

## Iraq Bans Reuters Following Covid-19 report

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<https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/iraq-bans-reuters-following-covid-19-report.html>

Iraq's Communications and Media Commission (CMC) has fined and banned Reuters news agency from operating following a report on the number of coronavirus cases in the country. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has condemned this "blatant violation of media rights" and urged the CMC to lift the ban immediately.



*Credit: Reuters*

The CMC took its decision on 3 April after Reuters reported that thousands of people in Iraq had been infected with Covid-19 resulting in many more deaths than the government claimed. According to media reports, the CMC suspended the news agency's right to operate in the country for three months and fined them \$20,000 for having "*put social security at risk*".

The IFJ said that the CMC had exceeded its mandate which normally only allows for issuing fines and not to implement media suspensions without a court order.

The IFJ expressed its deep concern at this blatant breach of press freedom, supported the right of Reuters journalists to work freely and urged the Iraqi government to lift the ban and cancel the fine.