

# MEIN

MEDIA AND EXPRESSION IN NIGERIA

Vol 2, No 4  
April 2023



# **MEDIA AND EXPRESSION IN NIGERIA (MEiN)**

*Vol 2, No. 4 • April 2023*



**Institute for Media and Society**

*Nigeria*

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

This section of the report provides a list of the abbreviations used in this document. Each abbreviation is listed in alphabetical order, followed by its full form.

These are the abbreviations used in this report:

ARCON - Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria

CJID - Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development

CPJ - Committee to Protect Journalists

FCT - Federal Capital Territory

IMS - Institute for Media and Society

MEiN - Media and Expression in Nigeria

NBC - National Broadcasting Commission

NFVCB - National Film and Video Censors Board

NHRC - National Human Rights Commission

NITDA - National Information and Technology Development Agency

NTA - Nigerian Television Authority

PIAFO - Policy Implementation Assisted Forum

SERAP - Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project

## **BACKGROUND**

Media and Expression in Nigeria (MEiN) is a monthly report by the Institute for Media and Society. The report focuses on the developments that affect freedom of the media and expression in the country. This initiative involves monitoring the editorial content of various media sources and the actions of pertinent stakeholders.

## METHODOLOGY

This combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The data is coded by media monitors using a content analysis method that assigns codes to the units of analysis categorised under the following headings:

- **Issues:** the topics or themes that relate to MEiN during the period in review. The topics include various types of attacks on the media and other victims, regulation of the media space, and other related themes.
- **Actors:** the individuals or groups that are involved in or influence the issues. These actors include the government and its agencies, journalists and the media in general, as well as politicians and political parties.
- **Victims:** the individuals or groups that suffer harm or loss as a result of the issues or actions of the actors, and could be any of the individuals or groups identified under actors.

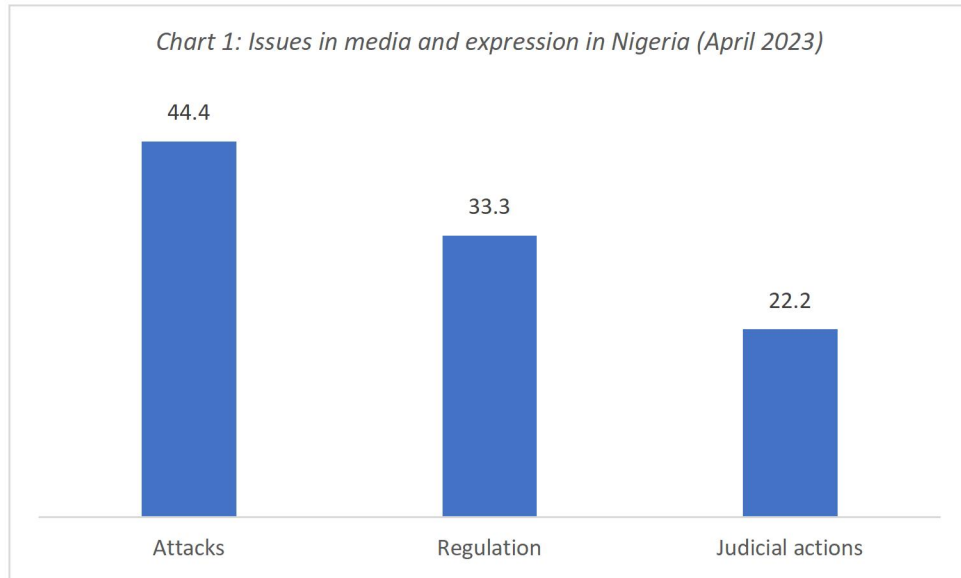
The coding process is done by trained media monitors who follow a coding scheme that defines the categories and sub-categories of each unit of analysis. The coding scheme also specifies the rules and criteria for assigning codes to the data. The coded data is then translated into a spreadsheet for further analysis.

The analysis of the data employs description and visualization techniques such as graphs, charts and tables to present the results clearly and concisely.

The research also employs a qualitative method that complements the quantitative method by highlighting some of the contents driving the data trends.

## ISSUES

These were the topics that dominated the contents tracked during the period in review.



### Attacks

Chart 1 shows the distribution of 18 stories across topics related to media and expression in Nigeria in April 2023. Eight of these stories concerned attacks on the media and other victims, and represented 44.4% of the distribution. The attacks included assault, detention, censorship and denial of access.

#### Examples:

1. “Agba Jalingo released after one week in prison over alleged cybercrime,” [TheCable reported](#) on April 3.

“Agba Jalingo, the publisher of CrossRiverWatch, has been released from the medium-security custodial centre in Kuje, federal capital territory (FCT),” the report read.

“CrossRiverWatch reports that Jalingo was released on Monday after his release warrant was signed and served on correctional authorities.

“Last Monday, Jalingo was remanded in prison after he was arraigned on a two-count charge bordering on false publication against Elizabeth, wife of Frank Ayade. Frank is the brother of Ben Ayade, governor of Cross River state.”

2. “Banana Island management refuses journalists access to collapsed building site,” [TheCable reported](#) on April 13.

“The management of Banana Island estate in Lagos has refused to grant access to the site of the collapsed seven-storey building,” the report read.

“TheCable had reported that a seven-storey building collapsed in Banana Island on Wednesday evening. The incident was said to have happened when workers were inside the building.

“Reacting to the incident, the Lagos State Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development said a few people sustained injuries and no fatality.

“When TheCable visited the area on Thursday morning, access to the site of the collapsed seven-storey building was not granted.

“Private security personnel manning the estate told TheCable reporter and other journalists that the management directed that no journalist should be allowed to gain access into the estate. The journalists, however, assembled their cameras and other gadgets outside the estate gate.”

3. “Nigerian police officer attacks journalist Benedict Uwalaka over protest coverage,” [CPJ reported](#) on April 18.

“On the morning of Monday, April 17, an unidentified police officer attacked Uwalaka, a freelance photojournalist working with the privately owned Daily Trust newspaper, while he covered a protest at an airport in Lagos, according to [a report](#) by the Daily Trust and Uwalaka, who spoke to CPJ by phone,” the report said.

“Uwalaka said that the officer injured his hand, which was still painful the following day, and damaged his camera, breaking its screen and preventing its lens from reattaching.

“Uwalaka told CPJ that he was covering a protest by aviation workers at the airport when an officer sitting in a police vehicle with two other officers summoned him and criticized the journalist for taking a woman’s photo without her permission.”

4. “Silverbird TV Reporter Attacked, Brutalised By Police For Filming Riot Incident In Oyo,” [Tori NG](#) reported on April 26.

“According to a report by SaharaReporters, some personnel of the Oyo State Police Command have attacked a reporter.

“The officers, on Tuesday attacked and physically inflicted bodily injury on a Silverbird News24 reporter while on assignment in Ibadan, Oyo State capital.

“The journalist, John Alabi, while narrating his ordeal after spending about five hours in police detention behind the counter displayed his bruised face.

“Alabi explained that the policemen numbering about five attacked him while taking photos and making a video of them when they were dispersing a rowdy crowd, adding that they took away his phone and prevented him from calling his office.”

## **Regulation**

There were six stories focusing on regulation, representing 33.3% of the total.

### *Examples:*

1. “2023 Polls: NHRC Cautions NBC Against Sanctioning of Media Houses,” [ThisDay reported](#) on April 3.

“The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has appealed to the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) to apply caution when acting on petitions of political parties against media organisations,” the report read.

“The appeal came against the backdrop of the sanction against Channels TV by NBC after a petition was written against the news channel by one of the All Progressives Party (APC’s) Presidential Campaign Committee (PCC) spokesperson for airing an interview with the vice-presidential candidate of the Labour Party (LP), Alhaji Datti Baba Ahmed, that was allegedly inciting.

“Channels TV was slammed a penalty of N5 million by the broadcasting control body and further warned against airing any content that could incite the public to violence following Datti’s interview.”

2. “ARCON law will save N120 billion capital flight yearly, says Johnson,” [The Guardian reported](#) on April 11.

“Chief Executive Officer of Lilvera Group, Mr Buchi Johnson, has said the new law setting up Advertising Regulatory Council of Nigeria (ARCON) has prevented a capital flight to the tune of N120 billion,” the report read.

“Johnson, who spoke to the media recently, said, ‘The law provides that, with effect from January 1, 2023, advertisers must use a cumulative 75 per cent of local content in all ads and marketing directed at the Nigerian market. This is exciting because the country has been losing about ₦120 billion yearly due to capital flight in the sector where ads targeted at Nigerians were produced externally creating jobs in other economies but not in the targeted economy, Nigeria.’

“Johnson said this law is expected to create over 500,000 jobs yearly. So, this will lead to more multinational brands using Nigerian talents, agencies and producers in commercials targeted at the Nigerian market.”

3. “Why we can’t ban ‘Gangs of Lagos’ — NFVCB,” [Vanguard reported](#) on April 15.

“Following the controversies that have trailed the movie, ‘Gangs of Lagos’, since it was released on Amazon Prime Video, the National Film and Video Censors Board, NFVCB, has explained why they cannot ban it.

“The Executive Director and CEO of the regulatory body, Alhaji Adedayo Thomas, said the board can’t take any action against the movie for now.

“According to him, the NFVCB has no legal backing to regulate what is being exhibited on the online platform.

“Alhaji Thomas made this known in a telephone chat with Vanguard yesterday. He regretted that regulating online platforms poses a lot of difficulties since it’s not part of the mandate of the Board.”

4. “Nigerians Call On NBC To Sanction NTA Over Broadcast Of Binani’s ‘Illegal’ Acceptance Speech,” [The Whistler reported](#) on April 18.

“Some Nigerians have called on the National Broadcasting Commission, NBC to sanction Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) over the broadcast of Senator Aisha Dahiru Binani’s ‘illegal’ acceptance speech as Adamawa state Governor,” the report said.

“This comes barely 72 hours after Binani was declared as Adamawa State governor in the just concluded governorship supplementary polls, on April 15.

“Following her declaration by Adamawa Resident Electoral Commissioner, REC, Mr Hudu Yunusa-Ari, Binani was seen reading an acceptance speech on Nigerian Television Authority, NTA.

“It was reported that when the REC announced Binani as the poll winner, the results of the supplementary election from 10 LGAs were yet to be collated.”

5. “NITDA Bill may compound regulatory, compliance hurdles for digital economy,” [The Guardian reported](#) on April 19.

“With calls on the National Information and Technology Development Agency (NITDA) to focus more on developmental issues, stakeholders in the sector have said that passing the pending NITDA Bill into law is a recipe that would engender regulatory and compliance hurdles for businesses in the digital economy,” the report read.

“Information and Communications Technology (ICT) stakeholders, at a gathering in Lagos, organised by the Policy Implementation Assisted Forum (PIAFO), to discuss the pending 2021 NITDA Bill, said passing it into law, could worsen the issue of multiple regulations and multiple taxation in the industry.”

## **Judicial actions**

Judicial actions got four stories or 22.2% of the distribution.

*Examples:*

1. “SERAP, CJID Sue Buhari, Others Over N5m Fine On Channels TV,” the television station [reported](#) on April 9.

“The Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) and Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID) have filed a lawsuit against President Muhammadu Buhari over the N5 million fine on Channels Television,” the report read.

“In the suit, they are asking the court to ‘declare arbitrary, illegal and unconstitutional the N5m fine imposed on Channels Television over a recent interview with the Labour Party vice-presidential candidate, Datti Baba-Ahmed.’

“Joined in the suit as Defendants are the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and Mr Lai Mohammed, Minister of Information and Culture. NBC had recently fined Channels Television N5 million over an interview with Datti Baba-Ahmed. NBC alleged that the interview ‘violated the NBC code.’”

2. “Defamation: Journalists to challenge conviction by Kwara magistrate, give reasons,” [Premium Times reported](#) on April 9.

“Two Nigerian journalists convicted of defaming an agro-allied company in Kwara State have vowed to challenge the judgement and have it overturned by a higher court,” the report read.

“A magistrate’s court in Ilorin, Kwara State, on 7 February, convicted Gidado Shuaib and Alfred Olufemi for publishing a defamatory article against Hillcrest Agro-Allied Industries Limited.

“In the contested publication published by an online platform, News Digest, the article said Hillcrest Agro-Allied Industries Limited, a firm located at Kilometre 4, Ajase-Ipo along Offa Road, Amberi Village, Kwara State, allowed its staff members to smoke Indian hemp freely.

“In the verdict, A.S Muhammad, a senior magistrate, said ‘the defendants had common intention in publishing’ the damaging article ‘and must have intended the natural consequences.’

“Mr Muhammad further ruled that ‘the elements of defamation have been established by the prosecution.’



“The magistrate sentenced the journalists to two months imprisonment with an option of N40,000 fine on one of the two counts preferred against them – the offence of conspiracy.

“He sentenced each of them to a fine of N60,000 on the count of defamation or three months imprisonment in default of payment.

“The magistrate clarified that ‘each of the convicts is to pay a fine of N100,000 only for the offences of conspiracy and defamation respectively, having been convicted.’

3. “‘Cyberstalking’: Court grants Chude Nnamdi, social media influencer, N10m bail,” [TheCable reported](#) on April 20, citing the News Agency of Nigeria.

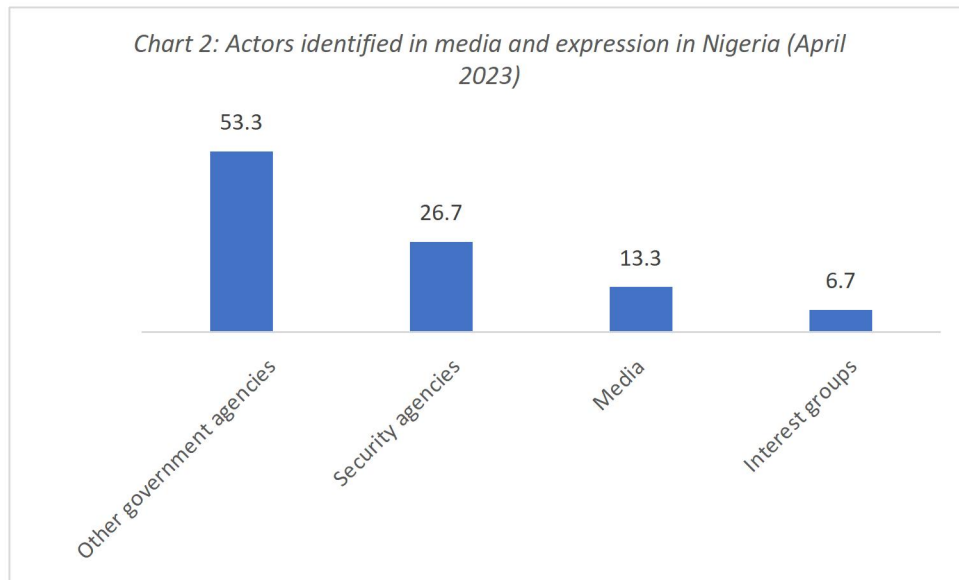
“A federal high court sitting in Abuja has granted bail to Chude Nnamdi, a social media influencer,” the report said.

“Chude was arraigned on Thursday before Gladys Olotu, the trial judge, on a one-count charge of cyberstalking.

“However, the social media influencer pleaded not guilty to the charge. According to NAN, Usman Baba Alkali, the inspector-general of police, was the prosecutor in the case.”

## ACTORS

This section concerns the personalities and groups who were prominent in the relevant stories tracked in April 2023. It also concerns the actors identified as the major instigators or perpetrators of attacks against the media and (or) citizens’ right to freedom of expression.

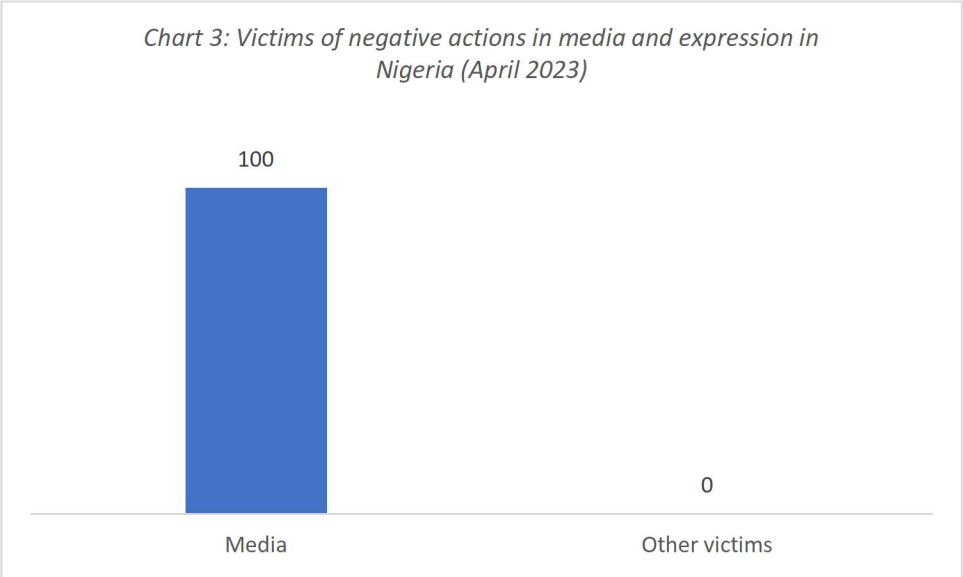


According to Chart 2, other government agencies were the most prominent actors as they were identified in eight stories or 53.3% of 15 applicable reports. Security agencies were the actors identified in four reports, representing 26.7% of the total. Whereas the media got 13.3% (two reports) of the total visibility, interest groups were the least visible as they were featured in one report, or 6.7% of the total.

# VICTIMS

These were the individuals or groups that suffered harm or loss as a result of the issues or actions of the actors. The stories tracked for this section involved, but are not limited to, the following form of ‘negative actions’:

- arrests
- threats
- detention
- censorship
- assault



The media (100%; eight applicable reports) were the only victims identified in this section, Chart 3 shows.

# CONCLUSION

MEiN analysis for the period in review showed that attacks on the media and other victims were the most prevalent theme, accounting for 44.4% of the stories. Regulation and judicial actions also got attention. Government agencies were the most prominent actors, with the media and interest groups getting minimal visibility as actors. The media were the most attacked victims, with most of the negative actions perpetrated by security agencies.

**MEiN** is published

*by*

Institute for Media and Society (IMS)

3, Emina Crescent, Off Toyin Street,

Ikeja Lagos, Nigeria

Phone:

Email: [info@imesoimeso.org](mailto:info@imesoimeso.org), [imesoimeso@hotmail.com](mailto:imesoimeso@hotmail.com)

Website: [www.imesoimeso.org](http://www.imesoimeso.org)

