

THE 2021 REPORT ON THE SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS & DIMENSIONS OF PRESS FREEDOM VIOLATION

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The worrisome trend of the violation of the rights of journalists and the media in Nigeria continued in the year 2021. There were many of such incidents, hence the Safety of Journalists Alert Desk of the International Press Centre (IPC), Lagos - Nigeria documented not less than forty-one (41) incidents of attacks on journalists and other media professionals with fifty-seven (57) of them affected, varying from unlawful arrests/detention, physical assaults, threat to life, abduction, invasion, threat to sanction, and murder. Incidents of threats and attacks on media organisations were also encountered.

Quite significant was the fact that among the attacks were those targeted at some of the journalists who were on legitimate duty to cover the #ENDSARs one-year anniversary protests in Lagos and other parts of the country on Wednesday October 20, 2021. IPC had in a statement captured the development as follows: “Reports from the IPC’ situation room on ‘Media Coverage of One Year After the #EndSars Protest’ reveals that Legit.ng Online reporter, Abisola Alawode was arrested at the Lekki Toll Plaza while PM News correspondent, Taiwo Okanlawon and the Arise TV crew of Adefemi Akinsanya and Ope Adenihun were beaten and harassed at the same venue. The Arise TV crew were also illegally ordered to pull down the drone they were using to cover the event. Policemen also barred The Punch Newspaper correspondent, Adebimpe Olajiga, from covering the protest and in Osogbo, Daily Post correspondent, Sikiru Obarayase, was arrested during the anniversary match in the state capital” (<https://www.ipcng.org/2021/10/20/ipc-decries-attack-on-journalists-and-endsars-activists-at-one-year-anniversary-protests/>)

1.1. METHODOLOGY

The report on the state of attacks on journalists and media in Nigeria (2021) was generated through desk research and monitoring by the Safety of Journalists Alert Desk complemented by the field reports of press freedom monitors engaged by IPC in each of the country’s six geo-political zones. The collated information was then subjected to verification especially through the affected individual journalists and news mediums after which they were analysed to determine the location of the incident, the gender of the victims, the nature of the attacks, the injuries or losses suffered, the alleged perpetrators and the remedies sought if any. The report as being presented reflects the application of the outlined methodology by specifically detailing the location of attacks, the types of attacks, the alleged perpetrators of the attacks, trends of attacks on media outlets, the trend of attacks on journalists, the summary of attacks according to media type and the summary of the attacks according to gender.

1.2. THE LOCATION OF ATTACKS

The attacks occurred in the six geo-political zones of the North West (NW), North Central (NC), North East (NE), South West (SW), South East (SE) and South South (SS). The states where they occurred include:

Kaduna and Kano (NW) – Three (3);

FCT Abuja, Kogi, Niger and Nasarawa (NC) – Seventeen (17);

Borno, Bauchi and Adamawa (NE) - Two (2);
Lagos, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Oyo (SW) – Twenty (20);
Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo (SE) – Seven (7); and
Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo and Rivers (SS) – Eight (8).

1.3. THE TYPES OF ATTACKS

The types of attacks that occurred in the year under review were:

- Physical assault
- Abduction
- Gun attacks
- Threats to sanction
- Threats to life
- Invasion
- Murder
- Surveillance
- Censorship
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Unlawful arrest and detention

1.4. THE ALLEDGED PERPETRATORS

- * State governments and their agencies
- * Department of State Services (DSS) – Three (3)
- * Rapid Response Squad (RRS) – One (1)
- * The Nigeria Police Force – Eighteen (18)
- * Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) – Two (2)
- * Hoodlums / Bandits – Four (4)
- * Private organisations – Two (2)
- * Kidnappers - Three (3)
- * Unknown gunmen & unknown persons – Three (3)
- * Government officials- Three (3)
- * Economic & Financial Crime Commission (EFCC)
- * National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) – One (1)
- * Lagos Environment Sanitation Corps – One (1)

1.5. DATELINES & TRENDS OF ATTACKS ON MEDIA OUTLETS

In February 2021, the Peoples Gazette news site was blocked after it revealed that privileges were given to the son of a member of the President's inner circle.

October 23, 2021, the acting Director General of National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Prof. Armstrong Idachaba, signed the letter authorising the payment of a N3 million fine by three (3) Nigerian stations – Channels Television, Africa Independent Television (AIT) and ARISE Television as penalty for their alleged use of unsubstantiated footages from social media in their coverage of the #ENDSARS protests. They were given three weeks from the date of receipt of the letter to pay the amount to avoid further sanctions.

April 26, 2021, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) threatened to sanction Channels Television for interviewing the spokesman of a proscribed organization during the broadcast of its 'Politics Today' Programme on Sunday April 25, 2021, threatening that the station "remains liable to sanctions provided in section 15 of the code which prescribes among others – suspension of broadcast license and the fine of 5million' and ordering the suspension of the 'Politics Today' Programme.

June 4, 2021, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari suspended the operations of a US-Based social media platform, Twitter in Nigeria. "The Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, announced the suspension in a statement issued in Abuja on Friday, citing the persistent use of the platform for activities that are capable of undermining Nigeria's corporate existence," the statement read. Mohammed said the Federal Government had also directed the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to immediately commence the process of licensing all Over-The-Top (OTT) and social media operations in Nigeria.

June 6, 2021, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Nigeria's broadcast regulator, issued a press release, ordering all broadcast outlets to cease publishing information on Twitter and to stop using Twitter as a news source.

- <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/487589-buhari-attacks-nigerian-media-accuses-journalists-of-reporting-irresponsible-remarks.html>
- <https://rsf.org/en/country/nigeria>

1.6. DATELINES & TRENDS OF ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS

1. **Ibanga Isine** (male) an investigative journalist and Editor of the Next Edition was forced to move away from his home after threats over his work became intolerable. During the night, his telephone lights up by itself and during the day, it is impossible to end some calls without switching the phone off since he began his investigations, into massacres carried out in the south of Kaduna State in the north of the country. Ibanga Isine, had to flee abroad in January after investigating the massacres in Kaduna state.
<https://www.ipcng.org/2021/02/02/ipc-decries-threats-on-journalist-ibanga-isines-life/>
2. **Benjamin Anaja** (male) a journalist with The Guild Press Limited, on Wednesday February 3, 2021, was physically assaulted by the officials of Lagos Environment Sanitation Corps (LAGESC) for allegedly recording and taking pictures during an enforcement operation at Meiran bus stop along the Lagos-Abeokuta expressway.
<https://cpj.org/2021/02/nigerian-journalist-benjamin-anaja-beaten-detained-by-security-forces/>
3. **Okechukwu Nnodim** (male) a reporter with The Punch Newspaper, was abducted by gunmen at about 11p.m on Wednesday February 3, 2021, at his residence in the Arab road area of Kubwa, Abuja. His phone and wife's phone were stolen in the process.
<https://punchng.com/gunmen-abduct-punch-journalist-two-others-in-abuja/>

4. **Chidiebere Onyia** (female), a reporter with the Nigerian Television Authority, (NTA), PortHarcourt, Zonal Office in Rivers State. She was allegedly kidnapped at a gunpoint around 8p.m on Wednesday February 10, 2021 along the railway line, Woji in Obio/ Akpor Local Government Area of the state on her way home after work.
<https://guardian.ng/news/police-confirm-kidnap-of-nta-reporter-in-port-harcourt/>
5. **Eniola Daniel** (male), a reporter with The Guardian Newspaper was physically assaulted while covering the activities of a government Taskforce at Apapa-Oshodi expressway in the early hours of Sunday February 28, 2021. His personal belongings and work tools were destroyed and vandalized during the incident.
<https://www.ipcng.org/2021/03/01/ipc-frowns-at-police-brutality-against-journalist-in-lagos/>
6. **Jaafar Jaafar** (male) a Daily Nigeria publisher was forced to go into hiding because of fear for his life as unidentified persons, likely to be 'hitmen' had been stalking him both at his Abuja and Kano residences. These threats came after Jaafar had published video clips of Governor Abudullahi Ganduje of Kano State in October 2018, allegedly showing him collecting bribe in dollars from a contractor. On Wednesday April 14, 2021, Jaafar further received an invitation from the Inspector General of Police monitoring unit for questioning alleging that he was inciting violence and spreading injurious falsehood against the Inspector General of Police.
<https://www.ipcng.org/2021/04/22/ipc-decries-threats-on-journalist-jaafar-jaafars-life/>
7. **Friday Olokor** (male) a Senior Correspondent with The Punch Newspaper and **Patience Ihejirik** (female), a reporter with Leadership Newspapers were assaulted by the Department of State Services (DSS) and the Police on Thursday June 10, 2021, in Abuja while trying to gain access to M & M Events Centre, Abuja where they had gone to cover the ongoing African Women Conference organised by DRPC (Development Research and Projects Centre) with the support of Ford Foundation. Olokor was physically manhandled while Ihejirika had her phone seized and vital videos deleted to ensure she did not record the assault on Olokor.
<https://www.ipcng.org/2021/06/11/ipc-condemns-assault-on-two-journalists-in-abuja/>
8. **Titus Badejo** (male) a former presenter and on-air personality for Naija FM, was murdered by unknown gunmen outside Club 407 in the Oluyole area of Ibadan at about 11:30 p.m. on Saturday June 19, 2021, in Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria. <https://punchng.com/police-confirm-killing-of-popular-ibadan-radio-presenter-titus-badejo/>
9. **Damisa Yusuf**, (male) a reporter with the Africa Independent Television (AIT) was brutalised by men of the Rapid Response Team attached to the Bauchi State Police Command, while covering a protest by students of the College of Agriculture in Yelwa on Thursday July 29, 2021, in Bauchi metropolis. His camera, laptop, mobile phone and wallet were also seized by the police officers during the encounter.
<https://guardian.ng/news/police-brutalise-journalist-covering-students-protest-in-bauchi/>
10. **Oluwagbemiga Olamikan** (male), a photojournalist with the Vanguard newspaper was assaulted and prevented from covering the trial of some supporters of Sunday Adeyemo, a youth leader better known as Sunday Igboho by the Department of State Services (DSS) operatives at the Federal High Court, Abuja on Monday August 2, 2021. <https://pmnewsnigeria.com/2021/08/02/igbohos-aides-dss-takes-over-court-premises-attacks-journalist/>
11. **Chukwu Odiahu** (male), a member of staff of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), who works at the engineering department of the station in Okene, Kogi State on Tuesday evening, September 07, 2021, was allegedly stoned to death by some yet-to-be-identified persons after he closed from work around 10 pm.
<https://dailytrust.com/nta-official-stoned-to-death-in-kogi>
12. **Tony Awobode** (male), the General Manager, JAMZ 100.1FM, Ibadan was harassed and beaten by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) and his men from the Eleyele Police station in Ibadan, the Oyo State capital on Published on Sunday September 19, 2021. The incident happened when Awobode who was riding on a power bike was stopped by the DPO alleging that his car mirror was hit by the power bike as he was trying to cross

towards the Aleshinloye axis. <https://dailypost.ng/2021/09/21/dpo-allegedly-beats-up-journalist-in-ibadan-photos/>

13. In September, the Ebonyi state government signed the state Cybercrime Prohibition bill into law, in October, **Godfrey Chikwere** (male), a journalist, was arrested by the police for social media posts that allegedly violated the state's Cybercrime Prohibition Law. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/africa/west-and-central-africa/nigeria/report-nigeria/>

14. **Tordue Salem** (male) a Vanguard Newspaper reporter covering legislative activities of the House of Representatives went missing Wednesday October 13, 2021, after a close of work without any trail of his whereabouts and was found dead a month later on Thursday night November 13, 2021. <https://www.ipcng.org/2021/10/18/missing-vanguard-reporter-ipc-demands-thorough-investigations/>
<https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2021/11/13/missing-vanguard-reporter-tordue-salem-found-dead/>

15. **Luke Binniyat** (male) a freelance journalist and a spokesperson for the Southern Kaduna Peoples Union (SOKAPU), a local rights group on Thursday November 4, 2021, was arrested by police officers at the SOKAPU office in Barnawa, a town in Kaduna state, following a complaint filed against the journalist by Samuel Aruwan, the state's commissioner for internal security and home affairs, over an October 29 Epoch Times report by Binniyat. The officers held Binniyat at the police headquarters in Gabasawa, in northern Kaduna state, until November 8, when they brought the journalist to a magistrate court where he was charged with cybercrime and ordered to be detained at a local prison. <https://cpj.org/data/people/luka-binniyat/>

16. **David Ekanem** (male), a Efik language programme presenter of FAD FM, in Calabar, Cross River State was stabbed and left to die by alleged hoodlums close to a popular hotel on the Murtala Mohammed highway on Saturday November 6, 2021, while waiting to board a taxi. <https://guardian.ng/news/radio-station-confirms-murder-of-oap-david-ekanem/>

17. **Ibrahim Hassan-Wuyo** (male), a Vanguard reporter received a threatening phone call on the 11th of December 2021 from the leader of a Non- Governmental Organization (NGO). The threat came after Hassan-Wuyo had published a story that emanated from a press statement by a group clamoring for an Igbo Presidency in 2023. <https://www.ipcng.org/2021/12/14/ipc-decries-threat-on-journalist-hassan-wuyos-life-condemns-arrest-of-fisayo-soyombo/>

18. **Fisayo Soyombo** (male), an Investigative Journalist was arrested and detained by Police Officers on Monday December 13, 2021. He was arrested after he was invited by the Police authorities over an investigative report by his medium on alleged corruption in the execution of some Police projects. Soyombo mobile phone was seized and therefore was incommunicado during the period, he was held from morning till late evening when he was granted bail. <https://www.ipcng.org/2021/12/14/ipc-decries-threat-on-journalist-hassan-wuyos-life-condemns-arrest-of-fisayo-soyombo/>

19. **Frederick Olatunde Odimayo** (male), a freelance reporter and editor with the privately owned Grace FM, published a report on the drug trade in Lokoja, Kogi State. In that report, Odimayo went undercover as a drug buyer to expose a local trafficking group. As a result, on April 16, in Lokoja, the capital of Kogi State, five men attacked Odimayo, beating him until he lost consciousness. <https://guardian.ng/features/2021-year-of-assault-on-press-freedom/>

20. **Niyi Oyedeji** (male) and **Ajibola Amzat** (male), Dr. Rufus Egbegba, the Director General of the National Biosafety Management Agency, NBMA, attempted to use institutions of the state to intimidate and harass the International Centre for Investigative Reporting, ICIR, and its journalists for a report on contract inflation at the agency. Dr. Egbegba used the Police Force Criminal Investigation Department, FCID; Department of State Security, DSS; Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC; and the office of the Attorney General of the Federation (Office of the Federal Director of Public Prosecution,) to threaten, intimidate or harass ICIR reporter, Niyi Oyedeji and its Editor, Ajibola Amzat, just for doing their work.

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/501037-coalition-condemns-state-attacks-on-nigerian-journalists-over-critical-reports.html>

21. **Tony Ufoh** (male), a journalist with Punch Newspaper on December 30, 2021 was harassed by the Nigerian Special Police Fraud Unit [SFU] in the line of duty in Milverton Ikoyi area of Lagos. Mr. Ufoh was speaking to tenants who were reportedly defrauded by a developer when he was accosted by the police and his phone and identity card were forcibly taken and still unreturned. <https://www.icirnigeria.org/media-cso-condemn-attack-on-journalists-by-nigerian-security-agents/>

22. On 28 August the DSS summoned television hosts **Chamberlain Usor** (male) and **Kayode Okikiolu** (male) for questioning in relation to comments made by Samuel Ortom, governor of Benue state, during a live interview on Channels Television. The authorities alleged that the governor's comments were "inciting, divisive and unfair".

Media organisations were also denied access by the Department of State Services to cover the trial of Nnamdi Kanu the leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Monday July 26, 2021. Only ten media organisations were selected to cover the trial. <https://www.thecable.ng/fhc-selects-only-10-media-organisations-to-cover-nnamdi-kanus-trial>

23. **Olatunji Abasa, Olu Aremo and Mudashiru Atanda** (male) who work with The Punch Newspaper, Leadership Newspaper and The Sun Newspaper respectively were on January 6, 2021, harassed by officers with Nigeria's Security and Civil Defence Corps. These three photo-journalist in Abuja had their cameras seized, also the images they had on their phone at the headquarters of the Nigeria's National Identity Management Commission, where all three of them were covering people enrolling in a government program, to link their phone sim cards with their national identification numbers as required by a new government policy were deleted. [Nigerian security forces seize journalists' cameras, delete photos - Committee to Protect Journalists \(cpj.org\)](#)

24. **Haruna Mohammed Salisu** (male), owner and reporter at the privately owned WikkiTimes News Website received a threat note. He (Salisu) found a note slipped under his office door in the city of Bauchi, the capital of Nigeria's northern Bauchi state. The note referenced a report Salisu had published on January 18, which alleged that the Makkah Eye Specialist Hospital, a clinic in Bauchi State had extorted its patients and committed tax fraud. On February 9, the clinic filed a civil defamation suit against Salisu over that article, demanding 1.105 billion naira (US \$2.9 million) in damages. The threatening note, a copy of which was published by the Nigerian International Centre for Investigative Reporting, criticised Salisu for allegedly not seeking to "reach out to us for reconciliation" related to the civil suit. The note is signed for Makkah eye clinic. [Nigerian journalist Haruna Mohammed Salisu threatened over report on alleged fraud - Committee to Protect Journalists \(cpj.org\)](#)

[Journalist threatened after exposing corruption at Makkah Eye Clinic - International Centre for Investigative Reporting \(icirnigeria.org\)](#)

25. **Peter Nkanga** (male)- since May 20, 2021 dozens of anonymous people have called and sent text messages to Nkanga, an Abuja based reporter with the British Broadcasting Corporation angered over a documentary which was aired by the broadcaster (Nkanga). On May 17, the BBC aired a documentary anchored by Nkanga that featured Ahmed Isah, the host of the Berekete Family program, a popular Nigerian radio show in which he advocates on behalf of people facing human rights issues. In the documentary, Isah is seen slapping a woman who allegedly set her niece's hair on fire, which Nkanga says "crossed a line." Elsewhere in the documentary, Nkanga also refers to Isah as "effective" in seeking justice for Nigerians who faced abuse. On May 19, Isah [apologized on-air](#) during the Brekete Family Program for hitting that woman, but accused Nkanga and the BBC team of plotting to kill him, saying, "they had planned a specific spot where they would stage what looked like an attack on our vehicle and there they would eliminate me."

The BBC denied those allegations in a statement published by the local daily [Premium Times](#).

On May 20, during [a call-in segment](#) on the Brekete Family Program, someone who identified themselves as “Barrister Tinubu” called the program, said Nkanga’s phone number on-air, and called for Isah’s supporters to contact Nkanga to voice their displeasure over the documentary. On May 21, the same person identifying themselves as Barrister Tinubu [called the show again](#), shared another of Nkanga’s phone numbers, and again criticized the journalist’s work. A May 22 [tweet](#) tagging Nkanga and BBC Africa included an image of a bleeding snake wrapped around a saw and a message that those picking fights need to “Be careful.”

On May 20, Nigeria’s broadcast media regulator, the National Broadcasting Corporation, summoned Isah and a co-host of the Brekete Family Program over the assault featured in the documentary, according to [Premium Times](#). The National Broadcasting Corporation said on May 27 that it had suspended Human Rights Radio, the Brekete Family Program’s parent company, over Isah’s actions depicted in the BBC documentary, according to [Premium Times](#). The suspension will begin on May 31 and last for at least 30 days, according to that report, which also said that the broadcaster would be required to pay an unspecified fine. [Nigerian BBC host Peter Nkanga receives death threats - Committee to Protect Journalists \(cpj.org\)](#)

[UPDATED: BBC reporter speaks on documentary on Brekete family, 'death threats' \(premiumtimesng.com\)](#)

26. Michael Victor (male)- a journalist who works with the British Broadcasting Corporation Pidgin was attacked by a police officer on Saturday during the June 12 Protest at Mokola in Ibadan, Oyo state. The BBC pidgin reporter was slapped while trying to record the harassment of protesters by security operatives, Premium Times reports. Michael was attacked by a police officer identified as S. A. Oke. The officer also seized the reporter’s phone.

It was also stated that the police officer allegedly vowed to kill any protester who refused to listen to their orders. Some officers were heard saying protest is ‘illegal on democracy day’. The protest was deliberately planned to coincide with Nigeria’s Democracy Day. Organisers of the June 12 protests have called on Nigerians to boycott official activities lined up by authorities to commemorate the day and join the demonstrations in their localities. <http://saharareporters.com/2021/06/12/june-12-police-officer-attacks-bbc-journalist-seizes-phone#:~:text=by%20SaharaReporters%2C%20New%20>

27. Sunday Egena Odeh (male) - the State House correspondent of Peoples Daily, an Abuja-based newspaper was on April 30, 2021, at about 5.30pm arrested at the AYA roundabout in Abuja by officers of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) on the orders of the Benue State governor, Samuel Ortom, for criticising him. Sunday who was arrested along with Johnson Ubeh, his cousin, who was used as a bait to locate him, was whisked away to Makurdi, the state capital but Johnson was reportedly released later. [Journalist Arrested for Criticising a State Governor – Media Rights Monitor \(wordpress.com\)](#)

28. Precious Nwadike (male) - A journalist in Imo State, Precious Nwadike, was allegedly been beaten to a pulp by a brother to the state governor, Hope Uzodimma. Nwadike, the editor of an Owerri-based newspaper, Community Watchdog, said he was beaten by the governor’s sibling, Uche, on Port Harcourt Road in Owerri. Uche is alleged to be one of the contractors handling road projects in the state. Uche, who reportedly moves around with police escorts, allegedly slapped the journalist, who unknowingly drove past the site of his road renovation work. Nwadike, who was bruised, battered, and left unconscious, was revived, and taken to hospital by passers-by. <https://www.nextedition.com.ng/journalist-hospitalised-after-uzodimmas-brother-thugs-alleged-attack#:~:text=A%20journalist%20in%20Imo%20State%20>

29. Pelu Awofeso (male) - When journalistic instinct made Pelu Awofeso bring out his phone to film the harassment of a motorist by officials of a Lagos State task force, what he got himself was assault. Mr. Awofeso said the incident happened before the traffic light junction by Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH) in Ikeja on Tuesday when he was headed to the library. A winner of the CNN/Multichoice African Journalists Awards for tourism reporting, Mr Awofeso said he was making a transaction by a Point of Sale

(POS) when the officials, including police officers, numbering about eight, got out from a 'danfo' bus and tried to forcefully remove the key from a private car. The motorist resisted and their exchanges lasted for about 20 minutes. Happening around 11 a.m. when snarl-up had gained traction, the exchanges made it worse. [Nigerian journalist assaulted by Lagos task force for filming harassment of motorists \(premiumtimesng.com\)](https://www.premiumtimesng.com)

30. **Chidiebube Okeoma** (male)- On December 6, 2021, operatives of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) brutalised Chidiebube Okeoma, the Imo State correspondent of The Punch newspaper at the Federal Girls Government College in Owerri, the state capital, where he went to get information for a story he was investigating on students bullying. They thereafter arrested and bundled him to their command headquarters accusing him of being an operative of the Eastern Security Network (ESN), the militant arm of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). While one of the NSCDC operatives hit him with the butt of his rifle, another punched him in his left eye and smashed one of his smartphones on the ground. The journalist was released after he was interrogated by a senior officer at the command headquarters in Owerri. Chidiebube was later treated at the Chapel Group Hospital, Ikenegbu-Owerri, having lost a lot of blood. [NSCDC Officials Brutalise The Punch Correspondent in Imo State | Media Rights Agenda](#)

31. **Idumonza Isidahomhen** (male) - The attempt of forceful invasion into Mr. Idumonza's Office at Plot 7, Ilapo Estate, opposite AIT Alagbado, Lagos, on 3rd September, 2021 by Police Officers from the Ekiti State Command, Ado-Ekiti, following a story originated from an anonymous parent of a student of Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti, titled Afe Babalola University in Rumbles as Parents Complain of Fraud, published on Thursday, August 19, 2021, was a clear manifestation of the violation of the Journalist's constitutionally guaranteed rights to privacy and freedom of expression and the Press, by the Officers of the Nigeria Police.

It was gathered on Friday, 3rd September 2021 that errant Police Officers, claim to be in possession of a purported petition but refused to inform the Journalist who the Petitioner is, and they refused to avail the Journalist with a copy of the petition despite the request by the Journalist. Apparently, the Officers are determined to get the Journalist arrested this weekend. Thus, without provocation and without justification, they had apparently attempted to invade the Lagos Office of the Online Journalist in search of him for his arrest. [JOURNALISTS UNDER THREAT: TRAVAIL OF IDUMONZA ISIAHOMHEN \(lovetvnews.com.ng\)](https://lovetvnews.com.ng)

32. **Yusuf Odejobi** (male) - A news Reporter with MMS Plus newspaper, Mr. Yusuf Odejobi, was arrested, handcuffed, and paraded for over five hours by policemen, who had invaded the headquarters of Kings Communications Limited in the early hours of Tuesday, 9th August 2021. Editor of the newspaper, Mr. Kenneth Jukpor, in a statement on Wednesday, said the policemen acted on the directives of Dangote Group Spokesman, Mr. Anthony Chiejina, who had threatened to deal with the leadership of the media outfit for publishing a news story titled, "AMCON May Take Over Dangote Refinery As Liabilities Swell." According to the statement, when attempt to find the Editor-in-Chief of MMS Plus, Mr. Kingsley Anaroke and the Editor of MMS Plus, Mr. Kenneth Jukpor, were futile, the armed Policemen arrested Mr. Odejobi, a Reporter with MMS Plus. Odejobi who was handcuffed and bundled into the police vehicle: A Blue Ford Ranger'. While in the vehicle heading to the police station, the police officers threatened to use him as a litmus test or scapegoat. He was later taken to the Zonal CID, Zone 2 Command, Onikan where he said the Police paraded him like a criminal taking him from one office to another in handcuffs from 12noon to 5:30pm. According to Odejobi, there were four officers; two from Nigeria Police Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID), a legal officer and a man who claimed to work with Dangote Group. [Police](#)

[invite MMS Plus editor, release arrested reporter over Dangote Refinery story – One Page Africa](#)

33. **Tosin Ajuwon** (male)- On November 9, 2021, a group of persons suspected to be hoodlums burgled the apartment of Mr. Tosin Ajuwon, the Ondo State correspondent of Daily Times newspaper and took away important documents and other valuable property. The hoodlums broke into Tosin's apartment located at Irese Community in Ifedore Local Council of Ondo State through the window after he and members of his family had left for work and made away with two sets of television, in addition to his documents.

Tosin described the incident as shocking, frightening and a direct attack on him explaining that the hoodlums came into the apartment through the backyard after breaking the burglar-proof iron rods in his window. They ransacked the whole room, scattered some of my documents in a most frightening way. In fact, it's a direct attack. They stole two television sets (a 55 inches Hisense CurveTv and an LG 32 inches Tv) while they also took away vital documents.” <https://mediarightsagenda.org/journalists-apartment-burgle-vital-documents-carted-away/#:~:text=On%20November%209%2C%202021%2C%20a%20group%20o>

34. **Tosin Busayo** (male) and **Precious Uzoanya** (male) – the two journalists with Roots TV were arrested during the #NorthIsBleeding protest in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The journalists; Tosin Busayo (cameraman) and Precious Uzoanya (reporter) had been arrested at Area 1 while covering the protest against the growing insecurity in the northern region which was organised by northern youths. The journalists had been taken to the Durumi Police Station before being transferred to the FCT Police Command Headquarters. They were later released by the Deputy Commissioner of Police in Charge of Operation, Ben Igweh, after being subjected to unnecessary interrogation on their motives for covering the protest. The police also previewed the video clips from their camera. [#NorthIsBleeding: Police Release Journalists After Previewing Video Clips From Abuja Protest | Sahara Reporters](#)

35. **Uche Ejiowhor** (male) and **Aham Chijioke** (male) – The two journalists alongside seven other journalists reporting for different media organisations in Rivers State including Rhythm FM, RSTV, SweetCrude, Sahara Reporters, Wish FM, Today's FM and Arise TV, were attacked by suspected hoodlums in the presence of anti-cultism squad of the Rivers State Police Command on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at the new airport road before OPM, Rumuagholu in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area where they had gone for a press briefing. Some of the items looted, according to reports reaching NUJ, include nine smart phones, two cameras, one HDV Sonny and Canon and their accessories, audio recorder, wrist watches, two medicated eyeglasses and physical cash. [NUJ CONDEMNS ASSAULT ON MEMBERS IN RIVERS – FlashPoint News](#)

36. **Nnamso Okoro, Nelson Eyinama and Blessing and Onyebuchi Iwundu Micheal** (All male) - Police operatives attached to the Intelligence Response Team of the Inspector General of Police arrested no fewer than seven newspaper vendors and distribution agents in Imo State for circulating news related to Indigenous People of Biafra and the Eastern Security Network. The police operatives swooped on them on Monday morning at their base located at Number 5 Rotibi Street, Douglas Road, Owerri, as the circulation of the day's newspapers was ongoing. Other vendors and distribution agents who ran away, told journalists that the gun-wielding police operatives accused them of circulating newspaper publications that had stories on IPOB and ESN. The arrest also affected newspaper circulation in the state on Monday as the other vendors and distribution agents fled over the fear of being arrested. [Police Continue Mass Arrests In Imo, Raid Newspaper Vendors For Circulating IPOB, ESN News | Sahara Reporters](#)

37. **Adebayo Ayinde** (male) – On Monday, February 22, 2021 the Niger State Governor Abubakar Sani Bello was called on to launch an investigation into reports that his Chief Press Secretary, Ms Mary Noel-Barje, ordered the arrest of The PUNCH correspondent in the State, Mr. Adebayo Ayinde, and directed security men to bar him from Government House in the State for undisclosed reasons. Ms Noel-Barje is reported to have sent The PUNCH correspondent's pictures to some security men in the state and instructed security operatives at Government House to bar him from entering the Government House, following which one of the security men attempted to evict him from Government House, but for the intervention of other journalists who thwarted the move. Security men at Government House are also reported to have confirmed that the Chief Press Secretary had told them to arrest Mr. Ayinde but did not provide any reason for the directive. [MRA Asks Niger State Governor to Investigate Press Secretary for Ordering Journalist's Arrest | Media Rights Agenda](#)

38. **Cletus Enurujama, Godspower Anele and Thursday Dick** (All male) - Bandits reportedly attacked three journalists working with the Rivers State Television Authority, (RSTV) and stole their camera and phones. The incidents happened around Bori in Khana Local Government Area of the state. It was gathered that the victims

were returning to Port Harcourt from a function in Andoni LGA when the hoodlums waylaid them. [Gunmen kidnap UNIPORT lecturer, attack three journalists - The Nation Newspaper \(thenationonlineng.net\)](https://thenationonlineng.net/gunmen-kidnap-uniprot-lecturer-attack-three-journalists/)

39. **Agba Jalingo** (male) - Agba Jalingo, an activist and publisher of Cross River Watch, an online newspaper; the paper's news editor, Jonathan Ugbal; and its lawyer, James Ibor, were on June 12, 2021, arrested by men of the Nigeria Police in front of the Cross River Watch's office in Calabar, Cross River State, over this year's Democracy Day protest in the city. They were standing in front of the premises of Cross River Watch, as that is where the police commissioner authorised them to protest, sharing leaflets to passers-by when the police suddenly swooped on them, firing tear-gas, and later arrested them. Mr Jalingo was initially arrested on June 11 over a petition that he was into gun running. He had gone to the police headquarters in Calabar to honour an invitation from the State Police Commissioner, Mr. Kayode Sikiru, where a copy of the petition was shown to him. He was detained for some hours and later released after he had made a statement in response to the petition. [Journalists, Lawyer Arrested over Democracy Day Protest | Media Rights Agenda](#)

40. **Sikiru Obarayese** (male) - On October 20, 2021, about a year after the first attack, Sikiru Obarayese was attacked. He was covering a memorial demonstration when a few police officers instructed him to leave. After filming, a policeman shoved him from behind ordered others take him to a nearby police van, where at least six officers beat him with batons and the butt of their guns, forced him into their van, and drove him off to the station.

"It was dreadful and fearful," he says. "At the station, I was punched repeatedly in the face by an officer. Others threatened to kill me if I did not cooperate. They took my phone and didn't allow me to call anyone until I was brought to court." A magistrate court charged him with "breach of peace for videoing the Divisional Police Officer." A few days later, the police withdrew the charges and released him. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/nigeria-approaches-next-elections-journalists-are-increasingly-under-threat>

41. During the 'media coverage of one year after the #EndSars protest' Legit.ng Online reporter, **Abisola Alawode** was arrested at the Lekki Toll Plaza while PM News correspondent, **Taiwo Okanlawon** and the Arise TV crew of **Adefemi Akinsanya** and **Ope Adenihun** were beaten and harassed at the same venue. The Arise TV crew were also illegally ordered to pull down the drone they were using to cover the event. Policemen also barred The Punch Newspaper correspondent, **Adebimpe Olajiga**, from covering the protest and in Osogbo, Daily Post correspondent.

1.7. THE SUMMARY OF ATTACKS ACCORDING TO MEDIA TYPE

- a. Broadcast = Twenty (20)
- b. Print = Fifteen (15)
- c. Online = Fifteen (15)
- d. Others = Seven (7)

1.8. THE SUMMARY OF ATTACKS ACCORDING TO GENDER

- a. Male = Fifty-four (54)
- b. Female = Three (3)

Conclusion

It is imperative for journalists to demonstrate greater sense of solidarity in dealing with attacks on media and abuses on the rights of colleagues in the profession. Sharing information relating to similar experiences and circumstances of attacks by journalists and victims could be useful for interrogating and overcoming the predisposing factors that make journalists vulnerable to victimization.

In most cases, available information provided to the help desk by victims; particularly as it pertains to identities of attackers or perpetrators of abuse may not be adequate enough considering the spontaneity of the incidents. It would therefore be helpful if colleagues who were on the same beat or at the scene of the incidents could volunteer further credible information to assist in apprehending and prosecuting abusers of journalists and attackers of the media.

It is however noted that abuse by security agents, especially the Police Force still features as a dominant challenge in spite of decades of advocacy aimed at demanding change from relevant authorities of security agencies. There is the need for relevant authorities to priorities sensitization and reorientation of security agents on the rights and privileges of journalists as part of deployment personnel on security assignment; particularly in crisis situation.

It is therefore imperative for media professional bodies especially the unions and associations as well as relevant stakeholders of the civil society to demand accountability on safety of journalists and media through renewed engagements at institutional and legislative levels.

Recommendations

The following are recommended as follow-up to existing efforts at mitigating attacks on journalists and the media:

- Greater networking, partnership and collaboration by stakeholders on safety of journalists
- Using institutional and legal mechanisms to challenge the violation of the rights of journalists and the media.