

Burkina Faso suspends more foreign media over killings coverage

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Burkina Faso has suspended a number of Western and African media over their coverage of a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report accusing the army of extrajudicial killings, its communications authority said on Sunday.



Source: www.unsplash.com

The move follows similar suspensions of *BBC Africa* and the US-funded *Voice of America* for reporting on the HRW investigation that alleged the Burkinabe military executed about 223 villagers in February as part of a campaign against civilians accused of collaborating with jihadist militants.

The junta-led West African country's communications council said French television network TV5Monde's broadcasts would be suspended for two weeks, while access to its website would be blocked.

The websites of German broadcaster Deutsche Welle, French newspapers *Le Monde* and *Ouest-France*, British newspaper the *Guardian*, and African agencies APA and Ecofin have also been blocked until further notice, it said.



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Reuters was not able to immediately reach the media groups for comment.

On Saturday, Burkinabe government spokesperson Rimtalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo rejected HRW's allegations as "peremptory" and denied that the authorities were unwilling to look into the alleged atrocities.

"The killings ... have led to the opening of a judicial investigation," Ouedraogo said, citing a 1 March statement by a regional prosecutor.

Violence in the region fuelled by a decade-long fight with Islamist groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State has worsened since respective militaries seized power in Burkina Faso and neighbouring Mali and Niger in a series of coups from 2020 to 2023.

Burkina Faso saw a severe escalation of deadly attacks in 2023, with more than 8,000 people reportedly killed, according to US-based crisis-monitoring group ACLED.

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