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<http://www.rsf.org/haiti-politically-motivated-attacks-on-11-09-2014,46941.html>

Americas - Haïti

Repeat attacks

Politically-motivated attacks on journalists in Haitian town

11 September 2014

At least five journalists have been the victims of physical or verbal attacks in the past month in Petit-Goâve, a coastal town 65 km west of Port-au-Prince.

The latest victim was **Guyto Mathieu**, the director of *Radio Préférence FM* and correspondent for the *Haïti Libre* news website, on 9 September. He has repeatedly been subjected to insults and derogatory comments.

According to a Petit-Goâve journalists organization, a group opposed to the local government is responsible for these verbal attacks against Mathieu, who was threatened during a demonstration on 4 September. Mathieu is regarded as a supporter and defender of Jacques Stevenson Thimoléon, a parliamentarian who is one of the targets of the Petit-Goâve opposition.

Other journalists have been victims of the political polarization in Petit-Goâve. Pro-Thimoléon demonstrators attacked reporter **Ephesien Joseph** on 29 August, the local media sources said.

Duralph Emmanuel François, another journalist, was also attacked recently, while a local judge threatened *Radio Vision Plus* director **Gibsonne Bazile** with arrest.

"We urge the local authorities to protect Petit-Goâve's journalists, who are too often being identified and targeted as political actors at a time of considerable polarization," said Camille Soulier, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"The local government's defenders and opposition representatives must agree to put an end to these repeated attacks on journalists in the area."

The protest movement against Thimoléon and Petit-Goâve mayor Sandra Jules –accused by the opposition of embezzlement – is continuing despite the justice minister's nationwide ban on demonstrations during the first week of school after the summer break.

Haiti is ranked 47th out of 180 countries in the 2014 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).
