

Mauritanian editor freed

Journalist released on bail; three others interrogated by police.

Nouakchott - Abdel Fettah Ould Abeidna, managing editor of *Al-Aqsa*, a daily Arabic-language newspaper, was granted bail on 28 May 2007 by a Nouakchott court after spending four days in prison for allegedly defaming a businessman, Mohamed Ould Bouammatou.

The Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) correspondent reported that the journalist had been granted bail to allow for further investigations into the allegations.

Bouammatou brought defamation charges against the journalist following a 16 May article in *Al-Aqsa* that linked him to a recent drug scandal. Abeidna was arrested and subsequently detained on 24 May under a court order.

In early May, a drug scandal hit the country following the seizure of a private jet, helicopters, and large sums of foreign currency by the authorities in Nouadhibou, a city 470km north-west of the capital, Nouakchott. The authorities also busted an international narcotics trafficking network.

Meanwhile, three other newspaper journalists have been interrogated by the police in Nouakchott in a defamation case filed by Ch'bih Ould Cheikh Malainnie, chairman of the opposition Popular Front political party.

The journalists, Oumar Mouctar, managing editor of the daily newspaper *L'Authentique*, Tah Ould Ahmed, managing editor of the daily *Al Vejr*, and Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Bakar, managing editor of the daily *Al Alem*, were interrogated for about one and a half hours.

The correspondent said the newspapers had also linked the party's chairman to the scandal.

Source: [IFEX](#)