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Waxaa maalgeliyay Midowga Yurub

SOMWA's 2026 report on the state of press freedom for women in Somali media

Launched on the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists

2 November 2026, Mogadishu



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In partnership with UNDP, funded by the European Union

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A Message from the Executive Director



Maryan Seylac
Executive Director, SOMWA

I have led this organisation for a long time now, and every year I tell myself the next report will have fewer names in it. This year it does not.

Between November last year and September this year, our team wrote down thirteen separate incidents involving Somali journalists being arrested, beaten, chased off their own Facebook pages, or made to disappear for days without anyone telling their families where they were. Some of the names in this report belong to people I have trained myself. One of them, Rowda Hassan Taakilo, was simply doing her job in Deyniile when she was taken, and for a stretch of time none of us knew where she was. I will not pretend that did not frighten me.

What is different about this report is not only what happened. It is what we are doing in response. We are no longer only counting incidents after they happen. We are building something that did not exist before, a national map of who Somali women journalists actually are, where they work, and what they need, together with a database that will let us reach them before the next crisis, not only after it.

This work is being carried out with the United Nations Development Programme and with funding from the European Union, and I am grateful for a partnership that has allowed us to move from documenting harm to building protection. I am equally grateful to every journalist named or quietly represented in these pages, who trusted us enough to tell us what happened to them.

We are releasing this report on the day the world sets aside to remember that most crimes against journalists are never punished. For us at SOMWA, that is not a day of mourning alone. It is a deadline we are setting for ourselves and for everyone who shares responsibility for the safety of the Somali press.

Acknowledgements

This report would not exist without the journalists who spoke to us, often while still shaken by what they had just been through. We thank every one of them, named and unnamed, for trusting SOMWA with their stories.

To the United Nations Development Programme

We are deeply grateful to UNDP for standing beside SOMWA as a partner, not only a funder. From the earliest conversations about what a national mapping of Somali women journalists could look like, through to the practical work of building a secure database and planning this very launch, UNDP's team has brought patience, technical guidance and genuine belief in what SOMWA is trying to build. Thank you for seeing this through with us.

To the European Union

This work is made possible by funding from the European Union, and we want to be direct about what that has meant in practice. It has meant Focal Points could travel to six regions to find and speak with women journalists who had never before been asked about their work or their safety. It has meant a national database could be built to international security standards rather than assembled on a shoestring. We thank the European Union for an investment that Somali women in media will feel the benefit of for years, not just on the day this report is launched.

> *This report is researched, written and published entirely by the Somali Media Women Association. The incidents described in Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 were documented directly by SOMWA through its own monitoring network, unless a source is explicitly credited otherwise.*

About SOMWA

The Somali Media Women Association was founded in Mogadishu in 2006 by a small group of women journalists who were tired of being left out of their own newsrooms. Nearly two decades later, SOMWA is the oldest media organisation of its kind in Somalia, with offices in Mogadishu and Baidoa and a membership that reaches into every Federal Member State.

We are a non profit, non political, membership led organisation governed by a Board of Directors. Our work rests on four pillars that have not changed since the beginning, even as the threats we respond to have grown more sophisticated. We protect women journalists who come under threat. We build their skills through safety and digital security training. We document violations so that the scale of this problem cannot be waved away as anecdote. And we advocate, loudly and persistently, for the legal reform that Somalia's media sector still lacks.

SOMWA has worked with the United Nations Transitional Mission in Somalia, UNESCO, the Norwegian Embassy and a number of international partners over the years. We are a member of the Global Forum for Media Development and the Global Democracy Coalition. In 2026 we published Silence Is Not An Option, a position paper documenting more than thirty violations against journalists in just the first four months of the year. This report builds directly on that work, extending our own monitoring through September 2026 and widening the lens to look specifically at what collective action, protection and opportunity can look like for the women who make up this profession.

Executive Summary

Between November 2025 and September 2026, SOMWA documented Ninety-six incidents affecting Somali journalists, touching more than thirty individuals by name along with at least two media houses whose operations were disrupted outright. These were not isolated accidents of a difficult operating environment. They followed a pattern that our own data, now collected over several years, continues to confirm: journalists in Somalia are arrested for simply being present, their equipment is seized as a matter of routine, and a growing share of the harm now happens online, where a single fraudulent complaint can take a page with more than a million followers off the internet in a matter of hours.

Women journalists carry a second layer of risk that male colleagues do not. Of the cases SOMWA has tracked since 2023, seventy-nine have involved some form of gender-based harassment, online abuse or targeted defamation designed specifically to discredit a woman because she is a woman, not because of what she reported.

This report sets out that record in detail, incident by incident, alongside two case studies that illustrate how these threats actually unfold on the ground. It describes a coordinated wave of attacks on journalists' Facebook pages, including one in which a living journalist's account was falsely reported as belonging to a deceased person in an apparent attempt to seize control of it, a tactic we document here with the evidence our team collected at the time.

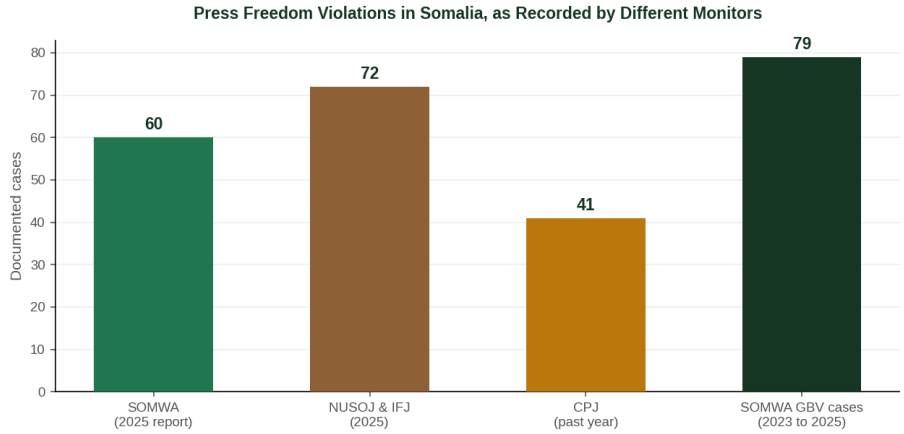


Figure 1. SOMWA's own documentation sits alongside figures published by NUSOJ, IFJ and CPJ, each using a different methodology and reporting period.

But this report is not only an account of harm. It sets out what SOMWA is building in response, a national effort to map, connect and protect Somali women journalists at a scale we have not attempted before, carried out with UNDP and funded by the European Union. We close with a set of recommendations addressed to the Federal Government of Somalia, to Meta, and to the international community, each one grounded in a specific case documented in these pages rather than in abstract principle.

1. Introduction

Somalia's constitution promises freedom of expression. Somalia's media law, passed in 2016, sets out how an independent press is supposed to function. On paper, a Somali journalist in 2026 works under more legal protection than her predecessors did twenty years ago. In practice, the women and men who actually do this work tell a different story, one this report is built to record honestly rather than soften.

We called our last major publication Silence Is Not An Option, and we meant it as both a description and a warning. This report carries that warning forward, but it asks a different question. Instead of only measuring how bad the year has been, it asks what it would actually take to change the picture, not someday but within the timeframe of the work SOMWA is now undertaking.

That is why this report takes its title from the project behind it. Strengthening Collective Voice, Protection, and Opportunities for Somali Women Journalists is not a slogan. It names three concrete things SOMWA believes are missing and is now building: a way for women journalists across the country to find each other and speak with one voice, a functioning safety net when something goes wrong, and a visible, documented professional community that media houses, donors and government can actually see and work with.

The record in the pages that follow is not comfortable reading. We have not softened it. But we ask readers, particularly those in government and at international organisations, to read it alongside the recommendations in Section 10, because every one of those recommendations answers something that happened to a real person whose name appears in this report.

2. The Picture in Numbers

SOMWA has monitored violations against journalists in Somalia for several years, and the figures below draw first on our own records, covering the eleven months between November 2025 and September 2026 in detail, and set against the wider picture reported by our partners and by international monitors over a longer period.

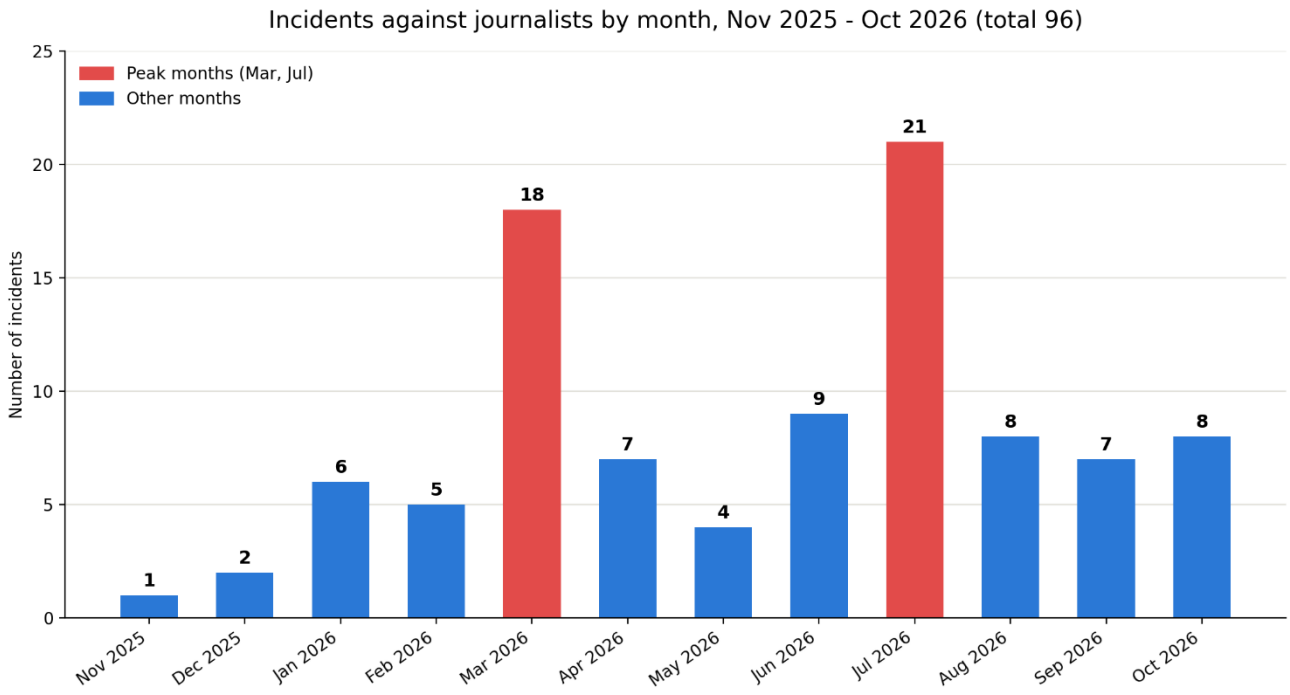


Figure 2. Ninety-six incidents documented directly by SOMWA, November 2025 through October 2026. March and June 2026 were the worst months on record.

The incidents in Figure 2 touched more than ninety-six journalists and several media. That is already a conservative count. It reflects only what reached SOMWA through our monitoring network, our membership and direct reports from affected journalists. Experience tells us that fear of reprisal keeps an unknown number of smaller incidents from ever being reported to us at all.

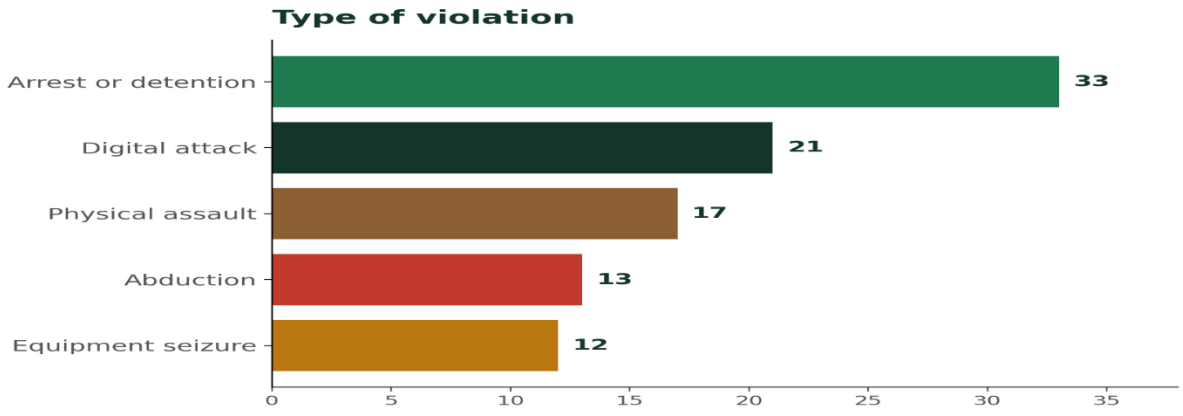


Figure 3. Arrest and detention remain the most common violation our team recorded, but digital attacks are catching up fast, accounting for close to a third of all documented incidents in this period.

What stands out in Figure 3 is how close digital attacks now sit to physical ones. Twenty-One of the Ninety-Six incidents in this reporting period involved no

physical contact at all. They happened entirely online, through Facebook's reporting tools, and they affected journalists with some of the largest audiences in the country. Section 5 looks at exactly how that works.

How SOMWA's figures sit alongside others

SOMWA's own 2025 report recorded more than sixty violations against journalists over the course of that year. The National Union of Somali Journalists, working with the International Federation of Journalists, independently recorded seventy-two over a similar period. The Committee to Protect Journalists has documented forty-one cases in Somalia over the past year using its own global methodology. None of these figures is more correct than the others. They are counting the same crisis through different lenses, different networks and different definitions of what counts as a violation, and taken together they paint a consistent picture rather than a contested one.

Since 2023, SOMWA has specifically tracked cases involving gender-based harassment, online abuse and targeted defamation against women journalists. We return to what sits behind that number in Section 6.

3. Where It Happened

Mogadishu dominates this record, and that is not simply because SOMWA is based there. Banadir is where the largest concentration of media houses, government institutions and public gatherings exist, and it is where journalists are most often caught between covering a story and being treated as a threat for doing so.

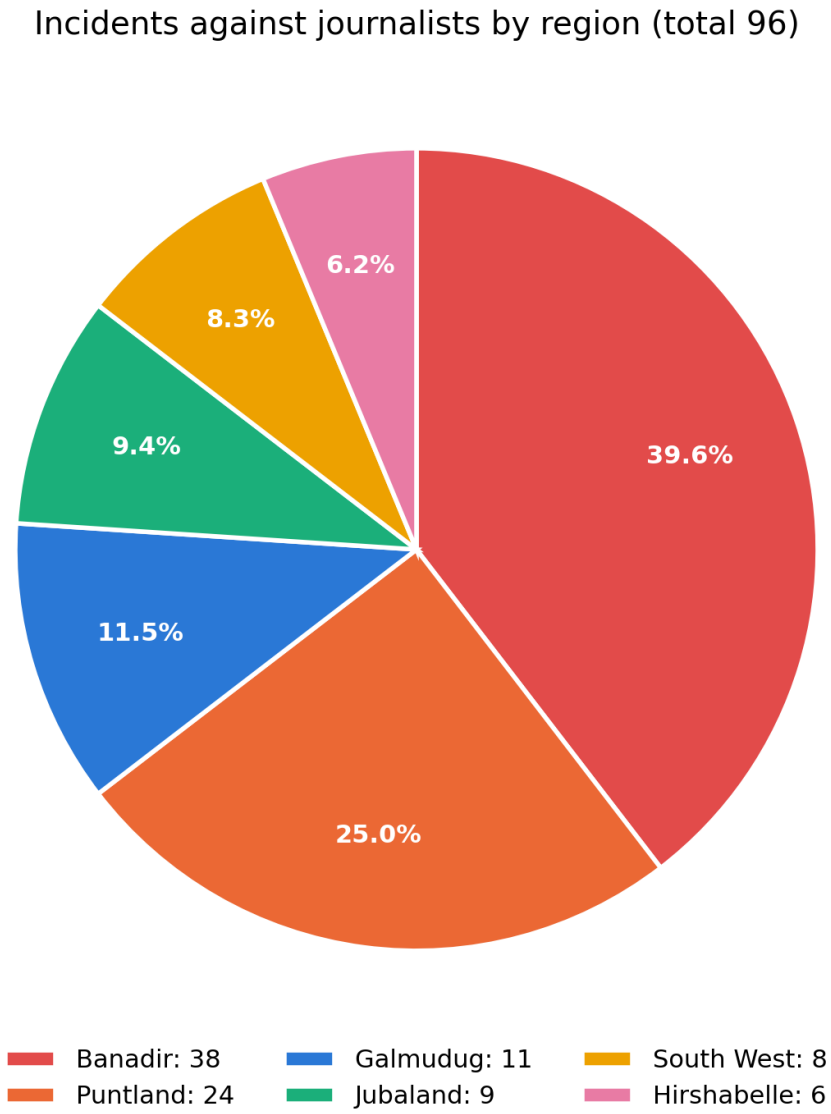


Figure 4. Eight of the thirty-eight of the documented incidents took place in Banadir region. Twenty-Four occurred in Puntland, where a journalist was held for thirteen days. Twenty-One happened entirely online, with no fixed location at all.

Puntland accounts for twenty-four incidents in this period, including the thirteen-day detention of journalist Suways Gacayte in Garowe, described in full in Section 7. That single case matters disproportionately because it shows that arbitrary detention of journalists is not confined to the capital or to areas directly affected by conflict. It can happen in one of Somalia's more stable regional administrations just as easily.

The twenty-one incidents marked as online or nationwide in Figure 4 deserve particular attention precisely because they do not respect regional boundaries at all. A journalist based in Mogadishu, a media house serving all of Somalia, and individuals living outside the country entirely have all had their work disrupted by the same coordinated tactics described in Section 5. Geography offers no protection from this category of threat.

4. Chronological Record, November 2025 to September 2026

Every entry below was documented directly by SOMWA through our monitoring network, direct testimony from the journalists involved, or their media houses. We have named individuals where it is safe to do so and where their cases are already a matter of public record among Somali journalist associations. Where a journalist's safety could be put at further risk by naming them in a public document, we have described the incident without doing so.

Note: The table below contains selected cases.

Date	Location	What SOMWA documented
21 Nov 2025	Mogadishu, Banadir	Abdullahi Mohamed Ali, known as Saawey, a cameraman with Himilo Media, was arrested while covering a story and had his equipment confiscated by police.
11 Dec 2025	Dayniile and Daaru Salaam, Mogadishu	A series of bomb explosions brought journalists to the scene. Kalsan TV reporters Ja'far Mohamed Jimale and Sumayo Ali Hussein, along with cameraman Abdirahman Mohamed Ahmed, were briefly arrested and had their equipment confiscated. Hirasho TV reporter Iqro Abdullahi Abdirahman had her arm twisted by a soldier. A further camera operator at the scene was also affected.
11 Dec 2025	Yaaqshiid district, Mogadishu	Six journalists covering a car accident were arrested by police and officers of the National Intelligence and Security Agency. Qasim Abdille Barrow and cameraman Mohamed Adan of Somali Cable TV were beaten with pistols. Khadar Abdirahim Ibrahim and cameraman Abdirisak Haji Sidow of Himilo Media were arrested and had their equipment confiscated. Cameraman Ali Yasin Ali and reporter Hussein Isse Mohamed were beaten with a gun by a soldier. Also detained were Salman Abdirizak Shire of Risaala TV, Mohamed Abdukadir of RTN TV, Abshir Abdullahi Amin of Universal Somali TV and Deeq Moalim Jinow of Saab TV.
24 Feb 2026	Mogadishu, Banadir	Journalist Abdihafid Nor was abducted by armed men identified as officers of the Somali National Army.
7 May 2026	Xamar Jajab, Mogadishu	Shabelle Media reporter Shukri Caabi Abdi and cameraman Abdullahi Abdifatah Siidow were arrested. Shukri was assaulted and the pair's equipment was confiscated.

7 May 2026	Deyniile, Mogadishu	Kalsan TV editor Jacfar Mohamed Jimale and cameraman Nur Hasan Ali were arrested and held at a military station. Goobjoog Media journalist Rowda Hassan Taakilo was also detained in Deyniile, and for a period afterward her whereabouts were unknown to her colleagues and to SOMWA.
12 May 2026	Online, nationwide	A coordinated campaign emerged in which journalists' social media accounts were mass reported and Facebook's copyright complaint tools were used against them, organised through what researchers call troll networks or coordinated reporting groups.
13 May 2026	Mogadishu, Banadir	A camera and wireless microphone belonging to Kalsan TV were seized and held for eight days by the Banadir Regional Police Division, on the order of a named police commander in the Waberi Police Division.
4 Jun 2026	Online	Content belonging to Shabelle Media was removed from Facebook through a copyright claim filed by an account with no apparent legitimate interest in the material, shortly after the outlet published coverage critical of the federal government.
2 to 15 Jul 2026	Garowe, Puntland	Journalist Suways Gacayte was arrested by Puntland security forces and held for thirteen days at Garowe Central Prison before being released on bail by the Garowe District Court.
13 Aug 2026	Abdicasiis district, Mogadishu	Shabelle Radio and Television reporter Shukri Abdi was assaulted by two mobile police officers while covering the dispersal of a protest. Her phone was seized and she was hospitalised with a hand injury.
14 Sep 2026	Online	A coordinated wave of Facebook attacks targeted several high profile Somali media figures at once, including Farah Geylan of Geylan Media and Abdirisak Atosh of Salbaar Media, each with followings in the hundreds of thousands to low millions.
Sep 2026 (ongoing)	Online	A further wave disabled or restricted the accounts of several more journalists and media pages, including a fraudulent attempt to have a living journalist's Facebook profile falsely marked as belonging to someone who had died, examined in detail in Section 5.

Ninety-Six incidents in eleven months works out to roughly one documented case every eight incidents weekly. We do not believe that rate reflects the true frequency of harm against Somali journalists. It reflects the rate at which incidents become visible enough, or safe enough, for someone to tell us about them.

5. The Digital Frontline

A Somali journalist no longer has to be arrested to be silenced. Increasingly, all it takes is a complaint filed against their Facebook page by someone with no legitimate claim to the content on it, and a platform on the other end that cannot or will not tell the difference between a genuine copyright dispute and a coordinated attempt to take a newsroom off the internet.

What the pattern looks like

The Somali Media Women Association documented a coordinated scheme in which accounts belonging to journalists and public figures were targeted using forged documentation submitted to Facebook's own systems. In several cases, the attackers submitted what appeared to be false death certificates, triggering Facebook's own memorialisation process, a feature intended to let grieving families secure the account of someone who has actually died. Used this way, it becomes a tool to lock a living journalist out of their own page under the pretence that they are dead.

This is not a new tactic invented in 2026. Somali journalists have raised concerns about Facebook account removals for years, including a wave in 2019 in which more than a dozen accounts belonging to Somali journalists were removed without clear explanation. What has changed is the scale and sophistication: organised groups now apparently run what researchers studying similar schemes elsewhere call coordinated reporting networks, built to exploit automated platform tools faster than any human moderator can keep up with.

The case of Munasar Mohamed

In September 2026, SOMWA's monitoring team documented an attempt to seize control of the Facebook page belonging to Munasar Mohamed, a journalist in exile with an audience of more than two million followers who describes his own work as exposing corruption through verified evidence. An email purporting to come from Facebook arrived requesting a memorialisation decision, the standard process triggered when the platform believes an account holder has died.

Screenshots collected by our team at the time, reproduced below, show the memorialisation request itself, Munasar's own public profile describing his journalism, and the Gaylan Media Facebook page, a separate but related outlet that was also affected, displaying a page not found error after being taken down. The same period saw threatening messages sent over WhatsApp from a foreign-registered number to individuals connected to these pages, warning them to stop their coverage.

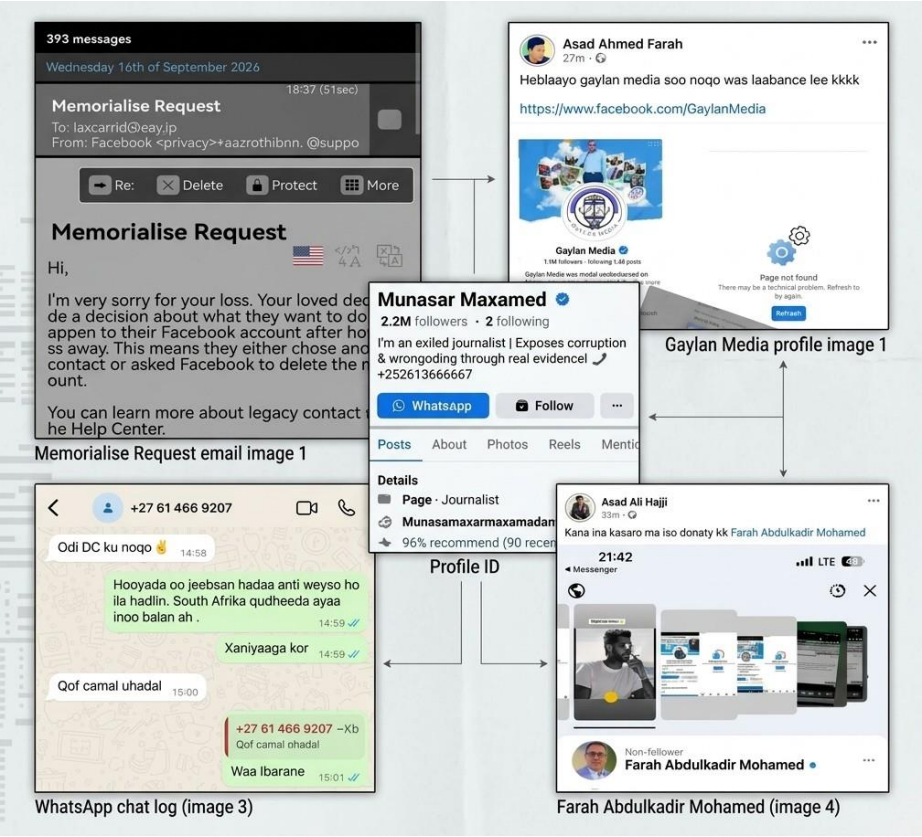


Figure 5. Evidence collected by SOMWA in September 2026, showing the fraudulent Facebook memorialisation request targeting journalist Munasar Mohamed, the Gaylan Media page after removal, and threatening WhatsApp messages sent to affected individuals from a foreign registered number.

Gaylan Media's page was restored after SOMWA and partner organisations intervened directly with Meta, only to be disabled again within the same period. That cycle- taken down, restored, taken down again- is itself part of the harm. It is difficult for an outlet to plan its editorial calendar, let alone its advertising revenue, when its entire online presence can vanish without warning and without a clear channel to appeal.

> *SOMWA does not publish the names of individuals believed to be behind these coordinated attacks in this report, since that determination is a matter for formal investigation rather than public accusation. Our role here is to document the pattern and its effect on journalists, and to press Meta and relevant authorities to investigate who is organising it.*

6. When Women Report, They Carry a Second Risk

Every violation described in this report can happen to a male or a female journalist. Women face all of them, and then something more. Since 2023, SOMWA has kept a separate count of cases in which a woman journalist was targeted through harassment, online abuse or defamation aimed at her as a woman, rather than at the story she had reported. That count now stands at seventy-nine.

The pattern behind those cases is consistent. A woman covers a political event or publishes a critical story. Within hours, the response is not a rebuttal of her reporting but an attack on her character, often sexual in nature, circulated online and sometimes across messaging groups that her family and community also belong to. The aim is not to win an argument. It is to make her pay a social price high enough that she, and every other woman watching, decides the next story is not worth it.

Several of the cases in Section 4 carry this second layer. Iqro Abdullahi Abdirahman, Sumayo Ali Hussein, Shukri Caabi Abdi, and Rowda Hassan Taakilo are all women who were detained, assaulted or made to disappear while doing ordinary reporting work. We cannot say from the incident record alone whether gender was the deciding factor in each case. What we can say is that women journalists describe the aftermath differently. A male colleague who is released from a police station usually returns to work. A woman who has been held, even briefly, often returns to questions from relatives about her reputation, her safety on the road, and whether this is really the right profession for her.

> *When we speak up, we are ashamed. When we push boundaries, we are threatened. And when we reject advances, we are punished.* *Maryan Seylac, Executive Director, SOMWA*

This is why SOMWA argues that gender neutral safety policies are not enough. A hotline, a legal referral or a training programme designed with male journalists in mind will miss the specific forms of pressure women face. Protection that works for women has to be built around them from the start.

7. Case Studies

The incident table in Section 4 tells readers what happened. These four case studies try to explain what it meant, for the people involved and for the working environment around them.

Case One: Rowda Hassan Taakilo, Goobjoog Media

On 7 May 2026, Goobjoog Media journalist Rowda Hassan Taakilo was detained in Deyniile, Mogadishu, during the same afternoon that two Kalsan TV colleagues were arrested at a nearby location and taken to a military station. While the Kalsan TV pair were at least known to be in custody, Rowda's position was unclear. Her colleagues and SOMWA could not immediately establish where she had been taken or who was holding her.

The distinction matters. An arrest that is acknowledged can be challenged through lawyers, family and press associations. A detention in which nobody will confirm where the person is held closes all those routes. For the hours or days it lasts, the journalist's family has no way to act, and her colleagues cannot tell whether a quiet approach or a loud public campaign is more likely to bring her back safely. SOMWA treats cases like this as the most serious category of violation we record because they strip away the one protection every detained person is entitled to: knowing where they are and being able to tell someone.

Case Two: Suways Gacayte, Garowe

Suways Gacayte was arrested by Puntland security forces on 2 July 2026 and held at Garowe Central Prison. SOMWA followed the case through its public stages, including a court hearing at which concerns about press freedom in the region were raised. She was released on bail on 15 July by the Garowe District Court, after thirteen days in custody.

What makes this case worth recording carefully is where it took place. Most of the incidents in this report happened in Mogadishu. Puntland is often described as one of Somalia's more institutionally developed administrations, with a functioning court system and a long-established media sector. The fact that a journalist could still be held for nearly two weeks there shows that the problem is not simply a matter of

which region has the weakest system. It is about whether security forces anywhere in the country believe they will face consequences for detaining a journalist, and so far, the answer has been that they do not.

Case Three: Kalsan TV and the Eight-Day Equipment Seizure

On 13 May 2026, a camera and a wireless microphone belonging to Kalsan TV were taken by the Banadir Regional Police Division and held for eight days. The order came from a named police commander in the Waberi Police Division. No charge was brought against the journalists who had been using the equipment, and no legal basis for the seizure was ever communicated to the outlet.

It is easy to treat equipment seizure as a lesser harm than arrest or assault. For a small television station, it is not. A camera and a microphone are the working tools of a newsroom, and they are expensive to replace. Holding them for eight days, with no case against anyone, does the work of a closure order without requiring anyone to sign one. A station that cannot film cannot report, and every outlet watching understands what the same treatment would mean for them.

Case Four: Shukri Abdi, Shabelle Radio and Television

On 13 August 2026, Shabelle Radio and Television reporter Shukri Abdi was covering the dispersal of a protest in Abdicasiis district, Mogadishu, when two mobile police officers assaulted her. Her phone was seized, and she sustained a hand injury serious enough that she was taken to hospital.

Shukri works for Shabe Media, which had content removed through a Facebook copyright claim in June. Shabelle's staff have now been affected by physical assault, arrest, equipment confiscation and digital takedown within a single quarter. We do not suggest these incidents were coordinated. We do note that, taken together, they describe the full range of pressure a single Somali media house can face in the space of about three months, and why journalists at outlets like this one increasingly describe their working conditions as unpredictable rather than merely difficult.

8. What the Law Promises and What It Delivers

Somalia's Federal Constitution guarantees freedom of expression and freedom of the press under Article 18. The National Media Law of 2016 sets out how an independent media sector is meant to operate. Somalia is also a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, both of which protect press freedom.

None of the Ninety-Six incidents in this report took place in a legal vacuum. Each one involved someone who, on paper, had a right to do what they were doing. Journalists arrested for covering a car accident, a bomb scene or a protest were not breaking any law the Constitution recognises. Yet in the cases SOMWA documented, nobody has been publicly held accountable for the arrests, the beatings or the equipment seizures.

Three gaps stand out, and each connects directly to something described in this report:

- There is no independent mechanism to receive and investigate complaints from journalists against security agencies. Cases like the Yaaqshiid arrests and the Kalsan TV equipment seizure had nowhere to go.
- There is no agreed national protocol between media organisations and government for how journalists should be treated at the scene of a news event. Journalists arrested at the Dayniile protest were doing what any reporter does after an attack, and had no agreed procedure to point to.
- Somalia's law has not caught up with digital extortion and the abuse of platform reporting tools. The September 2026 attacks on journalists' Facebook pages fall into a gap where neither the media law nor existing criminal law clearly applies.

Journalists' personal data is also becoming a protection issue in its own right. Somalia's Data Protection Act of 2023 gives people rights over how their personal information is collected and held. For SOMWA, that law is not a background detail. It shapes how we are building the national database described in Section 9, and it is a standard we believe any organisation holding information about journalists should meet.

9. What SOMWA Is Doing About It

For most of SOMWA's history, our response to violations has been reactive. A journalist is arrested, we hear about it, we issue a statement, we call a lawyer, we follow the case. That work matters, and we will keep doing it. But it always starts after the harm has happened, and it depends on us knowing who the journalist is, where she works and how to reach her.

The project behind this report, Strengthening Collective Voice, Protection, and Opportunities for Somali Women Journalists, was designed to change that starting point. It is delivered by SOMWA in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and funded by the European Union, and it has four parts.

A national mapping of women journalists

Since September 2026, SOMWA's Focal Points have been collecting information from women journalists and media professionals in Banadir and across five Federal Member States: Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, Puntland, NorthEast and South West State. The aim is to reach at least three hundred women and record, with their consent, where they work, in what role, under what conditions, and what threats they have faced. Everyone interviewed is told exactly how their information will be used and can decide whether it is made visible to anyone beyond SOMWA. The findings will be published in a National Mapping Baseline Report.

A secure national database

The mapping feeds a national database of women journalists, hosted on SOMWA's own website. It has been designed with three levels of access. The public sees only basic professional details, and only for women who agree to be listed. Verified partner organisations such as media houses and development partners can see more, again only where the journalist has agreed. Sensitive information, including anything about safety incidents, is visible only to a small number of named SOMWA administrators. Every access to a record is logged. We are building it this way because a list of women journalists in the wrong hands is a risk in its own right, and the people it describes deserve to decide who sees them.

A day of remembrance and demand

This report is being released at SOMWA's commemoration of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists on 2 November 2026, which will also include a

formal advocacy statement addressed to government. We chose to anchor our advocacy to this date because impunity is the thread that connects almost everything in these pages.

A national gathering

In December, SOMWA will bring women journalists from every region together in Mogadishu and online, with participants travelling from the Federal Member States to attend in person. A profession that is isolated is easier to intimidate. We want women who have only ever read about each other's work to meet, compare experiences and leave with contacts they can call when something goes wrong.

None of this will stop the next arrest by itself. But a journalist who is already known to SOMWA, already connected to colleagues in her region and already part of a network that will notice quickly when she goes quiet, is in a different position from one who is working alone.

10. Recommendations

Each recommendation below responds to something recorded in this report. We have tried to keep them specific enough that anyone reading them could check, a year from now, whether they have been acted on.

To the Federal Government of Somalia

- Issue a clear written directive to the Somali National Army, the Somali Police Force and the National Intelligence and Security Agency that journalists reporting at the scene of a news event are not to be arrested, assaulted or have their equipment taken for doing so. The Dayniile and Yaaqshiid cases show this instruction is needed.
- Establish a body independent of the security agencies that can receive complaints from journalists, investigate them and refer cases for prosecution. At present, journalists who are beaten or detained have nowhere to take that complaint.
- Require security agencies to confirm within twenty four hours where any detained journalist is being held. The case of Rowda Hassan Taakilo shows why.
- Return seized equipment promptly and in writing, with a stated legal reason for the seizure. The eight day Kalsan TV case shows what happens when neither is required.
- Introduce legislation that specifically covers digital extortion and the abuse of platform reporting tools against journalists.

To regional administrations, including Puntland

- Ensure that journalists detained in connection with their work are brought before a court promptly and that the grounds for detention are made public. The thirteen day detention of Suways Gacayte in Garowe should not be repeated.
- Work with SOMWA and other media associations on an agreed protocol for how journalists are treated at public events and protests in each region.

To Meta

- Create a dedicated, fast review channel for verified Somali media organisations and journalists whose pages are removed or restricted, with a human reviewer and a response time measured in hours, not weeks.
- Review how the memorialisation process can be used against living people, and add checks that would stop a false death report from locking a journalist out of an active account.
- Take action against accounts that file repeated false copyright claims against news outlets, and tell affected organisations what has been done.

To the international community

- Treat press freedom indicators as a regular part of conversations with the Somali authorities about governance support, and raise individual cases such as those in this report directly.
- Support the protection of women journalists specifically, including legal aid, safe reporting equipment and psychosocial support, alongside general press freedom programming.
- Support efforts to build and maintain shared national resources, such as the database described in Section 9, so that protection does not depend on a single project cycle.

To media houses and journalist associations

- Report incidents to SOMWA and to one another quickly, even when they seem small. A pattern is only visible if the pieces are shared.
- Review internal practices so that women journalists are not sent into high risk situations without the same support, training and equipment as their colleagues.

Conclusion

When we started compiling this report, we expected to be writing mostly about arrests and beatings. We did not expect that a Facebook page could be taken from a living man by telling the platform he was dead, or that a journalist's whereabouts could be unknown for a stretch of time in the middle of the country's capital.

What the record shows is a profession under pressure from several directions at once, some of them old and some of them new. What it also shows is how much of that pressure depends on one condition, which is that nobody expects to be held to account. The officers who beat a cameraman, the commander who held a station's equipment for eight days and the people filing false claims against newsrooms online all act in the expectation that nothing will happen to them. Change that expectation, and a great deal else changes with it.

SOMWA cannot do that alone, and we do not claim to. What we can do is keep documenting, keep connecting the women whose work depends on being able to count on each other, and keep putting the record in front of those with the power to act. This report is part of that effort. We hope that when we write the next one, there are fewer names in it.

Silence is not an option.

Annex: Other Incidents Affecting Journalists

This annex records further incidents involving journalists and media workers that were documented during the reporting period but fall outside the main findings. Part A covers offline incidents. Part B covers online incidents, namely the disabling of journalists' Facebook accounts and pages.

Part A: Offline incidents

No.	Date	Journalist(s)	Outlet / role	Location	Type of incident	Summary
1	3 Sept 2026 (shot); 7 Sept 2026 (died)	Bashir Mohamed Abdullahi (Bashir Moalin), 24	Reporter, Arlaadi Media Network	Baidoa, Somalia	Killing	Shot twice in the back near his home in the Al Axmaar district during armed clashes. He died of his injuries on 7 September. He is the second journalist killed in Somalia this year.
2	18 Sept 2026	Mohamed Aweys Muudey, 68	Veteran Somali journalist	Darmstadt, South Hesse, Germany	Killing (in exile)	Fatally stabbed on Friday night, according to a police statement.
3	18 Sept 2026	Hassan Kafi Abdirahman Qoyste, 57	Veteran radio journalist	Mogadishu, Somalia	Death (illness)	Fell ill on Friday night and was pronounced dead at hospital. His family reported a short illness; he was diabetic. Not a rights violation. Recorded as a loss to the profession.
4	18 Mar 2026	Amiro Sulaiman Ibrahim	Journalist, Kaab TV	Dayniile district, Mogadishu	Arrest and confiscation of equipment	Arrested by armed police, reportedly led by Captain Jamilo Faradar, while covering a protest against forced evictions.
5	18 Mar 2026	Iqro Abdullahi Abdirahman	Journalist, Five Somali TV	Dayniile district, Mogadishu	Arrest, physical assault and confiscation of equipment	Beaten by police officers before being forced into a police vehicle while covering the same protest.
6	6 Sept 2026	Abdirahman Mohamed Abdi	Local journalist	Baidoa, Southwest State	Arbitrary detention	Held for almost a week at an unknown location following his arrest in connection with his journalism. Release called for.
7	8 Sept 2026	Mohamud Ali Abdi	Journalist	Southwest State	Arrest	Arrested by Southwest State authorities. Release called for.

No.	Date	Journalist(s)	Outlet / role	Location	Type of incident	Summary
8	17 July [year to be confirmed]	Ummakhayr Abdiwali Jama (Head of Programmes, Producer, Newscaster) Suways Jama Mahmoud (Reporter, Camera Operator, Newscaster) Samir Abdi Ali (Reporter, Cameraman) Nadar Garaase (Newscaster, Camera Operator) Shukri Gashaan (Newscaster, Producer) Falis Mohamed Abdullahi (Reporter, Camera Operator)	Staff, Puntland TV	Puntland	Unlawful dismissal and exclusion from workplace	A letter posted at the station entrance by Deputy Minister of Information and Acting Director-General Bile Qabowsade barred the six women from the premises. They approached the Minister of Information, the Minister of Labour and Employment, and the Puntland Parliament without a satisfactory response. They allege abuse of power. They reported the case to the Somali Media Women Association (SOMWA).

Part B: Online incidents (Facebook account and page disablements)

No.	Date	Journalist / account holder	Incident	Impact
1	24 Oct 2026	Hasan Gallaydh	Facebook account disabled	Not stated
2	24 Oct 2026	Ismail Shine	Facebook account disabled	Account has over 146 followers [figure to be confirmed]
3	20 Oct 2026	Hafid Nor	Second disablement of Facebook Page	Page has 200,000 followers
4	19 Oct 2026	Sharma Hiilwalaal	Facebook Page disabled	200,000+ followers. Page unavailable for over 10 days.
5	19 Oct 2026	Shiine Culey	Repeated disablement of Facebook Page	Reportedly targeted by a coordinated team
6	16 Sept 2026	Munasar Mohamed	Facebook Page disabled	Affects his media work
7	16 Sept 2026	Shiine Culay	Facebook Page disabled	Affects his journalistic and political analysis
8	8 Sept 2026	Munasar Mohamed and Ayub Abdirisak (follow-up)	Munasar: ongoing account issues, including Rights Manager access and copyright allegations. Ayub: content removal and Rights Manager access.	Ongoing

Sources

The incident record in Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 was documented by SOMWA's own monitoring team and is held in SOMWA's case files. The published sources below were used for context, comparison and legal references.

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