

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/zimbabwe-reporter-badly-hurt-in-attack-by-21-06-2013,44838.html>

Africa - Zimbabwe

Abducted and beaten

Reporter badly hurt in attack by three masked men

21 June 2013

Reporters Without Borders is very worried about the safety of journalists in Zimbabwe after last week's brutal attack on **Paul Pindani**, a reporter for the Harare-based daily *NewsDay*. Three masked men abducted Pindani from his home in Chinhoyi, 115 km west of Harare, and gave him a severe beating over a *NewsDay* article.

"Coming amid mounting intimidation and threats against the media, this physical attack on a journalist does not bode well for the coming weeks," Reporters Without Borders said. "Given the climate of violence and harassment of the media in which the last elections took place, this incident must be taken seriously."

"Those who think they can target the media with impunity must be dissuaded. We urge the authorities to issue an appeal for calm and respect for the physical safety of journalists."

Pindani was hospitalized with a broken arm and multiple lacerations following the 14 June attack by masked men, who accused him of writing an unbylined report in *NewsDay* about the arrest of a ruling Zanu-PF party member for the murder of a local businessman.

Pindani and the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists (ZUJ) nonetheless insist that he did not write the article. He was targeted because he is the most widely known Chinhoyi-based journalist reporting for *NewsDay*. The ZUJ said he received threats several days before the attack.

Dozens of *NewsDay* copies were meanwhile confiscated in a Harare neighbourhood on 18 June because of an article about the formation of an opposition coalition with the aim of bringing down President Robert Mugabe. Zanu-PF members were thought to have been responsible for the seizure.

Reporters Without Borders has already criticized the worsening security situation for the media in Zimbabwe ahead of the next elections. After unilaterally scheduling the presidential election for 31 July, President Mugabe has asked a court to delay it until 14 August:

- [Journalists still being harassed as elections loom](#) (25 May).
- [Opposition also threatens media](#) (11 June).

Zimbabwe is ranked 133rd out of 179 countries in the 2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index, while President Mugabe is on the Reporters Without Borders list of "[Predators of freedom of information](#)".
