

Politicised prison sentence for Moroccan editor

NEW YORK: The one-year prison sentence against Rachid Nini, executive editor of the Moroccan daily *Al-Massae* and owner of Al-Massae Media Group, is the latest instance of the Moroccan government settling scores with critical journalists through a judiciary that is subservient to the executive branch, the Committee to Protect Journalists said on Thursday, 9 June 2011.



"Today's politicised verdict against Rachid Nini is yet another example of how the Moroccan judiciary is utilized to curb press freedom", CPJ Middle East and North Africa program coordinator Mohamed Abdel Dayem said. "Critical journalism is not a crime. King Mohammed VI must ensure that his March pledge of extensive constitutional and structural reforms extends to journalists."

Nini was detained in late April and charged with "denigrating judicial rulings" as well as "compromising the security and safety of the homeland and citizens." Nini is a frequent critic of government policies and has written about widespread corruption among government officials. On numerous occasions, he has called for the annulment of Morocco's anti-terrorism law and for increased political freedom.

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