

# Media Threats Bulletin

## CHRONICLING VIOLENCE AGAINST PAKISTANI JOURNALISTS

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Month	JOURNALIST THREATS BAROMETER							
	Aug-Sep 2012	Oct-Nov 2012	December 2012	January 2013	February 2013	March 2013	April 2013	
Killing	2	2	0	3	1	1	1	1
Kidnapping /								
Abduction	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Detention	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Arrest	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Assault / Injury	9	8	1	6	4	8	6	
Attack on Office	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Attack on Home	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attack on Press Club	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Verbal Threat	3	1	2	1	0	1	1	
Written Threat	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	
Ban	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Secret funds case: SC publicizes list of 'beneficiaries'

ISLAMABAD - Following directions of the Supreme Court (SC), details of Rs 1 77,988,450 paid from the secret fund of the Information Ministry to 282 journalists for the year 2011-12 were made public on 23rd April 2013

Names of several senior journalists and anchors are included in the list, some of whom have been added for being provided flights or accommodation as part of official delegations with government officials such as the former prime minister. A few journalists who did not choose to travel on the offered trips have also been included in the list, seemingly erroneously.

According to the rules and regulations, the purpose of the secret fund is only to obtain or uncover sensitive information necessary to



protect 'national interest/national security'. It cannot be used for any other purpose, such as emergencies or incidental expenses. All withdrawals are supposed to come under specific heads and justifications.

Another list of 155 journalists who took gifts and payments from the Information Ministry will also be made public later.

Earlier in the day, a three-member SC bench headed by Justice Jawwad S Khawaja ordered posting the details online. The court also sought a reply from the auditor general (AG) in connection with audit of these items.

Justice Khawaja remarked during the hearing that details of spending of public money could not be concealed.

"The Information Ministry will have to render account of every penny. Court is accountable to the constitution and not the US. Decision on the confidentiality of 155 items will be taken after the AG's report comes".

"When incidents like May 2, 2011 in Abbottabad compound occur,

the ministry lacks the ability to counter the negative fallout and has to engage the best writers available in the market," Tahir Hassan, a director with the Information Ministry explained before the three-judge Supreme Court bench.

The court remarked, "Inform the court about the details of the law under which you have asked to keep the documents confidential. Explain it in terms of Article 19-A".

Amir Abbas, the lawyer, said every citizen had access to information under Article 19.

He read out Section 7 to which Justice Javed remarked, "You want to say you hold privilege under Article 19-A. This matter was reviewed in the memo case."

Presenting the details in respect of secret funds, Amir Abbas assured the SC that the reports which were presented in court would be subjected to audit by the auditor general.

The court was told that there were three heads running under secret funds of which money was being spent. Opening his

arguments, Abbas said forces, ISI and other institutions used this fund.

He said freedom of expression had been provided under the ordinance, adding that it was a matter of internal security.

"We are not providing details due to security risk. Who will provide protection to these people if their names are flashed in the media? We want to extend them protection," he added.

Justice Jawwad remarked, "What you are trying to say is that if the media does not publish columns, you do so after buying columnist".

"Stop joking with the people. We are posting 282 items on the website. The remaining will be decided by us later. Is it essential for freedom of press that the Ministry of Information buys journalists to make any message public? These things will have to be sorted out."

Petitioner Absar Alam said secret funds amounted to Rs 650 million, but officials were putting the amount at around 260 million.

# Police thrash journalist

**Swat:** On April 1st, police thrashed a private channel journalist when he was covering death of three children in a road accident.

As per details, yesterday morning three innocent school going children have been died in a roadside accident at the Gulibagh area of Swat. The children were going to school after they were hit by a speeding vehicle. The locals rushed them to Saidu Sharif District Hospital where doctor declared them dead.

In the meanwhile a private TV channel (Khyber News) reporter Saeed Rehman along with his cameramen (Saeed Iqbal) reached the hospital to cover up

the tragic incident, where driver of police van Adnan, exchanged harsh words with the reporters and starting beating both of them. He broke up TV camera well.

Later, Swat Union of Journalists staged a protest rally against the barbarism of police, which was led by Chairman Swat Press Club Rasheed Iqbal and President Swat Union of Journalists Hazrat Bilal to record their protest with peaceful way.

When the rally participants reached the office of DIG Malakand Division Abdullah Khan, the police personnel deputed at the DIG office entrance once again started thrashing the entire journalists'

community on the main Saidu Sharif Road.

Police fired rubber bullets at journalists in a bid to block their entry to DIG office and disperse them.

After the incident a meeting was held in the Swat Press Club, in which journalists demanded stern action against the cops involved in their manhandling. They also demanded the transfer of SSP Swat Gul Afzal, DSP City Amjad Khan and SHO Saidu Sharif Police Station Hanif Khan, otherwise, the protest against the police will be continued till their posting order.

As reported by The Nation

# Pre poll violence claims life of one journalist, leaves two injured

**Khuzdar:** Tariq Amin, sib editor at Daily Pakistan was killed in a bomb blast at an ANP election meeting. The blast was the deadliest in reported pre-poll violence incidents and claimed 20 lives in all.

Two other journalists including Azhar Ali Shah from Daily Pakistan and Ihtesham Khan, an Express News reporter were also injured in the blast.

## IN BRIEF

**MITHIYAL** (1 April 2013) - Nazir Awan, Vice president of divisional union office of journalists Rawalpindi was threatened by workers of a political party on publishing a news story regarding party's local leader Abrar Hussain Qadri. The journalist was asked to think twice before publishing more stories mentioning the member or be ready to face the consequences. Journalists protested against the threat and asked the authorities to provide security to Malik Awan.

# INP Office gutted; Loss of around 20 million

ISLAMABAD : The office of Independent News Pakistan (INP), a private news agency, was gutted after a fire broke out on 28th April, incurring a loss of around Rs 20 million.

"The fire engulfed the entire office bringing everything, including air-conditioners, computers, printers, furniture and documents to ashes. However, there was no human loss," INP Editor Javed Qureshi told APP.

The senior journalist described the inferno as part of a conspiracy and alleged that they had been receiving threats for a long time.

He demanded the government to conduct a comprehensive inquiry to find out elements or factors that were behind the incident.

He said around 150 employees were now jobless as a result of the incident, thus, he demanded the government to make arrangements for giving compensation so that the staff can feed their families.

Javed Qureshi said that the elements behind the incident perhaps wanted to teach a lesson to INP and send a message to other independent media.

The fire broke out around at around 4:30 am and spread rapidly, engulfing the entire office situated on the third floor of block 18-B, F-6 Markaz Super Market in Islamabad.

Three staffers who were sleeping in one of the rooms after their late night duty said that they woke up due to smoke in their room. When they came out, they saw the huge fire at the entry gate of the office. The three staffers were rescued by the people who were going for prayers in the nearby Motamar Mosque and by those who were going for morning walk. By the time the fire brigade reached the spot all the office equipment worth over 20 million rupees was burned to ashes.

Information Minister Arif Nizami, Information Secretary Agha Nadeem condemned the incident

and reiterated their support for an independent media.

Prime Minister Mir Hazar Khan Khoso, PML-N President Mian Nawaz Sharif, PML-N spokesman Senator Pervaiz Rashid, MQM chief Altaf Hussain, JUI-F Maulana Fazalur Rehman and other political leaders strongly condemned the high handedness against the media and called on the government to ensure their security.

PFUJ President Pervaiz Shaukat, National Press Club President (NPC) Farooq Faisal, and NPC General Secretary Sherayar Khan also extended their full cooperation to the management and the staff of INP in this difficult time. They said such acts cannot suppress the media.

PFUJ (Dastoor Group) President Idrees Bikhtayar telephoned INP editor from to convey his shock and assured that he would raise the issue at every forum.

As reported by Pakistan Today

## IN BRIEF

KARACHI (14 April 2013) – Ahmed Sheikh, a reporter with Khabrain group was subjected to torture by staffers of an international airline. According to details, the reporter had published a story regarding continuing issues with the airlines' service. He was then invited to the airlines' office in Karachi on pretext of giving the airline's version. When the reporter reached the office, he was subjected to torture and locked in a room. He was freed after other journalists were alerted and reached the office to intervene on his behalf.

# Pakistan Journalist Safety Fund

Pakistan Journalism Safety Fund (PJSF) is an initiative to provide basic financial & legal support to journalists under duress. The fund works under collaboration between Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists and Intermedia Pakistan with financial support from International Media Support.

## Categories of Assistance

- \* Death (murder / killing / terrorism victim)
- \* Kidnapping/abduction
- \* Detention / Arrest (by state authorities)
- \* Assault/injury/physical harm
- \* Censorship/ban/gag order
- \* Displacement (from hometown due to conflict)
- \* Threat (verbal/written)
- \* Legal notice
- \* Others

## Nature of Assistance Provided

- \* Legal aid for family
- \* Trauma counseling for family
- \* Financial aid for family
- \* Relocation
- \* Medical aid
- \* Other

## Contacts to Remember!

If you are a journalist facing a threat, you can contact us on:

PFUJ: 051-287-0220  
Intermedia: 051-260-4205

Or write to us at  
[safetyfund@intermedia.org.pk](mailto:safetyfund@intermedia.org.pk) or  
[outreach@intermedia.pk](mailto:outreach@intermedia.pk)

You can also report the threat to us online by visiting this webpage -

<http://journalistsafety.org/report-a-threat/>

If you report the threat online, we will call you for further details, especially if you are in the need of assistance.

You can also apply for assistance by downloading the application form here - <http://journalistsafety.org/2012/08/30/assistance-application/>

# TV Channel taken off air for airing anti-Kayani remarks

Lahore: The broadcast of Capital TV, a new private TV Channel, owned by former FIA deputy director Ahmed Riaz Sheikh, was taken off air across the country on April 18th, 2013, when a guest on a live show used abusive language against Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani.

Sources said that a guest on a talk show hosted by senior journalist Ejaz Haider insulted the Army chief by using foul language against him on air. The guests on the show were journalist and social activist Marvi Sirmed and Ahmed Khalid, a former personal secretary to right wing activist Zaid Hamid. Taking note of the situation, the department

concerned decided to take the channel off air and cable operators were instructed to remove Capital TV from their networks.

(The channel's broadcast was resumed after a few hours.)

*As reported by Pakistan Today*

## Copies of Dawn burnt

HYDERABAD: Armed men continued to snatch and burn copies of Dawn in Hyderabad, Jamshoro, Dadu, Hala and Benazirabad on 7th April. Dozens of bundles of the newspaper were snatched from stalls and hawkers in Hyderabad and other towns in interior of Sindh.

According to Sindh regional manager of Dawn Media Group Thadani L.S., two armed men on a motorbike snatched 10 to 15 copies of Dawn from a stall near the PTCL office, burnt them and warned the hawker against selling copies of the newspaper in future.

He said that two armed motorcyclists snatched 20 to 25 copies from a stall in Naseem Nagar, Qasimabad, set them on fire and fled.

Five armed men went to Akhbar Farosh Market at Hyderabad railway station and threatened Dawn agent Sajid Karimi of dire

consequences if he continued to sell copies of Dawn. They misbehaved with Anjuman Akhbar Faroshan president Amir Shah when he tried to intervene. They identified themselves as activists of the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (Shafi Burfat group) and fled.

In Jamshoro, two armed motorcyclists deprived a hawker of 50 to 60 copies of the newspaper.

In Dadu, three armed men snatched about five bundles of the newspaper from a hawker. In Hala, five armed men intercepted a wagon loaded with different newspapers on the National Highway and picked 20 to 22 bundles of Dawn, torched some of them and took away the rest.

The bundles were to be sent to Hala, Naushahro Feroze, Khairpur Mirs, Mehrabpur, Ranipur and Gambat.

In Benazirabad, three to four armed men warned local agents and hawkers not to sell copies of Dawn till the matter was resolved. The newspaper was delivered to Pathan Colony depot of Dawn with the help of Hyderabad police which had provided security to its two trucks from Toll Plaza between 4am and 6am.

Meanwhile, Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz secretary general Sajjad Shar agreed to halt the protest and resolve the matter through talks.

Talking to Dawn's Hyderabad Bureau Chief Mohammad Hussain Khan over phone, Mr Shar promised that no incident of burning of the newspaper would take place on Monday.

*As reported by Dawn*

# Media bodies to be stopped from covering banned outfits

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is writing letters to the media representative bodies and Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) asking private media to avoid carrying the statements of banned outfits.

"This ministry, however, is addressing a letter to the All Pakistan Newspaper Society, Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors, Pakistan Broadcasters Association as well as Pemra to advise their respective private channels and newspapers not to carry the statements of banned outfits' spokespersons," according to the concise statement of the ministry submitted in the Balochistan High Court (BHC).

The concise statement has been submitted by Ministry of Information in compliance with the BHC judgement dated April 9, 2013. According to the statement, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in consultation with the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), has recently finalized a code of conduct for print & electronic media as well as for the political parties wherein ban has been imposed on hate literature and its propagation which negatively impacts the social and political order in Pakistan.

The Minister for Information and Broadcasting and the Secretary of the Ministry along with Pemra and Federal Press Information

Department already held numerous meetings with All Pakistan Newspapers Society and Pakistan Broadcasting Association, bringing them home the importance of restraining the media from publishing and broadcasting the statements and hate material issued by the representatives of banned outfits as per law of the land, it added.

In this regard, the Pemra has specifically imposed financial penalties and a number of channels for violating the terms and conditions of their licenses, whereby they are supposed to observe an acceptable code of conduct as per relevant law, the statement said.

The ministry believes that the organizations banned under Section 11-B of Anti-Terrorism Act-1997 should not be allowed to use print & electronic media for propagation of hate literature and negative material which is considered unlawful under the relevant laws of the land.

This ministry fully supports the directions of the BHC that its orders are implemented in letter and spirit, and the statements of banned outfits as well as the organizations involved in acts of terrorism and subversion are not carried by print & electronic media.

The state media organizations like Pakistan television, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation, Associated Press of Pakistan Corporation are not

disseminating hate material at all, the statement added.

The rest of the media operates in private sector. The existing media laws do not specifically empower federal government to initiate gag orders to the extent of private sector media. This ministry however is addressing a letter to the All Pakistan Newspaper Society, Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors, Pakistan Broadcasters Association as well as the PEMRA to advise their respective private channels and newspapers not to carry the statements of banned outfits' spokespersons.

The director general Press Information Department of the federal government along with the Pemra have been advised to keep a watch on such channels and newspapers which violate the commonly accepted code of conduct for media, prescribed by the ECP as well as under various media laws of the land.

Admittedly, because of threats to journalists and owners of print & electronic media from banned outfits, it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to function independently. The government however is doing its best to carve a way out of it which is supportive to the independent professional functioning of journalists.

*As reported by The News*

# Amounts disbursed from Information Ministry's Secret Fund

The ministry spent Rs 37 million for a media campaign to promote a song dedicated to former PPP chairwoman Benazir Bhutto. Another Rs 35,000,000 was paid to a private TV channel for conducting a week-long programme, especially approved by PM Gilani.

Hefty amounts were paid for running a monitoring cell and EMR wings of the ministry, reflecting the staff and activities were not entitled payment from exchequer and were therefore accommodated from the secret fund.

Owner of a private TV channel and Saleh Zaafir, a journalist with a leading newspaper group, were specially accommodated a number of times from the secret fund and both received over Rs 0.5 million each. Saleh Zaafir was paid for "special assignments" while no reference was made for the payment made to the owner of the TV channel.

The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) tops the list with Rs 6 crores, 14 lacs and 55 thousand rupees during the period between July 1, 2011 and

September 6, 2012. At least Rs 100 million were spent on journalists' visits in and outside the country, while millions of rupees were spent on invitation of journalists from Karachi, Lahore, Multan and other cities to the federal capital.

Chief executive of SANA news agency Shakeel Turabi received Rs 600,000 and the media commission of the Supreme Court was given Rs 40 lacs, the list stated.

A programme 'Pakistan This Week' on the CNBC TV channel was given Rs 3 crore and 50 lacs. After rains and floods in Sindh province, various media groups were given Rs 1,320,000 for public relations activities.

Widows of journalists of various newspapers were also given thousands of rupees in aid on different occasions.

The late Mehmood Hamdani received Rs 200,000 for medical treatment, Zahid Hamid Rana Rs 500,000, Saleem Khawaja Rs 100,000, chief executive of a private TV channel Syed Sajjad Shah Rs 100,000, publisher of a

book 'Mufahimat' (reconciliation) received Rs 70,000, while Haris Marhoob 150,000, UD Sabiri Rs 50,000 and M Ashraf Rs 400,000.

Publisher of a book 'Mera Sahafat Ma Agaz' received Rs 250,000, Azhar Bhatti Rs 50,000, Intikhab Hanif Rs 100,000, Farooq Amin Rs 50,000, Maqbool Hussain Tabassum Rs 50,000, Fareed Khan Rs 100,000, Shaukat Hussain Shaukat Rs 100,000, Nokhaiz Abbas Rs 50,000 and Gulraiz Shehzad had got Rs 100,000, the list stated.

Mian Mohammad Nadeem Rs 200,000, Ghulam Nabi Mughal Rs 100,000, Nazeer Abbas Rs 300,000, Assad Ullah Ghalib Rs 200,000, Jamil Soomro Rs 600,000, Umer Sharif Rs 50,000, Farooq Sehar Siddiqui Rs 100,000, Mazhar Iqbal Rs 100,000, Bashir Ahmed Khan Rs 700,000, Mohammad Amin Rs 500,000 and Abid Saqi Rs 500,000.

Rs 700,000 were given for media coverage on occasion of Quaid-e-Azam Day.

*As reported by Pakistan Today*

## Information Ministry moves SC against Hamid Mir

ISLAMABAD – On 22 April, Federal Information Ministry filed an application in the Supreme Court against senior anchor person Hamid Mir on contempt of court charges.

The applicant, Amir Abbas, has given the reference of the

program hosted by senior journalist Javed Chaudhary in which Hamid Mir not only gave comments on the secret funds of Information and Broadcasting Ministry, but also discussed points that he was not allowed to do so as the matter was already pending before the court of law.

The applicant said on the other hand, Mir was himself a party in the case and by commenting on a sub judice matter, he tried to influence the court proceedings.

*As reported by Pakistan Today*

# Clean the dirt and the dirty will go away

By Mazhar Abbas

Ethical journalism is in serious danger. The lists submitted by the Ministry of Information(MoI) to the Supreme Court are interesting and present a serious problem. The simple solution is to clean up the dirt so that the dirty can automatically be wiped out, i.e., the MoI should be abolished, as in the last 63 years, it has been unable to defend any state or government interest.

The MoI tried to confuse the journalist community by making the list controversial. For instance, they have mixed up individual beneficiaries with those who went on official visits. It was unfair on the ministry's part to mention such names even though such tours are official and there is no secret in them. Secondly, journalists go on the tour after permission from their respective organisations.

The ministry also adopted criminal silence over clarification and categorical denials from some journalists named in the list. One journalist has written a letter to the secretary of information that the office either clarifies her position or she reserves the right to file a defamation case against the ministry. So far, there is complete silence from other journalists named in the list. One can only hope that if they were wrongly implicated, they will stand up. However, at the same time, they should not completely reject the list but inquire about those who have not yet given an explanation.

In order to eradicate corruption on the media front — at least to a large extent — I have several proposals to make. To achieve this, sincere efforts are required by media stakeholders like the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), the Pakistan Broadcasters Association (PBA) and the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors.

The first suggestion 1) is to abolish the Ministry of Information. 2) If there is still a problem, the Supreme Court should abolish its secret fund, which should be audited every year and made transparent. 3) A powerful media complaints commission should be appointed immediately. 4) The advertisement control of the Ministry of Information should be handed over to an independent body of professionals with unblemished records as, over the years, successive governments have used it as a tool for blackmailing the media. 5) The APNS and the PBA should take the responsibility of journalists and their families killed in the line of duty. 6) Another proposal is that media houses should bear boarding and lodging costs of journalists if they want to send anyone on official tours. 7) Press clubs and unions should work off their own resources instead of depending on government grants. In this regard, they can work on quarterly souvenirs, sponsorships, etc. It is quite contradictory if, on the one hand, we fight for our rights with the government and, on the other, seek grants from it. Under no circumstances should press clubs take donations from political parties. 8) All journalists who are irregular employees, including district correspondents, workers in remote areas, conflict zones, etc, must be made full-time journalists. 9) Parliament should properly legislate for the welfare of journalists and appoint an independent committee for parliamentary oversight. 10) Finally, journalists must not maintain close friendships with politicians so as to remain free from bias and personal political agendas.

Until these changes are made, ethical journalism remains in serious danger.

*Originally published in The Express Tribune*

## PFUJ President serves legal notice

ISLAMABAD: On 25th April, President Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, Pervaiz Shaukat served a legal notice to ministry of information for enlisting his name among beneficiaries of ministry's secret fund.

Shaukat in his legal notice asked the ministry to issue an apology publicly or he will be entitled to claim damages worth Rs. 0.01 billion and initiate criminal proceedings for defaming him.

On the directions of Supreme

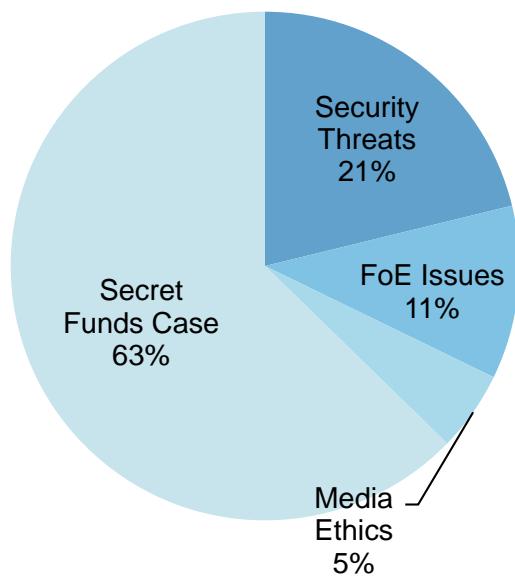
Court the ministry, earlier this week, had released a list of some journalists and media outlets that allegedly benefitted from a special fund of the ministry.

*As reported by the Express Tribune*

# NEWSMAKERS IN THE NEWS

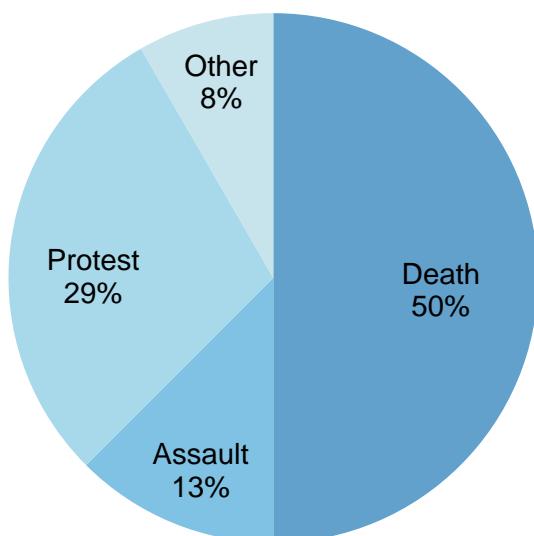
In April 2013, more than a hundred stories were published on security of journalists and FoE [freedom of expression] threats to the media in the monitored newspapers. The larger part of the media coverage was dedicated to proceedings of the case regarding information ministry's secret fund.

**Focus of news stories on media and journalists**



One journalist Tariq Amin became the victim of a bomb blast targeting ANP's pre-election corner meeting, the blast also injured two journalists. Another journalist was threatened and tortured while a fire burnt down Islamabad office of a local news agency.

**Sub Categories of reported security threats**



This report is prepared by Intermedia Pakistan with support from Foundation Open Society Pakistan and International Media Support. For detailed updates on journalist safety issues in Pakistan, please visit our special website [journalistsafety.org](http://journalistsafety.org)

If you are a journalist under threat please contact us on [outreach@intermedia.pk](mailto:outreach@intermedia.pk) or report the threat at <http://journalistsafety.org/report-a-threat/>

Media Threats Bulletin is a monthly publication, compiling key news items about threats to media in Pakistan. The bulletin can be accessed at [journalistsafety.org](http://journalistsafety.org). If you would like to receive the monitor and regular updates on journalist safety issues in Pakistan, follow our website or email us at [outreach@Intremedia.pk](mailto:outreach@Intremedia.pk) for subscription.

