

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/mexico-grenade-attack-and-car-bomb-hit-29-03-2012,42207.html>

Americas - Mexico

Intimidation tactics

Bomb attack and car bomb hit media as violence escalates in election run-up

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A bomb attack on the offices of the national TV network *Televisa* in Matamoros in Tamaulipas state on 25 March has raised fears of a [resumption of the threats](#) that were aimed against the organization in the same place in 2010.

The latest attack caused only damage and no injuries. However, it occurred in the wake of two other attacks in the same part of northern Mexico, which has a history of violence.

"Violence against the media appears likely to escalate as the July 1 federal election approaches," Reporters Without Borders said. "Strangling or sabotaging the means of information plays into the hands of the [drug cartels](#) and their accomplices among the authorities, while violent crime will once again be a major issue in the election campaign.

"After a six-year [federal offensive against drug trafficking](#) during which more than 50,000 people have been killed and human rights and basic freedoms seriously undermined, how do the presidential candidates propose to restore the rule of law? What will be the consequences of making attacks on journalists a [federal crime](#)?"

The latest attack on *Televisa* occurred on the heels of a car bomb explosion on 19 March at the offices of the daily *Expreso* in Ciudad Victoria, the capital of Tamaulipas state. That attack also caused only material damage, but its aim appeared to have been achieved, namely that *Expreso* removed a statement on the attack from its website, which was taken off line briefly, according to the newspaper [Vanguardia](#).

Equally worrying was a shooting attack on the home of **Víctor Montenegro**, editor of the weekly *El Contralor* and a contributor to the magazines *Contralíneas* and *Lobo Times*, during the night of 24 March in Durango, capital of Durango state.

Only the journalist's mother, who shares the home with her son, was on the premises at the time. Fortunately she was uninjured.

Montenegro, who reported the attack to the local office of the federal justice ministry, has no ideas as to the motive for the attack.

"I don't write about drug issues and don't do any investigative work in that area," he told Reporters Without Borders. "However, I am a critical journalist who tackles social concerns."

Mexico is ranked 149th of 179 countries in the latest world press freedom index published by Reporters Without Borders. In the past 10 years, 80 journalists have been killed and 14 have disappeared in the country.

Legal victory

Reporters Without Borders is pleased at the acquittal by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation yesterday of two journalists prosecuted for "psychological distress".

Proceedings were brought against **Eduardo Huchim**, of the magazine *emeequis*, and **Rubén Lara**, of the newspaper *Rumbo de México*, in October 2008 by magistrate Consuelo Villalobos, after they published official documents relating to the construction of new premises for the Federal Tax and Administrative Court.

The journalists were twice ordered to pay huge damages and banned from mentioning the subject or quoting from official documents.

"This is a victory for freedom of expression after three years and five months of civil proceedings," Huchim told Reporters Without Borders. He is awaiting a second ruling in the case by the Supreme Court on whether a legal precedent can be set.

"It will be another precedent restricting the protection of a public figure's reputation where the public interest is at stake, " said the journalists' lawyer, Perla Gómez Gallardo.
