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**The semi-annual report from MOVU Documents 40 Violations Committed Against Journalists in Baghdad Already in 2019**

The National Union of Journalists in Iraq **NUJI** by its observation unit **MOVU** (Media observing violations unit) have reported 40 cases of violation against Iraqi journalists since the beginning of 2019 And until 30/6/2019. These violations include murders and threats as well as unjust dismissal from employment for economic reasons (financial crises), charges of political bias, and the expression of personal views on social media.

**MOVU** calls on working journalists to foster a culture of legal accountability, one which exposes institutions that fail to pay journalists back salaries due to them after being let go, ensures that they have valid contracts which guarantee their rights and brings to an end the phenomenon of dismissal without reasonable cause.

Despite the liberation of Iraqi territory from Daesh, the risk of death, threats, intimidation, and harassment still haunts journalists working in liberated areas and safe cities. The main dangers for journalists are violations from powerful government officials (such as members of parliament, governors, mayors, and other politicians), armed groups and political parties. The three Iraqi authorities — legislative, executive, and judicial — along with the security authorities are unable to ensure journalists' safety. Since January 2019, journalists have been assaulted during field coverage, prevented from covering certain stories, restricted in their access to important events and have been arbitrarily arrested and suffered attacks by unknown groups.

Since early 2019, **MOVU** has put a team of 20 volunteer journalists in place to monitor and document violations of journalists in media outlets both inside and outside Iraq. These volunteers are **MOVU**’s main source for reporting violations and assisting journalists in obtaining the legal advice they need.

From January until June 2019, **MOVU** has amassed evidence for more than 33 violations against journalists, listed here:

January

14 January 2019

Othman al-Husseini, a cameraman who works for Dijlah (Tigris) satellite channel, was attacked by the police of Al Hurria Bridge in Mosul. He suffered severe beatings for no apparent reason.

19 January 2019

The camera crews of Al Sharqia and Dijlah Channels along with a number of journalists, including Jumana Mumtaz, a member of NUJI council, were prevented from field coverage after the destruction of the Cairo Church in the Al Maidan area in the eastern part of Mosul. Authorities attempted to justify this ban by noting that all photography and media coverage in Mosul could be approved only by the previous governor of Mosul, Nofal Al Agob.

22 January 2019

Al-Mosuliya TV channel reporter, Ali Yousef Jassim, and photographer, Ahmad al-Nuaimi, were arrested while filming citizens claiming to reconstruct the old city of Mosul.

27 January 2019

Minhal al-Jubouri, a war journalist, was killed while covering of a terrorist bombing near the village of Khanuga, south of the district of Sharqat in the province of Nineveh.

28 January 2019

The NRT TV channel office in the province of Dohuk was closed, and the director of the office was arrested after covering demonstrations, protests, and the burning of the Turkish military base in the province of Dohuk.

28 January 2019

The crew of Al-Furat Channel’s ‘Koora’ TV program, Ahmad Al-Atwani and his photographer, the crew of Al-Ahad Channel, and the host of the ‘Fourth Referee’ TV program, Omar Riyad, along with his photographer, were prevented from entering the headquarters of the Iraqi Football Federation after broadcasting video reports about the reasons for the loss of the national Iraqi team against Qatar.

31 January 2019

7 people from the staff of the Biladi TV channel were attacked during the live stream of the ‘Among People’ TV program for not obtaining security approvals in the area of Diyala bridge, southeast of Baghdad.

February

5 February 2019

Reporter, Anas Yousef, and photographer, Ahmed Mohamed, both from the Dijlah Channel, were taken by the police forces responsible for protecting the Madinah Hospital for not having permission from the hospital's Media Department to photograph there.

6 February 2019

Mahmoud Al-Jammas, a reporter from Biladi Channel, was injured near the village of Knaos south of Mosul while covering a security operation against remaining Daesh fighters.

19 February 2019

Haidar Hadi, a reporter for I News Channel, had two separate legal cases filed against him by the head of the governorate council, Nassif Jassem al-Khattabi, and the former MP, Habib al-Tarfi, for conducting a TV report on corruption files related to the elections and ration card items more than 5 months ago.

19 February 2019

A team from Ur Channel, consisting of a reporter, Laith Guamir, and a photographer, Omar Dawood, lost their jobs arbitrarily and without warning.

23 February 2019

A Biladi Channel crew — including reporter, Ali Nassef, broadcast engineer, Haidar Nidal, and photographer Uday Hamed — was prevented from covering a demonstration by the Engineers Syndicate in Tahrir Square in central Baghdad.

24 February 2019

The journalist, Amir Ismail, was prevented from filming a report on humanitarian conditions, mass immigration and the deteriorating security situation in Khanaqin district of Diyala province and its outskirts.

March

5 March 2019

Al-Jazeera TV channel reporter, Rwaid Al-Ahmad, was prevented from covering a demonstration in front of the Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi's building in the Alawi area in central Baghdad.

8 March 2019

Hossam al-Kaabi, a reporter from the NRT Arabiya Channel in Najaf province, was arrested by security forces after broadcasting an hour-long report criticizing the work of the National Security Apparatus.

12 March 2019

The judiciary in the province of Karbala dismissed the charges brought by former MP Habib Al-Tarfi against Haider Hadi, a reporter of NRT Arabic Channel in Karbala.

14 March 2019

The bodyguards of the Undersecretary of the Minister of Oil attacked the media staff present to cover the opening of a TV station. More specifically, the attack involved the photographer of the I News Channel, Ali al-Tai (who suffered a broken finger), and a reporter from the Dijlah Channel, Ahmed Al-Jafal.

19 March 2019

The reporter, Ruwaid Al-Ahmad, along with his photographer and crew of Al-Tijah satellite channel were attacked by employees in the dormitories of the Waziriyah district in Baghdad. The attack, which involved the destruction of their equipment, was in response to a report they broadcast on the sale of alcoholic beverages in front of the building.

21 March 2019

Dozens of followers of the Sadrist movement demonstrated in front of the headquarters of the satellite channel, Tigris, calling for the dismissal of the presenter of the program, ‘Your Decision’ Sahar Abbas Jamil. Protestors filed a lawsuit against her due to claims that one of the guests on the program uttered statements which were slanderous to Mr. Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr.

22 March 2019

Following the tragic ferry accident in Nineveh province which injured, Laith Rashedi, a correspondent working for the site Yala, there was an attack on journalists and the angry protestors by the governor of Nineveh province, Nawfal al-Aakoub, and his bodyguards.

April

1 April 2019

The Iraqi people demanded the cancellation of the program ‘Tabab Khair’, broadcast on the satellite channel, Al-Rasheed, because of its degradation of Iraqi women and the excessive dumbing down of its content which is patronizing to the Iraqi public.

3 April 2019

Security forces detained and assaulted Anbar Channel staff photographer, Mohammad Ahmad Badawi, while he prepared a report about the return to life in Iraqi cities after liberation from Daesh.

7 April 2019

The staff of the program ‘Their Voice’, broadcast by NRT Arabia, were prevented from filming in the streets of the Kadhimiya district in northern Baghdad despite the fact that they had obtained all the necessary security approvals.

16 April 2019

A reporter from Al-Itjah’s ‘The Direction' on the satellite channel, Adnan al-Muwali, was detained by the security patrols of Najdah Kirkuk during coverage of events there, on the pretext that he had not obtained the security approvals required for filming.

17 April 2019

News reporters Zaid Alfatlawy from Dijla Channel, and Mohammed al-Nuaimi from Al Sharqiah Channel received death threats in Diwaniyah province due to their report on the severe lack of basic services in the province after being accused by Diwaniyah governor of misrepresenting the facts and misleading the public with false reports.

17 April 2019

Asia, NRT, Dijla, Alahd, Alsharqiah, Almiaden, Inews, Alsumaria were prevented from covering the meeting of the Stabilization Working Group of the International Alliance to defeat Daesh due to insufficient coordination between the Iraqi Foreign Ministry and the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers. Only three channels were allowed to cover the event: Rashid, Free and Iraqi.

30 April 2019

The former deputy, Ali al-Alaq tripe, surrounded the headquarters of the Asian satellite channel claiming that it unfairly criticized his family in political programs broadcast by the channel.

May

14 May 2019

Karawan Satat Rafeeq, a reporter from Kirkuk Now website, and reporter, Aso Ahmed and his photographer from the NRT Channel in Kurdistan were arrested because of their coverage of the developments in Balkana village in the district of Dibs within Kirkuk province.

14 May 2019

The staff of the Baghdad Today endured threats, intimidation, and political pressure because of their disclosure of the biggest corruption case relating to the sale of foreign currency by the Central Bank of Iraq which allowed for the smuggling of billions of dollars.

21 May 2019

The owner of NRT Channels was arrested and detained in an unknown location and his lawyers and family were prevented from visiting him.

21 May 2019

A number of journalists in Salaheddine governorate (Samarra) received death threats for publishing reports demanding that buffalo breeders be forced to relocate due to increased accidents in the area.

26 May 2019

Journalist, Nabil Jassim, editor of Baghdad Today, received threats due to the agency's publication of reports of a corruption file belonging to a bank owned by an Iraqi politician.

30n May 2019

The staff of the program AlDunia Bkheer, which presents on NRT Arabia, and journalist, Aziz al-Rubaie, were arbitrarily prevented from filming in Abu Dshir, south of Baghdad: filming had gone on in the same location just a day earlier.

June

7 June 2019

A reporter from NRT Arabia, Laith Gawamir, was attacked in one of Baghdad's malls by the owners of a commercial center on the basis of an earlier report on the bacteriology of pathology analysis laboratories.

7 June 2019

The director of the office of Al-Iraqiya Channel in Beirut, Ameen Al-Nasser, was threatened and publicly pressured to be dismissed on the basis of information he published relating to files of former Iraqi officials arrested in Lebanon by Interpol.

13 June 2019

The sponsor of a hospital in the Abbasid area in Karbala is suing an I-News correspondent on the basis of a television report.

16 June 2019

The crew who films the program, Their Voice (broadcast on NRT Arab TV), were arrested while filming an episode near the bridge of the city of medicine, They were prevented from any further filming on the grounds that they do not have permission to shoot in this area.

25 June 2019

NRT Arabia correspondent “Ghazi Anmar’ prevented from covering the parliamentary sessions. Plus, a parliament member form Al-Nasar political Coalition inside parliament assaulted him at the same session reasoning this to a video that NRT has released on its Facebook page.

26 June 2019

Riot forces assaulted Al-Ayam T.V channel crew in front of the prime minister office at Al-Alwai zone in the middle of Baghdad.

The crew which presented by the correspondent Dhafar Ali and the cameraman Hayder Hadi were covering a demonstration for the graduates with the higher degree who were protesting because of the unemployment crisis.

28 June 2019

After Karbala governorate council change its session to elect to new governor from an argent session to a privet one, the council prevented the journalists from covering it.

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**NUJI** and **MOVU** in Iraq stress that the lack of awareness on the part of journalists as to their legal rights has allowed media outlets to operate without giving fair contracts to its employees. Without contracts, dozens of journalists can have been silenced because they expressed their views on social networking sites, or for economic and political reasons.

According to **NUJI**, the presidency of the Iraqi Council of Representatives is responsible for not adopting laws that would protect the rights of journalists, both inside and outside their institutions. Currently, journalists are protected only by the Protection of Journalists Law No. 21 of 2011, which is subject to amendment and thus not a strong basis for ensuring rights.

**NUJI** also stresses the necessity of enacting laws protecting the rights of journalists working in civil media institutions as well as their counterparts in government institutions, and stop firing them for unjustified reasons.

**NUJI** calls on the executive authorities to put an end to impunity for anyone engaged in violations against journalists. We must prevent the security forces from demanding official approvals for filming in certain areas of Baghdad and instead allow our journalists to report freely and openly on the events that impact us all. To ignore these issues, and to be blind to the abuses described above, amounts to a direct violation of the Iraqi constitution and we must not passively accept this.

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