

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/pakistan-tv-reporter-released-on-bail-after-06-01-2014,45697.html>

Asia - Pakistan

Journalist freed

TV reporter released on bail after six weeks

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Farhan Ahmed Bangash, a *Royal TV* reporter who had been held on terrorism charges in connection with his coverage of clashes in Kohat district, near Islamabad, since 20 November, was finally released on bail by a Peshawar high court on 1 January.

"We are relieved but we regret that this decision came so late," Reporters Without Borders said. "It is wrong for a journalist to be arrested so arbitrarily in connection with his work. We condemn the arbitrary treatment Bangash received from the police, who destroyed his professional equipment."

Reporters Without Borders added: "We disturbed by the reinforcement of the anti-terrorism law on the pretext of protecting lives, and its use to arrest journalists. If the government is sincere, why doesn't it take measures to end the cycle of violence against journalists and to end the impunity that surrounds this violence?"

[Seven charges](#) were brought against Bangash, including "inciting violence" under the anti-terrorism law, in connection with his coverage of clashes on 15 November in Kohat, in which ten people were killed. He was even accused of participating in the clashes, which he covered for Royal TV.

Bangash told Reporters Without Borders he was mistreated psychologically by the authorities, who held him for two weeks in a room with 17 other people. His camera was destroyed along with the photos it contained, showing police fleeing the scene of rioting and clashes between two clans in Kohat.

Bangash, whose first request for release was rejected, has been supported by his TV station but had to pay his lawyer's fees and his bail himself.

Pakistan is ranked 159th out of 179 countries in the Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).
