

Kenyan government ignores court order over broadcasting ban

The Committee to Protect Journalists called on the Kenyan government to obey a court order suspending a broadcasting ban on four privately owned television stations.



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Angela Quintal
Africa Program Coordinator



A high court yesterday ordered the government to lift the ban on Citizen TV, Inooro TV, NTV, and KTN News, for 14 days while a case challenging its legality is heard, according to reports. The order came two days after authorities switched off transmitters while the stations were broadcasting live coverage of an event by the opposition in the capital, Nairobi, according to reports.

Separately, a court ordered police to halt attempts to arrest at least three Nation Media Group (NMG) journalists, according to an online report in the *Daily Nation*, which is owned by NMG, one of the outlets affected by the ban.

The journalistS - Linus Kaikai, Larry Madowo, and Ken Mijungu - said they believed that police planned to arrest them and applied to the court for anticipatory bail, which was set at 10,0000 Kenyan shillings (US\$983) each, reports said. All three are due to report to police headquarters in Nairobi for questioning on February 5, according to reports.

Kenya's Minister of Interior said in an earlier press conference that authorities are investigating individuals and organisations, including media houses, in relation to the Nairobi event.

"The Kenyan government's refusal to abide by the court order and permit four television outlets back on air is not only contempt for the rule of law, but a brazen example of censorship," said Angela Quintal, CPJ's Africa program coordinator. "Every day that these TV stations are kept off air and their journalists are harassed or intimidated further erodes Kenya's position as a leader of press freedom in Africa."

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