

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/south-sudan-authorities-urged-to-free-two-08-11-2011,41361.html>

Africa - South Sudan

Freed

## Two Destiny journalists released after two weeks

21 November 2011

**Ngor Aguot Garang**, the editor of the Juba-based English-language daily *Destiny*, and **Dengdit Ayok**, one of his reporters, were released from Juba's Jebel Marra prison on 18 November after being held for more than two weeks.

They were arrested because of an article in the newspaper's 26 October issue criticizing President Salva Kiir Mayardit. National security chief Akol Koor said the article was "illegal" and libellous, and violated the president's privacy.

Garang, who is also a reporter for the *Sudan Tribune*, said he was "beaten and tortured" in detention "by people who never identified themselves."

### 8.11.11 - Authorities urged to free two journalists and reopen their newspaper

Reporters Without Borders condemns the illegal detention of two journalists and calls for their immediate release and the reopening of their newspaper, the Juba-based daily *Destiny*, which has been closed by the government. They are **Ngor Aguot Garang**, its editor, who was arrested on 2 November, and **Dengdit Ayok**, its deputy editor, who was arrested on 5 November.

"These arrests highlight the difficulties of working as a journalist in South Sudan and the risks that media personnel run in this young country, in which no law protects them," Reporters Without Borders said. "We call on the authorities to free Garang and Ayok without delay and to quickly pass laws that regulate the work of the media and protect journalists from arbitrary imprisonment of this kind."

The two journalists are reportedly being held in a prison near Jebel Marra. No formal charge has been brought against them. Under South Sudan's laws, this makes their detention illegal.

Garang, who is also a reporter for *Sudan Tribune*, was arrested one day after being summoned for questioning by the national security department in Juba on 1 November. As *Destiny* is the English-language version of *Al-Misier*, an Arabic-language also based in Juba, *Al-Misier* editor **Atem Simon** and chairman of the newspaper's board, **Dhieu Mathok**, also responded to the summons.

The summons was prompted by an article by Ayok in *Destiny's* 26 October issue criticizing President Salva Kiir Mayardit, to which the information ministry had reacted by suspending the newspaper. The suspension has remained in place, although *Destiny* issued an apology. The ministry also suspended Ayok from working as a journalist.

The incident has revived the debate about media freedom in South Sudan, Africa's youngest country since obtaining its independence on 9 July. In an earlier incident, **Mohammed Arkou** of *Sudan Radio Service* was arrested on 11 May for taking photos without government permission, although he was not in a military area, and was held for three weeks.

The South Sudan Media Development Association has expressed its concern about this latest case, while the *Sudan Tribune* has launched an online petition for Garang's release. Reporters Without Borders urges you to sign it [here](#).

Photo : AFP / Peter Martell.

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