

Journos detained, barred from traveling

The National Union of Somali Journalists (NUSOJ) have expressed deep concern over perpetual attacks against journalists by Somaliland police, who continue to arrest and detain reporters. Some journalists have also been barred from traveling around Somaliland to cover stories.

On Monday, 9 January 2012, Somaliland police arrested Abdqani Hassan Farah, nicknamed Gadari, who is a reporter for Universal TV in the Las Anod district of Sool region, northern Somalia. Farah's arrest occurred at around 9:30am, local time, after he aired a news report about a clan meeting in the town of Taleh on the previous night. Somaliland police accused the journalist of "exaggerating reports of a meeting that was creating instability in Sool, Sanag and Eyn regions".

Farah was informed that his arrest was ordered by minister of information Ahmed Abdi Habsade. The order was executed by the governor of Sool region who called the journalist to his office only to order the police, already awaiting the orders, to arrest him.

Other incidents

In a separate incident, reports from Borame indicate that on Monday, Somaliland police barred four journalists from traveling to cover the laying of the fibre-optic cable by SomCable Ltd, which is supposed to connect Somaliland via Djibouti and the Red Sea. The deal for SomCable Ltd to implement this internet cable project was allegedly sanctioned by the former Somaliland government but has reportedly been rejected by the current government.

On Sunday, 8 January, Royal TV reporter Yusuf Abdi Ali, publicly known as Indho Quruh, was arrested by Somaliland police in Borame district, the regional capital of Awdal. Borame police stated that they received a complaint against the journalist alleging that he falsely reported on "corruption by humanitarian NGOs," who expressed annoyance about the journalist's news report to police. Ali is being detained at Borame central police station.

"These latest arrests and continued detention of Farah and Ali are uncalled for and illegal. We condemn this move by security agencies and call for their immediate and unconditional release," said Omar Faruk Osman, NUSOJ secretary general.

NUSOJ deplores the illegal arrest and detention of the journalists without arrest warrants and court convictions. "This is pure intimidation meant to scare journalists from reporting on sensitive issues. The authorities must not bar journalists from traveling to cover events and gather news and we ask the authorities to end these restrictions," added Osman.

Source: allAfrica.com

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