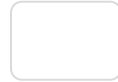


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RSF – Reporters Sans Frontières (Author)

West Bank: Persecution of Palestinian journalists ramps up while world spotlight on Gaza

In the West Bank, at least 14 Palestinian journalists are still being held by Israeli security forces after an increase in pressure against them since 15 October. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) calls for their immediate release and condemns this increased persecution as a serious threat to press freedom.

Israeli forces have ramped up their [harassment](#) of Palestinian reporters in the West Bank. On that territory, governed by the Palestinian Authority, at least 14 of the journalists arrested by the Israeli occupation since the start of the war are still in prison.

Most of the journalists were arrested in targeted raids on their homes between 15 October and 8 November. They include **Moaz Amarna**, a photojournalist with the *J-Media* new website. When soldiers went to his home in the Dheisheh refugee camp, south of Bethlehem, on 16 October, he told them he was a journalist. They phoned their superior who immediately ordered his arrest for “*inciting violence*,” according to the [Mada Centre](#), a Palestinian press freedom organisation.

Transferred to Megiddo prison in Israel, Amarna was sentenced two weeks later to six months of administrative detention. [His lawyer says](#) he has been subjected to repeated violence by his jailers, who have also deprived him of basic medical care. Amarna suffers from the after-effects of the serious head injury he sustained when he was shot by Israeli soldiers while covering an armed clash near Jerusalem in 2019. He also lost an eye as a result of this injury.

Thaer Ziyad Al-Fakhouri, 32, who runs the *Space Media* production company and heads the city of Hebron's press department, was arrested at his home in the southern part of the city at 1 a.m. on 20 October. His father said Israeli soldiers surrounded him while keeping his wife and children at a distance. After they seized his keys and phone, he was handcuffed and blindfolded and was taken away to a still unknown destination.

"We condemn the increased persecution of journalists by the Israeli occupying forces in the West Bank, characterised by a wave of arbitrary arrests of reporters covering the spillover from the war in Gaza. We demand their immediate and unconditional release, and an end to the harassment and threats that are obstructing the work of Palestinian journalists."

Jonathan Dagher

Head of RSF's Middle East desk

The other victims of the wave of arrests are either freelance reporters or journalists working for such Palestinian media as the *Palestine Information Centre*, *Alam Falastin*, *J-Media* and *Al Hadath*, as well as the *Quds Press* news agency and the *Maan News Agency*. They include *Al Hadath* reporter **Sojoud Assi**, *J-Media* director **Alaa Hassan al-Rimawi** and *Maan News Agency* photographer **Abed al Naser Lahham**.

Reporting repeatedly obstructed

As well as the 14 journalists who are still being held, at least seven other journalists have been detained and questioned for several hours at military or police checkpoints before being released.

Other journalists have been prevented from covering developments in the West Bank. Crews with *J-Media*, the Palestinian TV channel *Dafa*, and the Jordanian TV channel *JRTV* have been obstructed while covering demonstrations in support of Gaza. Some were physically attacked by soldiers, some were verbally threatened or intimidated, and in some cases stun grenades were used to keep journalists away.

Journalists in the field report that the use of violence by the Israeli security forces has [increased](#) since 7 October.

ecoi.net description:

West Bank: At least 14 of the Palestinian journalists arrested by Israeli security forces since 7 October 2023 are still being held

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