2015, the Statistics Act, 2015, the Media Services Act, 2016 (MSA), the Electronic and Postal Communications Act (EPOCA), 2010 and some of its Regulations, and the Zanzibar's Registration of News Agents, Newspapers and Books Act, 1988 among others.

These pieces of legislation have compounded an already restrictive regulatory and policy environment, for instance, sections of the Penal Code and the National Security Act.

### ***The State of Press Freedom and Freedom of Expression in Tanzania***

Although the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania provides for freedom of speech, it does not specifically guarantee freedom of the press. As stated above, laws give authorities broad discretion to restrict media on the basis of undefined national security or public interest.

On top of that, difficult registration processes and requirements, including fees and obligatory yearly renewal of operating licenses,

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hinder flourishing of independent media.

The media landscape is diverse; however, there is a lot of self-censorship and control of the media is mostly concentrated in the hands of a few proprietors—including the government, which withholds advertising contracts from critical outlets.

The state of press freedom and freedom of expression in Tanzania since 2015 raises a lot of concern. Since then government has stepped up repression of dissent, detaining opposition politicians, shuttering media outlets, and arresting citizens for posting critical views on social media.

The ascent to power of President Samia Suluhu Hassan brought some hope, especially with her conciliatory tone and the lifting of the ban on four newspapers, some of which had successfully challenged the interdiction in courts. However, unless and until the repressive legal regime and the growing impunity are addressed, there is no guarantee that the trend will abate.

This is especially so considering the fact that suspension of media outlets has continued even under her administration. Raia Mwema and Uhuru newspapers, as well as a programme on Wasafi TV, were suspended under her watch.

During the period of October 2018 to November 2019 the Media Council of Tanzania recorded a total of 119 violations. In 2020, 41 incidents of violations were recorded and in 2021 the recorded number of violations was 26.

Violations that are being recorded by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) database include: denial of access, threat, murder, harassment, arrest for performing journalistic work, kidnapping and disappearance, and assault.

Others are: banning, violent or forceful eviction, confiscation of equipment, destruction of equipment, cyber-attacks, fines, editorial interference, self-censorship and interfering with or cutting radio or TV programs that are on air.

During the year 2021, the incidents of journalists being arrested,

their media being closed and fined have decreased compared to the year 2020. In 2020, a total of 13 journalists were arrested, ten media outlets were fined while four media outlets were closed.

The situation is different in 2021 where seven journalists were arrested, and three media outlets banned. This is according to the MCT database of the Press Violations of Tanzania ([www.pressviolations.or.tz](http://www.pressviolations.or.tz)) which records violations that journalists encounter in their duties to find information.

The 26 violations that happened in 2021 seven constituting the main source of violations recorded in the year, which its perpetrators were police and district commissioners. It was observed that district commissioners had been ordering police officers to arrest journalists and detain them due to stories published were not liked by the authority.

In 2020 this act of arresting journalists in connection with their work, the MCT database recorded 13 incidences of police officers being the main perpetrators.

The 26 violations affected journalists or media entities, with mainly private owned. In more than 7 out of 26 incidents (26.9%), journalists were arrested in 2021 while 13 out of 41 journalists (5.33%) were arrested in 2020. All the journalists were later released.

Another type of violation that the Council is monitoring is fine to media outlets and journalists.

Under this type, for the year 2021 we saw two media outlet being fine by the authority which is equivalent to 0.52 percent of 26 incidences captured by the Media Council of Tanzania database during review period.

The same type in 2020, they were 10 fines to media outlets equivalent to 24.4 4.1 percent, an increase of 3.8 percent to a total of 41 incidences of press violations recorded in 2020. The main perpetrators under this type was the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) and Information Services (MAELEZO).

As was recorded in the MCT database for January to December



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2021, three media outlets were banned in 2021 out of 26 violations recorded in the said year, compared to six out of a total number of 41 incidences recorded in 2020.

This is equivalent to 0.78 percent for 2021 while for 2020 it was 2.46 percent. Under this category, the main perpetrator was the Information Services.

In 2020 the same type of violation, MCT recorded six incidences of media outlets being ban. This is equivalent to 1.6 percent compared to three percent of 2021.

Threats to journalists was another type of press violations that MCT database recorded four incidences for the year 2021 equivalent to 1.04 percent which the same type in 2020 the database recorded three incidences equivalent of 1.23 percent.

These scenarios show an increase of one violation for 2021. Under these type perpetrators were district commissioners and unknown people.

Assaults for the year 2020, the Council recorded two incidences of the violation while in 2021 one assault was recorded to the MCT database. This means that in 2020 violation of this type was 0.82 percent lower compared to 0.26 percent of 2021. Perpetrators are police.

Attack was another press violations that was recorded by the MCT database ([www.pressviolation.or.tz](http://www.pressviolation.or.tz)). During the year under review one attack to journalist was recorded which is equivalent to 0.26 percent compared to two incidences of attacks recorded equivalent to 0.82 percent in 2020. Under this category perpetrator was worshippers and police.

Other incidences which were recorded in 2021 was denial of access to information. Under this category, a total of four incidences equivalent to 1.04 percent was recorded compared to three incidences in 2020 equivalent to 1.23 percent. Perpetrator of this category was District Executive Director (DED)

Fear of using a story or stories was also among the areas which

the MCT database captured. Under this category in 2020 there was no incidence while in 2021 one incidence was recorded. This account to 2.6 percent of all 26 incidences.

Under program cut category for both years the database recorded two incidences which occurred in 2020, equivalent to 0.82 percent. For the year 2021 there was no incidence of such type. Perpetrator of this category was unknown.

The MCT database also recorded radio programs suspension where in 2021 and 2020 each year two radio stations were suspended which is equivalent to 0.52 percent in 2021 compared to 4.9 percent in 2020. Perpetrator of this category was the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA).

Forceful eviction of a journalist from the event the database recorded one incidence in 2021 while in previous year there was no such an incidence. This violation account for 0.26 percent.

The MCT database also recorded one incidence equivalent to 0.26 percent of a journalist's equipment being destroyed and damaged while a journalist is at work. Perpetrator of this category was worshippers.

Death is another incidence that is being captured by the MCT database, and for this case one journalist was murdered and her body was found in Mwenge area near Maryland bus station. Reports say the body of the deceased was found between Bamaga and ITV bus stop in Mwenge Suburb along Ali Hassan Mwinyi road. The investigation has yet to bring the culprit to custody.

## INCIDENCES OF VIOLATIONS AND THEIR CATEGORIES

### **Arrest**

**TANGA:** On September 10, 2021, Police in Tanga region arrested Mwananchi Communication Limited, journalist, Rajab Athumani on ground that are yet to be known. The journalist was later released.

Rajab who is based in Handeni District, received a called that he

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was needed at the Tanga Police Headquarters on September 10, 2021, when he reached there, he was arrested.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On July 19, 2021 a journalist Ephrahim Bahemu reporting for The Citizen online was arrested and required to write a statement at the Director of Criminal Investigation, Cybercrimes department, following his story with the headline "Phone users brace for new Simcard levy in August.

The reporter was later release but ordered to go back to the police the following day. He was told to go back; in case he was needed would be called. Since then he has not heard anything from the police.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On October 2, 2021, a journalist working with Mgawe TV, Harold Shemsanga was arrested together with members of BAWACHA, the women's league of the Tanzania's opposition party, (CHADEMA).

Shemsanga said he was arrested while interviewing BAWACHA members following a jogging event in Kawe grounds.

The reporter said he was taken to Kawe Police Station and later was transferred to Mbweni Police Station at outskirts of the Dar es Salaam City, where he was detained from Saturday to Monday, October 4, 2021.

He said his devices including a camera, flash, mobile phone, memory card and laptop were taken and his interview was reviewed and later he was locked in a cell.

Shemsanga said that when his boss Ernest Stanley Mgawe was also arrested when he went to bail him.

The two and BAWACHA were released on bail on October 4, but that police are still investigating them on allegations of illegal assembly, alongside several members of BAWACHA.

Shemsanga complained that her few stuff such as identity cards and wallet were returned to him except electronic devices which are being held at the station.

Following their release, but they were required to report back at

the Mbweni Police Station on October 8, at 10:00 both Shemsanga and Mgawe.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On September 24, 2021 police arrested a cartoonist Opptertus John Fwema at his home Bunju area in Dar es Salaam, and have since detained at the Oysterbay police station.

According to fellow cartoonist Nathan Mpangala Fwema was arrested following a critical political cartoon he published on his Instagram.

Mpangala said Fwema is at Oysterbay Police Station where he has been for some days, on alleged issues of cybercrime offenses.

On September 16 and again on September 20, Fwema published a political cartoon that depicts Hassan as a child playing with a basin of water painted with the Tanzanian flag, while a large man wearing a black coat printed with the words “Kiwete”—“cripple

On October 6, 2021 Tanzania Human Rights Defender Coalition (THRDC) through its human rights advocates instituted miscellaneous criminal application no 27 of 2021 before the resident magistrates2 court of Dar es Salaam at Kisutu.

The statement of offence says, “publication of false information contrary to section 16 of the Cybercrime Act [cap 14 R E 2015]

Opptatus John Fwema on diverse date between 15<sup>th</sup> September and 20<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2021 within the city and region of Dar es Salaam with the intent to deceive and mislead the public did publish in a computer system a picture of Her Excellency Hon. Samia Suluhu Hassan, the president of United Republic of Tanzania and His excellence Hon. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete the retired President of United Republic of Tanzania, through his Instagram account with the name of johnoppter showing the country is now ruled by Hon. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete knowingly that such information is false, the act which is contrary to the law.

**TANGA:** On September 22, 2021, the correspondent of ITV television station from Tanga, Mr. William Mngazija is accused of being arrested by the police on the instructions of Korogwe District

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Commissioner, Ms. Basila Mwanukuzi.

The district commissioner, who complained about the news broadcast on ITV about a village being attacked by elephants and one person being killed, was broadcast with his voice from the past, and that the District Commissioner claims it appeared to be a new incident.

However, the district commissioner said she did not order the arrest of the journalist, nor did Mngazija be arrested by the police.

“The journalist has used my old clip in the current news”. Said the District Commissioner.

However, the District Commissioner asked the reporter to write a statement denying the district commissioner's statement ordering his arrest and to distribute it online as he did and then apologize.

Bw. Mngazija says that the District Commissioner does not want him to write about elephants invading people's farms, which is why he is angry.

The Officer Commanding District telephoned Mngazija and asked him to report to the station, where he went and recorded his statement and after that, he was released and resumed his activities.

According to Korogwe District Commissioner, Ms. Basila Mwanukuzi did not order an arrest of the journalist. Although Mngazija was not arrested.

However, Mngazija was instructed to report to the Korogwe station whenever he was needed, but later the order was revoked by the Officer Commanding District. Mngazija is free.

**UKWA:** On October 6, 2021, ITV Reporter from Rukwa, Mr. Baraka Lusajo has been arrested by the police on the orders of Kalembo District Commissioner, Rukwa Region, Ms. Tano Mwera.

According to Rukwa Press Club Chairman, Nswima Ernest, there were reports of the journalist's arrest, but the fact is, the reporter went to the police station to file a statement and was released.

The journalist did not stay inside, as reported on social media.

The incident happened on October 5, 2021, after an ITV journalist wrote an article about a hurricane disaster in Mkowe village, Kalambo district.

Reports say that on October 6, 2021, Mr. Lusajo went to the Matai police station where he recorded a statement and was released.

The report alleges that the District Commissioner complains that the journalist at the time of writing the story did not the District authorities views, and that part of the information aired was incorrect.

**KILIMANJARO:** On March 21, 2021: A journalist James Lanka working for the Guardian newspaper was arrested and detained for three days at Moshi Central Police station upon conducting an investigative story at Uru Ward hospital in Kilimanjaro region.

He was investigating the existence corruption as one accountant at Moshi District Council Mr. Stanley Kisaka and his four colleagues from Moshi Municipal Council were collecting money from people and giving already generated EFD receipts.

He was released on March 23, 2021 and conditioned to report to police station on every Monday of the week.

**KILIMANJARO:** April 12: 2021: An independent journalist working for The Guardian newspaper in Moshi, Mr. James Lanka had been detained police for three days without charge or trial.

According to Lanka, on Sunday March 21 2021 he received a call from one of the traders of the Uru Mawela market informing him that there were officers with a vehicle registration number STK 2341 passing through business areas collecting various taxes.

Lanka went to the market and found two officers and he asked them why were they collecting taxes on a Sunday, instead of receiving an answer? One of the officers ordered his arrest and he was ordered to enter into a vehicle, which later the vehicle went to the Dar es Salaam road.

"I thought they were taking me to the Majengo Police Station but we passed when, I questioned where they were taking me they



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changed direction and took me to the Moshi Police Station in the city, where I stayed for three days," he explain.

The journalist was charged with disorderly conduct, and was required to report to the police station the next day.

The Kilimanjaro Press Club (MECKI) through its secretary Nakajumo James followed up on the matter and police said it was still under investigation.

## **Ban**

**DARES SALAAM:** On January 05, 2021, the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority Content Committee suspended Wasafi TV from operation for six months on the allegation of live streaming a live performing consent in Dodoma with musicians who were immorally dressed on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021. Wasafi TV is an entertainment media in Tanzania.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On August 11, 2021, the Government issued a 14-day suspension of Uhuru, a newspaper owned by the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) ruling party, following allegations that the paper had published a false and seditious report about the country's president, Samia Suluhu Hassan.

The newspaper had carried a headline, "Sina wazo kuwania urais 2025-Samia," which translates to (I have no intention of running for the presidency in 2025-Samia")

In connection to that, the CCM said after the suspension that Uhuru's board had suspended three top managers, including the CEO, over the story, and was investigating why the story was published.

The suspended are the newspaper's CEO, Ernest Sungura who is also a member of the CCM Executive Committee, Executive Editor, Ramadhani Mbwaduke and the newspaper's managing director, Rashid Zahoro.

Within weeks of taking office, President Samia Hassan called for all the outlets banned by Magufuli to be allowed to reopen

immediately.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On September 6, 2021, the Raia Mwema newspaper, a Swahili-language daily, was suspended for 30 days from September 6, 2021, for “repeatedly publishing false information and deliberate incitement,” Gerson Msigwa, the government’s chief spokesperson, said in a statement.

Msigwa cited three recent stories, including one about a gunman who killed four people in a rampage through a diplomatic quarter of Tanzania’s main city Dar es Salaam.

The article linked the gunman to ruling party Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the statement read, adding that the article violated a 2016 media law. The newspaper’s management did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

### **Threats**

**MARA : On May 19, 2021** two journalists of Mara Online news and Sauti ya Mara were threatened by the CCM Party Mara Region, Chairperson complained that he was wrongly reported.

The journalists are Mara Online News, Managing Editor, Jacob Mugin and Christopher Gamaina, who is also the Chief Editor of the Mara Online News and Sauti ya Mara.

CCM Mara Regional Chairman, Samwel Kiboye complaining that on May 19, 2021 his story was misrepresented on the Mara online news blog and made threatening remarks to Mugini and to Christopher Gamaina.

**MWANZA: On June 11, 2021:** The EATV journalist Sophia George being stopped at the gate by security guards while she was going to do an interview with Regional Commissioner (RC) for the EATV Friday Live Show, has denied access to information to the society.

Incidents of intimidation, obstruction of work in the activities of the Mwanza Regional Commissioner and now banned from visiting regional commissioner’s offices.

**ARUSHA:** On June 22, 2021, three journalists from ITV, TBC 1



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and Mwananchi newspaper who report from Arusha, received threats calls from unknown people who didn't want former District Commissioner of Hai, Lengai Ole Sabaya, stories to be published.

The journalists received threat because they were reporting court proceedings of the Sabaya and co-accused who were first arraigned to court on June 4, 2021 after they were arrested on May 27, in Kinondoni District, Dar es Salaam.

The matter was reported at the police station, but todate nothing has been done.

Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) strongly condemns the intimidation of ITV, TBC and Mwananchi journalists for writing information about the accused of various offenses in court.

The Council received the reports with great shock especially considering that on May 20, 2021 at the Editors Annual General Meeting in Morogoro, the Prime Minister Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa (Mb.), Said the Government would not accept to see journalists being harassed.

In his address, the Prime Minister added that "It is not the Government's policy to harass journalists."

The council is deeply saddened by the way in which some people continue to harass and intimidate journalists with an order from higher authorities urging people who harass journalists to stop immediately.

**MWANZA:** April 09, 2021: Nyamagana District Commissioner Dr. Philis Nyimbi, has threatened a journalist that he will do something to him that will lead to his work dismissal.

The District Commissioner made the threats, after complaining to ITV and radio one journalist Mr. Mabere Makubi, that he writes stories that endanger his job.

Nyimbi said the information that the journalist is writing, could lead him lose his job in the new leadership of Hon. President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

One of the stories he wrote about people of Ihushi Street, Kishiri

Ward sending the coffin of a young man who was killed on suspicion of robbery.

Reports say that, District Commissioner was supposed to have taken measures against the Chairman who was involved in the death of a young person.

### **Assault**

**ZANZIBAR:** On April 21, 2021, a journalist working for Mwananchi Communications Ltd (MCL) in Zanzibar, Jesse Mikofu was attacked by SMZ security personnel while carrying out his duties.

Mikofu was attacked while taking photographs of the security forces who were evacuating petty traders who had displayed their goods along the road at Darajani area.

Describing the situation, Mikofu said in addition to being beaten, dragged in mud, the officers also forced him to roll muddy water and later do push-ups; his work equipment including the smart phone he used to take the photographs was also destroyed.

Mikofu was further beaten by the uniformed officers asking him to show them the pictures he had taken and then forced him to change the password on his mobile phone.

He was then directed to lay in a paddle of rain water and roll again, it was after the final lap of punishment that he was allowed to leave the area.

### **Denial of Access to Information**

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On September 2, 2021 the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), received reports that Journalists are being denied access to Chadema party chairman Freeman Mbowe court case proceedings.

Mbowe and his supporters accuse police of torturing him in custody to force him to make a statement in the trial, which opened under tight security, with most journalists banned from the courtroom by police.

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The Courtroom where the case is being conducted is small and majority of the seats are being occupied by the police as a trick of reducing number of journalists to enter into the court.

In some sessions you will find only two or three journalists covering the court proceedings, for instance September 3, 2021 it was only Mwananchi newspaper, Azam TV and Uhuru newspaper who got access into the court, the rest could not enter because the court room had no space. Police use this trick to ensure Mbowe court case is not given expected publicity.

Mbowe has been behind bars since July 21 when he was arrested along with a number of other senior Chadema officials in a night-time police raid just hours before they were to hold a public forum to demand constitutional reforms in the East African country.

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On May 27, 2021 a reporter of the Jamhuri newspaper, Ms. Aziza Nangwa was denied information at the Technical and Electrical Agency (TEMESA) offices in Dar es Salaam.

The reporter was following up information about the ship's card system. The journalists went to the TEMESA offices to get information about the system, however when they arrived they were told that the Director General had a press conference so they asked to enter the session but were refused.

When they asked the director to come in he told them he had called the press and that after the press conference, he would put all the information on the institution's website so he asked the reporters to look up the information they were looking for on the website and if they missed it call him.

When contacted through a phone, the Director did not answer the call, and as she continued calling her, he hung up the phone and turned it off completely. So the writers did not succeed in getting the information they needed.

The TEMESA has launched a new electronic ticketing system that will use cards at the Magogoni and Kigamboni Ferry in Dar es Salaam.

Speaking at the launch of the system held on May 26, 2021 in Kivukoni, Dar es Salaam, TEMESA Chief Executive Officer, Engineer Japhet Maselle, said that the N-Card system will help reduce congestion at the ferry, as it provides services to quickly different from the system that was previously used.

**DODOMA:** On March 09, 2021, the Information and Communication Technology Minister Dr. Faustine Ndugulile, told Mwananchi Communications Ltd in an interview that the government was looking into ways of preventing loss of its revenues, occasioned by WhatsApp calls.

He said Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) is currently analyzing the Telecommunication Traffic Monitoring System (TTMS), with a view to looking into the best modality to prevent revenue losses.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021, telecommunication companies introduced new internet data packages that were extremely high leading almost 90% of consumers to complain. The telecommunication firms revised their bundles for voice calls, data and short messaging service as they sought to align them with new regulations set recently by the regulator TCRA.

TCRA's new regulations issued on 2nd March 2021 require telecoms to allow Tanzanians freely share already purchased data bundles, to be able to extend the expiry date of their airtime or data packages by buying additional data or airtime, and get notified once their packages hit the 75% mark. On April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021, the government suspended new internet data packages issued by telecommunication firms, saying they are expensive and need to be revised.

### **Media self-censorship**

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On February 09, 2021, there was an advert developed by Azam TV which was giving awareness to Tanzanians to be careful with Covid-19, this advert was produced in March 2020.

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In the year 2021 the advert went viral on social media depicting that Tanzania has Corona which is contrary to what President John Magufuli preaching that Tanzania has no Corona.

The Azam TV management came out and clarify that their advert was published last year when the country was going through Covid-19, so the advert is not current. The statement show that media threatened in such a way that it could go to an extent of refuting their own Corona alerts adverts.

This is an example of how media has been intimidated about reporting Covid-19 until they wished to deny the warnings they published.

### ***Damage of equipment***

**KATAVI:** On April 12, 2021, a Journalist Pascal Katona reporting for Channel 10 from Mpanda district, in Katavi region, his equipment were destroyed by voters who were not happy with result which favour the opponent.

The journalist had gone to cover a story at Makanyagio Mosque where an election of leaders was conducted, in the course of publishing the released results, he was attacked by those who were not happy with the results. His working tools were destroyed by the worshipers.

### ***Forceful eviction***

**DAR ES SALAAM:** April 12, 2021: Journalists Christopher James of ITV & Radio one and Dickson Billikwija of Island TV were detained at Temeke Municipal offices for three hours are following directives from the District Executive Director (DED) for Temeke Municipal Mr. Lusabilo Mwakabibi.

The meeting was conducted at Temeke Municipal offices involved Dar es Salaam businessmen and entrepreneurs.

The duo were kept under police arrest for three hours for allegedly attending his meeting with Mbagala Rangji Tatu traders

without official invitation. The two journalists were later released unconditionally after the meeting.

On April 13, 2021 the Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Innocent Bashungwa conducted an investigation on the matter.

Some few days later Mwakabibi was suspended due to claims from citizens, leaders and other sources about improper conduct, abuse of power, embezzlement, and unsatisfactory supervision of execution of development projects.

### **Journalist murdered**

**DAR ES SALAAM:** On March 28, 2021, a presenter and reporter Blandina Sembu, working for ITV/radio One from Dar es Salaam, was found murdered and her body found thrown alongside the Bagamoyo road, at Mwenge area, in Dar es Salaam.

The Kinondoni Regional Police Commander Mr. Ramadhan Kingai while speaking to the media confirmed reports of the death of journalist Blandina adding that her body was dumped in front of Maryland bar, Mwenge, on Saturday, March 27, 2021, at 11 pm.

He said a Toyota Noah whose registration number could not be identified had arrived at the scene and stopped shortly before throwing Blandina's body; she was already dead by then.

The deceased was also found with injuries on her head and face which are yet to be established whether they were the cause of death. According to commander Kingai, the bodaboda riders who were parked near the area saw the car which had full lights on for some minutes and then saw a woman being thrown out.

"Investigations are ongoing but what we have found out so far is that the woman was not killed there, the killing took place elsewhere, and they only went to dump the body"- RPC Kingai.

The Council could not immediately confirm whether her death is a result of her journalistic work or it was something else.



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For a country to flourish, adhering to civil rights needs should be at the center of the country's agenda. Individuals and media need to be able to express and receive information without fear of incarceration, suspension or deregistration.

The country needs to take a purposive stand to defend and adhere to the minimum standards provided under the Constitution, regional and international instruments.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The state should enact laws that are friendly to the media industry so that it carries on its activities without any undue interference. Since 2015 there has been a flurry of enactment and amendments of legislation that has not only been unfriendly but also limit the human rights regime in the country. The state should honor its human rights obligations by allowing societies, civil society and human rights defenders to continue with their day-to-day activities in a free environment.

Allowing them will not only increase respect for human rights but also fulfil the state's obligation under international human rights law. Media houses should further operate without censorship.

The state should engage media practitioners in the law-making process to adopt the laws that suit the situation in Tanzania. This will not only create a favorable working space for the journalists but also debunk the media laws that do not suit the home situation. The state should re-think and revise laws on media and the regulation of freedom of expression.

This will not only give it a new structure but also free the media from operating in suppressive environment. In addition to revising the laws the state should always work in consultation with media stakeholders for the best interest of freedom of expression.



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