

129 journalists, media workers killed in 2025

David Brunnstrom
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – A record 129 journalists and media workers were killed in the course of their work last year, with two-thirds of them killed by Israel, the Committee to Protect Journalists said on Feb. 25.

It was the second straight year that press killings set a record and the second straight year that Israel was responsible for two-thirds of them, the CPJ, a New York-based independent organization that documents attacks on the press, said in its annual report. Israeli fire killed 86 journalists in 2025, mostly Palestinians in Gaza but also including 31 workers in an attack on a Houthi media center in Yemen, the second deadliest attack the CPJ has ever recorded, it said.

Israel was also responsible for 81% of the 47 killings that the CPJ classified as intentionally targeted, or “murder.” It said the actual figure was probably higher due to access restrictions that made verification difficult in Gaza.

Israel’s military says its troops in



A Reuters cameraman was killed in an Israeli strike in August while he was recording a live video at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip. RAMADAN ABED/REUTERS FILE

Gaza target only combatants but that operating in combat zones carries inherent risks. Israel acknowledged targeting the media center in Yemen in September, describing it at the time as a propaganda arm of the Houthis.

In several cases, Israel has acknowledged targeting journalists in

Gaza it said had links to Hamas, without providing verifiable evidence. International news organizations have strongly denied that slain reporters had links to militants. The CPJ called such allegations by Israel “deadly smears.”

A statement from the Israeli Defense Forces said it “strongly rejects” the claims presented in the CPJ report.

“The IDF does not intentionally harm journalists or their family members,” it said. “The report is based on general allegations, data of unknown origin, and predetermined conclusions, without considering the complexity of combat or the IDF’s efforts to mitigate harm to non-combatants.”

Israel does not permit foreign journalists to enter Gaza, so all the media workers killed there were Palestinians.

The CPJ report said the “Israeli military has now committed more targeted killings of the press than any other government’s military on record,” noting that the CPJ started collecting data more than three decades ago.

Its report said at least 104 of the 129 journalists killed died in connection with conflicts. Apart from Gaza and Yemen, the deadliest countries for journalists include Sudan, where nine were killed, and Mexico, where six died. Four Ukrainian journalists were killed by Russian forces and three journalists died in the Philippines, it said.

Russia’s embassy in Washington did not respond specifically to the CPJ report but referred to past Russian Foreign Ministry statements accusing Kyiv of responsibility for the deaths of more than 60 individuals working in Russian media since 2014.

Russia has previously denied deliberately targeting journalists, and Ukraine denies targeting Russian reporters.

Those killed in Gaza in 2025 included Reuters journalist Hussam al-Masri, killed by Israeli fire in August while operating a live video feed at the enclave’s Nasser Hospital. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he regretted the attack, which also killed four other journalists, as a “tragic mishap.”

EU memo raises security concerns over Syria camp

Lili Bayer
REUTERS

BRUSSELS – An EU internal memo has raised security concerns about the escape of thousands of people from a detention camp holding relatives of suspected Islamic State fighters in northeastern Syria, suggesting militant groups could recruit from them.

The memo, sent from the Cyprus presidency of the Council of the European Union to member states and dated Feb. 23, said the status of third-country nationals who had fled the camp at al-Hol remained unclear and that it was reported that a majority of them had escaped.

“This raises concerns about how terrorist groups might seek to capitalize on the current situation to increase recruitment efforts among escapees,” said the memo, which was reviewed by Reuters.

Al-Hol, near the Iraqi border, was one of the main detention camps for relatives of suspected Islamic State fighters who were detained during the U.S.-backed campaign against the jihadist group in Syria.

Control of the camp changed hands in January, when Syrian government forces under President Ahmed al-Sharaa drove the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces from the area.

The SDF had guarded the facility for years.



The EU memo said that al-Hol and Roj camps were hosting around 25,000 people, primarily women and children, “with many of these being highly radicalized and living in degrading humanitarian and security conditions.” KHALIL ASHAWI/REUTERS FILE

The camp’s population was 23,407 people the day before the government takeover, including 6,280 foreigners from more than 40 nationalities, Reuters reported last week, citing official data from the camp.

The U.S. military said on Feb. 13 it had completed a mission to transfer 5,700 adult male Islamic State fighters from jails in Syria to Iraq. It had

originally said up to 7,000 prisoners could eventually be transferred. The EU memo noted that the initial target was not met.

In a section entitled “Security concerns stemming from the evolving situation in northeast Syria,” the EU memo said the “chaotic takeover led to the collapse of security and services in the al-Hol camp, triggering

the escape of a significant portion of its population.”

The U.N. refugee agency in Syria and the Syrian government “have confirmed that an uncontrolled exodus has occurred over the past few weeks,” it added.

Damascus has accused the SDF of withdrawing from al-Hol on Jan. 20 without any coordination. The SDF has said its forces had been “compelled” to withdraw from the camp to areas surrounding cities which it said were under threat.

The SDF had guarded prisons holding thousands of Islamic State militants in northeast Syria, in addition to al-Hol and a second camp at Roj, which also holds relatives of suspected jihadists.

The EU memo said that al-Hol and Roj camps were hosting around 25,000 people, primarily women and children, “with many of these being highly radicalized and living in degrading humanitarian and security conditions.”

Roj camp remains under the control of the SDF for now.

Last week, the SDF released 34 Australian nationals from Roj, only for them to return later. The Australian government has ruled out helping families of IS militants return home.

Syria’s Information Ministry and the U.S. Central Command did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Obituaries

TODAY’S DEATH NOTICES

Name	Age	Town, State	Passed	Arrangements	Service Time	Service Location	Interment
*Brink, Rodney	97	Ames, IA	Feb 22	Adams Funeral Home	--	-	-
*Renfeldt, David	98	Ames, IA	Feb 25	Adams Funeral Home	Feb 28 11:00am	Adams Funeral Home	Ames Municipal Cemetery

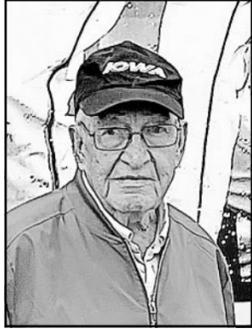
**Additional information in display obituaries
Obituaries appear in print and online at amestrib.com/obituaries*



David Renfeldt

AMES - David William Renfeldt, of Ames, passed away peacefully on February 25, 2026, at the age of 98. He was born on June 15, 1927, in Collins, Iowa. Service and obituary information can be found at: www.adamssodertrum.com

Adams Funeral Home has been entrusted with handling the arrangements.



Rodney Brink

AMES - Rodney Hugh Brink, age 97, of Ames, Iowa, passed away on Sunday, February 22, 2026, surrounded by his beloved family. He was born on September 22, 1928, in LeMars, Iowa. For full obituary and service information please visit Adams-sodertrum.com.



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