

Reporters Without Borders

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Africa - Guinea

Lynching

Three journalists killed while covering visit by Ebola education team

19 September 2014

The dangers to media personnel are growing amid mounting panic about the epidemic

Three journalists were among a total of at least eight people who were lynched by villagers during a health team's visit to a remote part of southeastern Guinea on 16 September to inform the local population about the dangers of the Ebola virus.

The bodies of the journalists and five other people were found yesterday in Womé, a village in Nzérékoré prefecture. The tragedy has highlighted the dangers to which journalists are exposed because of the mounting panic in areas hit by the Ebola epidemic.

The slain journalists were identified as **Facély Camara**, who worked for a privately-owned radio station, **Molou Chérif**, a technician with N'Zérékoré's rural radio service, and **Sidiki Sidibé**, a trainee technician working with Chérif.

They were accompanying a delegation organized by the local governor with the aim of increasing awareness of the dangers of Ebola. The authorities said they were attacked by hostile villagers.

"We deplore the deaths of these three journalists and the members of this health education team and we take note of the Guinean prime minister's promise to ensure that these murders will not go unpunished," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We call on the authorities and on news media to take all possible measures to protect journalists, who are providing an essential information service during this public health crisis."

Although the circumstances of the lynching have not been fully established, it seems that the villagers' fear was the underlying cause. According to the information so far available, [they accused the delegation of spreading the virus and disseminating the propaganda of white foreigners](#).

Although the need for information about the epidemic is clearly growing, there have been attempts to gag the media in the West African countries hit by the virus, including Liberia, where [the authorities have harassed several news organizations](#).

Guinea is ranked 102nd out of 180 countries in the [2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).

(photo: a man washes his hands to prevent transmission of Ebola, Conakry - AFP/ CELLOU BINANI)

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