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Mburu Muchoki, editor of the weekly tabloid *The Independent*, was sentenced in March to a year in prison on a criminal libel conviction. The case stemmed from a complaint filed by Justice Minister Martha Karua over a 2004 story detailing an alleged sex scandal involving the minister. Muchoki disputed the charge and in June was freed on a presidential pardon.

In August, following local protests and an international outcry, President Mwai Kibaki rejected a bill that would have forced editors to name their sources if their stories led to court cases. Lawmakers also withdrew a bill containing provisions restricting media ownership and granting the government sweeping powers of search and seizure on national security grounds.

The government imposed a ban on all live broadcasts on December 30, hours after the contested results of national elections were announced. President Mwai Kibaki was declared the winner of the December 27 vote over opposition candidate Raila Odinga, despite evidence of ballot rigging, according to international news reports. The announcement triggered widespread rioting, with the initial death toll reaching into the hundreds. The media ban allowed wild rumors to spread by text message and word of mouth, The Associated Press reported. The violence appeared to tap a deep vein of tribal tension; Kibaki is a Kikuyu, and Odinga a Luo.

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