

Nigerian Broadcasting Commission closes Ekiti state radio and TV

The Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the federal government-run broadcast regulator, should immediately permit the Broadcasting Service of Ekiti State (BSES) to reopen, the Committee to Protect Journalists said. On July 14, police acting on the order of the NBC evacuated the state government-owned radio and television broadcaster and locked its doors, Rotimi Ojomoyela, chairman of the Nigerian Union of Journalists in Ekiti state, told CPJ.



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The closure came after Ekiti Governor Ayodele Fayose on July 14 went on the state broadcaster and declared victory for his deputy and fellow member of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Kolapo Olusola Eleka, in the election for governor. His announcement came before the Independent National Electoral Commission had made its results announcement, according to the privately owned [Sahara Reporters](#) news website and a statement [published](#) on the NBC website.

The NBC on July 15 [called](#) Fayose's actions a violation of the [Nigeria Broadcasting Code](#) and the Electoral Act.

"The alleged infractions by the Ekiti state broadcaster do not justify the ongoing closure of a major source of public information," CPJ deputy executive director Robert Mahoney said. "The journalists should be permitted to return to work immediately."

The NBC [statement](#) listed what it considered multiple infractions of the [Nigeria Broadcasting Code](#) by BSES, including Section 5.2.15, which mandates, "A broadcaster shall broadcast election results or declaration of the winner only as announced by the authorised electoral officer for the election."

The statement additionally noted alleged "malicious and unsubstantiated claims" made on air against "the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Nigerian Police and the Department of Security Services."

Appeal

CPJ's repeated calls to Mallam Is'haq Modibbo, director general of the NBC, and Maimuna Jimada, head of public affairs for the NBC, to ask for clarification on the sanctioning process and reasoning for the closure, went unanswered.

Ojomoyela told CPJ that NUJ on July 16 submitted an appeal requesting that the broadcaster be reopened.

Days before the closure, on July 11, the NBC also fined the state broadcaster 500,000 naira (US\$1,385) for allegedly failing to meet ethical standards, according to [Premium Times](#), a privately owned news website. The NBC took issue with Lere Olayinka being appointed acting director general of the broadcaster while at the same time serving as a spokesperson for the PDP governorship candidate, Olusola Eleka.

On July 15, Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission [declared](#) Kayode Fayemi, the candidate from All Progressives Congress party, the winner of the Ekiti gubernatorial election, a result rejected by Olusola Eleka, according to [Premium Times](#).

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