Reporters Without Borders

Asia - Pakistan

Police violence

Cameraman attacked by police at Peshawar clash

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Zahid Hussein, a cameraman working for *Express News TV,* was injured in the head and arms by police officers in Peshawar while filming a violent crackdown by security forces after a clash between two armed groups on 4 March.

Reporters Without Borders is alarmed by the frequency with which the police are allowed to get out of control, as well as their tendency to stop journalists doing their jobs and place them in danger instead of protecting them.

The organization wants the police chief's apology to be accompanied by genuine measures to put a stop to such excesses.

Hussain was the first journalist to arrive at the scene of the clash between two armed groups. Local police chief Liaqat Ali had gone there with about 100 officers to stop the shooting. When he noticed Hussain filming, he told him: "Go away and let us to get on with it."

"I got out of the way and then I saw police officers beating a man," Hussain said. "I was filming the incident when they started pointing at me. Then they jumped on me and started beating me too."

When he returned to his office, his head bandaged, he told Reporters Without Borders: "I told the police I was a television journalist but they carried on beating me with their rifle butts." His camera was confiscated and when it was returned to him later, the footage he had shot had been erased.

The head of the Express News TV bureau, **Jamshed Baghwan**, told Reporters Without Borders that he regarded the matter as closed as the police chief had apologized to Hussain for his men's violent behaviour and Hussain "had accepted the apology."