

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/montenegro-two-of-leading-daily-s-cars-15-07-2011,40645.html>

Europe & ex-USSR - Montenegro

Repeated intimidation

Another arson attack on car owned by leading daily

25 July 2011

Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns the latest arson attack on a car displaying the colours of the Podgorica-based daily *Vijesti* on the night of 23 June. It was the third such attack on a *Vijesti* vehicle in the space of a week (see below).

In the latest incident, an unidentified individual tried to set fire to a *Vijesti* car parked on the street but a policeman who happened to be nearby intervened and managed to put out the fire. The attacker was able to escape.

Vijesti editor **Mihailo Jovovic** told Reporters Without Borders: "It is definitely not a madman who does not like white cars with blue letters. It is clearly related to the *Vijesti* logo that is to be found on most of our cars. But if you were to believe the prime minister and police chief, these are just isolated acts by an irresponsible person that have nothing to do with media work."

Reporters Without Borders reiterates its call to the authorities to order a serious investigation and to give it enough resources so that both the perpetrators and instigators of these attacks on a leading national daily can be identified.

"We are clearly not dealing with random vandalism or unfortunate coincidences," Reporters Without Borders said. "These are systematic attacks designed to sow fear within a news organization and, beyond that, within the entire profession. By directly attacking a national daily, those responsible are sending a warning to all the media. A lax response by the authorities to these threats would be irresponsible."

Two of leading daily's cars torched in deliberate attack

15.07.2011

Reporters Without Borders firmly condemns [an arson attack on two cars owned by the independent daily *Vijesti*](#) in the early hours of yesterday in Podgorica. Unidentified individuals doused the two parked cars with gasoline before setting them alight and fleeing. The cars were clearly marked with the newspaper's colours.

"We firmly condemn this latest attack on *Vijesti*, which clearly was not random," Reporters Without Borders said. "Aside from the material damage and resulting financial loss, this attack constitutes another warning to the newspaper's staff, which is unfortunately used to such incidents. *Vijesti* often has to adopt special measures to protect its journalists and other employees against this type of violence.

"We support the newspaper's demand for a thorough investigation that is not abandoned before it is completed. The investigators must not stop at the perpetrators. The instigators of this act of intimidation and their motives must also be clearly established. By using such violence against Montenegro's leading daily, they are sending a very clear signal to all of the country's journalists with the probable aim of getting them to reinforce the already significant level of self-censorship."

Reporters Without Borders is worried about the worsening situation in Montenegro, in which constant judicial harassment of the media has now been compounded by a resumption of violence. The authorities must act before there are tragic consequences. The government has

a chance to show that its professed commitment to media freedom is real and effective.

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