

MALAWI HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



PUBLIC STATEMENT

The Malawi Human Rights Commission is greatly concerned with the arrest of PIJ journalist Gregory Gondwe and seizure of his laptop, computers and phones. The Commission is informed that the arrest was in relation to an article which was published online and is purported to have potential links with ongoing investigations by the Southern Region Police.

The Police has informed the Commission that Mr. Gondwe was taken in for questioning for his alleged role in the said ongoing investigations which also warranted the seizure of Mr. Gondwe's laptop and phone (s). The Commission is aware that a Search Warrant was issued by the Court to allow the Police take possession of Mr. Gondwe laptop, phones and computers.

The Commission is closely monitoring the circumstances surrounding this case to guard against any unwarranted interference with the freedom of the press and the right to privacy in terms of section 36 and 21 of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi. The tenets of our democratic Constitution requires a strict adherence to protection of human rights and the rule of law.

The Commission has therefore instituted an investigation into how Mr. Gondwe was arrested, treated whilst in police custody, the circumstances leading to his release and the basis on which his laptops, computers and phones are still being held by the police.

The Commission wishes to remind the Malawi Police Service that as a service, they should work to build and maintain public trust and ensure adherence to principles of human rights in discharging their duties.

Scader Louis
CHAIRPERSON
5th April, 2022