

**February 2024 Report – Executive Summary**  
**National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists**  
**Monitoring Unit of the Occupational Safety Center**

**Part One: Attacks on Journalists and Photojournalists during the Second Round of Local Elections**

The Monitoring Unit recorded 17 attacks on journalists and photojournalists, from February 1, 2024, to the end of the same month.

The attacks were divided into a single attack outside the voting day and 16 attacks during the voting day for the second round of local elections.

The attacks during the second round of local elections on February 4, 2024, affected 20 victims, including 7 men and 13 women, all of whom are officially accredited journalists and photojournalists by the Independent High Authority for Elections to cover the electoral process.

The victims of the attacks work in 11 media institutions, which are radio stations, a website, a news agency, and a written newspaper.

The attacks were geographically divided into 6 attacks in the Governorate of Medenine and 4 attacks in the Governorate of Nabeul.

The attacks also affected 2 journalists and photojournalists in the Governorate of Gafsa. A single attack (01) was also recorded against journalists and photojournalists in each of the Governorates of Béja, Zaghouan, Bizerte, Sousse, and Tunis.

The Unit also recorded 4 cases of work ban as well as 8 cases of withholding information and 5 cases of harassment, most of which were filming journalists' personal information.

Most of the attacks were related to the heads of polling stations, where they were responsible for 10 attacks. Local coordinators were also involved in 5 attacks against journalists and photojournalists.

The Authority was responsible for a single harassment by issuing warnings, while the security officers were responsible for a single attack.

## **Part Two: Attacks on journalists and photojournalists outside the election pathway**

The Monitoring Unit recorded 15 attacks against journalists and photojournalists, during February 2024, outside the pathway of local elections.

The attacks affected 16 victims (10 women and 6 men). The victim journalists work in 15 media institutions, including 5 radio channels, 3 television channels, 3 websites, 3 written newspapers, and one news agency.

During February 2024, journalists were banned from carrying out their work on 7 occasions and faced 5 occasions of information withholding. The Unit also recorded one case of physical assault (1), one case of incitement (1), and one case of judicial tracking.

The recorded attacks were attributed to regional delegates and ministries on 3 occasions each. Additionally, judicial authorities and citizens were responsible for 2 incidents each. Furthermore, communication officers, public employees, foreign official authorities, and social media activists were each responsible for a single incident.

The locations of the attacks were as follows: 14 in physical space and one in virtual space.

The attacks were geographically distributed as follows: 10 cases in the Governorate of Tunis, 3 cases in the Governorate of Nabeul, 1 case in each of the Governorates of Kairouan and Sousse, and a single attack recorded on Libyan territory.

## **Recommendations**

**The National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists, after detailing the attacks on journalists during the first round of the local elections and during February, recommends:**

**The Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE):**

- To investigate instances where polling station heads and office chiefs obstructed the work of journalists and photojournalists, follow up administratively and investigate these incidents, and report back to the Syndicate with the outcomes and actions taken regarding them.
- Cutting off with the warning system, deemed as harassment, which was practiced by the Authority during the second round of the elections 4 times during February and January 2024.

**The Syndicate also calls on:**

**The Presidency of the Republic:**

- To investigate the obfuscation carried out by the governor of Nabeul and suspicions of imposing illegal obstacles and licenses on press statements in the Governorate of Nabeul, affecting regional officials and government communication regarding the visit of state officials, governorate activities, and regional authorities.

**Presidency of the Government**

- To convene an emergency ministerial council on government communication, reassessing internal circulars impeding the right to information, and redistributing tasks among parties to enhance media freedom and effectiveness.
- To initiate an investigation into instances of withholding information reported against the Ministry of Agriculture due to the sector's substantial influence on the lives of Tunisians and public interest, identify accountabilities, and enforce disciplinary actions to prevent recurrence.

**Prosecutor General of the Court of First Instance in Tunis**

- To fulfill his legal role by granting media licenses to attend the hearings, especially in cases of great public interest, specifically cases of political

assassination, and enabling journalists to cover the hearings of the murderers of the martyr Shukri Belaid.