

# Reporters Without Borders

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Asia - Pakistan

Held for interrogation

## Reporter held incommunicado by military intelligence for past four days

18 October 2013

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Reporters Without Borders condemns the arrest, detention and interrogation methods used with **Muhammad Zaib Mansoor**, a journalist based in Dargai, in the northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who was taken away for questioning by military intelligence on 17 October.

The methods violate the law and the guarantees of protection that journalists are supposed to enjoy.

"We demand Mansoor's immediate release," Reporters Without Borders said. "No one can be held like this for more than 24 hours. After that, the military must take him before a judge if they think he has committed a crime. Security for journalists in this part of the country is already bad enough without the authorities making it worse".

"We have other concerns. Why did Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) tap this journalist's phone? Did they obtain a court's permission to do this? How many other journalists is the ISI currently spying on?"

Reporters Without Borders added: "The freedom with which Pakistan's intelligence agencies act poses a grave threat to freedom of the press and information. An investigation should be carried out with the aim of controlling the methods used by the different agencies."

The disappearance of Mansoor, who works for the Dargai-based dailies *Ayeen* and *Awaz-e-Swat*, was made public yesterday by colleagues who were with him when he was "abducted" by military intelligence officials on 14 October.

His colleagues said they contacted military press officers, who told them Mansoor was being questioned about "suspicious phone calls" and would be released soon if he was innocent. It is not known if they were referring to calls made or received by Mansoor.

"We have been informed that Mansoor is in the custody of intelligence personnel after he was picked up for interrogation," one of his colleagues told Reporters Without Borders. "He is a professional journalist and a very serious one. If he has done anything wrong, they should act according to law. But taking him away in such fashion worries all journalists."

A journalist for the past 15 years, Mansoor is general secretary of the Dargai Press club.

Pakistan's Tribal Areas are no-go areas for journalists from other regions, while foreign journalists have had no access to them at all since the United States launched its war on terror in 2001.

Pakistan is ranked 159th out of 179 countries in the 2013 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).

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