

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/mali-newspaper-editor-kidnapped-beaten-13-07-2012,43030.html>

Africa - Mali

Another abduction

Newspaper editor kidnapped, beaten and then dumped near stadium

13 July 2012

Gunmen abducted **Saouti Haïdara**, the editor of the privately-owned daily *L'Indépendant*, from the newspaper's headquarters in Bamako yesterday evening, gave him a severe beating and then dumped him in a northern district of the city, where he was found by colleagues.

"As kidnapping and assaulting journalists is becoming common practice in Bamako, we call on the authorities to identify those responsible for this attack and bring them to justice," Reporters Without Borders said.

"It is unacceptable that, amid all the turmoil in Mali, journalists keep on being targeted by armed groups acting with complete impunity. The sole aim of this practice is to scare journalists and to silence independent reporting."

Witnesses said around 10 gunmen arrived at the newspaper at around 9 p.m. in three four-wheel-drive vehicles, fired shots inside the newsroom and took Haïdara away. After being badly beaten, he was recovered by his colleagues with head and arm injuries near the 26 March Stadium in the north of the city.

They took him to the Luxembourg Hospital in the northern district of Hamdallaye, where his injuries were treated. Before releasing him, the gunmen had told Haïdara they would kill him if he filed a complaint.

On 16 May, Haïdara was [briefly detained by intelligence officers](#) who interrogated him about an article in the newspaper urging Bamako residents to stay away from government buildings because of the danger of armed attacks.

In a case similar to yesterday's, **Abdrahmane Keita**, the editor of the newspaper *L'Aurore*, was kidnapped, robbed and badly beaten by five gunmen on 2 July after being lured to a rendez-vous by someone posing as an informant. They finally dumped him, injured, in a field near Bamako-Senou airport.

Mali used to be a [regional model](#) of respect for freedom of information, but the situation [has deteriorated dramatically](#) since a military coup in March.

Photo: Saouti Haidara, 62 years old, with head and arm injuries after the assault
