

Christian radio fined, suspended over discriminatory broadcast

Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) has suspended Amazing Grace FM programming for one month and slapped the station with a Rwf2 million fine over a divisive and misogynous broadcast.



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The regulator acted on the recommendation of the Rwanda Media Commission (RMC), the self-regulatory body for the media, that the Christian radio station be suspended for airing a sermon that was described by many as discriminatory against women.

RMC had requested that the Kigali-based station be suspended for three months. However, RURA also decided to fine the station in addition to the one-month suspension.

In a statement released yesterday, RURA said that the radio station failed to comply with Rwandan culture, norms and values as well as terms of its license.

"Amazing Grace Christian Radio is hereby ordered to: suspend all the broadcasting services for 30 calendar days and pay an administrative fine of two million Rwandan Francs... within a period of 15 days effective the date of this order (February 20)," the regulator said in the statement.

The radio station has also been instructed to air a statement of correction and to apologise to the public on the message of evangelist Nicholas Niyibikora within 12 hours from the time of this order.

On January 29, the religious radio station hosted Niyibikora, who went on air to vent what is perceived as hatred against women, who he said were the source of all evil.

Niyibikora's sermon, delivered in *Kinyarwanda*, immediately went viral on social media, igniting anger among rights activists, with some commentators describing the message as divisive.

In a public hearing at RMC offices in Kigali, last week, which was also attended by Amazing Grace Radio station proprietor, Gregory Ryan Shoof, the executive committee of the self-regulatory body resolved to write to RURA, the regulator, to shut down the station for three months.

Shoof expressed remorse over the sermon. When contacted for a comment yesterday, Shoof said he was "of course not" suspending programming for now until the court decides so.

"I am contacting my lawyer and waiting on what he has to say. It is going to court. Of course we are not closing the station for now," he said. Shoof said he has failed to get in touch with the Pastor in question.

The National Public Prosecution Authority recently tasked the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) at Police to probe Niyibikora over public incitement but the law enforcers are yet to come out on the progress of the investigation.

Read the [original article](#) on [New Times](#).

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