

Reporters Without Borders

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Americas - Mexico

Election violence

Attacks on journalists mar Mexico's elections

10 June 2015

Journalists were among the many victims of the violence that marred Mexico's elections on 7 June. Reporters Without Borders urges the authorities to investigate attacks on media personnel and to ensure that they do not go unpunished.

The *Radiover* news website reported that two of its journalists, **Elena Anell** and **José Francisco García Reyes**, were attacked in Xalapa, in the eastern state of Veracruz, while trying to cover alleged vote-buying by members of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Unidentified individuals armed with a revolver broke the windshield of their car and seized their equipment, mobile phones, identity documents and other personal effects, *Radiover* said.

The NGO Article 19 reported on the #RompeElMiedo network that there were a total of 27 aggressive acts towards journalists on 7 June, including theft of material, unjustified demands for the deletion of photos, threats, physical attacks and cyber-attacks on two websites.

The #periodistas en riesgo network reported seven aggressive acts towards journalists.

The election campaign – during which four candidates were murdered and major clashes occurred in several states including Oaxaca, Guerrero and Chiapas – also saw attacks on media personnel, especially by members of political parties.

"Exposing corruption or fraud by political parties has become an act of bravery for journalists in Mexico, who risk not only being denied access to information but also being exposed to acts of intimidation, threats and even physical violence," said Claire San Filippo, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Americas desk.

"Anything seems to go in a country where there is a shocking level of collusion between officials and organized crime and where the judicial system is rarely available. We urge the authorities to quickly carry out investigations and bring the perpetrators to justice, and to provide appropriate protection to journalists who have been threatened."

Members of the National Action Party (PAN) attacked two reporters – **Elizabeth Ibal Rocha** of *El Occidental* and **Fabiola Rosales** of the *Sol de México* – on 4 June in Colima (in the western state of the same name), and tried to seize their equipment. The journalists told local media that they had been trying to interview people about motorcycles that were circulating with political propaganda on display.

A reporter for the Mexico City-based newspaper *La Reforma*, who asked not to be identified, told Reporters Without Borders that he was attacked and beaten on the night of 29 May by members of the campaign staff of the PAN candidate for mayor in Huixquilucan, in the state of Mexico.

He said they took his mobile phones and demanded that he delete photos of their candidate. *La Reforma* said an investigation has been opened by the office of the special prosecutor for crimes against freedom of expression.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, other journalists also told Reporters Without Borders they had been the victims of violence. A woman journalist was sexually assaulted on 30 May in Veracruz while covering the final stage of candidate Erick Lagos's campaign. It is impossible to say at this point if the assault was linked to her journalistic work.

Reporters Without Borders has learned that another Veracruz-based woman journalist was threatened a week earlier in connection with her coverage of a PRI parliamentary candidate. She stopped writing about the candidate out of fear for her safety.

[Ranked 148th out of 180 countries in the 2015 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#), Mexico was [the western hemisphere's deadliest country for media personnel in 2014](#), with a total three journalists killed in a clear connection with their work. A woman blogger was also murdered.
