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Asia - Pakistan

Deadly attack

Three TV station employees killed in targeted shooting by Taliban group

20 January 2014

Reporters Without Borders is appalled and saddened by the deliberate murder of three *Express News* TV employees in a shooting attack by a Taliban group on one of the TV station's vehicles in Karachi on 17 January.

"We offer our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and we urge the Pakistani authorities to do everything possible to ensure that those responsible for this shocking crime are brought to justice as soon as possible," Reporters Without Borders said.

"Targeted terrorist attacks on news media are intolerable but unfortunately only too frequent. This was not the first attack on the *Express Media* group but the authorities have still done nothing to protect media personnel, who continue to be killed while covering the news.

"The freedom of action and impunity enjoyed by those who carry out these attacks will only encourage them to commit more attacks with the aim of gagging the media. This climate of violence must be combatted.

"Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the group that claimed this attack, has announced that there will be more attacks of this kind against media it regards as 'propagandist.' The authorities have been warned. They must implement special security measures for independent news media."

Technician **Waqas Aziz**, security guard **Ashraf Yusuf** and driver **Khalid Khan**, all aged less than 30, were fatally injured in the head and chest when four gunmen on two motor-cycles opened fire on the *Express News* van with silencer-equipped pistols. A cameraman asleep in the back was unhurt. His three colleagues were pronounced dead on arrival at Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.



Khalid Khan - Ashraf Yusuf - Waqas Aziz

TTP representative Ehsanullah Ahsan said his group was responsible for the shooting. Speaking by telephone on the *Express News* programme "Kal Tak," he said that, "in the war of ideologies all media channels including *Express News* are acting as propagandist and as rival party."

He warned that the TTP would continue to attack all news media "that are involved in carrying

out propaganda against us.” Referring to an earlier attack on the *Express Media* group in December, he added: “We had not incurred any loss of life so we attacked them again.”

The 17 January shooting was the third armed attack in five months on the liberal *Express Media* group. The first was an [attack by a gunman](#) on 16 August and the second was a [homemade bomb attack](#) in December.

Ranked 159th out of 179 countries in the 2013 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#), Pakistan is [one of the world’s deadliest countries](#) for media personnel.

Credit photo: Express Tribune

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