Rumble Over Telecom License - Nigerians Rate GSM After 100 Days

The rumpus over the denial of Global System of Mobile Telecommunications (GSM) license to Communications Investment Limited (CIL) has hardly died down when the telecommunications sub sector was ruffled again by an allegation that the Nigerian Communications Commission, (NCC) the nation's telecommunication's regulatory institution granted operating license to MTS First Mobile (formerly Mobile Telecommunications Services Limited).

MTN Nigeria Limited, one of the GSM licensed operators was the first to raise an alarm that NCC was set to revalidate the operating license of MTS which was invalidated in 1995 after a disagreement with the Nigeria Telecommunications PLC (NITEL). In contention is the operating license granted MTS during the military regime to operate analogue network allegedly suspended in 1995 before the bidding process for GSM licences and actual operations commenced.

In a letter dated August 20 signed by its Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Karel Pienaar, MTN expressed dissatisfaction with the regularization of MTS' license three months ago which
it said was a breach of contract. GSM licensees were assured that no other mobile license would be granted until after five years. This was to allow the licensees to recoup their investments in the sub sector.

The MTN letter said in part:

"As you may recall, during and prior to the auction process in (January 2001) the NCC warranted that it would not issue more than four (second generation) licenses. MTN is surprised by the current press report on the licensing of MTS.

"MTN understands that the new democratic government suspended all licenses issued by the previous governments."

Mr. Pienaar's letter argued that revalidating the MTS license would pose a serious threat to the business of GSM operators. He also claimed that there would be spectrum interference if the spectrum allocated to MTS falls within the GSM band.

MTS, in its position, stated that it had been in existence since 1993 but went under as a result of trade dispute with NITEL not because its license was revoked. It added that:

"NCC made it clear during question and answer session before the GSM auction that analogue operators will remain in business until the technology becomes obsolete.

"That at no time was MTS' license canceled and thus the frequency has been reserved since there is no fear of overlap with GSM frequency as alleged.

"MTN cannot question the integrity and efficiency of the nation's regulatory agency simply because it wants to protect its business interest for which the commission had given all the room."

But rather than arbitrate, NCC referred both the MTS and the two GSM operators which have coalesced to fight MTS to the Ministry of Communications

This strange manner of arbitration drew the ire of experts in the communications sector who accused NCC of having something to hide. But NCC Chief Executive, Mr. Ernest Ndukwe in a rebuttal said that the commissions' activities have been in the interest of the nation.

The immediate past Chief Executive of NCC, Dr. Emmanuel Nnana criticized NCC for "its operational flip-flop which has thrown the industry into a tailspin." In an interview with a national daily, Dr. Nnana said: "It is mystifying that NCC has failed to respond categorically to this serious matter that has called the integrity of the organisation into question." He said he was dissatisfied with the recent inconsistency of NCC on a very crucial issue like licensing and frequency allocation. He urged the NCC not to subject itself to kindergarten debate where people are asked to indicate by raising of hands adding that regulation of telecoms is backed and guided by international law not sentiments. He said NCC had all the power to decide and should therefore live up to its responsibility.

In the face of arguments of all the parties, it is clear that something is amiss in the manner the NCC is handling the case of MTS' license.

Considering the fact that the present administration at its inception assured that it believed in transparency and accountability, which it said, would check corruption, such a simple matter of whether or not a license was invalidated or revalidated should not generate the hoopla it has provoked.

The successful take off of the GSM still remains the only achievement to date of the present government and should not be blighted by underhand deals.

Government is expected to stick to its promise that only four slots are open for grabs. NCC must have made a deal with MTS before it (MTS) could insist that it has "the most democratically and publicly approved revalidated license whose process was painstaking that every Nigerian was told that the process was taking place at the time."

MTS Executive Director, Dr. Eugene Jinwan and its head of engineering, Bob Okonyia claimed that MTS made presentations to both the NCC and NITEL after which the 45% shares originally held by the parastatal were monetised. They claimed that: "Our frequency was intact
but when it came to a point of signing a fresh interconnectivity agreement with NITEL, it (NITEL) sought clarification from the Nigerian Communications Commission on the status of MTS.

"We were invited by the NCC and after our presentation to its board, the NCC on June 12, 2001 after looking at our presentation dispassionately took a fresh look at our license as at 1995 when we went under and now offered MTS another license to replace the existing one." Jiwan said that the NCC specified that "the new license vitiate any offer of license document issued previously to your company for the provision of mobile cellular services in Nigeria." He added that the offer was on June 12, 2001 but the NCC published its intention in several national newspapers on the July 27, 2001 to ask for any objection, but none came after 21 days. By September 1, 2001, the NCC formally issued MTS a license to operate mobile cellular devices.

He claimed that MTS duly paid the license fee of N150 million in addition to another N23 million paid on August 3 last year.

He said it accepted to operate the Enhanced Total Access Communications System (ETACS), which is a first generation mobile service. With such explanation, it is easy to question NCC's integrity on the matter.

As the controversy rage, NITEL, the third licensed GSM operator, currently operates only the most expensive of its GSM service in Abuja the Federal Capital Territory alone. This it calls "Royal". It is yet to debut outside Abuja and this lapse has given the two other networks a field day to exploit Nigeria's vast market to the detriment of Nigerian's own network.

It is expected that when NITEL would come out with it own pay-as-you-go, its rates would be cheaper and would also force down the rates for the two other networks.

Meanwhile, 100 hundred days into the commercial deployment of the GSM phone in Nigeria, users have expressed dissatisfaction over the services of the GSM network operators. Generally, users describe their services as poor and complain that it was difficult calling or connecting other phone users either in the same network, another network or a landline. Subscribers also described their airtime charges as outrageous.

These were the outcome of a survey undertaken by Media Rights Agenda (MRA) recently (See page 8).

In other interviews with several GSM subscribers, the use of the voice mail to retrieve calls that go into it was the most popular among users.

One problem the survey discovered in the course of interactions with users with respect to the other services offered apart from the voice telephony is that the respondents either don't know how to use these services yet or their handsets have restricted facilities. Not all of the handsets can be used for all the valued added services being offered.

Some subscribers spoken to complain about the recharge cards, which they said they bought. Some of the users claimed that for over two weeks, they could not enjoy the GSM services because their network computer refused to credit their account with any amount to enable them make calls.

A subscriber who complained bitterly about the services said he was considering subscribing to a landline. His grudges are that the charges are expensive and most calls are made to go into voice mail too soon forcing him to make calls he would ordinarily not make. He also complained that while it is easy for him to call friends and relatives in the United States and Europe, they find it difficult to reach him on his GSM line.

On the flip side, all GSM users interview said the voice quality was very clear.

On the average, Nigerians seem to be enjoying the services as more people now clutch the GSM handsets. They are able to get in touch with their colleagues and families far and near. The mobile phone, which had been a status symbol prior to the launch of the GSM, has now lost that status. Yet a huge chunk of Nigerians who earnestly desire the GSM remain shut out of the system by a combination of factors, ranging from the prohibitive cost and unavailability of the services in most parts of the country. The nest few months will determine the fate of many.
SURVEY: 100 DAYS OF GSM IN NIGERIA, So Farm So Good - Nigeria

Nigerian GSM phone users have expressed dissatisfaction over the services of the GSM network operators, one hundred days after commercial deployment. Generally, users describe their services as poor and complain that it was difficult calling or connecting other phone users either in the same network, another network or a landline. Subscribers also described their airtime charges as outrageous.

These were the positions of respondents to a survey conducted through the administration of structured questionnaires by Media Rights Agenda (MRA).

One hundred copies of a questionnaire comprising eight close-ended and two open-ended questions were administered to users of GSM phones in Lagos between November 26 and December 7. The questionnaire solicited the views of respondents on the performance of GSM service providers after 100 days of commercial deployment. Ninety-one questionnaires were returned; a mortality rate of 9%.

The survey confirmed through question '1' which asked respondents the network they used, that NITEL hasn't reached Lagos. Those polled either subscribe to Econet Wireless or to MTN Nigeria Limited. Again, all those polled subscribe to the pay-as-you-go service.

Question '2' asked respondents how they would describe the services their networks were offering. Majority of them, 57 said it was 'good', 21 said it was 'poor' while the rest 12 said they would described the services of the GSM operators as 'very poor'. None of the respondents described the services of their GSM providers as 'excellent', which was one of the options provided.

Question '3' had three parts and asked about the ease with which GSM users are able to call or connect subscribers in the same network as theirs, other GSM networks and landlines.

A significant majority, 66 respondents, said it was 'easy' for them to connect other subscribers on their networks. Twenty-five said it was 'not easy'. None of the respondents said it was either 'difficult' or 'almost impossible' for them to call people on the same networks.

On the second part of the question, 49 respondents said it was 'not very easy' getting people on other GSM networks. Twenty-seven said it was 'easy', and 16 said it was 'difficult.' None said it was 'almost impossible.'

For the third part of the question, 44 respondents said it was 'not very easy' getting subscribers on landlines. Twenty-three said it was 'almost impossible'; 12 said it was 'difficult', while another 12 said it was 'easy.'

Question '4' asked respondents other value added services offered by their GSM service providers. Respondents listed eight services. They include "Executive Briefing," "Voicemail," "Caller identification," "Call Barring," "Call Waiting," "Short Message Services," "E-mail," and "Breaking News Stranding".

Question five asked how many of these services respondents use. Besides the voice telephony services which all the respondents say they use, 21 said they use one other; 28 said they use two others; 21 said they use three others.

Specifically, 77 respondents in their answer to question '6', said they use the voice mail; 45 said they use the short message service, while all the respondents said they used the caller identification facility to determine to either bar or receive calls. Seventeen indicated they use the call waiting service and one respondent to receiving breaking news.

Asked how respondents would describe the rates charged for air-time, 70 respondents said the charges were 'outrageous' and 21 said they were 'a bit expensive.' None said the charges were 'fair.'

Question eight asked what kind of improvement respondents would suggest from their GSM services providers. Virtually all the respondents said users should be allowed to use their discretion to determine how long to use their recharged cards rather than give it a limited life time. Sixty asked for reduction in their charges, 51 ask that they increase their cell sites and
networks, and six others said better interconnectivity between theirs and other networks. Two suggested that recharged cards should be made more readily available.

Asked how they would describe their experience with GSM services in the past one hundred days on a scale of 1 to 10? (1 being very poor and 10 being excellent), 65 respondents gave them 50% pass mark. They chose '5.' Sixteen chose 3 or 30% mark, while five respondents each gave them '2' (20 %) and '6 (60 %).

Responding to another question, 58 respondents said they rate their providers' customer relations services 'good', while 26 said they would rate it 'poor'. Seven rated it 'very poor', while none rated it 'excellent'.

SPECIAL LAW REPORT:
African Human Rights Commission on Malaolu

Following the arrest, trial and conviction of Niran Malaolu, editor of The Diet newspapers by the late General Sani Abacha’s regime in 1998 over his alleged involvement in a coup d’etat, Media Rights Agenda (MRA) filed a commission to the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) claiming that the trial and conviction were unfair.

ACHPR upheld MRA’s arguments and declared Malaolu’s trial unfair and in violation of its charter.

The following is a summarized compilation of the arguments canvasses before the Commission and its verdict on the matter.

FACTS:
Communication 224/98 was brought on behalf of Mr. Niran Malaolu editor of an independent Nigerian daily Newspaper, sentenced to life imprisonment under the Treason and Other Offences (Special Military Tribunal) Decree No 1 of 1986 by General Sani Abacha’s government in 1998 over his alleged roles in a foiled coup.

The Communication alleges that Malaolu was arrested along with three other colleagues who were later released but Malaolu was held without charges till he was arraigned before the special tribunal. Throughout the period of his incarceration Niran Malaolu was not allowed access to his lawyer, doctor or family members.

The communication alleges that Malaolu's involvement was not unconnected with a news story published by his newspaper on the coup plot involving the Chief of General Staff, General Oladipo Diya, other military officers as well as civilians.

The communication also alleges that Malaolu was denied the right to be defended by lawyers of his choice and instead assigned a military lawyer. And that the members of the tribunal were hand picked by the then Head of state, General Sani Abacha and the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) against whom the alleged offence was committed. Also the President of the tribunal Major General Victor Malu is a member of the PRC, which is empowered to confirm the death sentences passed by the Tribunal.

The communication alleges that the trial of Niran, a civilian, before the special Military Tribunal using special procedure is a breach of the United Nations Principles on the Independence of the judiciary and article 7 of the Charter.

The communication also argues that the right of appeal to a higher judicial authority is completely extinguished and those convicted can only appeal to the PRC whose composition and interests are already questionable.

The communication further argues that the trial of Niran in camera is a violation of the international human right standard of fair and public hearing.

The communication finally argues that the arrest, detention, arraignment, trial, conviction and sentence of Niran were in grave breaches of the norms of fair trial as guaranteed in the Charter.
Procedure
The communication is dated 25th May 1998
At the 25th ordinary session held in Burundi, the commission decided to be seized on the commission
On 19th August 1999, the Secretariat notified the parties of this decision.
On its 26th ordinary session held in Kigali, Rwanda the communication was declared admissible.
On the 17th January 2000, the Secretariat notified the parties of this decision.
On 17 February 2000, the secretariat received a Nole Verbal from the High commission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in Banjul requesting the draft agenda for the 27th ordinary session from the Secretariat, a copy of the complaint and a report of the 26th ordinary session and the letter of invitation to the session from the secretariat.
On the 8th of March 2000, the documents requested by the Nigerian High Commission, except that of the 26th ordinary session were forwarded.
At its 27th ordinary session the commission postponed its further consideration to the next session to enable the Nigerian Government respond to the request for argument.
On 31st May 2000, the Secretariat received a letter from the complainant inquiring about the decision made at the 27th ordinary session to enable the Nigerian Government respond to its request for argument.
On 6th July 2000 the decision was communicated to both parties
On 31st May 2000 the secretariat acknowledged receipt of the complainant's letter.
On 27th September 2000 the Secretariat received a letter from the High Commission of Nigeria in Gambia.
On 3rd October 2000, the Secretariat of the commission acknowledged the receipt of response and indicated discrepancies. A copy of the submission was forwarded to the complainant for its observation.

LAW

Admissibility.
The case was declared admissible at the 26th ordinary session held in Kigali, Rwanda on the following grounds:
In giving an opinion on the effect of Article 56(7) of the Charter in view of the prevailing political situation in Nigeria the Commission relied on its case law and submitted that based on the well established principle of international law, a new government inherits the previous governments international obligations, including responsibilities for the previous governments misdeeds.
Deciding upon the facts alleged at the time of the submission, even if the situation has improved the position still remains that the responsibility of the present government of Nigeria would be engaged for acts of human rights violation.
Further more, it was noted that although Nigeria is under a democratically elected government, the new constitution provides in its section 6(6)(d) that no legal action can be brought to challenge any existing law made on or after 15th January, 1966 for determining any issue or question as to the competence of any authority or person to make such laws.

THE MERITS

Article 3(2)
Every individual shall be entitled to equal protection by the law

Article 5
Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status, all forms of exploitation and degradation of man particularly slavery, slave trade, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and treatment shall be prohibited.
The Commission finds the various forms of treatment meted out to Malaolu as violation of the victim’s right to respect and dignity and right to freedom from inhuman or degrading treatment guaranteed under Article 5 of the Charter.

**Article 6**

"Every individual shall have the right to liberty and to the security of his person. No one may be deprived of his freedom except for the reasons and conditions previously laid down by law. In particular no one may be arbitrarily arrested and detained"

The commission finds the arrest and subsequent detention of Malaolu without a warrant of arrest and without informing him of the offences for which he was arrested a violation of Article 6.

**Article 7**

Every individual shall have the right to have his cause heard. This comprises.

(a) The right to an appeal to competent national organs against acts violating his fundamental human rights…..
(b) Every individual shall have the right to be presumed innocent till proven guilty by a competent court or tribunal .
(c) Every individual shall have the right to defense, including the right to be defended by counsel of his choice .
(d) Every individual shall have….. the right to be tried by an impartial court or tribunal .

Mr. Malaolu was neither informed of the reasons for his arrest nor of any charges against him. The failure of the security agents who arrested the convicted person to comply with these requirements is in violation of fair trial.

**Article 9**

Every individual shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinion before the law.

**Article 26**

State parties to the present charter shall have the duty to guarantee the independence of the courts and shall allow the establishment and improvement of appropriate national institutions entrusted with the promotion and protection of the rights and freedom guaranteed by the present charter.

**PRINCIPLE 5 OF THE U.N BASIC PRINCIPLE**

Every one shall have the right to be tried by ordinary courts or tribunal using established legal procedures. Tribunals that do not use the duly established procedure of the legal process shall not be created to displace the jurisdiction belonging to the ordinary court.

**PRINCIPLE 10 OF THE U.N BASIC PRINCIPLE**

Persons selected as judicial officers shall be individuals of integrity and ability with appropriate training or qualification in law.

The communication alleges that the decision of the Tribunal, which tried and convicted Mr. Malaolu is not subject to appeal but confirmation by the Provisional Ruling Council, the composition of which is clearly partisan. The commission finds the non-compliance of the competent authorities of Nigeria to this requirement in breach of the provision of Article 7(1)(a).

The communication alleges that prior to the setting up of the tribunal, the Military Government of Nigeria organized intense pre-trial publicity to persuade members of the public that a coup had occurred and those arrested in connection with it were guilty of treason. The Commission finds the Government of Nigeria in violation of Article 7(1)(b) of the Charter.

The Commission alleges that the exclusion of the members of the public and press from the trial by the tribunal was not justified and in breach of fair hearing. The Government of Nigeria argued however that the right to fair hearing in public was subject to a provision that the court might exclude from the proceedings persons other than the parties thereto in the interest of defense, public safety and public order.
The Commission invoked the provisions of Article 60 and 61 of the Charter and called in aid General Comment 13 of the U.N Human Right Committee on the right to fair trial

**Paragraph Of The Said Comment States:**

The publicity of hearing is an important safeguard in the interest of the individual and of society at large. At the same time Article 14, paragraph 1, acknowledges that courts have the power to exclude all or part of the public for reasons spelt out in that paragraph. It should be noted that apart from such exceptional circumstances the committee considers that a hearing must be open to the public in general, including members of the press, and must not, for instance be limited to a particular category of persons.

The Commission notes that these circumstances are exhaustive, as indicated by the use of the phrase "apart from such exceptional circumstances ". But since the defense of the Government is an omnibus statement, and considering the fact that the Government had organized pre-trial publicity to persuade members of the public of the occurrence of a coup and the guilt of those arrested. The Commission finds the exclusion of the public unjustified and in violation of the victim's right to fair trial guaranteed under Article 7 of the Charter.

The Commission submits that by refusing Mr. Malaolu access to a lawyer of his choice, the Government of Nigeria was in contravention of Article 7(1)(c) of the Charter. The Commission re-enforces this guarantee in paragraph 2(e) (I) of its Resolution on the Right to Recourse and Fair Trial which provides for the rights of suspects to communicate in confidence with counsel of their choice and thus finds the denial in this case a violation of these basic guarantees.

The Commission alleges that the Special Military Tribunal that tried the convicted person was neither competent, independent nor impartial because the Head of State, Gen. Sani Abacha, and the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC), against whom the alleged offence was committed, selected members of the Tribunal. Some are members of the Tribunal and were also serving officers. For instance the President of the Tribunal, Major General Victor Malu is also a member of the PRC, which is empowered by the Treason and other offences (Special Military Tribunal) Decree No 1 of 1986, to confirm the sentences passed by the Tribunal and was in breach of the right to fair trial as stipulated in Article 7 (1)(d) of the Charter.

The Government does not refute this claim but further asserts that it's submission will not affect the merit or demerits of the trial. The commission is of the opinion that the merits and the demerits of the trial must be considered and consequently finds the selection of serving military officers, with little or no knowledge of law as members of the Tribunal in contravention of Principle 10 of the Basic Principle on the independence of the judiciary, which provides that only individuals of integrity who are qualified in law should be selected for judicial office.

The Commission also finds the trial in contravention of Principle 5 of the U.N Basic Principles of the Independence of the Judiciary and article 7(1) (d) of the Charter.

The Commission also alleges that Malaolu is being punished by Nigeria's Military Government over news story published by his newspaper relating to the alleged coup plot and thus in contravention of his right of freedom of expression enshrined in Article 9 of the Charter. The Government claims that the trial was not an ostensible case of victimization against Malaolu or his profession. The Commission takes the view that it was only Malaolu’s publication that led to his arrest, trial and conviction and therefore finds that in violation of Article 9 of the Charter as alleged.

The Commission also finds the trial and conviction of Malaolu by a special Military Tribunal presided over by a serving military officer, who is also a member of the PRC, a body empowered to confirm the sentence in contravention of Article 26 of the Charter.

The Commission notes that the alleged violations took place during a prolonged military rule and such regimes as already pointed out by the Nigerian Government are abnormal. Though the Commission sympathizes with the government of Nigeria over this situation it asserts that
this does not in any way diminish it's obligation under the charter, nor the violations committed prior to it's coming into office.

Finally, the Commission finds it necessary to clarify the claim of the Nigerian Government that the trial was conducted under a law validly enacted by the competent authority at the time. Also that the victim was charged, tried, convicted and sentenced in accordance with the provision of such a law.

The Commission recalls it's decision in communication 147/95 and 149/96, Sir Dawda Jawara vs The Gambia where it was stated that a state could only avail itself of such a plea where the law is consistent with it’s obligations under the Charter. And since no such reasons were adduced in the instant case, the Commission rejects the argument.

For The Above Reasons the Commission declares that there has been a violation of Articles 3(2), 5, 6, 7(1) (a) (b) (c) (d), 9, 26; Principles 5 and 10 of the U.N Basic Principles on the independence of the judiciary

Urges Nigeria to bring its law in conformity with the provisions of the Charter.

*Media Rights Monitor* is published monthly by the Media Rights Agenda (MRA), an independent, non-governmental organisation established for the purpose of promoting and protecting press freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria. MRA is registered under Nigerian law and has Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights.

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MANAGEMENT’S NOTICE

Dear Readers,

Nigeria's traditionally vibrant press went through massive attacks in recent years, especially since 1993, resulting in frequent arrest and detention of journalists, confiscation of publications, closure of media facilities, banning of publications, assault on journalists, promulgation of repressive press decrees, as well as other forms of censorship.

Despite these constant attacks on the press, there was no regular medium for monitoring and documenting abuses of press freedom and freedom of expression and drawing local and international attention to them. The result was that many violations went unnoticed and unreported. Besides, many journalists also remained largely ignorant of basic issues affecting their journalism practice or their rights and privileges.
In addition, many journalists had no idea how press laws in Nigeria as well as administrative practices relating to the media comply with constitutional provisions and international standards of free expression. Also, many journalists had no knowledge of the numerous opportunities that are available internationally for self-improvement.

Nigeria's poor communications infrastructure ensured that very little information could be made available to interested groups outside the country on a timely and regular basis about the situation of the media. This often enabled the military government to claim, at local and international fora, to having the freest press in Africa and one of the freest in the world, despite the contradictory reality.

It was to correct this anomalous situation that Media Rights Agenda in April 1995 began to publish Media Rights Monitor.

From a modest few copies of about 200, MRA now publishes 3,000 copies of the Media Rights Monitor journal every month.

The publications are distributed primarily to journalists in Nigeria, who are the main target. The object of this was to be able to reach them directly and influence their attitudes about human rights, especially with regard to press freedom and freedom of expression.

Copies are also distributed to other human rights organisations in Nigeria, diplomatic missions, press associations within and outside Nigeria, international human rights non-governmental organisations and government departments and agencies whose functions and activities affect the media.

Not ones to blow our own trumpets, we would say we have achieved modest success with the journal. And we have done this with the support of several donor groups who themselves depend on the goodwill of other groups and persons. We remain eternally grateful to them.

However, since the last couple of months, it has become increasingly difficult to get resources to continue the publication of the journal.

Believing that the journal remains relevant in the quest for a viable media industry and the promotion and protection of freedom of expression in Nigeria, and in order to continue to meet our obligation to publish the journal, we have, therefore, decided to charge a minimum subscription fee beginning from the issue of January 2002. This will just be enough to cover the cost of production and postage.

The subscription rates and other necessary information shall subsequently be communicated to you on these pages.

Thank You.

LETTERS

MRM Brought Me Honour

I thank MRA so much for their priceless services to the media world. If not for the fact that I saw the Ranan Lurie Political Cartoon competition in your journal maybe I could not have entered for it, and could not have won.

At least now, I have done Africa proud, I have done Nigeria proud and also done my company Champion Newspapers and all my ardent readers proud.

This is the kind of thing we want in the new Nigeria. People who make remarkable intellectual achievements should be encouraged and recognised so as to discourage fraud, stealing, looting and mediocrity. That's how societies that want to move forward do.

Thank you so much.

Mr. Ikechi Elenwoke
Cartoonist
Thank You For Your Effort

I wish to formally use this opportunity to thank you for the regular supply of Media Rights Monitor and what you are doing to bring to the fore, ill treatments of journalists. More grease to your elbow.

Mike Okemi
The Comet
Benin City
Edo State

Put me On The Mailing List

I write to subscribe to your monthly media rights magazine [Media Rights Monitor]. I am a student of Times Journalism Institute. I was opportuned to read through one of your past editions courtesy of my photojournalism lecturer Mr Abiodun Daudu.

I shall be glad, if you can send me copies of your past editions and as well put me on your mailing list. I am certain the journal will be of great importance in helping to enhance my journalistic knowledge.

Thank you in anticipation.

Salami O’Kabiru
13/17 Charles Avenue, Ojo Road
Ajegunle-Apapa,
Lagos.

Editor’s Note.

Thank you Mr. Salami for your interest in our journal. Unfortunately, we try not to send to individual students because of the limited copies we are able to produce. We would advise that you check up your school library where you will find copies of the journal. But if you need any edition for a particular reason, you can come to our office. We will definately let you have it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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EXECUTIVE WATCH:

Soldiers Unsuitable for Domestic Peace-keeping, Say Nigerians

Nigerians have condemned the drafting of soldiers by the Federal government to the warring communities of Tiv in Benue and Junkun in Taraba states. According to them it was inappropriate on the part of the federal government to draft soldiers to the warring communities, for the purpose of peacekeeping when such soldiers were not trained for peacekeeping operations.

Nigerians also condemned in equal term, the force-by force approach by federal government at solving the problem of warring communities, saying such approach will not stop the killing of security agents.

Advising the government, Nigerians said the need to guard the new democracy is imperative, as democracy and violence do not go together.
However, they commended the federal government for setting up a panel of investigation headed by Professor Tekena Tamuno, which they said was a right step, provided the recommendations are looked into.

Out of the 6,157 respondents polled in the survey, 3,493 (56.7%) said, given that the Tiv complained earlier that the peace keeping soldiers were taking sides with their opponents, the killing of the soldiers was not justifiable, while 2,523 (41%) others regarded the killings as justified. One hundred and forty one respondents representing 2.3 percent were however undecided.

On whether the reprisal action of the soldiers was justified, 3,239 (52.6%) representing the majority said 'No', while 2,786 (45.2%) said 'Yes'. One hundred and thirty two others representing 2.2% were undecided.

Asked whether despite President Obasanjo’s denial, respondents believed that the soldiers deployed to track down and bring to book the perpetrators, were deployed specifically to avenge the killings of their colleagues, 3,989 (64.8%) representing the majority said 'No', while 2,074 (33.7%) said 'Yes'. Ninety-four others representing 1.5 per cent were undecided.

Responding to the question whether respondents think that it is appropriate to use soldiers for the purpose of peace keeping when such soldiers were not trained for peace keeping operations, 3,777 (61.3%) representing the majority said 'No', while 2,276 (37%) said 'Yes'. One hundred and four respondents representing 1.7 per cent however were undecided.

On whether the outcome of the panel of investigation headed by Professor Tamuno would see the light of the day, 3,673 (59.7%) representing the majority said 'No' while 2,415 (39.2%) said 'Yes'. However a significant number of respondents specifically 69 (1.1%) were undecided.

Lastly, asked whether the force- by -force approach adopted by the government would solve the problem of warring communities killing security agents, 4,032 (65.5%) representing the majority said 'No' while 2,102 (34.1%) said 'Yes'. However a marginal number of respondents specifically 21 representing (.4%) were undecided.

Majority of the respondents, precisely 3,493 (56.7%) out of the total sample of 6,157 respondents condemned the killing of the soldiers on peace keeping mission in Benue and Taraba state by the Tiv ethnic militia. The argument that the killing became necessary when earlier complaints by the Tiv that the soldiers were taking sides with their opponents, was not heeded, was regarded as baseless. However 2,523 (41%) said the Tivs were justified, as their action was that of self-defense. It is important to know that 141 (2.3%) respondents were undecided.

On a city- by-city basis, the survey indicated that majority of respondents in all the cities polled, did not support that the killing of the soldiers based on self defense. However in Enugu, Kaduna and Benin majority of respondent said the action of the Tivs was justified.

Further analysis are as follows: Abuja: 562 (58.7%) did not support, while 393 (41%) supported. Three respondents representing 0.3 per cent were however undecided. Benin: 332 (44%) supported, 302 (40%) did not support. One hundred and twenty respondents were undecided. Enugu: 610 (64.9%) supported, 312 (33.2%) did not. Eighteen others were undecided. Ibadan: 206 (25.5%) supported 603 (74.5%) did not support. Kaduna: 565 (58.1%) supported while 408 (41.9%) did not support. Kano: 150 (15.4%) supported, 823 (84.6%) did not. Lagos: 267(35.6%) supported, 483 (64.4%) did not support.

On whether the reprisal action of the soldiers was justified, broken into city by city analysis, the report showed that except in Enugu, Kano and Lagos, where majority of respondents said the reprisal action of the soldiers was justified, majority in other cities said it was not.

For instance in Abuja, 437 (45.6%) respondents said the action was justified while 508 (53%) said it was not. Thirteen others representing 1.4 per cent were undecided. Benin: 306 (40.6%) said the attack was justified, 364 (48.3%) said the attack was unjustified. Eighty-four
respondents representing (11.1%) were undecided. Ibadan: 96 (11.9%) said the attack was justified, 713 (88.1%) said it was unjustified. In Kaduna: 261 (26.8%) said the attack was justified, 712 (73.2%) said the attack wasn’t justified.

Asked whether despite President Obasanjo’s denial, respondents believed that the soldiers deployed to track down and bring to book the perpetrators, were deployed specifically to avenge the killings of their colleagues, on a city- by-city basis, the survey indicated that majority of respondents in all the cities covered by the survey said 'No'. This is with the exception of Benin where the view of respondents who said 'Yes' and those who said 'No' tallied.

The responses are as follows, Abuja: 584 (61%) said 'No', while 372 (38.8%) said 'Yes'. Benin: 331 (43.9%) 'No', 331 (43.9%) 'Yes'. Ninety-two others were undecided. Enugu: 625 (66.5%) said 'No', 315 (33.5%) said 'Yes'. Ibadan: 621 (76.8%) said 'No', 188 (23.2%) said 'Yes'. Kaduna: 683 (70.1%) said 'No', while 291 (29.9%) said 'Yes'. Kano: 622 (63.9%) said 'No', 351 (36.1%) said 'Yes'. Lagos: 524 (69.8%) said 'No' while 226 (30.1%) said 'Yes'.

Responding to the question that asked whether respondents think that it is appropriate for the government to deploy soldiers to warring communities for the purpose of peace keeping when such soldiers were not trained for peace keeping operations, the majority said 'No', while 37% said 'Yes'. One hundred and four respondents representing 1.7 per cent however were undecided.

On a city-by-city pattern, the report showed that in Benin and Kano there was a marginal difference of 10 and 11 respectively between respondents who said it was appropriate for the government to deploy soldiers to warring communities and others who said it was inappropriate. In Ibadan majority 663 (32%) of respondents considered the federal government’s action appropriate.

However majority in other cities said the action of the federal government was inappropriate, as the report showed that in Abuja 615 (64.2%) considered the government action inappropriate while 335 (35%) considered it appropriate. Enugu: 96 (10.2%) considered it appropriate, 840 (89.4%) considered it inappropriate. Kaduna: 139 (14.3%) considered it appropriate, 843 (85.7%) considered it inappropriate. Lagos: 225 (31.1%) considered it appropriate while 524 (89.95%) said it was inappropriate.

On whether the outcome of the panel of investigation headed by Professor Tamuno would see the light of the day, broken down on city-by-city pattern the report showed that majority believe the report will not see the light of day just as several similar recommendations in the past had suffered neglect. In Benin and Ibadan however, majority of the respondents said the recommendation of the investigation will see the light of the day.

Further analysis showed that in Abuja, 364 (38%) respondents said the report would be looked into, while 584 (61%) respondents said the report it would not. Enugu; 191 (20.3%) said it would, 749 (79.7%) said it would not. Kaduna: 210 (21.6%) said it would, 763 (78.4%) said it would not. In Kano, 286 (29.4%) said it would, 687 (70.6%) said it would not. Lagos: 265 (35.3%) said it would, 485 (64.7%) said it would not.

Lastly, asked whether the force-by-force approach adopted by the government would solve the problem of warring communities killing security agents, the majority said 'No'.

On a city- by- city response, the pattern showed that except in Lagos where majority of respondents precisely 482 (64.3%) said the force-by-force approach adopted by the government would solve the problem of warring communities killing security agents, 268 (35.7%) others said it would not, majority of respondents in other cities said force by force approach by the government would not solve the problem of warring communities killing security agents.

The analysis showed that in Abuja, 597 (46.6%) respondents said No against 359 (37.5%) respondents who said 'Yes'. Two respondents representing .2 per cent were undecided. Benin; 386 (51.2%) against 352 (46.7%). Enugu: 915 (97.4%) against 22 (2.3%). Ibadan; 687 (84.7%), against 122 (15.1%). Kaduna: 598 (61.5%) against 375 (38.5%). Kano: 593 (59.9%) against 390 (40.1%).
MEDIA MONITORING:
Terrorism Dominated Media In September, Says MRA Report

One of the findings of the media monitoring project for the calendar month of September was that the terrorist attacks of the United States of America (USA) on September 11 and its multifarious aftermath elbowed aside several other matters on the airwaves and press of the national media. For example the October issue of the Airwaves monitor which was recently released by Media Rights Agenda (MRA) complained that while the previous anomalies such as egregious repetitions and abrupt breaks in transmission persisted on the broadcast media, the monitoring discovered that the terrorist crisis negatively affected the time and attention usually given to national issues.

As the Airwaves Monitor puts it, "One surprise was the stations' neglect of fire burning in our own country while those of another country were highly publicized. Such news as the bombing of the world Trade Centre in New York and the and the US department of Defence by terrorists was certainly news-worthy but it shouldn't have been done to the detriment of suffering and dying Nigerians in Plateau and Taraba States who were engulfed in various ethnic and religious clashes at the time."

The project discovered that the same lapses occurred in the print media. As the October edition of the MRA's print monitor had it, "it was observed in September that many newspapers devoted a staggering amount of space to the United States /Taliban face-off. This was okay but then, even more than a week after the September 11 attacks, some editors still down-graded important national news so as to be able to put terrorism news on the front pages."

The report added that the tragic killings in Jos, the Plateau State capital were routinely downgraded by several publications just because of the US/Taliban War. The Print Monitor complained that this was odd and speculated that perhaps there were some colonial mentality at work.

Another criticism of the broadcast media in the October report was that the independent broadcasters fight with the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) degenerated into the use of coarse and intemperate language on the airwaves and not surprisingly, objectivity was thrown to the dogs. Stated the report "the whole disagreement could have been addressed in a better way than by throwing professional ethics to the wind."

In the month, six radio and six television stations -both state-owned and privately-owned- were monitored. They were located in different parts of the country. A total of 5,634 reports were monitored on radio out of which 1,374 or 24% were fully evaluated. The cumulative duration of the news reports on radio was 7,164 minutes, 49 seconds. The duration or airtime of evaluated items came to 1,330 minutes, 36 seconds.

On television, six state and private television stations in various parts of the country were monitored. Reports on the medium came to 3,537 with an airtime of 7,728 minutes, 3 seconds. Evaluated reports were 907 or 25.6 of the total and an airtime of 1,466 minutes.

On both media, 769 new items 769 news items were evaluated for the Democracy Issue variable; 1,030 were categorized into Political Issues variable; the Human rights variable had 333 news reports; while public accountability had 149 reports.

The project also discovered that the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja generated the largest single bloc of reports for the broadcast media while the federal government and its functionaries received the highest positive projection in the month under review. The Airwaves Monitor concluded by advising station managers to de-emphasise ego-massaging reports on the various governments and their functionaries and instead extend coverage to the ordinary citizen of the country.

Pertaining to the print media, the overall number of monitored reports fell to 11,664 for all the 15 publications covered by the project. Evaluated reports came to 1,454 or 12.4% of the overall total. The report complained that public interest issues constituted only a small fraction
of overall print media reportage and opined that if the national experiment with democratic
governance is to succeed, the press must do more to educate the populace on the nuts and bolts
of ruling themselves. The report said the press has to do this over and above the primary duty of
reporting events truthfully and fairly. The October report also found that the most heavily
promoted institution for the period were the federal government and its functionaries followed
by state governments and their officials. Most of the evaluated news reports were derived from
Abuja the Federal Capital Territory and Lagos State.

**New Time Table For DTN Privatisation**

The Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) on November 20 released a new timetable for the
privatisation of the Daily Times of Nigeria (DTN) Plc, which had been pending for
sometime now. The time-table released in Abuja by the BPE shows that the Federal
Government's 60 per cent equity in the newspaper conglomerate would be sold through offers
for subscription and sale. It is expected that the privatisation would be concluded in April 2002
with the company's listing on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE).

The National Council on Privatisation (NCP) is reported to have approved the time-table
at its meeting a week earlier. Its highlight includes approval of resolutions by the DTN yearly
general meeting scheduled for December 17, and the forwarding of applications to the Security
and Exchange Commissions (SEC) and NSE on December 18.

January 7, 2002 is set as the expected date for the issuing house to receive approval from
SEC. The BPE, the issuing house, the stockbroker and the newspapers authority which together
make up the quotation committee would meet on January 8, 2002 with the final meeting of all
parties slated for the 9th of January.

Other aspects of the time table released by BPE included the expectation of the
company's stockbroker to receive certificate of exemption from the board meeting on January
10; commencement of distribution of offer documents are scheduled for the next day, January
11, and on January 21 opening of application list.

Applications are expected to close in March and the issuing house to receive returns
from receiving agents on March 15. The allotment meeting involving BPE, the newspaper
authorities and the issuing house is slated for March 22.

The new timetable also stipulates that the issuing house is slated to send allotment
schedules to SEC on March 25 while it is scheduled to receive SEC's approval of allotment on
March 29. Advertisement allotment, disbursement of proceeds to BPE/DTN, disbursement of
surplus/return of money and distribution of share certificates are all slated for April 1.

According to the timetable, submission of declaration of compliance to NSE by the
stockbroker is scheduled for April 8, while the listing on the NSE is fixed for April 6.

*Daily Times* newspapers has in the course of military incursion into governance fallen
from the position of first among equals in the 1960s to early 1990s into disrepute especially
during the reign of the late General Sani Abacha. The privatization option is government's
measure to salvage it from its present unviable state, due to declining sales.

**New Nigerian Internet Portal Makes A Debut**

Mr. Sam Nda-Isaiah announced the debut of Nigeria Unlimited.Com, a new Nigerian
Online Media Company and Internet Portal currently being hosted by Liquidweb Inc. of
the United States. Mr. Nda-Isaiah, Chairman of the company, disclosed that the website is an
elaborate Internet Portal that also operates as a Content Provider on Nigeria to the Internet
Community.
He said the portal parades chatrooms, forums instant messenger, classified advertising section, personalised homepages for registered users and a free email address service similar to Yahoo and Hotmail at mailover.tv. He maintained that the tv domain name like .com, .net, .gov and .org is the new Top Level Domain Name that is currently taking the world by storm and it is at present the most sought-after and the most expensive domain name on the Internet.

He said that the Portal has a state-of-the-art Search Engine powered by Google.com, one of the highest rated search engine on the World Wide Web.

He promised that the Portal shall provide breaking news and current news on Nigeria to the world as well as provide global breaking news to its users.

**Gov. Osoba Demands N300million From Three Media Houses**

Ogun State governor, Chief Olusegun Osoba dragged a national newspaper and two soft-sell magazines to an Abeokuta High Court, demanding N300 million damages for alleged libelous publications.

The suit filed by Counsel to the governor, Mr. Femi Falana is asking Punch Nigeria Limited, publishers of *The Punch* titles to pay him N200million. He is also asking for N50million each from Fame Publications Limited, publishers of *Fame* magazine and the Gold Vision Communications Limited publishers of *Breeze* magazine.

The governor cited articles in the September 9, September 30 and October 7 editions of *The Sunday Punch* and October 4 of *The Punch* as being libelous.

He deposed to a six-page statement of claims to support the suit which also has Messrs. Chenchee Chinda, Azubikwe Ishekwene and Bankole Fatade as co-defendants. The governor specifically referred to page 48 of *The Sunday Punch*, page 40 of the October 7, 2001 edition of *The Punch* newspapers as falsely and maliciously written, printed and published to libel him.

He averred that the publications were totally untrue and that by reason of the said publications, his "reputation has been damaged, and brought to public scandal, odium and contempt."

He sought a perpetual injunction restraining the defendants, whether by themselves, their agents, privies and servants from further publishing the said or similar libelous publication against him.

In the notice of summons against the Fame publication, he demanded "the sum of N50 million being damages for the words falsely and maliciously written, printed and published against him in the Fame weekly magazine edition of September 25, and October 1, 2001."

In a four-page statement of claim, the governor also sought a perpetual injunction restraining the defendants including Afolabi Odeyemi from further writing any libelous thing against him. He said the publication portrayed him as immoral, lewd, adulterous and licentious.

The publication, he further alleged, portrayed him as a man with inordinate ambition who will stop at nothing to be re-elected as a governor of his state and also as a person married to a prostitute.

Similar damages and perpetual injunction were also the two reliefs he sought in the suit filed against the Gold Vision Communications Limited, publisher of *Breeze* magazine. Sam Omotayo and Sunny Osa Irabor are co-defendants in the suit against *Breeze* magazine.

**Fire Razes Raypower/AIT Abuja Office**

The Abuja office of Daar Communications Limited, owners of Ray Power FM, Ray Power II and Africa Independent Television on the twelfth floor of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) House, was razed down by an early morning fire on October 21. All the property and equipment of both the television and radio stations were burnt to ashes.
The fire which started at about 12.20am lasted until about 2am when the NNPC Fire Service came to the rescue.

Daar Communications Limited recently survived crises that threatened its existence.

Its first ordeal was its financial problem with the consortium of banks that financed its take off. This later led to the shutting down of the station for about a year.

While the outfit was working round the clock to recover from the financial set-back, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Nigeria's broadcast regulatory body came out with threats to withdraw the station's license accusing the outfit and other private broadcast houses of refusing to pay 2.5 per cent of their annual income as recommended by law.

In addition, NMBC also claimed that the license given to the station does not entitle it to operate more than one station, adding that, "any other presumptuousness is in contravention of the law".

Sympathizers have trooped into the Labour House to condole with the management of Daar Communications

**Oshiomhole Tasks NUJ Leadership**

Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, President of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has taken the current leadership of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) under Comrade Smart Adeyemi to task accusing it of displaying a non-challant attitude to the welfare of its members.

Comrade Oshiomhole alleged that the NUJ leadership does not attend meetings called by the NLC to discuss problems affecting workers welfare and general conditions of service, with a view to jointly finding solutions to them.

He was particularly angry with the NUJ National President, Comrade Smart Adeyemi, urging journalists in the country to critically assess the role of NUJ in their lives.

He made the statement while addressing journalists in Benin City, Edo State after a meeting of the central working committee of the NLC comprising National Presidents and General Secretaries of all the 29 industrial unions affiliated to NLC.

While noting that the NUJ leadership was not represented at the crucial meeting, the NLC boss declared, "You should ask yourself what the role of NUJ is in your life beyond maintaining press centres and collecting beer from Breweries."

He indicted the NUJ leadership of not having the interest of members at heart as it hardly helps them stating: "Until you (journalists) begin to ask these questions, you will be suffering in silence, I know many journalists who lost their jobs, no gratuity, no pensions, no career prospects, and yet you have no machinery to talk."

Concluding, Oshiomhole prayed, "May God give you (Journalists) the wisdom and the courage to get your leaders to fight for your right."

**Nigerian Forum to Float Public Radio Service**

An association of Nigerians resident in the United States, the Nigerian Peoples Forum (NPF), is set to float a public radio service in Nigeria to support the nation's fragile democracy. It will be modelled after America's public service broadcast and will be financed through public support.

Chairman of the forum, Prof. Bark Nnaji revealed that the objective is to set up a radio service that would be owned neither by the government nor the private interest. "We think that democracy will require a number of institutions to sustain it and one of these is public discourse that is completely unbiased," said Prof. Nnaji.
An ex-service and Technology Minister, Prof. Nnaji who spoke in New York, said the forum would submit an application for a license for the proposed radio to the Federal Government in a couple of months.

Prof. Nnaji, described it as a new concept in radio broadcast, saying his organisation would help set up the radio service, run it for the first few years and hand it over to a board that would be set up to carry out its mission.

"It will have to be a board that certainly cannot hijack the mission of the (broadcast) organisation," he said, adding that funds for the service would be raised from the public, both in Nigeria and the U.S.

He also revealed that in the US, the National Public Radio (NPR) and Public Broadcast Service for Television raise funds yearly from individual members of the public and then get marching funds from endowments and foundations.

Their appeal comes from in-depth and fair presentation of news and issues and the absence of commercial interludes.

Ethiopian Authorities Heighten Harassment Against Journalists

Ethiopian authorities heightened their wave of harassment against journalists operating on their shores with the order on eleven journalists to appear before the courts to answer charges laid against them; a development which the Ethiopian Free Press Journalists' Association (EFJA) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) fear could signal a "new wave of harassment."

One of the journalists is EFJA president and Ethio Time editor-in-chief Kifle Mulat, who was summoned to appear before a federal high court on 5 December. It is not known what charge was laid against him.

No less than 80 court cases are pending against journalists in the country. Journalists complained that the Federal Police and Central Investigation Office have been threatening that authorities were forwarding press charges against them to the courts. The CPJ protested that the measures are "introduced by the authorities, who clearly intend to frustrate journalists from exercising their duties and democratic rights."

A CPJ fact-finding mission to the country in October, reported that Ethiopia "has seen a gradual improvement in its press freedom climate" after almost ten years of being Africa's leading jailer of journalists. It however expressed its 'deep concern' over a number of laws and regulations that "continue to hamper the development of a free and independent press." These include the frequent use of the 46-year old Penal Code to imprison journalists, even though the code should have been replaced by the current Constitution. It also expressed concern over the use of Press Proclamation No. 34, which gives the government extensive powers to prosecute and imprison journalists for "any criminal offense against the safety of the state."

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has also expressed concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) over the fate and safety of 25 journalists who escaped Ethiopia and are seeking political asylum in Kenya. The journalists are to be transferred to refugee camps in order to have their cases processed - a requirement under recent changes to Kenya's asylum policy. IFJ says it is concerned that while in the camps, the journalists could become vulnerable targets for Ethiopian government agents who may infiltrate the camps in order to identify and persecute them.

Two Private Liberian Newspapers Shut, Chairman Arrested

On 20 November 2001, policemen without any warrant visited the offices of the privately owned Liberian daily The News and ordered the newspaper's personnel to leave the
premises and shut the media house. A police officer explained to one of The News's editors that they were shutting the media house because of the newspaper's unpaid taxes.

The same day, policemen arrested Wilson Tarpeh, chairman of The News's board of directors. The Monrovia Guardian was also closed allegedly for the same reason. The Ministry of Finance claimed the two publications had not settled their taxes with the government.

RSF, in a letter to Minister of Finance Nathinal Barnes, called for the release of Mr. Tarpeh and the reopening of the newspaper houses. RSF Secretary-General Robert Ménard said: "These newspapers are struggling to survive and are not in a position to pay back taxes to the government. The authorities know this and we fear that they are using the issue as a pretext to shut down two independent newspapers that are particularly critical of the Liberian government." RSF noted that Liberia is one of the few countries that have not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19 of which guarantees freedom of expression.

RSF recalled that four journalists from The News were arrested and held for several hours in February after criticising the government for mismanaging public funds.

The current Liberian government has since its inception not hidden its dislike for press freedom and freedom of expression especially private media houses which are very critical of its policies. It has closed down broadcast houses and detained both local and foreign journalists for very flimsy and trivial often trumped up charges. The latest case is just one of its resolve to hamstring the press in Liberia

The Gambian Authorities Arrest Journalist

Alhagie Mbye, a journalist with The Independent and correspondent for the London-based magazine West Africa was on 21 November 2001 arrested and detained at the Gambian National Intelligence Agency's (NIA) headquarters in Banjul.

Mbye's offence was his article published in West Africa magazine, in which he reported on serious electoral fraud. According to him, thousands of foreigners from Casamance (Senegal) who live in The Gambia were reportedly registered on the electoral lists for the presidential election that was held on 18 October.

In a letter to Minister of Justice Joseph Joof, Reporters sans frontieres (RSF) called for his immediate release noting that: "This is not the first time that Alhagie Mbye has been troubled for investigating disturbing subjects." RSF also recalled that plainclothes police officers previously arrested Mbye on 25 July 2000 and was only was released on bail after being questioned about an article published in The Independent that revealed that about twenty persons were imprisoned for several years without ever being tried.

Robert Ménard, RSF secretary-general observed that: "The journalist did nothing more than exercise his right to inform." He added that it "It is high time that the harassment of investigative journalists ceased in The Gambia." He also recalled that the secretary-general of Amnesty International's local section was detained in the same conditions a month earlier. He had denounced the harassment to which opponents of Yaya Jammeh's regime were reportedly subjected during the recent election campaign.

Mbye suffered eight days of torture at the hands of the National Intelligence Agency before he was released.

Zimbabwe Curtails Press Freedom & Free Expression

Facing stiff opposition from home and abroad for his policies, and in order to censor the independent media, the Robert Mugabe-led government of Zimbabwe recently passed
Public Order and Security Bill which will "curtail the operations of the media and the free flow of information," according to the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA).

The bill makes it an offence to "undermine the authority of the president by making public statements or publishing in print and electronic media statements that engender hostility towards the president."

It also criminalises the publication or communication of false statements which are "prejudicial to the state," stir up public disorder and violence, or "disrupt or interfere with an essential service." In addition, false statements that "affect the defence and economic interests of the country and undermine public confidence in security forces" are liable under the bill.

Those found guilty of contravening such laws are liable to jail terms of five years, or fines of up to US$1,900, or both.

Meanwhile, on 23 November, the government publicly accused six foreign journalists and a South African human rights activist of aiding terrorism, report the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and Reporters sans frontières (RSF). A government spokesman was quoted by the state-run Herald newspaper as saying that some foreign correspondents based in Harare were practicing unacceptable reporting. According to RSF, the spokesman said "These reporters are not only distorting the facts but are assisting terrorists. We agree with President Bush that anyone who in any way finances, harbours or defends terrorists is himself a terrorist." The accused journalists are Jan Raath of The Times of London, Peta Thornycroft of The Daily Telegraph, Basildon Peta of The Independent, Andrew Meldrum of The Guardian, Dumisani Muleya of the South Africa-based Business Day and Associated Press correspondent Angus Shaw. The seventh person is named Richard Carver, a South Africa-based human rights activist. IFJ calls the accusations "hysterical and hateful," stating that "linking legitimate journalism to terrorism is absurd, cynical and dangerous."

Thirty Journalists Arrested For Protesting Ban of Publication

For daring to protest against the government's censoring of a story on corruption, thirty journalists and other employees of the independent Sudanese newspaper Al Watan were arrested and detained on 22 November, reported the Network for the Defence of Independent Media in Africa (NDIMA) and Reporters sans frontières (RSF).

The journalists marched to the offices of the Information Ministry where they protested the government's ban. They were however released later in the evening.

RSF said the offensive story which was on corruption reported that over 2 billion Sudanese pounds (approximately US$ 7,700) worth of outdated medicines were seized.

Al Watan, with a reputation for its investigative reporting and "bold handling of corruption cases," got its first baptism of fire from the ruling National Islamic Front government which temporarily suspended it soon after it took power in a 1989 coup.

The Khartoum Monitor, the only English language publication in Sudan, was, according to Index on Censorship (INDEX) twice shut down in September and October for reporting on the civil war between rebel forces in the south and the government-held north.

Us Forces Shutdown Somalia’s Telecommunications

Based on US government suspicions that the Somalia Internet Company (SIC), the country's only Internet company, and al-Barakaat, telecommunications company, have links to terrorists, the US has forced them to close down causing a virtual grinding of Internet access in Somalia. Al-Barakaat was forced to close down after its assets were frozen. These actions have also blocked off vital money transfer services in the country.
SIC was named by the Bush administration as one of 62 organisations having financial links with Osama bin Laden, has been forced to close operations, denying Internet access to all Somalis.

Millions of Somalis rely upon Al-Barakaat which is also the largest employer of labour in Somalia for money transfers in and out of the country, reports the BBC. Life in Somalia depends on these two companies as majority of Somalis depend on money they receive from relatives outside the country. A BBC correspondent says all Internet cafes in the country have shut down and only two companies are now running international phone lines.

Both Al-Barakaat and SIC denied they have links with terrorists.

REPORT:

Attacks on Press Freedom Heightened World-Wide in 2001 -WAN

The World Association of Newspapers said in its annual half-year review of press freedom world-wide that press freedom came under attack in virtually every region of the world this year, with an alarming number of journalists killed or imprisoned, and an increasing threat of censorship and repression in many countries.

"The global press freedom situation has deteriorated in several countries over the last six months; the number of murdered journalists, particularly, is rising dramatically", WAN said in a report to its Board, meeting on November 19 in South Africa.

The report said: "Several European countries and the United States are among the countries where journalists have been killed: terrorism of one kind or another is definitely a threat that must be taken into account in every nation," adding that the events of September 11 were raising concerns of increasing censorship in the United States and elsewhere.

WAN reported that 56 journalists had been killed, 105 currently serving various jail terms scores of media houses closed and journalists and their families facing various forms of harassments, amongst others.

Fifty-six journalists are reported to have been killed world-wide this year, 41 of them since early June and seven in Afghanistan in the second and third weeks of November alone. This figure already surpasses the total of 53 journalists who were killed in all of 2000.

Latin America remains the most dangerous place for journalists to work -nine journalists were killed in Colombia alone, and journalists have also died violently in Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Guatemala and Costa Rica.

The report further revealed that one hundred and five journalists are currently in prison, with Iran (19), Burma (18) and China (15) jailing the most journalists while across Africa, 13 media professionals are in prison.

Asia and the Middle East are the regions where journalists have been harassed or jailed most frequently in the line of duty this year. China and Burma are the worst offenders in Asia. Despite hopes of liberalisation, Iran continues to stifle freedom of expression and even having released several journalists from prison in recent months, many have been pressured to sign confessions and their families have been continually harassed.

In Syria, the press has been reduced to silence and despite the release of prominent journalist Nizar Nayouf in May, his family has been systematically harassed and the reporter himself - in France for medical treatment - still faces several charges.

In Western Europe, journalists were recently murdered by terrorists in the Basque region of Spain and in Northern Ireland, emphasizing the necessity of a serious defence of the right to expression in countries where such freedom is often taken for granted.

In Central Europe and Russia, six journalists have been killed this year, while governments in Ukraine and Belarus have mounted a continuous clampdown on the independent press. The press freedom situation has also deteriorated in the Caucasus, particularly in
Azerbaijan. Although there has been much progress in the Balkans, there are still difficulties in regard to press freedom.

In the Central Asian Republics, Kyrgyzstan's authorities have closed one newspaper and continue to harass others. The situation remains difficult in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. "The fact that these countries are now important allies in the fight against the Bin Laden terror network should not take our attention away from the lack of press freedom," the report said.

Farther east, in China, the government has stopped access to many foreign websites and monitors domestic sites. The Chinese authorities have cracked down especially hard on internet-based news services. A high number of webjournalists have been arrested and have received harsh prison sentences. Closures and arrests are the rule more than the exception.

Even in countries with a vibrant independent press, freedom of expression has come under attack. In South Korea, three publishers were imprisoned until very recently following a tax investigation that targeted South Korean newspapers. In the Philippines, five journalists were killed in a few short months.

In many African countries, it is very risky to be a journalist. Reporters are often exposed to jailing, censorship and harassment when criticising authorities.

In Zimbabwe, President Robert Mugabe and his government intensified the harsh crackdown on the independent press ahead of next year's presidential elections: expulsion of foreign correspondents, public criticism of the press, censorship and arrests.

WAN has launched more than 170 protest campaigns in more than 70 countries since the beginning of the year, with particular focus on China, Colombia, Iran and Burma. A significant number of protests have been sent to Bangladesh, Belarus, DR Congo, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, South Korea and Zimbabwe.

The Paris-based WAN, the global organisation for the newspaper industry, defends and promotes press freedom world-wide and represents 17,000 newspapers. Its membership includes 70 national newspaper associations, individual newspaper executives in 93 countries, 17 news agencies and eight regional and world-wide press groups. Full details of these attacks and reports can be found in WAN’s website http://www.wan-press.org.

**Journalists' Death Toll Rises In Afghanistan As US Bombs Al Jazeera's Kabul Office**

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), Reporters sans frontières (RSF) and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) reported that four journalists: Maria Grazia Cutuli of the Italian daily Corriere della Serra, Julio Fuentes of Spanish newspaper El Mundo, and two Reuters cameramen - Australian Harry Burton and Afghan-born Azizullah Haidari were on November 19 murdered in Afghanistan.

IFJ reported that a fifth, Swedish TV4 television cameraman Olaf Stromberg was shot and killed on the night of 26 November by gunmen who broke into a house where he was staying in the city of Taloqan.

This raises the death toll of journalists killed in Afghanistan in the wake of the US war against terrorists to eight. The four murdered journalists were reported to be traveling at the head of a convoy of six to eight vehicles without armed security en route to Kabul from the eastern city of Jalalabad when a group of armed men ambushed them and ordered them to halt. A driver and a translator who were part of the convoy told the BBC that the four journalists were dragged out of their cars, taken into the surrounding hills and executed with Kalashnikov rifles.

BBC reports that Stromberg was shot at through the door and hit in the chest while resisting three armed assailants who broke into the house where he and three other Swedish journalists were staying at 2 o'clock in the morning. His colleagues say he died a short while later. The gunmen escaped taking with them a satellite telephone and several thousand dollars in cash.
Only on 18 November, three journalists with Radio France International were attacked and robbed by bandits on the same road on which the four murdered journalists were traveling. Meanwhile there are disturbing reports that US warplanes on November 13 bombed the Kabul office of Qatar-based satellite channel Al Jazeera hitting the office with two 500-pound bombs. The bombs also damaged the nearby offices of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Associated Press. IFJ has questioned the motive for the bombing saying it raises concerns over whether or not media are being targeted.

Since the 11 September attacks on the United States, Al Jazeera had aired exclusive reports from inside Afghanistan drawing worldwide attention to it. It was the first station to broadcast statements made by Osama bin Laden after 11 September, and it has also filed reports from Taliban-controlled areas which are off-limits to most Western journalists.

In an attempt to censor the station, US Secretary of State, Colin Powell had in October asked Qatar's leader Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani to use his influence to tone down Al Jazeera's news coverage which were mostly perceived as anti-American views.

**IFEX Members Urge Syria To End Journalist's Harassment**

A coalition of 18 IFEX members have signed an appeal urging the Syrian government to drop charges against Syrian journalist Nizar Nayouf and stop harassment of his family. Two signatories to the appeal, the International Press Institute (IPI) and the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) report that Syrian Authorities have threatened three of the journalist's brothers with expulsion from their home city or from Syria if they do not publicly condemn statements made by Nayouf by 22 November.

Two of the brothers, who work as teachers, were sacked from their posts for refusing to condemn Nayouf while a third brother has been warned that he will not be allowed to graduate from university if he does not comply. These are in addition to the government confiscation of the family land.

The coalition fears that; "The most recent events point towards a renewed deterioration of Syrian press freedom." The coalition sees the recent action as of Syrian authorities as represent a further blow to press freedom, it also expressed its doubt about Syria's respect for the rule of law and human rights. Nayouf, a winner of WAN's 2000 Golden Pen of Freedom award and the 2000 UNESCO Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Award, went to France in July for medical treatment. In September, he was charged with "trying to change the constitution by illegal means and issuing false reports from a foreign country." If he returns to Syria, he faces trial and possible imprisonment of up to five years. Prior to his release from prison to seek medical treatment in France, Nayouf spent nine years in prison, during which he became partially paralysed and nearly blinded from being tortured and beaten.

**Groups Oppose Anti-Terrorism Legislation**

The Fédération professionelle des journalists du Québec (FPJQ) and International PEN have expressed opposition to the emergency anti-terrorism measures being proposed and adopted by governments around the world that endanger democratic principles and essential human rights, including freedom of expression.

In another instance, the Center for Human Rights and Democratic Studies (CEHURDES), the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters sans frontières (RSF) have raised alarm at press freedom violations "in the name of maintaining peace and security" during the state of emergency in Nepal.
Specifically, FPJQ, at its annual convention on 18 November, urged the Canadian government to withdraw its proposed anti-terrorism bill, C-36, expressing concerns that the legislation "opens the door to a possible abuse of power and places considerable restrictions on freedom of expression and access to information."

At the convention, FPJQ convened workshops and debates to tackle issues such as Bill C-36, media convergence, investigating terrorism on the Internet and investigative journalism. It paid tribute to journalists who lost their lives covering the war in Afghanistan.

On the issue of media convergence, FPJQ expressed dissatisfaction with the recommendations recently put forward by the Quebec government's parliamentary commission on media convergence. It said: "The recommendations…add up to nothing more than a wish list addressed to the industry."

In condemning anti-terrorism measures that undermine essential human rights including freedom of expression, PEN said: "The atrocities of September 11 should not be exploited by governments to assume extraordinary, unjustified powers to curtail freedom of expression."

"The atrocities of September 11 should not be exploited by governments to assume extraordinary, unjustified powers to curtail freedom of expression," said Homero Aridjis, the President of International PEN declared that: "We are alarmed that such legislation and executive orders are being planned or have already been passed by the government of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Russia and others."

The meeting also sent an urgent appeal to the government of the Czech Republic, on behalf of the Uzbek writer, Mohammed Salih, who is held in Prague and who faces extradition. Delegates at the meeting urged that Mr. Salih be released and returned to Norway, where he has been granted political asylum. In addition, it sent an appeal to the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran over reports that the distinguished journalist, Siamak Pourzand, was on November 27 abducted in Tehran.

"In the aftermath of the attacks, and as the war in Afghanistan continues to claim victims," said Mr. Aridjis, "it must be the role of International PEN to act according to our Charter: to do our utmost to dispel race, class and national hatreds, and to champion the ideal of one humanity living in peace in one world."

CEHURDES expressed "shock and concern" over continued police actions and "abusive attitude" against newspapers and journalists, many of whom have been arrested on allegation of being associated with the banned Communist Party of Nepal (CPN-Maoists).

King Gyanendra on 26 November declared a state of emergency sequel to renewed violence between Maoist guerrillas and government forces which has left at least 100 people dead in just two weeks.

The declaration of a state of emergency suspends the constitutionally guaranteed rights to freedom of expression and opinion, press and publication, and information.

Since the declaration, 10 media workers linked to leftist publications have been arrested even as Police also raided the offices of three publications closely connected to the Maoists - the daily Janadisha, the weekly Janadesh and the monthly Dishabodh - and confiscated information while nine staff were arrested.

For attending an event organised by High-Tech Publication Pvt. Ltd, the publisher of the pro-Maoist daily Jana Sangharsha local authorities in the western town of Butwal arrested 38 journalists on November 29. More than a dozen others still languishing in detention in different parts of the country.

**Togolese Authorities Censor Media**

The Togolese authorities have suspended two programmes of Victoire radio station, a private station, which they labeled "defamatory," via a letter dated 29 November 2001, according to reports by Reporters sans frontières (RSF).
The two programmes that were censored, "Revue de presse" and "Vice-Versa", enabled senior newspaper staff and other listeners to express their views on current events. "Their suspension demonstrates that the Togolese authorities still do not tolerate criticism. It is an attack on press freedom," noted Robert Ménard, RSF secretary-general.

Reports have it that the Audio-visual and Communications High Authority (Haute Autorité de l'audiovisuel et de la communication, HAAC, the public body that regulates audio-visual media) ordered the private radio station Victoire to cease broadcasting the two programmes until further notice because it believes that "these controversial programmes lead their hosts to make impassioned and defamatory statements that discredit [Togo's] constitutional and administrative authorities."

The Togolese government's aversion to criticisms and freedom of expression has been variously displayed with Prime Minister's disapproval on November 28, of a news bulletin by the station that reported on President Gnassingbé Eyadema's visit to France, his relations with French President Jacques Chirac and the human rights situation in Togo. And only this year, thousands of copies of private newspapers were seized and confiscated or destroyed by the police. These measures were facilitated by the adoption of a new press code that allows the minister of the interior and security "to order, by means of decree, the seizure of copies of any publication whose content constitutes a violation of the press laws."

Repeated seizures of some print titles with the backing of this law threaten their very existence. The situation become so serious that in April, the Togolese Journalists Union (Union des journalistes indépendants du Togo, UJIT) urged the HAAC to "fully command its role" as guarantor of freedom of expression.

ATTACKS ON THE PRESS IN NOVEMBER 2001

Police Confiscates Journalist's Midget

A combined team of policemen and state security operatives on October 19 seized a midget tape recorder belonging to The Punch Newspapers correspondent in Abia State Mr. Joe Effiong while covering a demonstration by students of Abia State University, Uturu.

Mr. Effiong was recording the event when the security operatives accosted and rough-handled him and thereafter confiscated his camera and reporter's midget in the presence of the state Police Commissioner Mr. Ben Oghomone.

In a petition to the police commissioner the council asked the state police command to release the midget in addition to a written apology within two weeks. It warned that failure to comply with the demand would compel journalists in the state to boycott coverage of police activities in the state. It added that it might be compelled to take further steps to seek redress and protect its members from further police intimidation, brutality and threat.

In a press statement, signed by the chairman of the Nigerian union of Journalists (NUJ) Abia State Council, Comrade Ambrose Nwachukwu and the secretary, Mr. Uzomba-Ekwuine respectively, the council state council said it regretted the increasing cases of police brutality, intimidation and threat of journalists performing their legitimate duties.

It noted that such unfortunate development negated the esprit de corps which should exist between the police and journalists in the state and regretted that the inhuman treatment meted to the Punch correspondent was supervised the state Police Commissioner himself.

NNN Short Changes Its Journalists

The wholly Federal government owned New Nigeria Newspapers has refused to pay its workers the national minimum wage introduction in May 2000 by the federal government. Persistent efforts made by representatives of the three industrial unions in the company did not
yield any fruit. The payment had taken immediate effect in other federal government establishments throughout the nation.

The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) gave the management a 30-day ultimatum within which to implement the salary structure otherwise it will spearhead an industrial action against the newspaper house.

The Assistant National Secretary of the NUJ Mr. Olu Akinboyewa (JP) dispatched an official letter to that effect to the NNN Managing Director. In the letter, the NUJ lamented the company's refusal to pay the wage since its introduction in May 2000.

The NUJ said it "views with concern this unpalatable situation which is a clear breach of the National Minimum Wage Act and against natural justice", and recalled "several efforts made in the past including meetings when your management promised severally to implement same and even improve on it than what obtains in the public sectors".

Vendors Kick Against Punch Newspapers Sales Policy

Newspapers Distribution Association of Nigeria (NDAN) has embarked on a nationwide protest against what it called "unacceptable policies" recently introduced by Punch Newspapers Limited, publishers of The Punch titles.

The protest, which started in Abuja, spread quickly to Lagos and Ibadan, where the vendors refused to distribute and sell newspapers. At Ibadan, the police quickly arrested the state chairman of the association, Mr. Jo. Adeoti and other officials and charged them with stealing.

In an interview with a correspondent of Daily Champion when the protesters marched to Champion House, corporate headquarters of Champion Newspaper Limited (CNL), Lagos Interim National President of the association, Mr. Richard Ochem, said The Punch newspapers' new policy of not accepting unsold copies of its papers is unacceptable to the association.

He appealed to the state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro, to withdraw all policemen that the firm allegedly uses to intimidate newspaper distributors.

He lamented the alleged excesses of a policeman, of the Rapid Response Squad who brutalised distributors and urged the commissioner to help the association recover N27,000 which he said policeman allegedly seized from members of the association.

In Ibadan, the association for two days engaged Punch in a running battle over cover price increase and alleged refusal to collect unsold copies from the vendors. They vowed that until the company rescinded its decision, "there is no going back".

JOURNALISM / PRESS FREEDOM AWARDS

Iranian Editor Wins Rsf's Fondation De France Prize

Reporters sans frontières (RSF) has awarded its 10th Fondation de France Prize to Reza Alijani, editor-in-chief of the Iranian magazine Iran-é-Farda, in recognition of his commitment to the defense of press freedom in Iran. Alijani has been detained in prison since February; ten months after the government banned his magazine.

RSF calls him "one of the rare journalists who has dared to defend freedom of the press in Iran through his interviews on foreign radios and articles in the national press." RSF says Iran-é-Farda magazine is popular among students and has become a "reference for the partisans of reform." Iran holds the record of being "the biggest prison for journalists in the Middle East," says RSF. As at 28 November, 17 Iranian journalists remain in jail, and the government since April 2000 has banned over 40 publications.

RSF awards the Fondation de France Prize worth 7,600 Euros (approx. US$6,800) to journalists who "through their work, beliefs or attitudes, have demonstrated their devotion to the
ideals of press freedom.” Past winners include Burmese journalist and writer San San Nweh, Syria’s Nizar Nayyouf and Carmen Gurruchaga of Spain.

**Champion Cartoonist, Elenwoke Gets Global Honour**

Global honour came the way of Champion Newspapers' cartoonist and illustrator, Mr. Ikechi Eliezer Elenwoke, as he emerged one of the two Africans whose works won honourable mention at the prestigious United Nations (UN) Ranan Lurie Political Cartoons Awards for the year 2001.

Mr. Elenwoke and Popa Mutumula of The African Newspapers, Dodoma, Tanzania, were the two Africans who made it to the final list of 13 winners selected from thousands of entries from all over the world by a panel of seasoned judges led by Nobel Laureate Dr. Elie Wiesel.

The first three winners were honoured at a ceremony in New York while Mr. Elenwoke and the ten others receive a plaque, honouring their achievements, signed by UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan

Mr. Elenwoke's winning piece was an editorial cartoon published in the Daily Champion of June 13, 2001. The highly instructive work depicted the chequered attempt of the UN to stem global crises, to no avail.

The annual Ranan Lurie Awards named after a Jewish American who is acclaimed one of the best political cartoonists of all time, started in February 19, 1995, and goes to the best cartoons of the genre.

**ICHR President Wins 2002 Chapultepec Grand Prize**

The Inter American Press Association (IAPA) has awarded Claudio Grossman, President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR) its 2002 Chapultepec Grand Prize.

The award honours individuals for their "work and commitment to promoting and disseminating the principles of the 1994 Declaration of Chapultepec," which sets out guidelines for safeguarding freedom of expression and press freedom in the Western Hemisphere.

In his current capacity, Grossman serves as the rapporteur for women's rights and has participated in ICHR missions to countries including Brazil, Haiti and Peru. In 1996 and 2000, he was elected to one-year terms as president of ICHR, which examines grievances put forward by alleged victims of human rights violations in the Americas, conducts investigative missions and drafts treaties.

**Zimbabwean Editor Wins WAN 2002 Golden Pen of Freedom Award**

Geoffrey Nyarota, editor-in-chief of the privately owned Zimbabwean Daily News, was been awarded the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) 2002 Golden Pen of Freedom award. The award honours Nyarota's "outstanding defence of press freedom in the face of constant persecution."

WAN eulogised Nyarota for editing a "newspaper which has gained the trust of his readers by fearlessly providing them with the truth about government corruption and the country's economic and social upheaval." The editor-in-chief has been arrested, jailed and threatened with death for overseeing the Daily News' reportage, which has brought the wrath of the government for its coverage of the takeover of white-run farms by Zimbabwean war veterans.

In Zimbabwe, independent and foreign journalists have recently experienced an escalation of attacks and threats from the government of Robert Mugabe especially with the takeover of white owned farmlands with the approval of the government.
Endowment For Democracy Announces Journalism Fellowships

World-wide democracy activists, practitioners, scholars, and journalists have a chance to deepen their understanding of democracy with the Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program, organized by the National Endowment for Democracy.

The fellowships seek to enhance the ability of the fellows to promote democracy. They are intended primarily to support practitioners and scholars from new and aspiring democracies.

Fellows will be in residence at the International Forum for Democratic Studies, the research and publications arm of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), located in Washington, D.C.

The Forum hosts 12-15 fellows per year for three to 10 months each. Each fellow will receive a monthly stipend for living expenses, plus health insurance and reimbursement for travel to and from Washington.

Stipend levels range from a minimum of $3,500 per month to a maximum of $7,500 per month, taking into account the fellow's previous annual income, level of experience, and the cost of living in Washington. Limited funds may be available for travel within the United States.

Applicants for Reagan-Fascell fellowships must choose between two tracks: a practitioner track (typically three to five months) to improve strategies and techniques for building democracy and to exchange information with counterparts in the United States; and a research and writing track (typically five to ten months) to conduct original research for publication.

Applicants who will focus on research and writing are expected to have a Ph.D. or, for non-academics, to have published in an area of expertise. The program is not designed to support students working toward a degree.

Applications should be sent by airmail as well as by e-mail to the addresses listed below. They should consist of eight copies of a 10-page description of the proposed project and a discussion on how the proposed project will advance public understanding of the theory or practice of democracy. Applicants should also include eight copies of a detailed CV or resume, and three letters of reference.

The deadline for fellowships is April 1, 2002, but applicants are encouraged to submit their materials earlier. For more information, visit http://www.ned.org/forum/fellowship_program.html, or contact Kristin Helz, program assistant, Fellowship Programs, International Forum for Democratic Studies, National Endowment for Democracy, 1101 15th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20005, Telephone (202) 293-0300. Fax (202) 293-0258. E-mail kristin@ned.org

Fisher Fellowship Open To Journalists From Developing Countries

Journalists from the Commonwealth countries, and members of the Commonwealth Press Union (CPU), have until February 18, 2002 to apply for the 2002-2003 Gordon Fisher Fellowship.

The fellowship is open to any journalist who is fully employed by a newspaper or news agency in membership of the CPU. Particular consideration will be given to journalists from developing countries.

The successful candidate is able to choose from a wide range of university courses and activities at the University of Toronto, Canada, and is free to audit any graduate or undergraduate course and to use all university facilities. The university, however, does not offer courses in journalism or media studies.

Appointed as Fellow-at-Large at the University of Toronto, the successful candidate receives all privileges, including membership and living accommodations in Massey College, the graduate college within the University.

The Fisher Fellowship program combines general education with concentration in at least two courses. In a parallel, extra-curricular program, the Fisher Fellow meets regularly with
Southam Fellows in informal seminars to discuss contemporary issues with eminent personalities from a wide variety of professions.

Each applicant must be a full-time employee with a newspaper or news service with at least three years' experience. Applicants must have employer consent for a leave of absence and undertake to rejoin the sponsoring employer for a minimum of one year at the completion of the fellowship program. The application should include a proposal for a plan of study, a statement of the applicant's experience, samples of work, supporting letter from the employer, and three references.

The fellowship runs from September 1, 2002 to April 30, 2003.

Interested parties should fax entries to Jane Rangeley on +44 20 7583 7733. The original copies should also be mailed, together with background papers, to reach the CPU by February 18, 2002. Mail to Jane Rangeley, training director, CPU, 17 Fleet Street, London EC4Y 1AA. More information is available on the Massey College Web site at http://www.utoronto.ca/massey

**John S. Knight Fellowships for Professional Journalists**

The John S. Knight Fellowships for Professional Journalists is awarded annually to twelve U.S. and up to eight foreign editors, journalists, reporters, photographers, radio and television broadcasters. Foreign journalists are expected to have had five years experience.

Successful applicants for the Fellowship receive a $50,000 stipend plus a book allowance and tuition.

The program gives outstanding journalists an academic year at Stanford to broaden and deepen their understanding of economic, historical, philosophical, social issues and trends shaping the nation and world. For further information and application form contact: Director, Knight Fellowships, Bldg. 120, Room 424, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-2050; Tel: (650) 723-4937; Fax: (650) 725-6154; E-mail: knightfellow@forsythe.stanford.edu, http://knight.stanford.edu

Deadline for submission of forms for US applicants is February 1 while international applicants have until March 1 to submit theirs.

**Alfred Friendly Press Fellowships (AFPF)**

The programme takes approximately twelve mid-career reporters and editors—usually between the ages of 25 and 35—to America for a six-month, in-depth, practical introduction to the professional and ethical standards of the U.S. print media.

AFPF offers these working fellowships to non-U.S. print journalists from developing and transitional countries with an emerging free press.

Applicant are expected to have an excellent command of written and spoken English, be in early to mid-career status, with at least three years experience as a print journalist, show a demonstrated commitment to a career in journalism in the home country, and current employment as a journalist with an independent print media organization in a developing or transitional country.

The Fellowship covers all costs of programme-related international and domestic U.S. travel, and provides a monthly stipend. The program begins in June with a two-week orientation seminar in Washington followed by five-month deployment to U.S. host newspapers.

Completed applications are expected to get be submitted latest February 1 for the program beginning in June of that year.

For more information and/or an application, visit AFPF's, Web Site: www.pressfellowships.org or contact AFPF at: 2000 L Street N.W., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036-4997; Telephone: (202) 416-1691; Fax: (202) 416-1695; E-mail: afpf@aol.com
READERS' SURVEY

Media Rights Agenda (MRA) is conducting a survey on the impact of the Media Rights Monitor newsletter. We hope to improve on the quality of the publications on the basis of the observations and suggestions arising from this survey. We would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us by hand delivery, mail or fax at: Media Rights Agenda, 44, Alhaja Kofoworola Crescent, off Obafemi Awolowo Way, Ikeja,, P.O.Box 52113, Ikoyi, Lagos. Fax:234-1-4930831.

1. Name (Optional):_________________________________________________________
2. Sex: M _________ F ___________
3. Profession: ______________________________________________________________
4. Since when have you been receiving Media Rights Monitor? ______________________
5. a) How regularly do you receive Media Rights Monitor? _________________________
   b) Do you receive the Media Monitor on time? Yes ________  No ________
6. What stories/articles interest you most in Media Rights Monitor? (Please rank from 1 to 10 according to your order of preference).
   Developments in other countries _____________ Developments in Nigeria __________
   MRA's activities _____________ International Standards _____________
   Stories on the Broadcast Media __________ Stories on the Print Media __________
   Attacks on Journalists ________________ Press Freedom Awards ______________
   Journalism Training Programmes __________ Media Law Reports _____________
7. How useful do you find Media Rights Monitor in your work/profession? ____________
   _______________________________________________________________________
8. What else would you like to see in Media Rights Monitor _________________________
   _______________________________________________________________________
9. Are you satisfied with the use of photographs? Yes __________ No _____________
10. If the answer to the above is no, would you prefer more photographs or less photographs? ________________________________________________________________
11. Do you find stories/articles in Media Rights Monitor too long or too short? __________
12. What do you do with the Media Right Monitor after reading it?
   Throw it away __________ File it _________ Pass it on to someone else _______
13. What are your general impressions of the Media Rights Monitor and what improvements would you like to see in it? ________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your cooperation
“For journalists, the (Freedom of Information) Act will broaden their knowledge on how government works. It will aid them in getting whatever information they want from any government institution thereby reducing the chances and incidents of inaccurate reporting.”

Media Rights Monitor, Editorial
October 2001, Vol. 6. No. 11