

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/iraq-violent-attack-on-tv-presenter-in-31-07-2014,46730.html>

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Middle East/North Africa - Iraq

Beaten unconscious

## Violent attack on TV presenter in Iraqi Kurdistan

31 July 2014

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Journalist suspects security services, RWB calls for an investigation

Reporters Without Borders condemns *Payam TV* presenter **Ayhan Saeed's** severe beating by unidentified assailants in Dohuk, in northern Iraqi Kurdistan, on the night of 27 July and calls on the Kurdistan regional government to conduct an independent investigation, one that does not rule out the possibility of a link to the victim's work as a journalist.

Saeed, who has worked for *Payam TV* for the past two years and presents its Kurmanji-language news programme, was hospitalized for treatment to the [severe injuries](#) he received.

On his release, he [described](#) the attack to [Badinan Sat](#), a TV station that supports the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), a party headed by former Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

*"One the eve of Eid, I went to a café in the bazaar to meet friends," he said. "Afterwards, I was waiting for a bus to go home when four or five individuals approached and one asked me if I was Ayhan. When I said I was, I received a violent blow to the head with a metallic object and lost consciousness. But they continued to hit me. I regained consciousness when a passing coffee vendor splashed water on face. He was the one who took me to hospital.*

*"Ten days ago, the Asayesh (security services) in Dohuk were asking questions about me, my family, my university studies and my daily movements. They had been following me from the café."*

When contacted by Reporters Without Borders yesterday, *Payam TV* CEO Faruq Ali said the police began investigating a few hours after the attack and told him they had arrested two people, who immediately confessed. He said he feared that any connection with Saeed's work would be ruled out although journalists have been killed in connection with their work in Iraqi Kurdistan in the past.

He added that Saeed is not the first journalist to have had problems in Dohuk, which is controlled by the Kurdistan Democratic Party (PDK), the party headed by Iraqi Kurdistan President Massoud Barzani.

Aged 21, Saeed is from Dohuk but is studying in Sulaymaniyah, where [Payam TV](#) has its headquarters. The station is affiliated to the Kurdistan Islamic Group, a political party that is represented in Kurdistan's parliament and is participating in Kurdistan Prime Minister Nechirvan Idris Barzani's new coalition government, which took office in June.

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