



The Onslaught Intensifies:

A Mid-Term Assessment Report On
Media Freedom Under The
Tinubu Administration

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Mr Ayode Longe, MRA's Deputy Executive Director, supervised the research, wrote the final report, and coordinated the entire project.

The cover design for the publication was done by Mr John Gbadamosi while the layout was done by Ms Bunmi Bamiselu.

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PREFACE

This publication presents a mid-term assessment of the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu in relation to media freedom, a fundamental pillar of democracy.

We define media freedom as the right of the media professionals and media organizations, including the press, radio and television stations and other agencies of the media, to operate independently and without interference from the State, political actors, private interests, or other forms of control.

Media freedom is a cornerstone of a democratic society and a vital condition for ensuring accountability, transparency, and the free flow of information and ideas. Without it, the public cannot fully exercise its right to know, and democracy becomes shallow or distorted.

Media freedom is a core component of the right to freedom of expression, which is protected by Section 39 of the Nigerian Constitution, as well as various regional and international instruments such as Article 9 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Key elements of media freedom include editorial independence, which is a requirement that journalists and media outlets should be free to determine the content they publish or broadcast without pressure, censorship, or directives from the government or even their owners.

Journalists and other media practitioners should also be free to gather, investigate, and disseminate news and information, including from government institutions and officials, without obstruction, and should be protected from all forms of attacks, including harassment, arbitrary arrests, detention, violence, surveillance, intimidation, abduction and killings, in the course of their work.

Media freedom is important because the media support democracy by enabling informed public participation; hold power to account by exposing

corruption, abuse, misrule or other societal ills; foster transparency and development; protect human rights by giving voice to marginalized and vulnerable groups while also highlighting human rights abuses or violations; promotes peace and security through fact-based reporting and countering misinformation, among other reasons.

However, we are seeing threats to media freedom in Nigeria through the continued implementation of repressive laws, such as the Cybercrime Act which is frequently used to target, silence or punish journalists; the enforcement of politically motivated regulatory sanctions; arrests and detention or other forms of attacks on journalists; surveillance or intimidation of media practitioners; and censorship of government-controlled broadcasters, among others threats and attacks.

As President Tinubu's administration reaches its halfway point, this assessment seeks to evaluate how its policies, actions, and inactions have impacted the exercise and enjoyment of media freedom across the country.

We consider the assessment resulting in this report a timely intervention in a political climate where democratic gains continue to face increasing threats from censorship, regulatory overreach, violence against journalists, and the misuse of digital surveillance technologies.

The objective of this report is not merely to criticize but to document, analyse, and illuminate the extent to which the current administration has either advanced or undermined the freedom of expression landscape in Nigeria. It draws upon empirical evidence, legal and policy developments, case studies of violations, and the lived experiences of journalists, media workers, civil society actors, and citizens.

The assessment is the result of rigorous research, monitoring, and analysis conducted over the first two years of the Tinubu presidency. It reflects the commitment of Media Rights Agenda to ensure that the principles of open governance, media freedom, and human rights remain central to national discourse and development.

We hope that this publication serves not only as a record of the Tinubu Administration's performance but also as a tool for advocacy, reform, and

civic engagement. We urge government institutions, the media, civil society, and the international community to take its findings seriously and to work collaboratively toward safeguarding and expanding the civic space in Nigeria.

Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that every Nigerian can speak freely, be informed, hold power to account, and participate meaningfully in the democratic process.

Edetaen Ojo

Executive Director

Media Rights Agenda

Lagos

June 2025

INTRODUCTION

President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's apparent disdain for the rule of law manifests in many ways, including several attempts at stifling press freedom and the civic space.

Even before he became President, while he was still campaigning to be elected in 2023, there had been indications of a lack of tolerance for media freedom exhibited by his campaign which resulted in repeated expressions of concern by Media Rights Agenda at that time about when the future held for the media if he prevailed in the elections.

For instance, at a meeting Asiwaju Tinubu held with the business community in Lagos on January 13, 2023 as the presidential candidate of the All Progressives Congress (APC), an Arise Television cameraman was expelled from the campaign meeting and later accused of being on an "espionage mission" by the campaign in an effort to justify its highhanded violation of the rights of the media.

Mr. Bayo Onanuga, who was then the APC's Presidential Campaign Committee's Director of Media and Publicity and is now Special Adviser to the President on Information and Strategy, had claimed that the Arise Television cameraman was caught clandestinely livestreaming Tinubu's campaign event without authorization and accused him of being on an espionage mission, a justification which MRA had described at that time as "ridiculous" as the journalist did not require any authorization to perform his professional duty of covering a political campaign event.

MRA was extremely concerned at the flippant manner in which the campaign characterized a purely journalistic act by a cameraman from a television station filming a public political campaign event and beaming it live to a public audience as "espionage" in an effort to discredit the cameraman and create the impression that he deserved the violation of his rights as a journalist.

This and other acts of disregard for the rights of journalists and the media in general led MRA during the presidential elections campaign to

expression concern that “If this attitude is indicative of the vision of the party or its presidential candidate on the role of the media in the democratic process, then we shudder to think of what the future holds for journalists and the media community should this attitude and mentality be brought into the highest political office in Nigeria.”

This concern is proving to have been quite justified as the Tinubu Administration’s record of respect for human rights, especially the rights to freedom of expression and its allied rights to association and assembly is falling far below what is expected in a democracy.

Many agencies of government, particularly the intelligence, law enforcement, and security agencies, are trampling on human rights with impunity, with their disdain for the Constitution and the rights of citizens in clear display. None of them has ever been held accountable for their actions.

But perhaps the most outrageous and scandalous action of the Tinubu Administration is treating peaceful protests as acts of treason, punishable by death, despite constitutional guarantees and the protections afforded by international human rights instruments to the right to peaceful assembly.

Nigerians, especially the youths, took to the streets across Nigeria to protest the high cost of living, food shortages, and government mismanagement. The protesters called on President Tinubu to address systemic corruption and reverse some controversial economic measures that his Administration adopted shortly after he assumed power in 2023, which had resulted in up to 300 percent increases in the prices of many essential items, including petrol and public transportation, as well as foodstuff.

At the height of the protests, in the first eight days of August 2024, law enforcement and security agencies of the Government unleashed a brutal response on citizens, including thousands of youths, who came out to participate in what was called the #EndBadGovernance protests across the nation.

Journalists were not spared during this onslaught as many suffered various forms of attacks including assault and battery, arrest and detention, prevention from carrying out their reportorial duties, harassment, equipment seizure and damage, among other things.

The police also arrested over a thousand protesters, including under-aged boys. Hundreds of protesters, including dozens of children, were charged with treason for participating in the protests.

Although the treason charges against the minors were later dropped due public outrage nationally and internationally, it is believed that similar charges against dozens of adults remain pending in various courts.

It was one of the clearest manifestations of his Government's lack of tolerance for criticism or dissent.

The Administration continues to weaponise some provisions of the law, especially criminal defamation and the Cybercrime Act to hound journalists, civil society activists, political opponents, and other critics.

The lack of accountability for perpetrators of these widespread attacks on citizens, including journalists, has given most of the law enforcement, security and intelligence officials that it is open season on journalists and other citizens who dare to criticise the Government.

Chapter One

1.0 Analysis of Attacks on Freedom of Expression in President Tinubu's First Two Years in Office

1.1 Analysis by Types of Attacks

In the first two years of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's reign, MRA documented a total of 141 incidents of attacks on journalists and ordinary citizens for expressing themselves both online and offline. These attacks include but are not limited to assault and battery, arrest and detention, threat to life, abduction/kidnapping, prevention from duty, and invasion/raid of media outlets among other forms of attacks.

This analysis of the incidents of attacks on freedom of expression groups these incidents into 11 categories according to their types.

During the period in review, assault and battery was by far the most prevalent form of attacks on journalists and citizens for their expression. MRA collated a total of 44 incidents which account for 31.20% of the total recorded incidents of attacks on freedom of expression. Following closely on its heels is arrest and detention for which 41 incidents were documented accounting for 29.07% or approximately 27% of the total incidents of attacks on freedom of expression.

The next most prevalent form of attack on freedom of expression was threat to life for which 11 incidents or 7.80% of the total incidents were recorded. Next is the 12 recorded incidents of prevention of journalists from the venue of newsworthy events; they were denied access to such venues. This form of attack constitutes 8.51% of the total 131 recorded incidents of attacks.

During the period, MRA documented six incidents apiece of three different forms of attacks on freedom of expression, and these are abduction/kidnapping; invasion/raid of media outlets; and summons of

journalists and citizens for their expressions with each constituting 4.25% of the total incidents of attacks.

In five incidents or 3.54% of the total incidents of attacks, various court actions including sentences, remand, issuance of bench warrant etc were meted out to journalists and citizens.

MRA also collated three cases in which journalists and citizens were killed for their expression. This constitutes 2.12% of the total incidents of attacks. Nobody was held responsible for any of these killings. In two or 1.41% of the incidents of attacks on freedom of expression, journalists were harassed for doing their work.

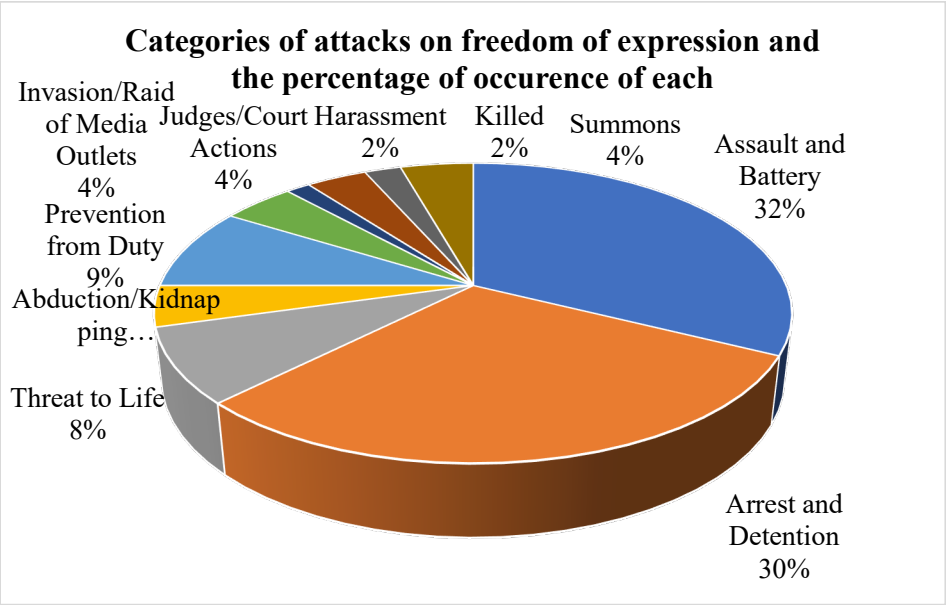
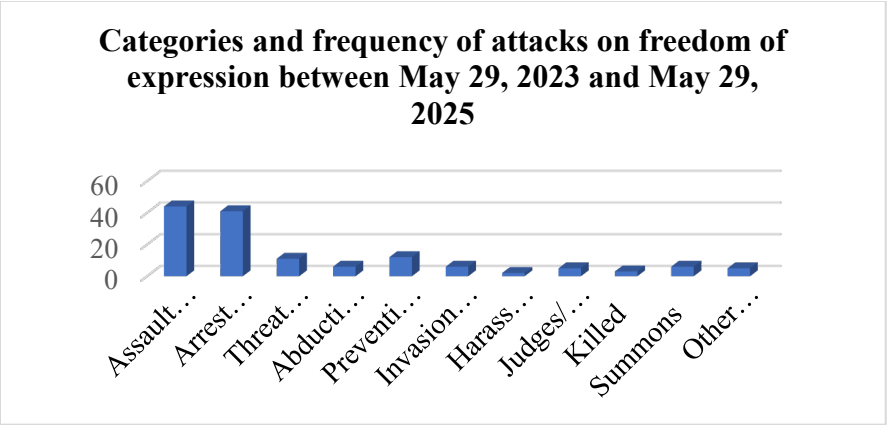
Five other incidents or 3.54% of the total incidents of attacks on freedom of expression were categorised under the omnibus ‘Other Forms of Attacks’ and these include declaration of a journalist wanted, shutting down the operations of a media house, an editor escaping assassination, revocation of the accreditation of journalists to cover Kano State government activities, and censorship of 22 films.

Women were victims in no less than 14 of the incidents of attacks on freedom of expression.

The table below shows the categories and frequency of attacks on freedom of expression between May 29, 2023 and May 29, 2025

S/N	Categories of Attacks	Frequency of Attacks	Percentage
1.	Assault and Battery	44	31.20%
2.	Arrest and Detention	41	29.07%
3.	Threat to Life	11	7.80%
4.	Abduction/Kidnapping	6	4.25%
5.	Prevention from Duty	12	8.51%
6.	Invasion/Raid of Media Outlets	6	4.25%
7.	Harassment	2	1.41%

8.	Judges/Court Actions	5	3.54%
9.	Killed	3	2.12%
10.	Summons	6	4.25%
11.	Other Forms of Attacks	5	3.54%
Total		141	100%



1.2 Analysis by Categories of Perpetrators of Attacks

During the period reviewed, MRA categorised the perpetrators of attacks into 14 categories including Nigeria Police, Department of State Services (DSS), thugs and hoodlums, known and unknown individuals, unknown armed men, and government officials (elected, appointed and employed), among others.

Ironically, operatives of the Nigeria Police, an agency set up to, among other duties, prevent and detect crime, maintain law and order, protect lives and property, and enforce all laws and regulations, were by far the major perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression, be it in the form of assault and battery, arrest and detention, prevention from duty or harassment. MRA recorded 61 incidents in which they were perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression. In some of these cases, they were used by government officials as well as rich and powerful people in the society. This number constitutes 43.26% of the total number of incidents in which men and officers of the Nigeria police were perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression during the first two years of Tinubu's presidency.

Other law enforcement, security, and paramilitary agencies were not left out as they attacked journalists and citizens because of their expression with reckless abandon; operatives of the Department of State Services (DSS) were culprits in seven incidents constituting 4.96% of perpetrators of attacks. Operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) were perpetrators in one incident or 0.70% of the total. The officers of the Nigeria Armed Forces, including the Nigeria Army and the Nigeria Airforce were perpetrators in five cases, which make up 3.54% of the total. Nigerian paramilitary agencies: the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) were perpetrators in four cases or 2.83% of the incidents.

Ironically, the agencies set up to gather intelligence reports, maintain law and order, and protect citizens became citizens' number one enemies as they were responsible for attacks on freedom of expression in more than half of the recorded incidents.

The combination of the frequency of attacks on freedom of expression by law enforcement, military and paramilitary agencies came to 78 times which constitutes 55.31% of the total number of times they were perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression.

Government Officials, including elected, appointed, and employed were perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression in 14 of the 141 recorded incidents accounting for 9.92% of the total.

Thugs and hoodlums attacked journalists in 12 incidents accounting for 8.51% of the total; named and unnamed individuals were responsible for attacks on freedom of expression in eight cases accounting for 5.67% while unknown armed individuals were perpetrators in 12 or 8.51% or approximately 4% of the incidents.

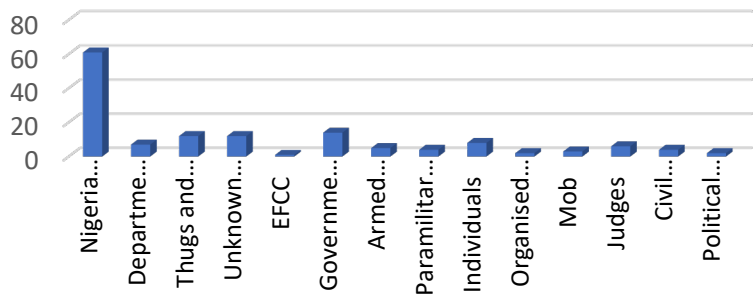
Other recorded perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression during the period, as well as the number of times and the percentage of times they were perpetrators are: Organised Groups, two times (1.41%); Mob, three times (2.12%); Judges, six times (4.25%); Civil Security Groups, four times (2.83%); and Political Aides, two times (1.41%).

Table showing the categories and frequency of attacks on freedom of expression between May 29, 2023 and May 29, 2025

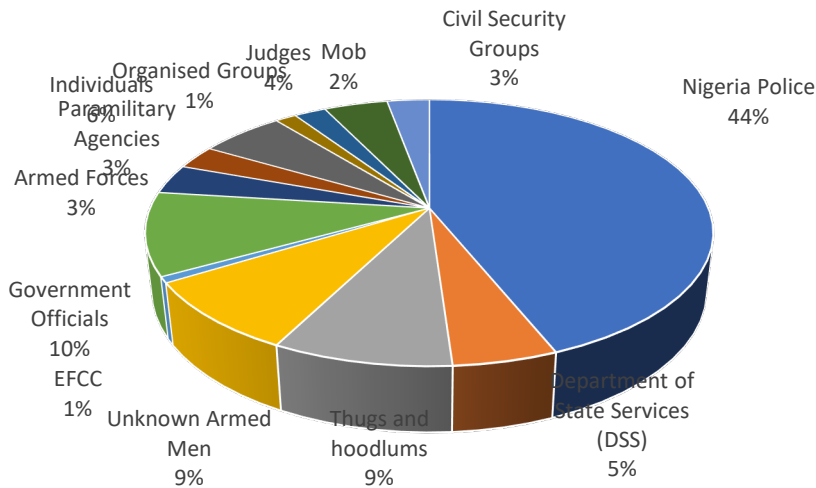
S/N	Perpetrators	Frequency of Attacks	Percentage
1.	Nigeria Police	61	43.26%
2.	Department of State Services (DSS)	7	4.96%
3.	Thugs and hoodlums	12	8.51%
4.	Unknown Armed Men	12	8.51%
5.	EFCC	1	0.70%
6.	Government Officials	14	9.92%
7.	Armed Forces	5	3.54%
8.	Paramilitary Agencies	4	2.83%
9.	Individuals	8	5.67%
10.	Organised Groups	2	1.41%

11.	Mob	3	2.12%
12.	Judges	6	4.25%
13.	Civil Security Groups	4	2.83%
14.	Political Aides	2	1.41%
Total		141	100%

Perpetrators and frequency of attacks on freedom of expression between May 29, 2023 and May 29, 2025



Perpetrators and percentage frequency of their attacks on freedom of expression between May 29, 2023 and May 29, 2025



Chapter Two

2.0 Freedom of Information Act Implementation by MDAs

2.1 Overview of FOI Act Reporting Compliance by MDAs (2023 and 2024)

Section 29 of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act mandates all public institutions to, among other obligations, submit to the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF) by February 1 of every year, a report on the usage of the Act covering the previous fiscal year.

This report provides an analysis of the Attorney General's FOI Compliance Reports for the years 2023 and 2024, assessing the overall level of compliance by public institutions and highlighting the key challenges and recommendations for improvement.

In 2023, a total of 90 MDAs out of over 500 submitted their annual FOI compliance reports. This figure saw an increase in 2024, with 143 MDAs complying. Despite efforts to promote openness and transparency through the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and other reform initiatives, the majority of MDAs continue to neglect their legal obligation to submit FOI compliance reports.

Assessment of Compliance Levels

- **Slow but noticeable growth:** The increase from 90 to 143 reports between 2023 and 2024 shows some movement in the right direction, though it also highlights how gradual progress has been.
- **Sectoral Performance:** While a few agencies, such as the Bureau of Public Service Reforms and the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), have demonstrated consistent compliance and proactive disclosure, most institutions fall significantly short.
- **FOI Request Handling:** Many MDAs report receiving few or no FOI requests, a trend that might suggest poor public awareness of

the law or an absence of proper systems to track and respond to requests.

Challenges Identified

The Attorney General's FOI compliance reports, along with insights from various civil society groups and media watchdogs, shed light on several persistent issues that continue to make the proper implementation of the FOI Act difficult across many public institutions. These are not just isolated oversights; they reflect a broader pattern of institutional resistance to openness.

- **Inadequate Designation of FOI Desk Officers:** While the law requires each MDA to have a dedicated FOI desk officer, this has not been fully implemented. In some cases, even when someone is assigned, they either do not have the right training or lack the tools needed to manage FOI requests properly.
- **Deficient Record Management Systems:** One of the biggest challenges is that many government offices still operate without organised or digitised or digitalised filing systems. So, when requests come in, they often struggle to locate the needed information, either because it is lost, incomplete, or poorly stored. This not only delays responses but also raises questions about how official records are maintained.
- **Failure to Fulfill Proactive Disclosure Obligations:** The FOI Act also obligates public institutions to proactively share basic information like budgets, project details, and annual reports. Unfortunately, only a few agencies regularly do this. Most either leave their websites outdated or avoid publishing anything unless prompted by a request.
- **Lack of Enforcement and Absence of Sanctions:** Perhaps the most discouraging issue is the absence of penalties. Institutions that ignore FOI duties face no consequences, which makes the law easy to sideline. Without a clear system for holding defaulters accountable, compliance will likely remain low.

Comparative Trends and Observations

From previous years leading into 2023 and 2024, compliance rates have fluctuated slightly but remain low overall:

- 2019: 89 MDAs
- 2020: 73 MDAs
- 2021: 89 MDAs
- 2022: 90 MDAs
- 2023: 90 MDAs
- 2024: 143 MDAs

These figures reveal a slow and inconsistent trend of compliance. In some cases, institutions that submitted reports in previous years failed to do so in subsequent years.

The level of FOI compliance among Nigerian public institutions remains critically low. With less than 12% of MDAs submitting annual compliance reports, it is clear that the FOI Act is not being upheld as intended.

2.2 Analysis of FOI Ranking Reports for 2023, 2024 for Level of Compliance

Introduction

Since the enactment of Nigeria’s Freedom of Information (FOI) Act in 2011, the implementation of its provisions has been marked by persistent challenges. Despite the clear mandate for public institutions to proactively disclose information and respond promptly to requests, compliance has remained largely inadequate. In response, a coalition of civil society organisations, including Media Rights Agenda (MRA), the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR), Public and Private Development Centre (PPDC), BudgIT, Right To Know (R2K) Nigeria, and Accountability Lab Nigeria, have jointly undertaken an annual FOI compliance ranking of Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). The primary objective is to promote openness, transparency, and accountability in governance by measuring and encouraging adherence to the FOI Act.

The 2023 and 2024 editions of the FOI Ranking assessed 238 and 245 MDAs, respectively. These assessments focused on three key compliance indicators: responsiveness to FOI requests within legally stipulated timelines, proactive disclosure of information on MDAs’ websites, and the extent of disclosure (full, partial, or none) when information is requested.

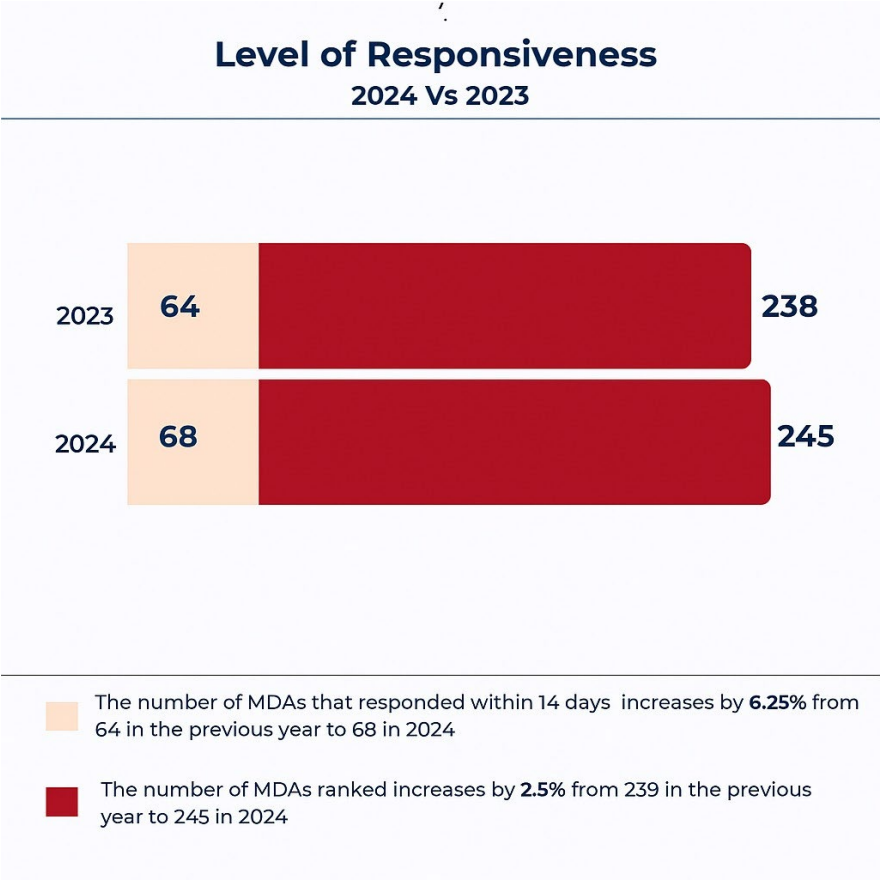
Figure 1: Table Showing FOI Responses and Proactivity of MDAs (2023–2024) in percentages

S/N	Parameters	2023 (number of MDAs =238)	2024 (number of MDAs =245)
1.	Responded within 7 days	48 (20%)	49 (20%)
2.	Responded within 14 days	64(26.9%)	68(27.8%)
3.	Fully proactive	2 (0.84%)	3 (1.22%)
4.	Partially proactive	32 (13.4%)	17 (6.94%)
5.	Non-proactive	204 (85.5%)	225 (91.84%)

6.	Full disclosure	14 (5.88%)	23 (9.39%)
7.	Partial disclosure	51 (21.4%)	14 (5.71%)
8.	Non-disclosure	173 (72.7%)	208 (84.9%)

Level of Responsiveness to FOI Requests

Figure 2: Chart Showing the Number of MDAs that Responded to FOI Requests within 14 Days in 2023, 2024

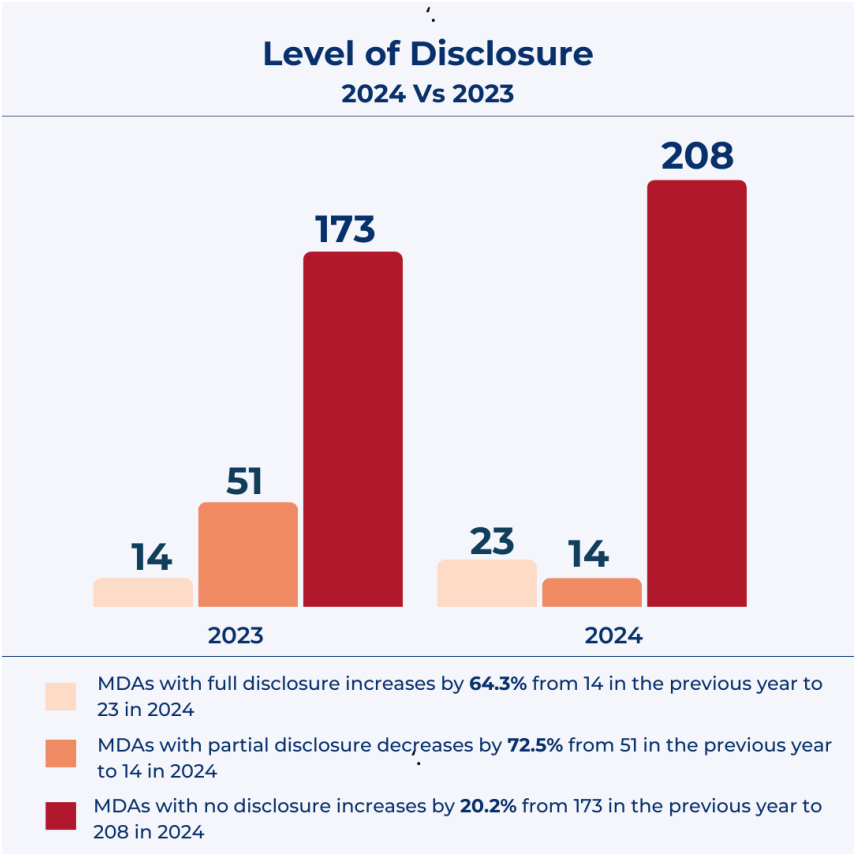


Responsiveness to FOI Requests

Despite a marginal increase in timely responses within 14 days, performance within the legally required seven-day period remained stagnant at 20% in both years. This indicates that the statutory timeline is largely disregarded by the majority of MDAs. The slight improvement within the extended 14-day period (an increase from 64 to 68) suggests incremental awareness but not significant progress in efficiency or compliance culture.

Level of Requested Information Disclosure

Figure 3: Chart Showing the Number of MDAs Based on their Level of Disclosure in 2023, 2024

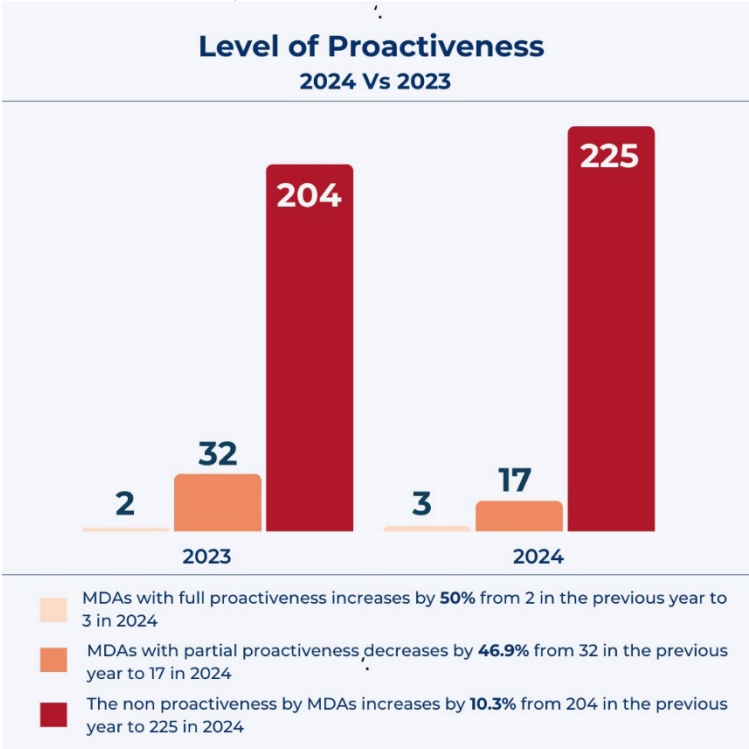


Level of Requested Information Disclosure by MDAs Ranked

MDAs with full disclosure increased by 64.3% from 14 in the previous year to 23 in 2024, those with partial disclosure decreased by 72.5% from 51 in the previous year to 14 in 2024, while those with non-disclosure rose dramatically by 20.2% from 173 in the previous year to 208 in 2024.

Level of Proactive Disclosure of Information

Figure 4: Chart Showing the Number of MDAs Based on their Level of Proactiveness in 2023, 2024



Proactiveness Disclosure of Information by MDAs Ranked

The number of fully proactive MDAs increased by just one, a 50% relative gain, but one that still represents a near-total absence of proactive disclosure across federal MDAs. The significant drop in partially proactive institutions (down 46.9%) and the increase in non-proactive MDAs (up 10.3%)

underscores a growing institutional culture toward transparency unless compelled by law or external pressure.

MDAs Performance in 2023, 2024

The top three performing MDAs in 2024 were Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation & Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) and Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) while the Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC), NIPC, and National Orientation Agency (NOA), were among the top performers in 2023.

NIPC maintained a top-three position over both years, culminating in first place in 2024. Meanwhile, ICRC and NOA's 2023 positions dropped the following year. New entries like RMAFC and DBN rose to prominence in 2024.

Key Observations and Trends

- 1. Missed Deadlines Remain Pervasive** - The legal obligation to respond within seven days is habitually ignored. Most MDAs neither acknowledge nor act on requests within statutory timelines, undermining the purpose of the FOI Act.
- 2. Openness and Disclosure are Still the Exception** - Fewer than 10% of MDAs achieved full disclosure in 2024. Meanwhile, the decline in partial disclosure suggests a troubling trend toward total opacity.
- 3. Institutional Proactivity is Almost Non-Existent** - Less than 2% of MDAs proactively disclose information as required under Section 2 of the FOI Act. This shows a failure to institutionalise transparency as a standard administrative function.
- 4. Top Performers Offer Hope** - NIPC, RMAFC, DBN, and previously ICRC demonstrate that compliance is possible with the right administrative practices, FOI desks, digital infrastructure, and internal monitoring systems.

5. Deep-Rooted Challenges Remain Unaddressed

Key structural barriers include:

- Poor record-keeping and data management systems
- Absence or non-functionality of FOI units within MDAs
- Lack of sanctions for non-compliance
- Cultural and bureaucratic resistance to transparency
- Inaction by the Office of the Attorney General in enforcing the Act
- Non-budgeting by MDAs for FOI implementation.

Chapter Three

3.0 Government Misuse of the Cybercrimes Act

3.1 Introduction

The Cybercrimes (Prohibition, Prevention, etc) (Amendment) Act, 2024 was first passed in 2015 by then President Goodluck Jonathan, but was amended in 2024 following public outcry over Section 24 which critics said had overly broad provisions that are open to misinterpretation and abuse.

Its objectives, according to Section 1 are to: “(a) provide an effective and unified legal, regulatory and institutional framework for the prohibition, prevention, detection, prosecution and punishment of cybercrimes in Nigeria; (b) ensure the protection of critical national information infrastructure; and (c) promote cyber security and the protection of computer systems and networks, electronic communications, data and computer programs, intellectual property and privacy rights.”

However, in spite of the amendment, it continues to be misused by operatives of the Nigeria Police and the DSS to arrest and incarcerate journalists and citizens who express themselves online.

The Act has over time transformed into a potent instrument for suppressing dissent, muzzling journalists, and curtailing free expression in Nigeria and been repeatedly misused, especially through ambiguous provisions like “cyberstalking”, “insult”, “harassment”, and dissemination of “false information”.

Within the period under review, MRA recorded 41 incidents of arrest and detention of citizens including journalists and civil rights advocates. Of this total number, seven of the incidents involved arrest, detention and prosecution for alleged cybercrimes.

This growing trend was highlighted in June 2025 by the Heads of Mission from the United States, United Kingdom, Finland, Norway, and Canada, who jointly called for an urgent reform of the Cybercrimes Act. In their statement to commemorate the 26th anniversary of democratic governance

in Nigeria, they stressed that while the law was designed to combat online fraud, its vague language has enabled misinterpretation and abuse, particularly against journalists, social media users, and critics of government actions.

Furthermore, the Heads of Mission pointed to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) advisory opinion, which acknowledged the “potential for abuse” inherent in the Act, warning that it is frequently used to arrest and prosecute journalists and activists on spurious charges. Additionally, they referenced the ECOWAS Court of Justice judgment in 2022, which found that several provisions of the Act violate Nigeria’s obligations under the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

3.2 Documented Cases of Misuse of the Cybercrimes Act

On January 15, 2025, the Force Criminal Investigation Department (FCID) annex of the Nigeria Police in Alagbon, Lagos State, detained Mr. Emmanuel Uti, a reporter with Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ), accusing him of criminal conspiracy and cyberbullying over a story he wrote, which was published by FIJ on November 28, 2024, titled [”Lagos Man Paid Expedia Consult’s Beverly Basil N4m for Canada Admission in 2023. She Disappeared With the Money”](#).

The police had invited the reporter through a letter dated December 16, 2024, signed by DCP Ibrahim Jibrin, Deputy Commissioner of Police (administration) for the Assistant Inspector General of FCID Annex, Alagbon.

On December 8, 2024, operatives of the Nigeria Police Force arrested 38-year-old blogger, Mr. Destiny Ekorutomen, in Uhumwonde Local Government Area of Edo State accusing him of cyberbullying and cyberstalking for allegedly operating multiple social media accounts, which they claimed he used to disseminate false and inciting content intended to provoke the public against the police. He was later granted stringent administrative bail conditions.

The administrative bail sheet alleged that the blogger committed cyberbullying and cyberstalking. One of the terms of the bail requested him to provide two sureties who are Federal Government workers on the Level 16 cadre who have landed properties in Abuja worth N500 million each and also provide some necessary documents of the proper and proof of their job appointments.

The second bail condition stated that he must provide two businessmen whose businesses are registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), both must have landed properties in Abuja worth N500 million each and must provide their proof of business ownership and the properties.

Two journalists, Salihu Ayatullahi, Editor-in-Chief, and Adisa-Jaji Azeez, Managing Editor of an online news portal, Informant247, were on February 6, 2024, detained in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, for allegedly publishing injurious reports against the Rector of the Kwara State Polytechnic, Engineer Abdul Jimoh Muhammed, when they honored a police invitation.

The following day, police charged them as well as Salihu Shola Taofeek, and Abdulrahman Taye Damilola with conspiracy and cyberstalking under section 24(1)(b) of Nigeria's Cybercrimes Act, and defamation under section 393 of the Penal Code Act. Taofeek, and Damilola who were not present in court were said to be "at large."

The Nigeria Police Force on December 3, 2024, arrested Dele Farotimi, a human rights lawyer and social critic, over a petition by Chief Afe Babalola (SAN), alleging that Mr. Farotimi defamed him. He was taken to the Nigeria Police, Zone 2 Command Headquarters in Onikan, Lagos Island from where he was immediately driven by road to Ekiti State. The following day, he was arraigned in a Chief Magistrate Court which ordered him to be in custody until December 10.

The Nigerian police filed cybercrime charges against him following the allegation of criminal defamation levelled against him by Chief Afe Babalola.

Mr. Koko Robson, a reporter with a local newspaper, The Waves, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom, along with two others – Mr. Victor Akpan and Mr. Okon Ben

were arrested by the Police in May 2024 over alleged cybercrime and remanded in prison.

The three men were accused of publishing materials on Facebook, accusing the village head of Ikot Ebidang in Onna Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Ukpe Alfred, of embezzling N45 million given to the village by an oil company, Sterling Global Ltd.

Four journalists: Precious Eze, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief, News Platform; Olawale Rotimi, Managing Director, National Monitor; Rowland Olonishuwa, Editor, News Hob Mag!; and Seun Odunlami, Website Administrator, www.newsjaunts.com, were arrested by men of the Nigeria Police Force accused of defamation and cyberstalking.

They were arraigned before Justice Ayokunle Faji of the Federal High Court in Lagos on September 27, 2024, charge with cyberstalking, false publications and spreading false information allegedly aimed at insulting Mr. Segun Agbaje, Chief Executive Officer of the financial holding company, Guaranty Trust Holding Company (GTCO) Plc.

On October 21, 2024, operatives of the Imo State Police Command arrested an Owerri-based broadcast journalist, Mr. Chinonso Uba (alias Nonsonkwa), accusing him of alleged cyberstalking, character defamation, spreading misinformation and inflammatory statements, following a petition by a member of the public over a viral video he shared relating to the burning of the National Open University Study Centre in Nsu, Ehime Mbano Local Government Area on September 30, 2024.

The police thereafter arraigned Mr. Uba at the Magistrate Court 5 in Owerri, the state capital on October 23 on five-count, which include conspiracy, treason and arson, preferred against him by N.S. Onwochie, Legal Prosecution Officer, Owerri, Imo State on behalf of the state police commissioner. When the charges were read to him, the court did not allow him to take a plea on the ground that it lacks jurisdiction to entertain the charges.

Chapter Four

Recommendations

On the Right to Freedom of Expression

The government should put mechanisms in place to see that perpetrators of attacks on freedom of expression, be they government officials or non-state actors, are brought to book; provide training for all its law enforcement, security and para-military agencies on the need to uphold the law and respect the right to freedom of expression of all Nigerian; and amend repressive laws (e.g., Cybercrimes Act, and criminal defamation laws) that the police and DSS misused to detain Nigerians.

As a matter of obligation, media organisations should provide regular digital and physical safety training for journalists, especially those deployed to cover protests and political events; and legal response mechanism to offer immediate support in the event of arrest or harassment of journalists.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Legal Advocates can come in by monitoring and documenting violations of freedom of expression of citizens for advocacy and litigation. They should also intensify pressure on government through local and international human rights mechanisms (e.g., African Union and UN Special Rapporteurs).

The Judiciary is regarded as last the hope of the masses and as such, it has a vital role to play in ensuring rule of law and respect for the right to freedom of expression and ultimately, all other human rights. The judiciary should ensure timely and fair dispensation of cases of infringement on the right to freedom of expression. It should also protect Nigerians from arbitrary use of cybercrime Act and Criminal Defamation laws against citizens.

The National Assembly should ensure effective oversight over relevant agencies on their roles in stifling free expression, and initiate reforms in by passing policies and laws that meet international norms and practices in the guarantee of citizens' freedom of expression and the protection of journalists.

On FOI Act Implementation

For the FOI Act to fulfil its purpose as a tool for transparency and civic engagement, there must be a shift from passive endorsement to active enforcement. The following recommendations aim to address the major gaps in compliance and help reposition the FOI Act as a working part of Nigeria's democratic system.

One of the most urgent reforms is the need for enforceable consequences. As it stands, institutions that ignore FOI obligations do so with little to no fear of repercussions. Establishing clear penalties, whether administrative, financial, or reputational, would send a strong signal that non-compliance is no longer acceptable.

In line with the provisions of the FOI Act, it should be compulsory for every Ministry, Department, and Agency to formally assign an FOI desk officer and make their contact information easy to find, preferably on the agency's official website and noticeboards. This not only simplifies communication but also places accountability on a known individual or office.

Beyond responding to requests, MDAs should be required to routinely publish essential information, such as approved budgets, procurement data, and internal audit reports, in line with the provisions of the Act and without being asked. In addition, they should also proactively publish information that members of the public have requested more than once. Making these materials available online, in formats that are easy to access and understand, would significantly reduce the burden on both the public and the agencies themselves.

The Office of the Attorney General should take on a more visible oversight role by regularly releasing a detailed compliance dashboard or scorecard. This should highlight both high-performing and underperforming institutions. Public naming and shaming, backed by reliable data, can be a powerful motivator for change, especially when linked to institutional incentives or funding access. A unit in the Federal Ministry of Justice (FMOJ) should be empowered to monitor, audit, and enforce compliance.

Many public officials still lack a clear understanding of what the FOI Act demands. Regular training sessions, refreshers, and resource toolkits should be developed not just for FOI desk officers but for entire departments. This helps embed a culture of openness, rather than leaving it in the hands of one individual or unit.

Many public institutions in Nigeria still rely on outdated and manual filing systems, which hamper record-keeping, delay information retrieval, and frustrate timely responses to FOI requests. MDAs should digitise their records and information to enhance effective implementation of the FOI Act. Digitisation involves converting paper records to electronic formats and deploying automated systems for managing public records. Digitisation ensures easy access and retrieval of requested information; enhanced data integrity and security; and more efficient tracking of FOI requests and responses.

On Misuse of the Cybercrimes Act

There is need for legislative reform to narrow and clarify ambiguous provisions of the Cybercrimes Act. Section 24, which deals with cyberstalking and other vague provisions. Subjective terms like “offensive”, “insult”, and “false information” need to be removed and what constitutes actual cybercrime needs to be clearly defined.

There is also the need to incorporate ECOWAS Court of Justice and National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recommendations to bring the law in conformity with Nigeria’s international human rights obligations.

The capacity of law enforcement agents, particularly the police and DSS, must be strengthened through training on digital rights and freedom of expression to curb arbitrary or politically motivated arrests. In addition, clear disciplinary measures should be established for officers who misuse the Cybercrimes Act to suppress dissent or intimidate citizens.

Cybercrime-related prosecutions should be restricted to the Federal Ministry of Justice or Department of Public Prosecutions, rather than allowing routine police prosecution of cases. This will prevent complainants or influential figures from using private petitions to trigger arrests and criminal charges.

Civil society groups should pursue strategic litigation at national courts to challenge unconstitutional uses of the Act as well as put pressure the Nigerian government to fully implement the ECOWAS Court ruling declaring parts of the Act a violation of free expression.

Civil society groups should also advocate for the passage the Digital Rights and Freedom Bill ensuring that its provisions balance cybersecurity needs with civil liberties; and harmonise existing laws to prevent overlaps and abuse (e.g., Cybercrimes Act, Criminal Code, Penal Code) etc.

Appendix

Table Showing Attacks on Freedom of Expression in Two Years of Tinubu's Reign

	Assault and Battery			
S/ N	Date	Attack	Victim	Perpetrator
1	June 5, 2023	Thugs Attack Journalists Covering Election Tribunal	The Blueprint newspaper correspondents and other journalists	Political thugs
2	June 5, 2023	Police Forcefully Use Journalist as Bait to Arrest Community Leader	Mr. Chinedu Orlu-Orlu, a presenter with Today 95.1 FM radio	Nigeria Police
3	June 30, 2023	Journalist Assaulted While Investigating South-East Nigeria Entrepreneurial Development Centre	Ms. Charity Uwakwe, a correspondent of Nigerian Horn newspaper	Staff of the Ministry of Women Affairs
4	August 7, 2023	Lagos State Taskforce Manhandles, Detains Reporter	Mr. Ikechi Nzeako, a reporter with the privately-owned Daily Independent newspaper	Operatives of the Lagos State Environment and Special

		Covering its Operations		Offences Enforcement
5	August 16, 2023,	Armed Hoodlums Attack Journalists, Cameramen on Guided Tour of Nembe Community	Journalists	Hoodlums
6	August 31, 2023	Political Thug Assaults Journalist Inside Adamawa State Government House	Mr. Ibrahim Mista Ali, a journalist and blogger	Political thug
7	September 18, 2023	Road Safety Officers Beat up Journalist for Capturing their Activities on Video	Mr. Mustapha Usman, a journalist with the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR),	Officers of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC)
8	September 20, 2023	Police Attack Journalists Covering Kano Election Petition Tribunal	Mr. Zahraddeen Lawal, BBC Hausa reporter and Mr. Salim Ibrahim of Daily Trust	Nigerian Police
9	November 24, 2023	VOA Reporter Assaulted by Commissioner of Homeland	Mr. Mustapha Batsari, a reporter with Voice of America	Major General Bello Mohammed Abdullahi

		Security in Niger State		(Rtd.), the Niger State Commissioner of Homeland Security
10	December 2, 2023	NSCDC Operatives assault Journalist in Anambra State	Mr. Izunna Okafor, a reporter with the online news portal, https://247ureports.com/	Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC),
11	January 26, 2024	Governor's Security Aides Brutalise Journalist at Event	Mr. Bunmi Adigun, a reporter with the Ogun State Television (OGTV),	Security aides
12	February 9, 2024	Murder Suspect Assault, Threaten Journalists in Court	Cameramen from the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and Niger State Television (NSTV)	Unnamed Individuals
13	February 17, 2024	Thugs Attack Journalists at Governorship Primary Election Collation Centre	Journalists	Political thugs
14	February 21, 2024,	Journalist Assaulted while Covering Police Raid on BDC	Ms Kasarahchi Aniagolu, a reporter with The Whistler newspaper	Nigeria Police

		Operators in Abuja		
15	February 23, 2024	Journalist Assaulted, Arrested by Soldiers for Covering Protest in Delta State	Dele Fasan, Chief of Galaxy Television	Nigerian Army
16	April 5, 2024	Immigration Officers Assault Journalist in Ibadan	Mr. Seun Falomo, a cameraman with Galaxy Television, Ibadan	Immigration Officers
17	April 20, 2024	Journalist Assaulted During APC's Governorship Primary Elections in Ondo State	Mr. Tayo Ikujuni, a senior journalist with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)	Government Official
18	May 30, 2024	Lagos State Building Control Agency Officials Brutalise The Guardian Reporter	Mr. Eniola Daniel, a journalist with The Guardian newspaper,	Government Official
19	June 3, 2024	Journalist Attacked by Security Guards while Covering Strike in Umuahia	Mr. Emmanuel Nwazue, a correspondent of Afia TV	Civic Security Group

20	July 31, 2024,	Immigration Officers Assault Female Journalists in Benin City	Ms Joy Odigie, a journalist with the News Agency of Nigeria	Immigration officers
21	August 1, 2024	Thugs Attack Journalists in Asaba	Journalists and media workers	Hoodlums
22	August 1, 2024	Editor Arrested in Calabar	Mr. Matthew Ochei and Mr. Monday Osayande, correspondents of The Punch newspapers	Political thugs
23	August 1, 2024	Hoodlums Attack NUJ Vehicle	Mr. Jonathan Ugbal, Managing Editor of CrossRiverWatch Newspaper online, and some activists	Nigeria Police
24	August 1, 2024	Journalists Teargassed, Beaten by Policemen	Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ)	Hoodlums
25	August 1, 2024	Premium Times reporter, Mr. Yakubu Mohammed and others were beaten with batons and the butt of police guns	Premium Times reporter, Mr. Yakubu Mohammed	Nigeria Police
26	August 1, 2024	AIT, News Central TV	Ms Mary Adeboye of News Central TV	Nigeria Police

		Crews Attacked		
27	August 3, 2024	DSS, Police Shoot at Peaceful Protesters, Journalists	Protesters and journalists	DSS and the Nigeria police
28	August 6, 2024	Journalist Attacked by Police During National Protest	Hilary Damissah, an independent journalist with DigiVation Network	Security operatives
29	August 6, 2024	Policemen Eject Journalists from Protest Venue	Journalists	Nigeria Police
30	August 7, 2024	Suspected Thugs Attack Channels TV Journalist	Channels TV reporter, Deborah Agbalam	Hoodlums
31	October 5, 2024	Suspected Political Thugs Attack Reporter Covering Local Elections in Rivers State	Mr. Emmanuel Atseyinku, a correspondent of the online news portal, 9 News Nigeria	Political Thugs
32	November 12, 2024	Policeman Assault Journalist, Damages his Camera	Mr. Chinedu Ngwuta, the Chief Executive Officer of Abakaliki-based online Television station	Nigeria Police
33	November 21, 2024	Journalists Attacked by Thugs During	Journalists and members of the NUJ	Thugs

		Inauguration of Bus Conductors' Association in Abuja		
34	December 24, 2024	University of Abuja Security Officers Assault Channels TV Crew, Destroy Camera	Channels Television crew members	Security operatives
35	January 6, 2025	Political Aide Assaults Journalist, Damages Phone	Mr. Ndubuisi Orji, The Sun newspaper correspondent	Senator Samuel Anyanwu's aide
36	March 6, 2025	Nigeria Air Force Officers Assault Journalists	Mr. Dare Olawin, a correspondent of Punch Newspapers and three other journalists	Nigeria Air Force
37	March 7, 2025	UI Security Assault Campus Journalists Who Recorded Them Manhandling Student	Two campus journalists, Mr. Olanshile Ogunrinu and Mr. Oluwasegun Akanni	University of Ibadan security personnel
38	March 15, 2025	Journalist Beaten, Locked up After Raising Alarm Over	Mr. Precious Amadi, a broadcast journalist	Members of Salvation Ministries

		Church Fire in Port Harcourt		
39	March 26, 2025,	Security Agents Assault Journalists, Deny Them Access to National Assembly	Journalists	National Assembly law enforcement and security agents
40	April 7, 2025	Journalists Covering Protest in Port Harcourt Brutalised, Arrested	Five journalists	Policemen
41	April 13, 2025	Daily Trust Photojournalist Brutally Attacked by Traders in Lagos Market	Mr Benedict Uwalaka, a photojournalist with Daily Trust newspaper	Group of traders at the Kontagora Market
42	April 17, 2025	Journalist Assaulted by Senator Akobundu's Aides in Abia State	Mr Tony Icheku, a journalist	Senator Austin Akobundu, who represents Abia Central Senatorial District.
43	May 1, 2025	Journalist Brutalised in Ogun State, NUJ Imposes Blackout on	Mr Olajide Osoba, publisher of News Angle online	Members of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS)

		NANS Activities		
44	May 19, 2025	Defendant Attacks The Guardian Photojournalist in Court	Mr Ayodele Adeniran, a photojournalist with The Guardian newspaper	Mr Adebayo Akeju, a partner in the firm of Adon Partners
ARRESTS AND DETENTION				
45	July 7, 2023	Police Arrest Publisher on Orders of Gov. Peter Mba	Mr. Mike Ilediagu, publisher of News Centre, an online blog	Nigeria Police
46	July 27, 2023	Hooded Security Operatives Abduct, Detain Broadcast Journalist	Mr. Chinonso Uba, a broadcast journalist with Ozisa FM	Nigeria Police
47	August 10, 2023	Police Arrest Chike Ibezim Over Report on Fashola, Disregard Court Orders to Release Him	Mr. Chike Ibezim, an entrepreneur and younger brother to the publisher of Reportera News	Nigeria Police
48	August 13, 2023	Police Arrest Three for Protesting Against the Emir of Kano	Abdulrazak Usman Sarki, Fatihu Muktar Faruk, and Usman Baba Attah.	Nigeria Police

49	August 16, 2023	Traditional Religion Devotee Arrested, Arraigned for Allegedly Defaming Monarch, Remanded in Custody.	Mr. Adegbola Abdulazeez, a.k.a. Talolurun (Who is God)	Nigeria Police
50	August 18, 2023	Police Arrest, Detain Lawyer for Alleged Defamation of Government Appointee	Mr. Femi Oniyide, an Abeokuta-based lawyer	Nigeria Police
51	September 11, 2023	Police Detain Kwara-Based Journalists on Orders of State Government Officials	Mr. Abdulrazaq Aiyelabegan Babatunde, publisher of Just Events Online and Mr. Lukman Oluwatoyin Bolakale, publisher of Satcom Media	Nigeria Police
52	September 13, 2023	Journalist Arrested Over Possession of Laptop	A freelance journalist working with Al Jazeera	Nigeria Police
53	November 13, 2023	Journalist Arrested, Detained in	Mr. Achadu Gabriel Idibia, who writes	Nigeria Police

		Kaduna over Publication	for Daybreak newspapers	
54	December 4, 2023	Editor Arrested, Detained by Security Operatives in Abuja	News Editor at the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (ICIR)	Nigeria Police
55	December 12, 2023	Journalist Arrested at Home by Security Operatives, Whereabouts Remain Unknown	Mr. Precious Eze, an online publisher and journalist	Nigeria Police
56	February 6, 2024	Two Journalists Arrested, Docked, Released on Bail	Salihu Ayatullahi, Editor-in-Chief, and Adisa-Jaji Azeez, Managing Editor of Informant247 news portal	Nigeria Police
57	May 1, 2024	Journalist Arrested, Charged, Remanded at Custodial Centre for Publication	Ibraheem Hamza Mohammed, First News	Nigeria Police
58	May 14, 2024	Journalist Arrested, Detained by Hisbah Corps	Mr. Jamil Mabai, a journalist with Trust TV	Hisbah Corps
59	May 27, 2024	Journalist Detained Over Report on Lagos-Based Businessman	Mr. Precious Eze, publisher of “News Platform”	Nigeria Police
60	May, 2024	Journalist, Two Others	Mr. Koko Robson, a reporter with a local	Nigeria Police

		Arrested, Remanded in Prison for Alleged Cybercrime	newspaper, The Waves; Mr. Victor Akpan and Mr. Okon Ben	
61	August 1, 2024	Radio Personnel Arrested in Maiduguri	Editor-in-Chief, Head of Programmes, the Nigerian Director and eight other staff members of Radio Ndarason International (RNA)	Nigeria Police
62	August 1, 2024	Photojournalist Arrested by Police	Mr. Kayode Jaiyeola, photojournalist with The Punch newspapers,	Nigeria Police
63	August 1, 2024	Newspaper Photojournalist Arrested	Mr. Jide Oyekunle, a photojournalist with the Daily Independent newspaper	Nigeria Police
64	August 5, 2024	Microblogger Arrested, Detained for Alleged Cybercrime	Mr. Isaac Bristol, a microblogger	Nigeria Police
65	August 25, 2024	Tambuwal's Media Aide Remanded over Alleged Defamation of Sokoto Governor and Family	Shafi'u Umar, a media aide to former Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal	Nigeria Police

66	August 29, 2024	Journalist Arrested, Remanded in Custody for Publishing Content Critical of the Kano State Governor	Mr. Muktar Dahiru, a journalist with Pyramid FM, Kano	Nigeria Police
67	September 17, 2024	DSS Detains Social Media User for Criticising Plateau State Governor's Administration	Mr. Samuel Bature, a 26-year-old critic of the Plateau State Governor	Department of State Services
68	September 20, 2024	Member of Nigerian Guild of Investigative Journalists Arrested by Police over Publication	Mr. Olurotimi Olawale, a member of the Nigerian Guild of Investigative Journalists	Nigeria Police
69	September 25, 2024	Police Arrest Journalist in Ogun State	Mr. Seun Odunlami, publisher of Newsjaunts online	Nigeria Police

70	September 27, 2024	Four Journalists Arrested, Arraigned for False Report, Cyberstalking Guaranty Trust CEO	Precious Eze, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief, News Platform; Olawale Rotimi, Managing Director, National Monitor; Rowland Olonishuwa, Editor, News Hob Mag; and Seun Odunlami, Website Administrator, www.newsjaunts.com	Nigeria Police
71	October 18, 2024	DSS Arrests Journalist over Report that Allegedly Poses Threat to National Security	Ms Edna Ulaeto, a staff member of OrderPaper	Department of State Services
72	October 21, 2024	Police Arrest Broadcast Journalist for Alleged Defamation, Other Offences	Mr. Chinonso Uba (alias Nonsonkwa)	Nigeria Police
73	November 3, 2024	Lady Arrested, Secretly Arraigned over Social Media Posts	Ms Hamdiyya Sidi Sharif	Nigeria Police

74	November 27, 2024	FIJ Founder, Fisayo Soyombo Arrested, Detained for 3 Days by Nigerian Army	Mr. Fisayo Soyombo, an investigative reporter and founder of the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ)	Nigerian Army
75	November 27, 2024	DSS Arrest President Tinubu Critic, Move him from Kano to Abuja	Mr. Zubair Zubair	Department of State Services (DSS)
76	December 3, 2024	Police Arrest Human Rights Lawyer, Dele Farotimi over Alleged Defamation	Dele Farotimi, a human rights lawyer and social critic	Nigeria Police
77	December 8, 2024	Nigeria Police Arrest Blogger for Alleged Cyberbullying, Granted Stringent Administrative Bail	Blogger, Mr. Destiny Ekhatoromuen	Nigeria Police

78	December 15, 2024	Activist Arrested in Lagos for Cursing Children of President Tinubu, IGP Egbetokun Children, Flown to Abuja	Ms Olamide Thomas, a nurse and activist	Nigeria Police
79	January 15, 2025	Police Detain Reporter for Alleged Criminal Conspiracy, Cyberbullying	Mr. Emmanuel Uti FIJ reporter	Nigeria Police
80	February 25, 2025	Monarch Orders Arrest, Detention of Newspaper Correspondent, Demands Compensation	Mr. Bankole Taiwo, the Ogun State correspondent for The Punch newspaper	Nigeria Police
81	March 4, 2025	DSS Detains, Questions Daily Trust Reporters for Writing Story on Peaceful Protest	Mr. Ado Abubakar Musa and Mr. Dickson Adama	Department of State Services (DSS)

82	April 2, 2025	Police Arrest, Detain Journalists on Orders of Niger State Governor's Print Media Aide	Mr Yakubu Mustapha Bina, the “People’s Daily” Correspondent and Chairman of the Correspondents’ Chapel of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Niger State, and Mr Fodio Ahmed, a freelance journalist	Nigeria Police
83	April 7, 2025	University Graduate Arrested for Supporting Protest Against Fees Policy	Mr Martins Eyam	Civic Security Group
84	April 14, 2025	Borno-Based Social Media Activist Arrested Over Criticism of Government Official	Mr Sultan Usman, a well-known social media activist	Nigeria Police
85	May 22, 2025	Police Arrest Journalist after Exposing Alleged Akpabio- Linked Smear Campaign	Maazi Obinna Oparaku Akuwudike, a Nigerian journalist and media activist	Nigeria Police

THREAT TO LIFE

S/N	Date	Attack	Victim	Perpetrator
86.	August 10, 2023	Journalist Goes into Hiding Over Alleged Threat to Life for Report Unravelling Corruption in Anambra State	Ms. Karen James, an investigative journalist	Unknown Persons
87.	September 29, 2023	Police Threaten WikkiTimes Editor, Wife, Others for Exposing Terrorism Funding, Illegal Mining in Niger State	Mr. Yakubu Mohammed, editor of WikkiTimes	Nigeria Police
88.	October 16, 2023	Journalist Goes into Hiding Over Accusation of Blasphemy	Mr. Gabriel Idibia, head of bureau of Daybreak Nigeria newspaper	Colleagues on the Kaduna journalists' WhatsApp group
89.	January 7, 2024	Journalist Alleges Threat to his Life by Unknown Persons	Mr. Adeniyi Kunnu, a Lagos-based broadcast journalist	Unknown Persons

90.	March 2, 2024	Editor-In-Chief Alleges Threat to His Life	Mr. Ebule Anthony Metsese, Editor-In-Chief of Fresh Angle International	Unknown Persons
91.	March 22, 2024	Journalist Petitions Police over Threats to his Life	Mr. Jamiu Folarin, a journalist with Rockcity 101.9 FM	Mr. Lukman Kudaisi, land grabber
92.	May 8, 2024	Journalist Raises Alarm over Threat to Life, Seeks Police Protection	Ms Victoria Ojeme, a reporter with Vanguard Newspaper	Unknown Persons
93.	June 2, 2024	Retired Air Force Officer Threatens to Deal with FIJ Reporter	Ms Opeyemi Lawal, a reporter with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism and Social Justice (FIJ)	Mr. Felix Ihenacho, a retired Air Force officer
94.	July 7, 2024	Journalist Petitions the Police over Alleged Threat to Life	Ms Edoamaowo Udeme, a reporter with Scroll Report	A soldier identified as CPL Ojo Abu
95.	August 8, 2024	Journalists Threatened by Bauchi State Governor's Security Aides	Journalists, members of the Bauchi State Correspondents' Chapel	An operative of the Department of State Services (DSS)

				identified as Abdu
96.		Citizen Journalist Alleges Threat to His Life for Reporting Corruption on Social Media	Mr. Chukwunenye Nweke, a citizen journalist	
ABDUCTION/KIDNAPPING				
97.	March 15, 2024,	Armed Soldiers Abduct First News Editor in Lagos	Mr. Segun Olatunji, Editor of FirstNews	Soldiers
98.	April 11, 2024	Channels TV Reporter Kidnapped, Released	Mr. Joshua Rogers, a reporter with Channels Television	Unidentified Gunmen
99.	May 1, 2024	Reporter Abducted by Police, Detained for Ten Days without Charge	Mr. Daniel Ojukwu, a reporter with the Foundation for Investigative Journalism (FIJ)	Nigeria Police
100.	May 22, 2024	Police Abduct Editor from Home in Abuja over Alleged Defamation	Mr. Madu Onuorah, Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of Globalupfront Newspaper	Nigeria Police

101 .	July 6, 2024	Bandits Abduct Two Kaduna Journalists and Their Families	Mr. Abdulgafar Alabelewe of The Nation newspapers and Mr. AbdulRaheem Abdu of Blueprint newspapers	Armed Bandits
102 .	October 15, 2024	Freelance Journalist Abducted, Brutalised, Dumped by the Roadside	Mr. Oluwatosin Oshibanjo, freelance journalist	Unidentified Armed Men
PREVENTION FROM DUTY				
103 .	August 21, 2023,	Security Officials Prevent Journalists from Covering Interior Minister's Assumption of Duty	Journalists	Paramilitary Officials/ Ms Oluwatoyin Akinlade, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Interior
104 .	November 11, 2023	Suspected Political Thugs Prevent Journalists from Covering Elections in Imo State	Mr. Chinagorom Ugwu, a reporter with Premium Times	Political Thugs

105 .	February 23, 2024,	Journalists Barred from Covering Arraignment of Former Kwara State Governor	Journalists	Court Registrar /Policemen
106 .	March 27, 2024	Journalists Barred from Covering Labour Party Convention	Journalists	Security Personnel
107 .	May 7, 2024	Nigerian Senate Restricts Journalists Covering Its Proceedings	Journalists	Godswill Akpabio, President of the Nigerian Senate
108 .	July 31, 2024	News Central TV Crew Prevented from Live Coverage	Mr. Benard Akede, News Central TV correspondent, and his crew	Police Officer
109 .	August 1, 2024	Arise TV Reporter Prevented from Interviewing Protesters	Arise TV Reporter	Nigeria Police
110 .	August 6, 2024	Journalists Evicted from Lagos Protest Ground by Police, Threatened by Hoodlums	Journalists	Nigeria Police/ Hoodlums
111 .	December 5, 2024	Journalists Barred from	Journalists	Department of States

		Covering Zamfara Governor's Budget Presentation		Services Officer
112 .	May 7, 2025	Kano State Bans Airing of Live Political Programmes, Issues Interview Guidelines for Media	Media Outlets	Kano State Government
113 .	May 24, 2025	Akwa Ibom Government Expels Channels TV Crew Over Governor's Defection Report	Channels TV Crew (Chris Moffat, and cameraman, Kufre Ikpe)	Akwa Ibom State Government
114 .	May 27, 2025	Security Personnel Prevent Journalists from Covering Governor Oborevwo's State Address at the Delta State House of Assembly	Journalists	Nigeria Police

INVASION				
115 .	June 5, 2023,	Criminals Burgle Radio Station, Steal Valuable Equipment	Kogi State Broadcasting Corporation	Hoodlums
116 .	July 22, 2023	Hoodlums Invade, Loot Radio Station in Jalingo	Rock 92.3 FM, Taraba State	Hoodlums
117 .	January 17, 2024	Police Invade TV Station, Arrest Guest on Live Programme, Destroy Equipment in Abia	ABNTV, Umuahia, Abia State	Nigeria Police
118 .	August 23, 2024	Armed Robbers Loot Radio Station, Injure Guard in Oyo	Ajilete 92.1 FM, Oyo State	Armed Robbers
119 .	October 14, 2024	EFCC Operatives Invade Radio Station, Disrupt Broadcast, Confiscate Equipment	Urban 94.5FM, Enugu State	EFCC Operatives
120 .	May 18, 2025	Armed Men Invade Private Radio	Rhythm94.7FM , Bayelsa State	Armed Men

		Station in Bayelsa State		
HARASSMENT				
121 .	August 2, 2024	Hoodlums Harass Journalists at Protest Ground in Lagos	News Central Africa crew, Mr. Damilola Olufemi of BusinessDay, Mr. Kabir Adejumo of HumAngle	Hoodlums
122 .	January 20, 2025	DSS Operatives Harass Journalists Covering Edo State Election Tribunal	Journalists	Operatives of the Department of State Services
JUDGES/COURT ACTIONS				
123 .	June 7, 2023	Court Remands Two Arraigned for Allegedly Defaming Osun State Assembly Speaker	Mr. Ajibola Oluwasegun and Mr. Ajiboye Babatunde	Magistrate Court
124 .	August 2, 2023	Federal High Court Jails Lady for Allegedly Cyberstalking	Ms Nwakaego Okoye, a social media influencer	Justice Nicholas Oweibo

		Nigerian Actress		
125	November 29, 2023	Magistrate Court Sentences Two Journalists Over Defamation of Character	Mr. Joe Ogbodu, Managing Editor of Bigpen Nigeria, and Prince Amour Udemude	Magistrate Court
126	August 19, 2024	Magistrate Seizes Phones of Journalists Covering Trial in Lagos	Journalists	Mr. Waliu Salami (Magistrate)
127	September 2024	Bauchi Magistrate Court Issues Bench Warrant for Publisher's Arrest	Mr. Haruna Mohammed Salisu, publisher of WikkiTimes	Magistrate Court
KILLED				
128	June 25, 2023	Man Stoned to Death for Allegedly Blaspheming Founder of Islam	Usman Buda Mai Hanji	Mob
129	September 13, 2023	Journalist Declared Missing, Later Found Dead	Mr. Yusuf Mubarak, a 27-year-old journalist and third-year student of	Unknown

			Nasarawa State University	
130	October 9, 2024,	Nigerian Sports Journalist Killed, Others Abducted by Gunmen	Mr. Kolawole Omoniyi, a Multichoice SuperSport media crew member	Armed Men
SUMMONS				
131	August 12, 2023	Police IGP's Monitoring Unit Summons Journalists from Enugu to Abuja	Mr. Petrus Obi of Everyday NewsNgr, Mr. Ignatius Okpara of the African Examiner, and Mr. Clinton Umeh of Journalists 101	Office of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Monitoring Unit of the Nigeria Police
132	August 22, 2024	Police Summon Three Journalists to Facilitate Undisclosed Investigation	Mr. Oluwamodupe Akinola, Publisher, Alimosho Today; Ms Ayomide Eweje, Managing Editor, Alimosho Today; and Mr. Wisdom Okezie, a former reporter with the news organisation	Nigeria Police

133 .	September 23, 2024	Social Media User Invited by DSS for Allegedly Criticising Oyo State Governor	Mr. Idris Animasaun, a social media user and critic of Oyo State Governor, Mr. Seyi Makinde	Department of State Services (DSS)
134 .	January 5, 2025	Journalist Summoned by INTERPOL over Alleged Cyberstalking and Criminal Defamation	Mr. Peter Olasupo, an Ibadan-based journalist with 32 FM 94.9, Oyo State	International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL)
135 .	March 24, 2025	Police Summon Two Journalists in Kano on Orders of the Information Commissioner	Mr Buhari Abba Rano, the online editor of Kano Times, and Mr Ismail Auwal, a freelancer	State's Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Department (CIID)
136 .	April 2025	Police Summon Lagos Journalist for Alleging Corruption, WAEC Certificate Forgery Against Epe LG Chairperson	Mr Yomi Agbaje, popularly known as Aagba Akin	Nigeria Police

	OTHERS			
137 .	June 27, 2023	Editor Escapes Assassination Attempt in Abuja	Mr. Saawua Terzungwe, Deputy Political Editor of the Daily Trust newspaper	Unknown Persons
138 .	September 3, 2024	Nigeria Police Declare David Hundeyin, Another Wanted for Alleged Collusion in Leakage of Secret Government Documents	Mr. David Hundeyin, investigative journalist and Bristol Isaac Tamunobifiri	Nigeria Police
139 .	October 21, 2024	Kano State Government Revokes Accreditation for 14 Journalists Covering its Activities	Journalists	Kano State Government
140 .	January 13, 2025	Labour Unions Forcefully Shut Down Lagos Media Stations Over Pay Dispute	Lagos Television, Radio Lagos/Eko FM, and Lagos Traffic Radio	Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), the Radio, Television, Theatre and

				Arts Workers' Union of Nigeria (RATTAWU) , and the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ)
141 .	May 19, 2025	Kano State Censorship Board Suspends 22 Hausa Films for Alleged Breach of Regulatory Protocols	22 Hausa Films	Kano State Censorship Board

