



Three Freedoms Under the Magnifying Glass Violations of Basic Human Rights in Serbia

July 17 - July 30, 2026

Freedom of Expression

Criminal complaint and arrest warrant against a military analyst

The Higher Public Prosecutor's Office ordered the Ministry of Internal Affairs to file a criminal complaint against journalist and military analyst Aleksandar Radić, on suspicion that he committed the offense of preparing acts against the constitutional order and security of the Republic of Serbia, as well as on suspicion of disclosing classified information. Last March, Radić spoke in the media about the alleged use of a sound cannon against citizens participating in the student protest on March 15. The issue of using this weapon against citizens resurfaced in June, when the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office announced that charges would be brought against organizers, those who acted, people who provided media support, and those who helped arrange medical examinations. At that time, part of the record from a student meeting appeared in the media, suggesting the action had been planned in advance. Since Radić has not been in Serbia since June 24, the Higher Court ordered an arrest warrant to be issued, citing the possibility that he might reoffend.

In its statement on the case, the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office also said there was reasonable suspicion that Radić, through his personal connections, had obtained classified documents marked "strictly confidential," "confidential," and "internal," and made them public. Parts of the correspondence were also released, along with the initials of the journalists and outlets Radić had been in contact with. The Journalists' Association of Serbia, the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia, and the Association of Independent Electronic Media warned that this endangers the safety of journalists and their sources and further fuels a climate of intimidation.

Radić's lawyer says the defense first learned the details from the prosecution's statement and from media reports, and that they had not received any official rulings. He later filed an appeal against the Higher Court in Belgrade's decision ordering detention and the arrest warrant.

Renewed threats against journalists

Comments on an article titled “Front-row tabloid spin: turning an ordinary protocol into a great honor for Serbia and Vučić,” published on the N1 portal, included threats against N1 news director Branislav Šovljanski and his family. Among other things, commenters wrote that he “should be impaled” and “burned alive.” NUNS notes that threats against other N1 journalists have previously come from the same IP address.

The hosts of the podcast Dobar, loš, zao, Marko Vidojković and Nenad Kulačin, received death threats on social media over an episode featuring guest Naim Leo Beširi. In recent months, similar threats against other journalists have been posted from the same account. Shortly after the media reported that the new threats had been reported to authorities, the same account holder again issued similar threats.

When the complaint was filed with the competent prosecutor's office, it was specifically noted that threats directed at a minister, the president, and an Informer editor had been effectively resolved, with suspects identified and arrested. In cases involving pressure on journalists, of which more than one hundred complaints have been filed over the past year and a half, only one has resulted in a final court ruling.

Officials block independent media from reporting

On July 19, a rally of the Serbian Progressive Party was held in Bačko Gradište, where journalists from Bečejski mozaik and the Webinfo portal were unable to cover or report on the event. Dane Basta, the provincial secretary for sport and youth, asked them to leave, saying: “This is a political, party rally, and you are part of the opposition.” Kristina Demeter Filipčev replied that she was a journalist, not part of the opposition, but after asking whether journalists could attend the rally, she received a negative answer. She has previously been the target of insults and misogynistic comments. The journalist and the Bečejski mozaik newsroom later received threats on social media in the comments under a video from the rally. In this case, too, there was no response from the authorities.

In Aranđelovac, journalists are not allowed to attend municipal assembly sessions, even though such sessions are supposed to be public, so only two local television stations have that access. Since the constitutive session in May, there has been no equal access for coverage and reporting. N1 journalists have repeatedly been denied accreditation. A criminal complaint was filed against Dragan Todorović, editor of the E stvarnost portal, for abuse of office, negligent performance of duty, and violation of equality through discrimination. Assembly secretary Đorđe Riznić then filed a criminal complaint against him for “false reporting.” Nikola Obradović, president of the Aranđelovac municipal assembly, denied a request from the portal's journalist, Ljiljana Stojanović, to cover the new assembly's first regular session. According to the journalist, he said: “he did not have time, due to obligations related to that day's session, to respond to eStvarnost's accreditation request sent the day before — or that she, as a media representative, should find out the outcome of the session through other media outlets.” Coverage of public gatherings and local government sessions must be equally accessible to everyone, with no possibility for certain outlets to be excluded.

Activist threatened with rape and being run over

Two men threatened Justina Arsić, an activist with the group “Struggle Is a Duty,” with rape and with being run over by a car. One of the attackers said he knew where she lived and what her political activities were. According to the group’s statement, “direct threats followed — that he could hardly wait to rape her, tied up among her ‘antifascist posters,’ until she started shouting ‘Aco, you Serb.’” The other attacker added that “he can hardly wait to run us all over at the blockades once he’s had enough.” One of the attackers was identified as a person who had also taken part in the attack on students and teachers at the Sremski Karlovci Gymnasium, while the other is the brother of an SNS official.

Lawyers, prosecutors, and judges under pressure

Retired prosecutor Jasmina Paunović announced that she would file lawsuits against Ana Brnabić and the television station Informer for targeting her and spreading falsehoods about her. She believes her reputation and honor were damaged by broadcast clips that attribute statements to her that she never made. On the order of the Higher Public Prosecutor’s Office, a complaint was filed against Paunović and the show’s host on suspicion of insulting, humiliating, and inciting discrimination against members of the Serbian Progressive Party, the president, and his family.

Judge Ksenija Marić became a target of pro-government media, which published her private photographs while claiming she was a “blockader judge who refused to order a search.” The media wrote about Aleksandar Perunović as an incompetent judge, but also as one “extremely prone to corrupt activities.”

On the V5 television station in Valjevo, lawyer Jana Aćimović Planojević and her family were accused of lying about attacks on citizens during last August’s protests in Valjevo. Aćimović Planojević and her parents are part of the legal team representing citizens who suffered violence at that protest. The media campaign against the lawyers began as early as July 5. This local station was bought by the owners of Alo and Informer, pro-government media. Aleksandar Vučić also referenced the lawyer, suggesting she was “almost linked to the suicide of a police officer from Priboj,” after which she began receiving threatening messages.

Targeting of media and NGOs

The show Report on the Lav Plus Čačak television station analyzed the financial reports of media outlets and NGOs with the aim of discrediting them. At the same time, they were accusing them of working against family values and tradition. According to ANEM: “Targeted by this television station were Stojan Marković, founder of the local outlet OzonPress, as well as local journalist Nebojša Jovanović, Mileva Malešić, founder of the Prijepolje Women’s Forum, Verica Marinčić of IN medija, N1 journalist Danica Vučenić, and media outlets and organizations such as Lokal Pres, ANEM, NUNS, BIRN, CRTA, Čačak’s CEMA, the Trag Foundation, the Slavko Ćuruvija Foundation, and others.” Best Media Team, a subsidiary of the publisher of Alo and Informer, bought the Čačak television station. A growing number of local media outlets that have been sold are becoming tools for targeting independent journalists and activists. In smaller communities, their safety can be especially at risk.

Freedom of Assembly

Cancellation of the Pride Caravan and attacks on journalists

Pride Caravan walks have been held across Serbia since 2019 to invite citizens to Belgrade's Pride Parade. This year's walk in Pirot was cancelled due to threats to participants' safety. A group opposed to the event gathered in the town square holding a banner reading "There is no place for you here." The crowd insulted and threatened Mašina journalist Aleksandar Đokić and Tampon Zone journalist Sara Stanojković, and N1 reporter Gordana Bjeletić was hit in the head. The Da se zna! association, which organized the event, said that police "allowed hooligans to directly endanger the lives of activists and journalists instead of arresting and prosecuting all the assembled hooligans for the criminal offense of endangering safety." Two people were detained on suspicion of endangering journalists' safety. A walk was also held that same day in Vranje, which passed without incident.

Citizens attacked

After a public information stand was held in Nova Varoš, a female student was attacked while walking home alone. According to students, after the case was reported to the police, the attackers admitted the attack was motivated by her political activity. A protest walk was held in Bačka Palanka, during which a man drove his car into a crowd of citizens. Three people sustained minor injuries.

Unknown persons set fire to activist's car

The car belonging to environmental activist Petar Antonijević was set on fire outside his family home. This was not the first attack on him — in May, Antonijević was beaten by men shouting Serbia is winning at a hospitality venue.