

S.Sudan journalist freed after questioning

NAIROBI - South Sudanese security forces have released a leading journalist without charge after two days of questioning in the latest crackdown on press freedom, the reporter said Friday.



Mading Ngor

Mading Ngor, a freelance journalist who has written extensively for both South Sudanese and international outlets, was arrested on Wednesday, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said.

He was released late on Thursday evening unharmed, with government officials telling local media that his arrest had been unauthorised and had been a mistake.

"Friends, relatives and well-wishers, I am out from the ordeal," Ngor said in a short statement thanking people for their support. Rights groups have repeatedly warned that security forces have cracked down on journalists, suffocating debate on how to end a civil war in which tens of thousands have been killed in the past 14 months.

Reporters Without Borders this week said South Sudan had slipped down six places on its annual press freedom rankings, listing it as the 125th worst nation out of 180.

It said the war has "hit media freedom hard," noting that "news outlets were warned not to cover security issues and journalists were unable to work properly because of the war."

Five journalists working for state-run media were killed in an ambush in January by unknown gunmen in the remote western region of Bahr al Ghazal, along with six other people.

Source: AFP via I-NET Bridge