

ASSASSINATING TRUTH **AND SILENCING THE PEN** **TARGETING JOURNALISM IN YEMEN**

A Detailed Report Issued by Insan Organization for Rights and Freedoms Documenting the Israeli Airstrike Targeting the Newspapers "26 September" and "Al-Yemen" in the Yemeni Capital, Sana'a, on September 10, 2025.



Background

Israel has committed dozens of serious violations against the Yemeni people over the past months, including bombing civilians and targeting media institutions and journalists. Among the most prominent was the direct attack on the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen," which resulted in the complete destruction of the building and the death of 32 journalists, in addition to several civilians, as the targeted site was located in the middle of a historic residential neighborhood.

Such attacks do not constitute random military actions but rather a systematic policy targeting Yemeni media and journalism, aiming to suppress the free voice and terrorize journalists.

These violations reflect a deliberate disregard for international humanitarian law and international agreements protecting civilians and journalists, rendering them a fully constituted war crime and placing the international community under urgent responsibility to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Insan Organization for Rights and Freedoms has documented the details of this crime and presents in this report a series of incidents related to the Israeli airstrikes, including direct testimonies from victims and survivors, alongside clear documentation of the material and moral damages inflicted upon journalistic institutions.

Overview of the Buildings of the Newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen"

The adjacent buildings of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen" are located in Tahrir Square in the heart of the capital, Sana'a. This area is densely populated with residential buildings and is only meters away from Old Sana'a and its ancient structures estimated to be thousands of years old. Nearby are the Military Museum, the National Museum, and one of the ancient monasteries of worship, the Qubbat al-Mutawakkil Mosque.

Tahrir Square is one of the largest and busiest markets in Sana'a at all hours. People from various segments of society visit this area to purchase their needs or relax with their children in a small garden park to enjoy pleasant moments.

Both "26 September" and "Yemen" newspapers have their own independent buildings and are printed weekly, covering local news and international affairs. They have a wide readership despite economic hardships caused by the coalition war on Yemen led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE since 2015.

The continued publication of these newspapers is considered a miracle given the economic situation and the cessation of employee salaries for ten years, following the coalition's imposition of a suffocating blockade and economic sanctions on the Yemeni people.

The Incident of Targeting the Newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen"

Without any prior warning, Tahrir neighborhood was subjected on Wednesday, 10 September 2025, at 4:00 PM, to Israeli airstrikes targeting the building of "26 September" newspaper, adjacent to the building of "Yemen" newspaper, in the heart of Sana'a.

Residents were unaware that their lives could turn from normalcy to destruction and terror in a single moment. The strikes did not only affect the newspaper buildings but also extended to residential homes, commercial shops, and the dreams of families who relied on this place for their daily sustenance and peace.

The entire neighborhood was reduced to rubble, with bedrooms mixed with kitchens and libraries intertwined with shops, creating a scene of complete chaos and destruction. The cries of those trapped under the debris, the wails of grieving mothers, and the whistling dust filling the horizon painted a tragic picture that struck the people of Sana'a deeply.



Some of the destruction caused by the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, 10 September 2025

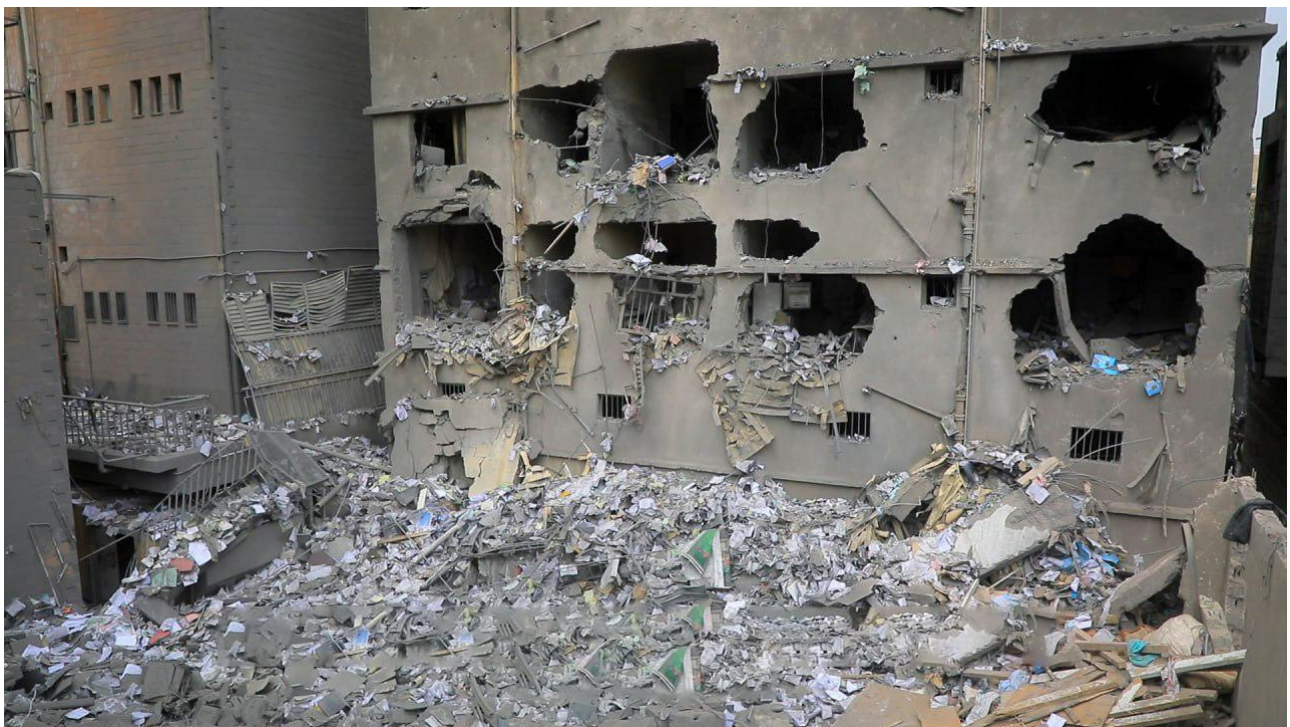
Rescue teams worked continuously for five days, searching for any hope of finding survivors amid the rubble, tirelessly digging through the debris with their hands. What occurred was not merely a military bombing but a fully constituted humanitarian crime targeting memory, truth, and innocent lives. It sends a clear message of deliberate disregard for international humanitarian law and the silence of the international community regarding the protection of civilians and journalists.

The targeted building was located in a densely populated area with pedestrians, shops, vehicles, passenger buses, and a bus station, making the airstrike a multi-dimensional disaster that resulted in dozens of casualties and extensive destruction.

These strikes caused a comprehensive humanitarian disaster on multiple levels, the most significant of which are:

- **Media Aspect: Targeting a journalistic institution constitutes an assault on freedom of speech and the conveyance of truth.**

The buildings of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen" were completely destroyed during official working hours, with all staff present performing their duties, including journalists, secretaries, managers, cleaning personnel, and other team members, in addition to two children who were accompanying their parents.



The building of "26 September" newspaper after being completely destroyed by the Israeli Air Force, 10 September 2025

Rescue teams worked continuously for five days to extract survivors from under the rubble, resulting in the death of 31 staff members from both newspapers and injuries to 22 others, most of them seriously injured, alongside significant damage to surrounding buildings and facilities.

The Committee to Protect Journalists confirmed in its report that Israel's targeting of the newspaper buildings constitutes the most violent attack on journalism globally in the past 16 years, noting that this incident ranks second after the



The building of "26 September" newspaper after being completely destroyed by the Israeli Air Force, 10 September 2025

"Maguindanao Massacre" in the Philippines in 2009, where 32 journalists were killed when their convoy was ambushed.

The report, published on 19 September, indicated that Israel has emerged since



Some of the damage inflicted on the printing presses of "26 September" newspaper following Israeli airstrikes, September 10, 2025

7 October as a regional killer of journalists, with repeated incidents of journalists being killed in Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, and now Yemen, confirming a persistent pattern of targeting journalists and justifying killings by attributing unrelated characteristics to them.

The following are the names of the journalist martyrs:

No.	Names of Victims	No.	Names of Victims
1	Abdulaziz Yahia Yahia Sheikh	17	Zuhair Ahmed Muhammad Al-Zakari
2	Yusuf Ali Yahia Shamsuddin	18	Muhammad Abdo Yahia Al-Sanafi
3	Ali Naji Saeed Al-Shera'i	19	Muhammad Al-Ezzi Ghalib Al-Harazi
4	Sami Muhammad Hussein Al-Zaydi	20	Jamal Firas Ali Al-Aadhi
5	Muhammad Ismail Hizam Al-Omaisy	21	Issam Ahmed Murshid Al-Hashedi
6	Murad Muhammad Ali Al-Faqih	22	Abdulwali Issam Ahmed Al-Hashedi
7	Ali Muhammad Ahmed Al-Faqih	23	Salim Abdullah Abdo Ahmed Al-Watiri
8	Abdulqawi Muhammad Saleh Al-Osfour	24	Abbas Abdulmalik Muhammad Al-Dailami
9	Bashir Hussein Ahsan Dablan	25	Lutf Ahmed Nasser Hadyan
10	Aref Ali Abdo Al-Samhi	26	Qais Abdo Ahmed Al-Naqeeb
11	Muhammad Hamoud Ahmed Al-Matari	27	Muhammad Ali Hamoud Al-Dhawi
12	Abdulwali Abdo Hussein Al-Najjar	28	Fares Abdo Ali Al-Rumaysa
13	Abdo Taher Muslih Al-Saadi	29	Abdulrahman Muhammad Muhammad Joma'n
14	Abdulaziz Saleh Ahmed Shas	30	Ali Muhammad Ali Al-A'qil
15	Abdullah Muhammad Abdo Al-Harazi	31	Amal Muhammad Ghalib Al-Manakhi
16	Muhammad Ahmed Muhammad Al-Zakari	32	Abdullah Mahdi Abdullah Al-Bahri

- **Humanitarian Aspect: A large number of casualties occurred, including deaths and injuries, among them children and women.**

Israeli fighter jets bombed the buildings of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen," located in an area densely populated with civilians, including homes, traditional markets, commercial shops, a bus station, and pedestrians. This horrific crime claimed the lives of dozens of innocent people, illustrating the most egregious forms of human rights violations and war crimes.

The indiscriminate and unjustified Israeli bombing caused massive destruction to the targeted buildings and neighboring homes, wiping out entire families, such as the Al-Dhamadi family, buried under the rubble, their voices silenced after the explosion.



Citizens trying to extract the bodies of the victims following the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, 10 September 2025



Civil defense teams rescuing the wounded following the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, 10 September 2025

Two medical school students, on their way from the hospital for practical training, carrying no weapons and posing no threat, were killed immediately while on a public bus.

Passersby, street vendors, shop owners, and drivers were struck by shrapnel and explosions, both physically and emotionally.

Among the unforgettable tragic scenes, a small child stood in the street watching his home being bombed from afar, crying out: "My mother will die... my mother will die," a cry that lingered in the minds of all witnesses, expressing the horror of what occurred, as if the city had turned into a scene from the Day of Judgment.

This crime constitutes a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, specifically the Geneva Conventions, which prohibit targeting civilians or putting them at risk.

The use of excessive, indiscriminate force in a densely populated area constitutes a fully constituted war crime.

Perpetrators must be held



Civilian homes damaged in Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, September 10, 2025

accountable in international courts. Continued international silence toward these crimes paves the way for their recurrence, represents a painful betrayal of the victims and their families, and undermines the foundations of justice and human dignity.

According to statistics from Insan Organization for Rights and Freedoms, the casualties from surrounding areas are as follows:

Number of deaths	Number of injuries
15	125



Some of the damage inflicted on citizens' properties following the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, 10 September 2025



Some of the wounded following Israeli airstrikes on civilian homes in Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, September 10, 2025

- **Cultural Heritage: Damage to archaeological sites thousands of years old threatens the memory of a nation.**

Among the crimes added to the record of the horrific violations caused by the Israeli airstrikes is the targeting of the locations of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen," situated in the heart of a vibrant historical area, on the outskirts of a city with a history of more than two and a half millennia, surrounded



Traditional houses in Old Sana'a damaged by Israeli airstrikes, September 10, 2025

by ancient homes, traditional markets, and artifacts that narrate the story of a rich human civilization.

One of the strikes hit the vicinity of the National Museum, near the targeted buildings, one of

the oldest museums housing rare and priceless artifacts representing chapters of the history of all humanity, not just the history of a single nation.

The museum suffered severe damage, and its fragile and valuable collections were threatened with destruction, creating a scene of deep sorrow and grief. The bombing struck not only the stone but also memory, identity, and belonging.

Targeting an area that holds human heritage of such significance constitutes a crime against culture and history, violating international laws protecting archaeological sites during conflict, foremost among them the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property and the 1972 UNESCO Convention.

What occurred cannot be considered "collateral damage" as some Israeli narratives attempt to justify. It is a dual crime: against the innocent lives lost under the bombing, and against the spirit of civilization preserved within the museum walls and surrounding buildings.

History is not the property of a single state or people; it is the heritage of all humanity, and its destruction means erasing the world's memory and wasting the very meaning of humanity itself.



Traditional houses in Old Sana'a damaged by Israeli airstrikes, September 10, 2025

Survivor Testimonies from the Targeting of the Newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen"

Testimony of a survivor from the attack on the buildings of "26 September" and "Yemen": It was like the Day of Judgment.

A survivor of the bombing that targeted the "26 September" newspaper building recounts the horrifying moments he experienced, saying: I was passing through Tahrir Street, heading to my family to spend the day with them. The street was crowded with people and vehicles, when suddenly a tremendous sound erupted... a missile landed at the newspaper's gate, followed by a violent shockwave that made me stop in sheer shock.



A survivor of the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood, Sana'a, September 10, 2025

Within seconds, everything turned into chaos—people were running, cars collided, and panic filled the area.

He adds: I got out of my car trying to take cover, but missiles continued falling one after another. We moved from car to car; some crawled, others ran, and all we could repeat was the Shahada of Islam. Our phones were ringing incessantly—calls from our children and friends checking on us—but we couldn't even answer.

The survivor continues with a trembling voice: Women and children were running in every direction seeking shelter, while shrapnel and glass rained down on us like a storm. We took refuge in a nearby small shop, where more than twenty people

gathered. When another missile struck, shelves shattered and goods scattered everywhere. We searched for a safe passage to escape through, but explosions surrounded us on all sides.

He concludes: We continued fleeing through the alleys until the bombing ended, but the scene left behind will never be erased from memory—destruction, blood, and a heavy silence enveloping the place—a scene that will remain etched in our minds for life.



Citizens providing first aid to a survivor of the Israeli airstrikes on Al-Tahrir neighborhood in Sana'a after being extracted from under the rubble, September 10, 2025

Legal Position Regarding the Targeting of the Newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen"

First: Targeting Journalists Under International Humanitarian Law

The targeting of the headquarters of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen" in the heart of the capital Sana'a, and the widespread destruction and the resulting of hundreds of casualties—dead and injured—all of whom are civilians—constitute a serious violation of the provisions of international humanitarian law and rise to the level of a fully constituted war crime under the standards of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Targeting media institutions and journalists during armed conflicts constitutes a clear breach of the principle of distinction between civilians and combatants, as set out in Article 48 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions. Journalists and media workers enjoy the status of protected civilians unless they directly participate in hostilities.

Article 79 of Additional Protocol I affirms that journalists engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered civilians and must be protected as such.

UN Security Council Resolution 2222 (2015) also emphasizes that all parties to an armed conflict must take the necessary measures to ensure the protection of journalists, media, and information workers, and to hold perpetrators of violations against them accountable.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Article 19, enshrines the right to freedom of opinion and expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and

impart information without interference, making attacks on media institutions a direct violation of a fundamental human right.

Under Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, intentionally directing attacks against civilians or civilian objects, including media institutions and press facilities, constitutes a war crime that entails international criminal responsibility.

Accordingly, the targeting of the headquarters of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen" is not merely an isolated aggressive act but a fully described crime with all its elements in terms of intent, the nature of the targets, and the catastrophic consequences that befell civilians.

This obliges the international community and competent judicial bodies to act urgently to open an independent and transparent investigation that ensures accountability for those responsible for this crime and safeguards journalists' right to security and protection while performing their professional duties.

Second: Damages to Adjacent Homes, Their Inhabitants, Passersby, and Markets

- Violation of the Principle of Distinction:

International humanitarian law requires parties to a conflict to always distinguish between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives. Journalists, civilians, women, children, and passersby are all protected civilians under international law. The building of the "26 September" newspaper is purely a civilian object, and there is no evidence whatsoever of its use for military purposes. Likewise, the neighboring

residential buildings, crowded streets, and markets were purely civilian objects, making their targeting a direct violation of the principle of distinction.

- **Violation of the Principle of Proportionality:**

The bombing resulted in a large number of casualties among journalists and civilians and the destruction of entire residential neighborhoods—losses disproportionate to any conceivable military advantage. Even assuming, without evidence, the presence of a military objective within the building, the scale of destruction and heavy civilian losses clearly indicate a failure to respect the principle of proportionality, a cornerstone of international humanitarian law designed to protect civilians.

- **Failure to Take Precautionary Measures:**

International law imposes on attackers the obligation to take all feasible precautions to avoid or minimize civilian harm. In this incident, no prior warnings were issued, and a densely populated civilian area was struck in a manner and at a time of heightened danger, which exacerbated the scale of human and material losses.

Third: Targeting of Antiquities and Heritage

The National Museum and its proximity to Old Sana'a (inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List) afford it special protection, and targeting this area constitutes a war crime if there is no clear military use of the cultural property. Consequently, the special protection of cultural and historical property was violated, an act criminalized under Article 8(2)(b) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

- Cultural property is afforded special protection under the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, which defines cultural property as:

a) Movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as:

- Architectural, artistic, or historical monuments, whether religious or secular.
- Archaeological sites.
- Groups of buildings of historical or artistic significance as a whole.
- Works of art.
- Manuscripts, books, and other objects of artistic or historical or archaeological interest.
- Important scientific collections, or collections of books, or archives, or reproductions of the foregoing.

b) Buildings whose main and actual purpose is to preserve or exhibit the movable cultural property referred to in paragraph (a), such as:

- Museums.

- Major libraries.
 - Archives repositories.
 - Repositories intended to protect cultural property in the event of armed conflict.
- Article 4 of the 1954 Hague Convention stipulates respect for cultural property:
- Contracting High Contracting Parties undertake to respect cultural property situated within their own territory as well as within the territory of other parties by:
 - 1- Refraining from using such property or the adjacent areas, or the equipment required for their protection, for purposes likely to expose them to destruction or damage during armed conflict.
 - 2- Refraining from any act of hostility directed against such property.

- Article 53 of Additional Protocol I

Protection of cultural property and places of worship, without prejudice to the provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and other relevant international instruments, prohibits the following:

- 1- Carrying out any acts of hostility directed against historical monuments, works of art, or places of worship which constitute the cultural or spiritual heritage of peoples.
- 2- Using such property to support the military effort.
- 3- Making such property the object of reprisals.

Local and International Positions and Condemnations

- **The United Nations** (through spokesperson **Stéphane Dujarric**) "strongly" condemned the attack and expressed the Secretary-General's shock at the number of civilian casualties, calling for respect for international humanitarian law and an independent investigation.
- **UNESCO** expressed "grave concern" about the damage to cultural sites near Old Sana'a and the National Museum, calling for the protection of cultural heritage and for historic structures not to be targeted.
- **The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate** condemned the strike, describing it as a "war crime" and a blatant violation of international laws and charters protecting media and freedom of expression during conflict.
- **The International Federation of Journalists** condemned the attack, calling it a "horrific massacre" targeting journalists, and demanded a prompt and independent investigation.
- **The Committee to Protect Journalists** described the attack as "the deadliest assault on journalists in 16 years," following the death of at least 31 journalists in the incident.
- **Human Rights Watch** condemned the attack, emphasizing that targeting a civilian media facility constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law unless the facility is being used clearly for military operations.
- **The Yemeni Media Freedom Observatory** condemned the targeting of the newspaper, deeming it a war crime and called for an international investigation and prosecution of those responsible.

Recommendations

First: To the United Nations and its Relevant Bodies

1. Establish an independent and impartial international commission of inquiry to investigate the attacks targeting journalists and civilians in Sana'a, particularly the targeting of the headquarters of the newspapers "26 September" and "Yemen".
2. Include this incident on the agenda of the UN Human Rights Council and monitor it through international justice mechanisms.
3. Invite UNESCO to assess the damage to the National Museum and the vicinity of Old Sana'a and activate special protection mechanisms for cultural property.

Second: To the International Criminal Court (ICC)

1. Open a preliminary investigation into this incident as a war crime, including the targeting of civilians, journalists, and cultural property.

Third: To the UN Security Council

1. Apply pressure to immediately halt attacks on civilians and media and cultural infrastructure in Yemen.
2. Issue an official condemnation of the attack during a public session and work to impose sanctions on those proven responsible.

Fourth: To the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions

1. Remind states of their legal obligations to protect journalists and cultural property during armed conflict.
2. Support international accountability mechanisms to ensure that perpetrators do not go unpunished.

Fifth: To International Organizations

1. Continue field documentation and witness testimonies regarding the incident and publish reports clarifying the extent of the violations.
2. Provide legal, psychological, and media support to victims and their families and assist in filing cases at an international level.

Conclusion

The airstrikes carried out by Israel on the headquarters of the "26 September" newspaper in Sana'a have revealed tragic dimensions of violations of international humanitarian law, as the protection afforded by law to civilians and to media as a primary source of truth and documentation was completely disregarded. The strikes also caused severe damage to neighboring cultural property, including the National Museum and the ancient city of Sana'a with its rich historical heritage.

These attacks did not only target a media building but also claimed the lives of dozens of innocent journalists and left their children orphaned, took the lives of civilians of all ages, and destroyed entire families. This constitutes a blatant violation of human rights and a threat to the values of peace and security in the region.

The continued impunity and failure to hold those responsible accountable send a dangerous message, urging the international community to intervene urgently to ensure justice, protect civilians, and halt attacks on civilian and cultural infrastructure in Yemen.

As we conclude this report, we emphasize the urgent and effective action required by all international and humanitarian actors to ensure accountability for the perpetrators, provide effective protection for civilians, support free press, and preserve cultural heritage as an inseparable part of human identity.



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