

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/pakistan-three-journalists-killed-three-12-01-2013,43905.html>

Asia - Pakistan

Twin bombings

Three journalists killed, three injured in Quetta blasts

12 January 2013

Reporters Without Borders is horrified at the double bombing yesterday in Quetta, in Balochistan province, in which three journalists were killed and three other people – one journalist and two other media workers – were injured.

“We express our condolences to the families and friends of the dead journalists,” the press freedom organization said. “These barbaric acts must not go unpunished. In the past four years the safety of journalists has continued to decline in Balochistan, which remains one of the most dangerous places in the world for the media. We call on the governor of the province, Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Magsi, to take concrete steps as soon as possible.

“We support the campaign launched by those in the media while recommending extreme caution on the part of editorial staff covering the violence gripping the province. It is not the first time that the bombers have used this method, designed to cause the maximum number of casualties.

“Besides causing human loss and damage, the first blast acts as a lure to draw in journalists and security forces, who are then the target of a second explosive device. Given the notable lack of government measures to protect the media, editorial departments must take action themselves to reduce the risks incurred by their reporters.”

Local news reporters went immediately to the location of the first blast, outside a billiards club on the road to Alamdar, yesterday evening. While they were reporting on the chaotic scene, a second bomb went off. Bomb disposal teams believe about 100 kg of explosives was used in the attack.

Contacted by Reporters Without Borders, the president of the Balochistan Union of Journalists in Quetta, Essa Tareen, said **Imran Shaikh**, a cameraman for the television station *Samaa News*, and **Mohammad Iqbal**, a photographer with the commercial news agency *News Network International* (NNI), were killed instantly, while *Samaa News* reporter **Saifur Rehman** died of his injuries later in hospital.

The Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) announced a demonstration would be held after Friday prayers in protest at the deaths of the three journalists.

Muhammad Hasan, a photographer with the agency *Independent News Pakistan (INP)* and the brother of Mohammad Iqbal, as well as two satellite engineers were injured in the blasts. They were said to be in critical condition.

About 80 people in total were killed when the two bombs exploded 10 minutes apart on the Alamdar road, targeting members of the Shi'ite community. Police and rescue workers were among the dead, according to the Quetta chief of police.

Several digital satellite news gathering vehicles were damaged in the twin attacks. The television stations *Geo TV* and *Samaa News* said their trucks were badly damaged.

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- , (JPEG - 42.6 kb)

