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Cambodian Journalists Alliance Association



Journalism Situation in Cambodia

Quarterly Monitoring Report

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I. Executive summary

CamboJA continues documenting the cases of violations against journalists and the situation for the media in Cambodia. In the second quarter of 2026 (April-June), CamboJA's monitoring report, highlights ongoing challenges to media freedom and fundamental human rights in the country. In this period, CamboJA documented 12 instances of violations against journalists, all directly related to journalistic activities. The violations recorded, included legal intimidations/action, accounting for 33% of the total violations, physical (17%), psychological harm (17%), and other violations against right to freedom of expression (33%). This reflects the continuation of legal intimidation and legal action against journalists being used as tools to restrict independent reporting.

The affected journalists include reporters, photographers, publishers, editor, citizen journalist, and media workers. Most affected journalists and media workers reported being required to admit their alleged 'wrongdoing', submit apology letters, and agree to delete the content and photographs. Other journalists were censored or experienced restrictions on their freedom of expression while covering public events.

State actors, primarily local-level authorities, continue to be the primary actors allegedly responsible for the documented violations this quarter, with these violations often remaining unpunished. The violations documented have resulted in severe consequences for individual journalists, including restrictions on their freedom of movement, psychological distress, forced admission of wrongdoing, the signing of apology letters, and self-censorship.

The findings in this quarter reveal a pattern similar to those observed during the first quarter of 2026 in which legal measures were frequently used to intimidate or silence journalists who report on sensitive issues or topics involving online scams or economically powerful individuals.

The most prominent type of reporting leading to violations this quarter concerned criminal activity, particularly online scams, with journalists being arrested and accused by authorities of incitements or spreading "fake news" deemed harmful to the reputation of state authorities. In one related case, a journalist who had been arrested and placed in pre-trial detention was released on bail after being detained for more than two months.

Four of the documented violations occurred after reports were published or posted on social media, while eight incidents took place while journalists were covering events or conducting field reporting. Most of the violations documented occurred in Phnom Penh, accounting for 67% of the total incidents.

As previously documented by CamboJA, authorities are resorting to criminal charges, including incitement charges, against journalists covering sensitive issues instead of utilizing the civil remedies outlined in the Cambodian Press Law. This approach runs counter to international standards that protect freedom of expression. Such restrictions on journalistic work hinder public access to information and undermine meaningful participation in public discourse.



II. Introduction

The introduction of new media-related regulations, political repression, and restriction on freedom of expression have contributed to the deterioration of media freedom. The new Prakas on journalism qualifications and press accreditation, introduced in late 2025, remain a major concern for independent journalists, particularly freelance journalists who report on critical or sensitive issues in Cambodia.

Journalists have faced challenges in obtaining press accreditation from the Ministry of Information since the new Prakas were introduced. Without a press card, many sources refuse to speak with journalists, making it difficult for journalists to carry out their work and often necessitating that freelance journalists conceal their identity while reporting in Cambodia.

The Information Ministry has launched the nationwide second phase of its Say No to Fake News campaign¹ to boost information literacy and curb fake news. The first phase began in 2025 to promote responsible social media use and combat fake news.²

The second phase continues with support from the Chinese government under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation framework. After providing \$1.7 million for phase one, China allocated another \$270,000 in 2026.³

With an estimated 15 million Facebook accounts and more than 10 million TikTok accounts in Cambodia social media has become an important source of news in Cambodia, according to the Ministry of Information. In this context, the government's Anti-Fake News Committee claimed to have identified nearly 4,000 cases of fake news in 2025.

However, the campaign has raised concerns among media freedom advocates, as Cambodian authorities have previously relied on broad or vaguely defined notions of "fake news" to justify investigations, arrests, and legal action against journalists, activists, and individuals expressing criticism online.

In the political sphere, former opposition leader Kem Sokha received a royal pardon on 25 May, lifting his 27-year treason sentence in a long-running case.⁴ He remains barred from political activity. The pardon came amid continued restrictions on political rights and civic space, including arrests linked to online criticism.

¹ <https://cambojanews.com/say-no-to-fake-news-phase-ii-targets-youth-media-literacy/>

² <https://cambojanews.com/government-launches-to-anti-fake-news-campaign-opponents-fear-suppression-of-freedom-of-expression/>

³ <https://cambojanews.com/china-funds-second-phase-of-information-ministry-anti-fake-news-campaign/>

⁴ <https://cambojanews.com/kem-sokhas-27-year-prison-sentence-pardoned-but-still-barred-from-politics/>

On June 19, the Supreme Court in Phnom Penh upheld a four-year prison sentence against outspoken opposition figure Rong Chhun but suspended the term. The court also barred him from political activities for five years and prohibited him from traveling outside Phnom Penh.⁵

Taken together, these developments may contribute to a more restrictive environment for freedom of expression and access to information in Cambodia. The combination of expanded state efforts to regulate online content and ongoing legal restrictions on politics may reinforce self-censorship among journalists, civil society organizations, and citizens, particularly when reporting on politically sensitive issues or expressing dissenting opinions. This environment may also reduce opportunities for open public debate and limit the diversity of voices available during discussions on matters of public interest.

CamboJA's monitoring reports on violations against journalists play a critical role in documenting and assessing Cambodia's media environment and freedom of expression by providing evidence-based insights, highlight ongoing concerns, and push for meaningful policy reforms to protect journalists and uphold a free and safe media space. The findings presented in this report paint a picture of the state of media freedom in Cambodia which is marked by persistent patterns of restrictions on independent reporting.

The violations, documented by CamboJA, not only infringe Cambodia's constitutional protections of press and media freedom - particularly Article 41 which states that Khmer citizens shall have freedom of expression, press, publication and assembly and Article 38 which guarantees fundamental civil liberties, physical safety, and rights for the accused in the legal system. The violations also contravene international standards under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), including basic rights to freedom of expression, physical security, justice and due process and liberty.

Without action to end the misuse of laws, repeal restrictive regulations, and protect journalists from retaliation, the space for independent media in Cambodia will continue to shrink, often in ways that escape public attention, with serious consequences for accountability, and democratic governance.

⁵ <https://cambojanews.com/supreme-court-upholds-rong-chhun-conviction-but-suspends-prison-sentence/>

III. Methodology

For the purpose of this report, monitoring is understood as the systematic process of observing, documenting, and analyzing the range of threats and attacks targeting journalists in the course of their professional activities. These violations encompass a broad spectrum of aggressions, including killings, imprisonment, physical violence, verbal abuse, intimidation, harassment, and gender-based violence, directed at journalists specifically because of their work. Such violations can occur in both online and offline environments and may also take the form of hybrid threats, combining elements from both digital and physical spaces.

These actions are not only harmful to individual journalists but are intended to intimidate, obstruct, or silence them, ultimately threatening the ability of media professionals and institutions to operate safely, freely, and independently. The methodology underpinning this report recognizes that any such actions, whether direct or systemic, can have a chilling effect on press freedom and represent serious violations of journalists' fundamental human rights.

A human right-based monitoring methodology

The methodology and data collection in this report is grounded in a human rights-based approach to documenting threats and attacks against the safety of journalists. This approach recognizes that such acts are not only assaults on individual journalists but also violations of fundamental rights that underpin inclusive and democratic societies.

Accordingly, the methodology aligns with international human rights standards, including the protection of freedom of expression, access to information, and other core rights such as the rights to life, security, and dignity, as enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Central to this approach is the understanding of the responsibility of the state to respect, protect, and fulfill human rights in line with international human rights law.

Threats and attacks targeting journalists and media organizations for their professional activities are understood as violations of the right to freedom of expression, which also implicates the public's right to receive information. A central feature of this monitoring framework is therefore its focus on documenting violations of the right to freedom of expression, and related violations of other civil and political rights essential to journalists' ability to work freely and safely. Such other rights include:

- The right to life
- Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment
- The right to liberty and security of the person, including protection from arbitrary detention
- The right to an effective remedy
- The right to a fair trial
- Protection from arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy
- The right to equality and non-discrimination

The methodology of this report therefore documents threats and attacks against journalists as violations of both the fundamental right to freedom of expression and a broader set of civil and political rights, as exemplified above.

The methodology also follows UNESCO's Journalists' Safety Indicators (JSIs) and the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity (UNAP), which are key international frameworks for assessing journalist safety across its interconnected legal, physical, psychological, online, and gender-based dimensions. Drawing on these frameworks, the monitoring approach adopts a gender- and context-sensitive lens to document threats and attacks on journalists as human rights violations.

Who/what is included in the data?

An inclusive definitional approach of a journalist/journalism as described in international human rights provisions is adopted to cover:

1. individuals engaged in journalistic activities to inform society of matters in the public interest
2. acts targeting such individuals as a result of these journalistic activities that constitute breaches of fundamental human rights

Classification of human rights violations

The methodology covers seven types of human rights violations including violations against the rights to: life, physical security, physical liberty, psychological integrity, justice, and due process and liberty, as well as other types of violations against freedom of expression.

These human rights violations are furthermore classified into types of acts corresponding to human rights violations. Controlled vocabulary developed for the purpose of systematically categorizing and sub-categorizing violation types is grounded in human rights standards and draws on a combination of sources including the UN International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS),⁶ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 16.10.1⁷ and key human rights provisions.⁸

It can be noted that a violation-event targeting a journalist may involve several types of human rights violations (e.g., detention and physical abuse). For the purpose of statistically classifying a violation-case CamboJA documents what is understood to be the most serious type of human rights violation (primary violation). Information about secondary or interrelated violations suffered by the same journalist are captured in qualitative records.

Data collection and verification

Data on violations against journalists for this report was collected using a combination of primary and secondary sources. Primary data was gathered through interviews with victims, their family members, and eyewitnesses, and verified through desk-based reviews. Secondary sources included media coverage, social media content, and official court announcements.

To ensure accuracy, all data underwent a verification process involving cross-checking with multiple sources and consistency reviews. In cases where journalists were accused of extortion, CamboJA categorized these as instances of human rights violations only after conducting independent investigations that revealed evidence of threats, intimidation, or other actions aimed at undermining press freedom.

Due to the safety and security concerns, names of affected journalists and other sources have been withheld from this report if not published widely elsewhere.

⁶ The International Crime Classifications is a framework to systematically classify and categorise different types of crime for the purpose of data collection, analysis, and international comparison. It provides a standardized methodology for classifying crimes which supports data comparability. The cases included in this report fall within international crime classifications including censorship (ICCS 08031), arbitrary detention (ICCS 020222), legal harassment (ICCS 0806), discrimination (ICCS 0210), and assault (ICCS 02011).

⁷ Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 16.10.1 measures enjoyment of fundamental rights covering: □ Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights defenders in the previous 12 months. □ See: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/SDG_Indicator_16_10_1_Guidance_Note.pdf

⁸ These human rights provisions include: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

Scope and limitations

This report includes only those cases of violations against journalists that were identified through CamboJA's documentation and monitoring efforts. It may therefore be the case that this report does not capture all violation incidents that occurred in Cambodia during the reporting period of April to June 2026. It is likely that many additional cases went unreported, particularly in provincial areas where journalists often face harassment without access to adequate monitoring, legal support, or protection mechanisms. As a result, the findings presented here should be understood as a partial but indicative reflection of broader trends and risks facing journalists in Cambodia.

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democratic society. It ensures individuals can share opinions, access information, and hold power to account without fear of censorship or retaliation. When journalism is censored or restricted, it constitutes a direct violation of this fundamental right, as guaranteed under Article 19 of both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. (UDHR, Article 19, ICCPR, Article 19(1);19(2))

Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.
3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
 - a. For respect of the rights or reputations of others;
 - b. For the protection of national security or of public order (order public), or of public health or morals.

IV. Key findings

From April to June 2026, CamboJA documented 12 instances of human rights violations targeting journalists (including four women journalists, one foreign journalist, and one media worker). The 12 recorded violations occurred in 10 separate incidents, meaning that four journalists and media workers were exposed to human rights violations in connection with two incidents.

Four of the documented violations occurred after news reports had been published or posted on social media, while eight incidents took place while journalists were covering event or during field reporting. Of these incidents, three involved journalists facing violations while covering public protest. The majority of violations occurred in Phnom Penh, accounting for 67% of the total incidents.

The cases documented during this quarter represent a 9% increase compared to the previous quarter (January-March 2026), during which 11 violations were documented.

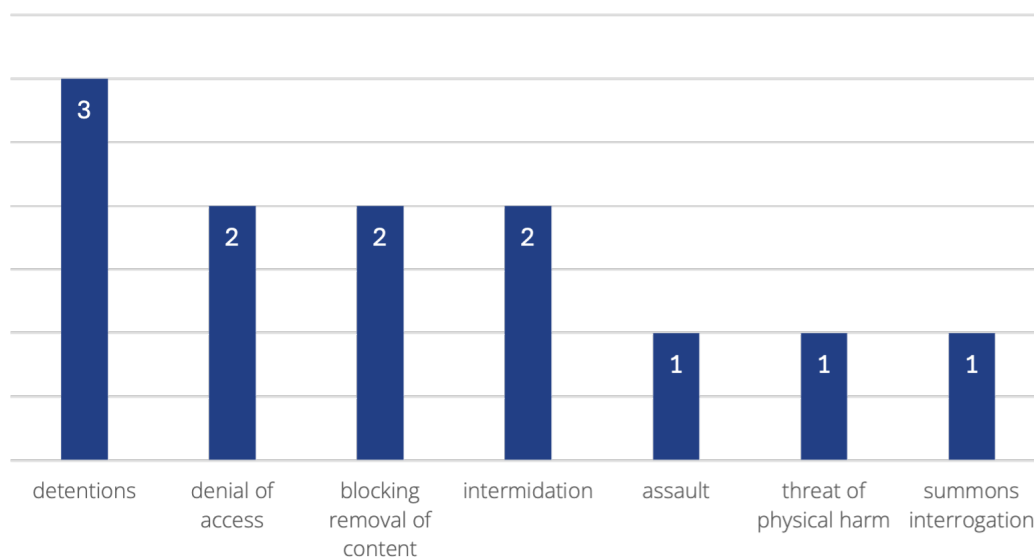
The data shows that legal intimidation and legal action against journalists remain a concern. Of the 12 violations documented this quarter, four directly impacted journalists' legal safety (see Table 1). These included three instances of brief detention, one of which involved a female journalist who was held in police custody for 72 hours after reporting on a major hospital in Phnom Penh.

In another case of legal intimidation, one journalist was detained by commune police while covering a protest in front of the Chinese embassy. Another online journalist was arrested by provincial police without a clearly stated reason and was referred to court for questioning in connection with commentary posted on social media about alleged corruption. In addition, another journalist was summoned for questioning by provincial police and interrogated for seven hours after reporting on the detention of a group of Chinese nationals during a provincial crackdown on alleged illegal immigration.

One violation involved a physical assault on a journalist, who was attacked by an individual while photographing alleged illegal logging. In another case, a journalist was threatened with physical harm while reporting on the alleged import of Thai goods into Cambodia from Laos through a provincial border crossing.

Four of the documented violations involved restrictions on journalists' right to freedom of expression, while covering events in public spaces. These restrictions included denial of access to reporting locations, intimidation in the form of warnings to stop reporting on sensitive issues, and the forced removal of journalistic content, including requiring journalists to delete photographs taken during their coverage.

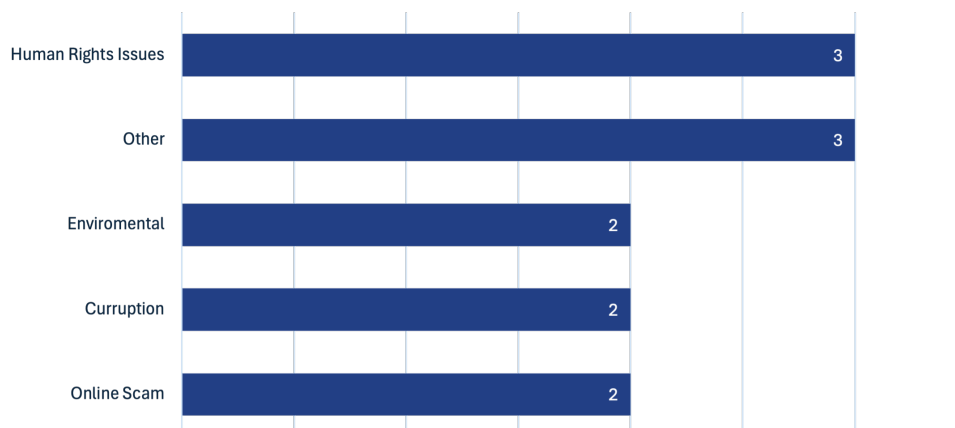
Chart represents the violations against journalists (April-June)



Findings in this quarter show that journalists working for online media outlets are most often exposed to violations, as in the previous quarter. These figures coincide with a broader trend of increasing online surveillance and escalating risks associated with using digital platforms for independent reporting.

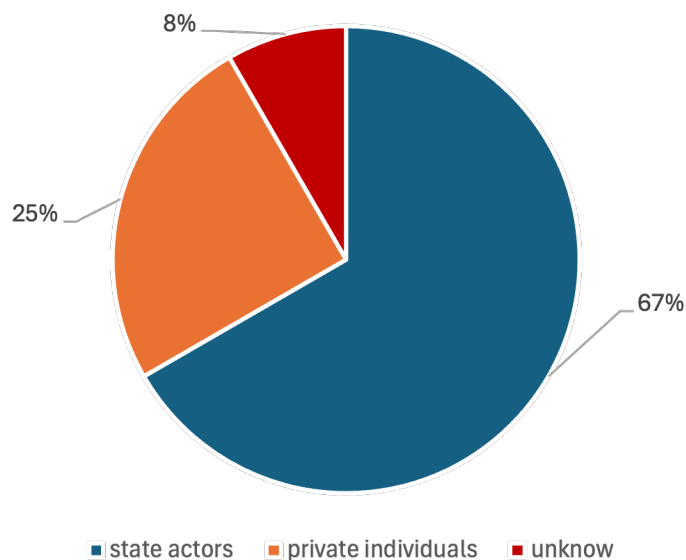
The documented violations arose from reporting on a range of issues, including online scams, corruption, human rights, and the environment.

Topics led to the violations against journalists (April-June)



Of the 12 recorded violations, eight allegedly involved state actors identified as responsible for the documented incidents. These actors operated at the national (ministry-level), provincial and the local levels (police). Three cases involved private individuals (a businessperson) while one case was perpetrated by an unknown individual (the victim cannot identify perpetrator). Six of the journalists affected had previously experienced violations in connection with their work.

Actors responsible for violations (April-June)



The violations had a range of impacts on individual journalists, ranging from enforced admissions of wrongdoing and the signing of apology letters to restrictions on freedom of movement, psychological distress, self-censorship, and the enforced removal of journalistic content. In seven cases, journalists were forced to delete content related to their reporting.

Of the 12 documented cases, eight were no longer active at the time of reporting, as authorities had taken no further action against the journalist. In these cases, proceedings ceased after the journalists complied with official demands, including admitting wrongdoing, issuing public apologies, removing published content, or deleting photographs. Two cases remained active at the time of reporting, with the journalists still awaiting the outcome of proceedings after the cases were referred to the courts. Two other cases were closed after the journalists and those allegedly responsible for the violations reached an agreement to end the dispute.

As shown in Table 1, the violations documented in the period cover four key safety dimensions: legal safety, psychological safety, physical safety and other violations against the right to freedom of expression.

TABLE 1: BREAKDOWN OF VIOLATIONS BY SAFETY DIMENSIONS

Safety dimension	# of violations	# of incidents
Legal safety	4	4
Physical safety	2	2
Psychological safety	2	2
Other violations against right to freedom of expression	4	2
Total	12	10

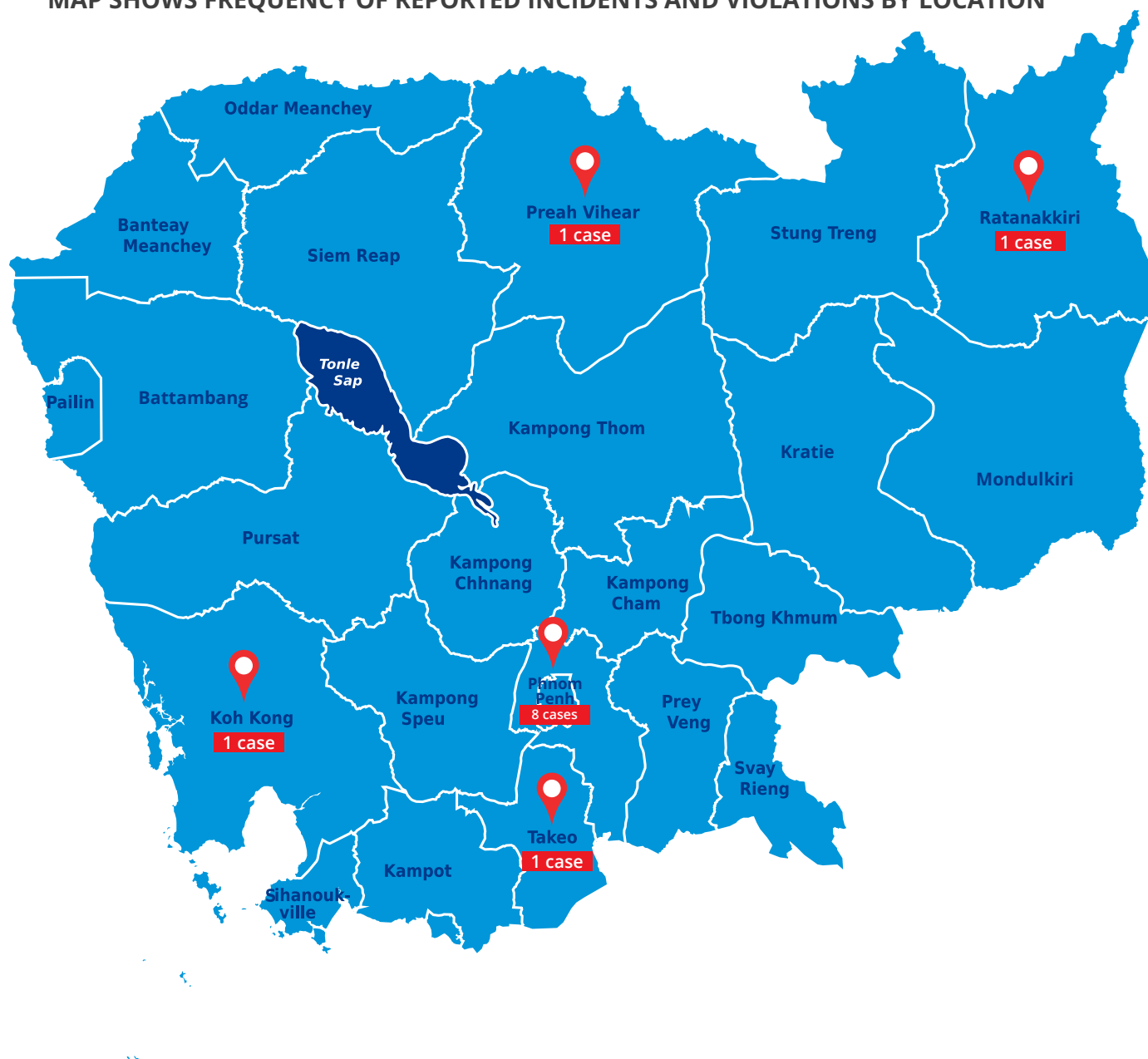
Table 2 breaks down the types and frequency of human rights violations and acts recorded during the period. As shown, one violation of the right to psychological integrity, involving two cases of intimidation. Two violations of right to physical security, including one case of assault and one threat of physical harm. Four violations involved the right to due process and liberty, comprising three cases of detention and one case of summons/interrogation. The remaining instances documented were violations of other violations against right to freedom of expression, including two cases of denial of access and two incidents involving the blocking or removal of content.

TABLE 2: TYPES AND FREQUENCY OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND ACTS RECORDED

Type of human rights violation	Acts included	Type of acts	# of violations
Right to psychological integrity	Acts connected to journalistic activity intended to induce fear or emotional distress	Intimidation	2
Right to physical security	Acts connected to journalistic activity causing (attack) bodily harm or intending to (threat) cause bodily harm	Assault	1
		Threat of physical harm	1
Right to due process and liberty	Arbitrary legal acts against liberty intended to discourage, restrict or control journalistic expression.	Detention	3
		Summons/interrogation	1
Other violations against right to freedom of expression	Acts constituting censorship or control of journalistic expression not covered elsewhere	Denial of access	2
		Blocking or removal of content	2
Total			12

Violations were documented across several cities and provinces, with incidents recorded in Phnom Penh, Takeo, Rattanakiri, Koh Kong, and Preah Vihear (see map infographic).

MAP SHOWS FREQUENCY OF REPORTED INCIDENTS AND VIOLATIONS BY LOCATION



V. Update on Previous Cases

1. Journalist Released on Bail After Two Months in Pre-Trial Detention

An online journalist in Banteay Meanchey province who was arrested in February after reporting on suspected online scam activities was released on bail on 8 April 2026, following two months of pre-trial detention.

The journalist, Hem Vanna, was arrested on 3 February 2026 by Poipet military police after reporting on a suspected online scam compound in Poipet town, Banteay Meanchey province. He was later charged with incitement to commit a felony under Article 495 and with intercepting or recording private conversations under Article 301 of the Criminal Code, and was placed in pre-trial detention.

On 26 March, the Court of Appeal in Battambang province held a bail hearing. However, on 2 April, the court rejected his request for release. A subsequent hearing was held on 7 April 2026 at the Banteay Meanchey Provincial Court, which then granted bail. Vanna was released on the afternoon of 8 April 2026,

Prior to his arrest, Vanna was summoned by Poipet military police without being informed of the reason. He was later transferred to the Banteay Meanchey provincial military police in connection with allegations that he had published misleading information about online scams.



*Hem Vanna stands outside the Banteay Meanchey Provincial Court following a hearing on July 16, 2026.
(Photo: Facebook ADHOC)*

2. Supreme Court Upholds 14-Year Prison Sentences for Two Journalists



*A van prepared to transport journalists Phon Sopheap and Pheap Pheara to Siem Reap Provincial Prison following their Supreme Court hearing on 19 June 2026.
(Photo: Im Naren)*

On 25 June 2026, the Supreme Court upheld the ruling of the Court of Appeal in Battambang Province, affirming the 14-year prison sentences imposed on journalists Phon Sopheap and Pheap Pheara.

The two journalists were convicted by Siem Reap Provincial Court on 17 December 2025 to 14 years in prison on charges of supplying a foreign state with information prejudicial to national defense. On 26 March 2026, the Court of Appeal in Battambang Province upheld the provincial court's judgment.

The Supreme Court conducted hearing the case on 19 June 2026 and the verdict announced on June 25, upheld the ruling of the Court of Appeal in Battambang Province.

Prom Yorn, Sopheap's mother, fought back tears as she denied that her son had betrayed the country or passed information to foreign entities. She described him as a journalist who regularly reported on social issues and said any mistake he may have made was unintentional.

"I urge the court and the government to show leniency toward my son because he did not do this intentionally," she said. "He has been separated from his wife and children, and we are getting old. Please release my son."

Sopheap's wife, Hong Tha, echoed her mother-in-law's appeal. "He has become thinner than before. He is a good journalist," she said. "I hope the leaders and the court will help reduce this sentence because my husband is a gentle person."

Information Ministry spokesperson Tep Asnarith said journalists "must distinguish between journalism and national security" and avoid activities that violate the law. He said the ministry had provided support and intervened before and during the legal process.

VI. Conclusion

The findings from CamboJA's monitoring during the second quarter of 2026 demonstrate that journalists in Cambodia continue to face challenges in carrying out their work safely and independently. The documented violations show that legal intimidation, restrictions on reporting, physical harm, and psychological pressure remain persistent obstacles to media freedom. Together, these violations contribute to a climate of fear and self-censorship, limiting journalists' ability to report on issues of public interest.

Legal intimidation remains the most common form of violation, reflecting a continuing pattern in which criminal law is used against journalists reporting on sensitive topics instead of relying on the safeguards and remedies provided under the Cambodian Press Law. Journalists covering issues such as online scams, corruption, and matters involving influential individuals continue to face arrest, prosecution, pressure to remove published content, and other forms of intimidation that discourage independent reporting.

These concerns are reinforced by broader developments affecting the media environment. The implementation of new press accreditation regulations has created additional barriers for independent and freelance journalists, while expanded efforts to combat so-called "fake news" raise concerns that broadly defined enforcement measures could be used to restrict legitimate journalism and critical expression. Combined with the continued narrowing of civic and political space, these developments risk further limiting access to information and reducing opportunities for open public debate.

The findings also indicate that state actors, particularly local authorities, continue to be the primary alleged action takers (those allegedly responsible for the violations) of violations against journalists. The lack of accountability for these actions contributes to a climate of impunity, increasing the risk of further violations, and undermining public confidence in the protection of fundamental freedoms.

The violations documented during this reporting period are inconsistent with Cambodia's constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression and press freedom, as well as its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Protecting journalists from intimidation and retaliation is essential not only for safeguarding individual rights but also for ensuring the public's access to accurate, timely, and independent information.

Without meaningful reforms to prevent the misuse of criminal law, review restrictive media regulations, and strengthen protections for journalists, the space for independent journalism in Cambodia is likely to continue shrinking. Ensuring a safe and enabling environment for journalists is essential to promoting transparency, accountability, informed public participation, and democratic governance.

VII. Annex

1. Journalist Questioned by Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training

The details of this case are withheld from publication in this report in accordance with the “do no harm” principle. *(Type of act: Intimidation)*

2. Journalist Threatened with Physical Attack While Returning from News Reporting

On 20 June 2026, an online journalist was reportedly threatened with physical harm by unidentified individuals while returning from a reporting assignment near a border crossing in Preah Vihear province.

The journalist told CamboJA on 3 July that he had been reporting on the alleged import of Thai goods into Cambodia from Laos through a border crossing in the province. While filming the transportation of goods along the border corridor, he noticed an individual photographing him before following him as he drove away.

According to the journalist, a Toyota Highlander and a motorcycle then began following him and repeatedly attempted to ram the rear of his car.

When he reached Narong Village in Chab Pir Commune, Chab District, one of the individuals approached and struck his vehicle. The journalist said there were four individuals involved—two in the Toyota Highlander and two on the motorcycle. All were wearing face masks, making them impossible to identify. He locked his car doors and was able to drive away safely.

On 22 June 2026, the Preah Vihear Provincial Administration issued a statement describing the incident as a personal dispute between private individuals. The statement also said that the journalist had not filed a formal complaint with the authorities. However, the journalist denied having any personal dispute with the individuals involved.

The journalist said he reported the incident to the police by telephone on the day it occurred. On 23 June 2026, he said the Preah Vihear Provincial Police asked him to come to the police station to identify two suspects who had been arrested following his report and to determine whether they were involved in the incident.

However, when he arrived at the police station, the journalist said officers informed him that, instead of identifying suspects, he had been named in a complaint filed by an individual identified as Lim Chhavy, who accused him of trespassing. The journalist said he did not know the complainant and did not understand the basis of the allegation, as he maintained that he had only entered the area near the border while carrying out his reporting assignment.

According to the journalist, police later informed him that the trespassing case had been forwarded to the court. The Provincial Police spokesperson declined to provide further information on the case. *(Type of act: Threat of physical harm)*

3. Journalist and Observer Barred from Supreme Court Hearing

On 19 June, a journalist and an observer from media associations were denied access to a Supreme Court hearing involving two journalists who had been sentenced to 14 years in prison. A journalist and media observer said they were prevented from entering the courtroom.

The hearing took place on the same day as Rong Chhun's case, when hundreds of supporters gathered outside the court. Authorities erected barricades around the court's compound and restricted access to the premises.

A CamboJA representative who was monitoring the case had requested many times to authorities to access the hearing, explained the authorities that the purpose was solely to observe the journalists' hearing and that the presence was unrelated to Rong Chhun's case. However, the request was still denied.

On 19 June 2026, the Supreme Court held a hearing on the case of journalists Phon Sopheap and Pheap Pheara, who had been sentenced to 14 years in prison by the lower courts. *(Type of act: Denial of access)*

4. Two Journalists Barred from Photographing Protest in Front of Chinese Embassy

On 16 June 2026, a photographer and a female citizen journalist were prevented by police officers from taking photographs of protesters in front of the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh.

The incident occurred when protesters, including Chinese nationals who said they were victims of Huione Bank, gathered in front of the Chinese Embassy to seek intervention for the return of money they said they had lost to the bank.

The photographer said on 16 June 2026 that while he was taking photographs of the protest, police officers approached him and asked, “Do you have permission from the embassy?” Although he was standing in a public area outside the embassy compound, police ordered him to delete all photographs related to the Chinese Embassy. He said he complied to avoid being detained by police.

During the incident, a female citizen journalist was also prevented by police from taking photographs. She told CamboJA that while she was photographing the protest, police officers approached her, took her phone, and deleted all the photographs she had taken. In a video seen by CamboJA, the journalist is seen filming and taking pictures of the protest before a police officer approached and took her smartphone.

Both journalists said they were later allowed to stay at the compound during the protest, but were warned not to take photographs. *(Type of act: Blocking or removal of content)*

5. Photojournalist Detained for Questioning While Covering Protest in Front of Chinese Embassy

On 8 June 2026, a photographer from a local media outlet was arrested and taken to Tuol Svay Prey 1 Commune Police Station for questioning while covering a protest by Huione Bank customers in front of the Chinese Embassy in Phnom Penh. According to information provided to CamboJA by the outlet’s publisher on 9 June 2026, the journalist was detained for approximately two hours at the commune police station before being released following the publisher’s intervention. The publisher told police that the journalist was carrying out his professional duties. The journalist and publisher declined to provide further details about the incident. *(Type of act: Detention)*

6. Foreign Journalist Reporting in Cambodia Threatened

A foreign journalist who is known for reporting on scam-related crimes and abduction cases in Cambodia said he was threatened by the owners of a Phnom Penh apartment where an alleged kidnapping reportedly took place.

The journalist told CamboJA on 2 June that the incident occurred on 30 May 2026. He said that a foreign couple who owned the apartment had threatened him via WeChat after he published a report on an alleged kidnapping at the property. According to the journalist, the couple demanded that he remove the apartment's name from the article and warned that he would face consequences if he failed to do so.

On 1 June 2026, the journalist also posted on his X account, writing: "No more time! It's so difficult to do news reporting in Chinese in Cambodia. Yesterday, we received another threat because of our reporting on the kidnapping case at Vue Aston apartment. They even demanded that the Tencent platform ban our WeChat official account."

The journalist said the couple also offered him money to delete the article, but he refused. He added that the wife continued to warn him, saying, "Don't harm more people."

However, the journalist said the situation had improved after the couple withdrew their complaint to the WeChat platform on 1 June 2026. He did not provide a reason for the withdrawal. When asked whether his report on the alleged kidnapping had been removed, he confirmed that the article remained online and had not been deleted. *(Type of act: Intimidation)*

7. Journalist Assaulted While Photographing Timber Transportation

On April 10, 2026, a journalist from NMR TV in Ratanakiri Province was assaulted by a man identified as a driver of a timber transportation truck in Ratanakiri province.

The journalist was grabbed and slammed to the ground during the altercation.

The journalist told CamboJA that on the day of the incident, he and two other journalists were traveling by motorbike. Along the way, they noticed a truck carrying timber parked in front of a man's house, who was later identified as one of the perpetrators.

According to the journalist, the group stopped behind the truck and attempted to photograph it. At that point, the man approached them and questioned their presence,

asking, “What are you doing here behind the truck?” In response, one journalist asked what the truck was carrying.

The man replied that it was transporting timber on behalf of a “high-ranking government official.” He then mockingly challenged the journalists to take photos, stating, “Do you want to take a photo? So, just do it!”

The journalist said he proceeded to photograph the truck, which led to a verbal confrontation. The situation quickly escalated when the man allegedly grabbed him and slammed him to the ground.

Other journalists who were present intervened and helped the victim leave the scene. The incident occurred in Village 2, Trapeang Chres Commune, Kon Mom District, Ratanakiri Province.

The journalist reported that the alleged perpetrator was immediately detained by village guards and handed over to the commune police after a complaint was filed.

According to information later received by the journalist, the suspect was released on April 12, 2026, by a prosecutor from the Ratanakiri Provincial Court. However, the journalist said he was not informed of the reasons for the release.

On May 6, 2026, the journalist and his lawyer were summoned by the provincial court for questioning regarding the incident. He stated that during the session, a court official questioned him about the case but indicated that no further action would be taken because the alleged perpetrator had already been released. *(Type of act: Physical assault)*

8. A Journalist Detained Over Hospital Report

The details of this case are withheld from publication in this report in accordance with the “do no harm” principle.

9. Journalist Summoned after reporting on the detention of Chinese national

On 2 April 2026, a journalist from Koh Kong Hot News was summoned for questioning by the Koh Kong Provincial Police for seven hours after reporting on the detention of a group of Chinese nationals during a provincial crackdown on alleged illegal immigration.

The journalist was summoned following his report alleging that Koh Kong provincial police had arbitrarily detained a group of Chinese nationals in the province.

In an interview with CamboJA on 2 April, the journalist said the matter was resolved after he agreed to delete the report at the request of the provincial police. No formal charges were filed in connection with the summons.

Previously, on 31 March, the journalist was summoned for questioning by Pursat provincial police after reporting a similar crackdown on alleged illegal immigration in Pursat Province.

Authorities accused him of public insult in relation to the report, which was also removed following orders from local authorities. *(Type of act: Summons/Interrogation)*

10. A journalist was arrested in connection with Facebook post

On 2 April 2026, a journalist from PKN Hot News was arrested by Kampong Speu provincial police, in cooperation with Trumkak district police in Takeo province. He was sent to court for questioning in connection with a Facebook post that criticized a provincial court official for allegedly taking bribes from gamblers.

According to local rights group ADHOC, the journalist was arrested without a clearly stated reason. Information collected from social media posts suggests that the arrest was linked to commentary he posted in mid-March 2026. In the post, he alleged that a Kampong Speu provincial court official had received bribes of USD 2,000 from each cockfighting gambler in exchange for their release, bringing the alleged total to USD 6,000. He also claimed that provincial authorities were behind illegal gambling.

On 31 March 2026, the prosecution office of the Kampong Speu Provincial Court issued a letter denying the report. The letter stated that three people had been accused of operating online gambling. However, after they were arrested and questioned, the court found that the case involved only a minor misdemeanor. The letter also said the journalist's report should have been checked more carefully before publication. A few days later, on 2 April, the journalist was arrested.

On 4 April 2026, the PKN Hot News page published a video in which the journalist apologized and acknowledged wrongdoing after his release. CamboJA made several attempts to contact the journalist and his family for further information, but they could not be reached.

Another local rights group, LICADHO, also confirmed the case, although no further details were available. *(Type of act: Detention)*

Report cases of journalists' rights violations

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