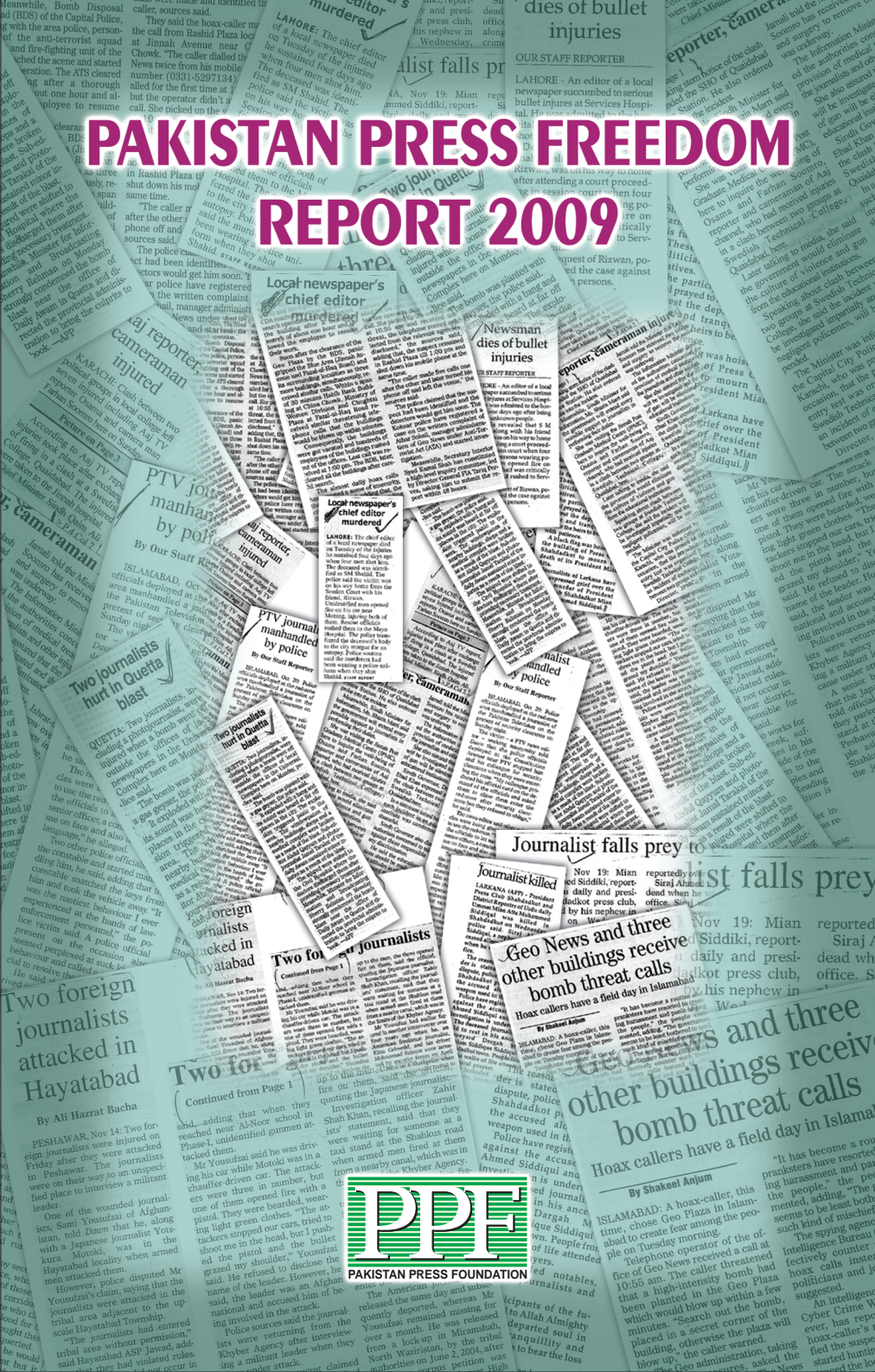


# PAKISTAN PRESS FREEDOM REPORT 2009



PAKISTAN PRESS FOUNDATION

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Notes

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## Introduction

Unlike past military rulers, General Musharraf did not clamp down on the media until the very end of his tenure. In fact the media saw an unprecedented development with greater level of freedom to the local media and advent of independent TV channels and radio, and increased strength, assertiveness and independence of media during the early part of his rule.

However, towards the end of his tenure, President Musharraf imposed a spate of the draconian curbs on the Pakistani media as part of the state of emergency declared on 3 November 2007. He placed sweeping legal restrictions on media freedoms by amending laws relating to the electronic as well as the print media. The Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) itself, which has replaced the constitution of the country, specifically suspends Article 19 relating to freedom of the press.

In addition, the Musharraf regime introduced two separate ordinances imposing severe curbs on print and electronic media that give government officials the authority to take unilateral action against media organizations. Under the new amendments government officials could suspend publication of a newspaper for up to thirty days and have the authority to confiscate equipment of radio and television channels and to seal their premises for up to thirty days.

Owners and operators of radio and television channels violating the amended electronic media laws could be punished by up to three years in jail and a fine of 10 million rupees or both. Cable operators found to be in violation of the ordinance could be punished by a jail term of one year and a fine of five million rupees or both.

Immediately after the imposition of the state of emergency the government machinery acted aggressively to curb freedom of expression in the country.

Some of these actions included:

- Suspension of broadcasts of all international and national private television news channels, as well as most national private sports and entertainment channels. Cable operators have been directed to only distribute entertainment channels approved by the authorities.
- Blockage of a number of websites of international and national news organizations on November 3.
- Blockage of telephone and SMS service in the capital city of Islamabad for some hours on November 3.
- Raids on a private television channel, two private FM radio stations and the printing press of one daily newspaper.
- Confiscation of the equipment of one radio station.
- Warning by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to a daily newspaper that action may be taken under the recent amendments to the law if the paper does not follow "certain parameters in reporting news and views".
- Appointment of government officials to monitor the contents of 21 newspapers.
- Attacks, detention and arrests by law enforcement agencies of journalists covering protests against the imposition of the state of emergency.

Soon after coming to power the elected government of President Asif Zardari, removed the oppressive laws enacted by the regime. The democratic government also circulated a draft of an access to information law, but failed to introduce it in the parliament.

## Threats To Media In Conflict Zones

The greatest threat to the lives and safety of journalists during 2008 has been militancy by the Taliban and resulting army action in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), the separatist movement in Balochistan province, and acts of terrorism by Al Qaeda in all parts of the country.

These factors combined led to heavy loss of life and injuries particularly among journalists living in NWFP and FATA.

## Journalists killed in conflict zones

### Photojournalist murdered by separatists in Balochistan

Dr. Abdus Samad Chishti Mujahid, a photojournalist and columnist for the Urdu-language weekly Akhbar-e-Jehan, was fatally shot on 9 February 2008 by a gunman in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan province, which borders Afghanistan. He was 55.

Mujahid was shot as he was coming out of his house with his wife. He received one bullet in the face and another in the chest area. He was rushed to hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

The Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), a nationalist and separatist group, claimed responsibility for the killing. According to press reports, BLA spokesman Meerak Baloch telephoned the Quetta Press Club and said Mujahid had been killed because he was working against the Baloch cause.

### Correspondent of The Nation killed in suicide bombing in Swat

Sirajuddin, the correspondent of daily The Nation, died in a suicide bombing in Mingora, North West Frontier Province (NWFP), on February 29, 2008.

The bomb blast, at the funeral of a slain police officer, which Siraj was covering, killed over 40 people and wounded 80 others.

Mingora is main town of in the militancy wrecked Swat Valley North West Frontier Province (NWFP). In 2007, militants took over much of the area, and though government has unsuccessfully tried to reassert control over the area.

### Correspondent of Sindh TV shot dead in Hub, Balochistan

Khadim Hussain Sheikh, correspondent for Sindh TV and the bureau chief for the daily Khabrain was killed on April 14, 2008 by unidentified

gunmen as he left his home on motorbike in the town of Hub in Balochistan province, Sheikh was also.

Sheikh's brother, Ishaq Sheikh, who was riding the same motorbike at the time of the attack and was hospitalized with gunshot wounds, said three men on motorbikes carried out the shooting, then checked to make sure his brother was dead before fleeing the scene, Ishaq said he was unaware of any personal dispute that might have led to Sheikh's murder.

### Correspondent of Express News television channel shot dead in Bajaur

Mohammed Ibrahim reporter Express News television channel and general secretary of the Tribal Union of Journalists in Bajaur was shot dead by unknown men outside Khar, the main town of the Bajaur tribal area adjacent Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) on May 22, 2008.

Ibrahim, was returning by motorcycle from an interview with local Taliban spokesman Maulvi Omar. The attackers took Ibrahim's camera, mobile phone and notes before shooting him and leaving his body at the roadside.

Bajaur is part of the restive Federally Administered Tribal Areas where Pakistan's military is fighting with militant groups.

### Journalist killed in bombing on Taliban hideout in Swat

Abdul Aziz Shaheen reporter for local dailies Azadi and Khabarkar in the troubled district of Swat in the NWFP province of Pakistan was killed on 29 August 2008, in an attack by jet fighters on a Taliban hideout, where he was being held by the Taliban.

Shaheen had gone to the Peuchar area of Tehsil Matta of Swat to investigate who was responsible for setting his car on fire a week earlier. As he was talking to local people, the local Taliban kidnapped Shaheen and imprisoned him in a Taliban jail.

Muslim Khan, a spokesman of Taliban, told journalists that the compound where Shaheen was detained was attacked by a jet fighter and the journalist was among more than 20 persons killed in the air attack.

His colleagues said Shaheen was a brave and bold journalist and that the Taliban were angered by the many reports that he had written about their activities. Shaheen, 35, left behind a wife, three sons and one daughter.

The Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) strongly condemned the killing of Shaheen. A statement issued by the PFUJ said "the government appears to be non-serious towards security issues confronting journalists, particularly in the tribal areas." The PFUJ statement added that journalists were getting life threats and some even received warning letters to leave the area.

## Journalists injured, assaulted and harassed in conflict zones

### Four journalists injured in suicide bombing in Mingora, Swat

Two Journalists were injured in February 29, 2008 suicide bombing in Mingora, Swat. The bombing, which took place at the funeral of a slain police officer, killed 40 people including Sirajuddin, the correspondent of The Nation.

Hazrat Bilal of the local newspaper Shawal, was hospitalized for his wounds sustained multiple injuries. Munawar Afridi, who writes for the English-language daily Dawn and other papers, suffered lesser injuries.

### President, Tribal Union of Journalists shot and injured in FATA

On 3 August 2008, the president of the Tribal Union of Journalists (TUJ), Khayal Zaman Afridi, received serious injuries when armed persons fired shots at him. The incident occurred in the town of Bara, Khyber Agency, in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The attackers also kidnapped his companion, Mohammad Waseem Niazi, a businessman from Lahore, who was visiting Bara.

On hearing the shots, Lashkar-i-Islami activists came to the scene of

the incident and took two of the alleged attackers into their custody. Afridi, who is the correspondent for the Urdu-language daily Aaj, was taken to Hayatabad Medical Complex, in Peshawar.

### Four journalists injured during protest memorial rally in Balochistan

Four journalists sustained minor injuries on August 25, 2008 after Pakistani paramilitary forces fired on a rally they were covering in the town of Turbat in Balochistan province.

The officers of the Frontier Corps fired indiscriminately while trying to subdue a public meeting on the second anniversary of the death of Baloch politician Nawab Akbar Bugti.

The killing of Bugti by security forces led to a violent separatist movement by Baloch nationalists.

The injured journalists were Irshad Akhtar, Gulzar Baloch, Aslam Jahangir and Saleem Buzdar.

### Offices of newspapers damaged in bomb blast in Quetta, two journalists injured

A sub editor and a photojournalist, received minor injuries on October 20 when a bomb went off outside the offices of local newspapers in Quetta, the capital city of southern province of Balochistan that borders Afghanistan.

The bomb, which was planted in a gas geyser, exploded around 4:00 p.m. It shattered window panes in nearby buildings and triggered panic in the area.

Abdul Qayum, sub editor and photojournalist Jamal Tarakai of the daily Awam sustained minor injuries as a result of the blast. The offices of five daily newspapers - Awam, Atemad, Intekhab, Public and Tijarat - located in the same building were also damaged in the explosion.

### A Japanese and a Pakistani journalist shot and wounded in Peshawar

A Japanese journalist and his Afghan colleague were shot and wounded on 14 November 2008 in Peshawar, the capital of Pakistan's restive North West Frontier Province (NWFP).

Motoki Yotsukura, the Islamabad bureau chief for Japan's Asahi Shimbun newspaper, and Afghan journalist Sami Yousufzai, a correspondent for Newsweek magazine, were attacked by three gunmen in the Peshawar, NWFP neighbourhood of Hayatabad, near the Khyber tribal agency.

According to press reports, the journalists were returning to Peshawar from the Khyber tribal agency after interviewing militants when armed gunmen stopped their car and put a gun to Yousufzai's head in an apparent attempt to kidnap them. When Yousufzai pushed one of the gunmen away, he began shooting.

Yotsukura was hit in the right knee, while Yousufzai sustained injuries in the chest, arm and hand. Press reports quoting Yousufzai said the gunmen spoke with an Afghan accent. The assailants fled in the direction of the Khyber tribal agency.

Yotsukura received medical assistance at a local hospital and was taken to Islamabad for further treatment. Yousufzai was admitted to a hospital in Peshawar.

### Paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC) troops assault correspondent of Dawn News television channel in Khyber Agency

Frontier Corps (FC) troops allegedly beat up a correspondent of Dawn News television channel in the Khyber Agency on June 22, 2008.

Wali Khan Shinwari was covering paramilitary action against a would-be suicide bomber in Jamrud when he was assaulted and detained at a check post, the channel said, adding that troops snatched his cell phone and camera.

### Correspondent of The News beaten up by security forces

Musa Khankhel, correspondent of The News and Geo TV in Swat, was manhandled on by personnel of the security forces.

Musa Khankhel was abused and manhandled by five unidentified personnel of security forces. Four of them were in military uniform and their boss, apparently a major, was not in uniform. Press reports quoting Musa Khankhel, said the major kept abusing him while ordering his men to hit him hard.

"I was called to the Gulkadda Circuit House, which serves as the headquarters of the Army in Saidu Sharif. The major accused me of misreporting and said he knew my place of residence and would eliminate me along with my family. It was a harrowing experience for me," he recalled while talking to The News.

According to Musa Khankhel, he had expected such a rough treatment after having received threats on phone. His younger brother Isa Khankhel, who is a reporter for Urdu daily Jang, said he too had received threats from the militants and security forces.

The News contacted Maj Gen Athar Abbas, director general of the ISPR, to complain about the manhandling of Musa Khankhel by uniformed military personnel in Swat. He said he was unaware of the incident and would make enquiries into the case. It seems he forgot to do so as no reply was given to The News and no probe was ordered into the incident.

### Canadian web-publisher, two Pakistanis kidnapped in tribal areas

Khadija Abdul Qahar, a Canadian publisher of a web magazine, and two of her Pakistani colleagues were kidnapped on 11 November 2008 in the tribal areas of Pakistan where she was gathering material for a documentary.

According to press reports, Qahar was travelling in a taxi to the town of Miranshah, in the North Waziristan tribal area that borders Afghanistan, when unidentified armed men kidnapped her along with her translator

and guide. The taxi driver managed to escape from the scene.

Police are searching the area for the journalist and her colleagues. Qahar, who was previously known as Beverly Giesbrecht, had embraced Islam after the 9/11 attacks on the United States and called herself a supporter of the Taliban. Her website, <http://www.jihadunspun.com> features comments and reports on Pakistan's tribal areas.

The political administration in the Bannu frontier region is negotiating with elders of the local Janikhel tribe for the release of the abducted journalist and her colleagues.

### Two journalists kidnapped in Mohmand Tribal Agency

Taliban militants kidnapped two freelance journalists and their local collaborator in Lakaro area of the volatile Mohmand tribal region on July 4, 2008.

Taliban spokesman Dr Mohammad Assad confirmed the kidnapping of the journalists, Pir Zubair Shah and photographer Akhtar Soomro, and local tribesman Malik Abdul Hassan.

He said they had been taken into custody for interrogation. Assistant political agent Syed Ahmad Jan said that the journalists were kidnapped from Ziarat Marble in Lakaro Tehsil, some 40 kilometres northwest of Ghalanai.

He said the journalists had not informed the local authorities about their visit to the tribal region, although under the law they should have informed the political administration.

According to press reports Pir Zubair Shah of Tank and Akhtar Soomro, a Karachi-based press photographer, had been contributing to various foreign newspapers and media organisations.

The Taliban spokesman accused the kidnapped persons of making contradictory statements during interrogation.

He said that both were suspects and Taliban believed that they were not journalists.

“Initially they said that they were journalists, but later they changed their statement and said they were politicians,” Dr Assad said, adding that they would be freed the moment they came clean about themselves and satisfied the Taliban.

The Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and Karachi Union of Journalists (KUJ) in separate statements, expressed concern over the deteriorating law and order situation in the tribal areas, particularly for journalists following the recent death threats to three journalists.

“We fear that journalists can become a prime target as situation in the coming weeks or months may aggravate and media groups must adopt safety for their staff and their families before it’s too late,” PFUJ secretary-general Mazhar Abbas said.

### Seven journalists arrested in Charsadda, NWFP for covering Taliban activities

Police in Shabqadar Tehsil of Charsadda district of NWFP arrested seven journalists on June 21, 2008 for covering Taliban activities.

Press reports quoting arrested journalists said that Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Ihsan-ud-Din had recently warned them to either stop giving coverage to the Taliban in the area or face the consequences. The journalists did not heed to his orders and continued their routine work which led to the police raid on the press club and the arrest of seven journalists.

### Intelligence agency interrogate news anchor for interviewing Baloch nationalist leader

Hasan Abdullah, an anchor and reporter of Pakistan's leading television channel Dawn News was detained for six hours by agents of an intelligence agency on 26th August and was released after interrogation.

The agents kept his cell phone and tape containing interview of Balach Marri, head of Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), who was killed in November 2007. BLA is a militant, separatist organisation that has attacked civilian, official and military personnel and infrastructure.

According to press reports, Hasan Abdullah was driving to office from home in the morning when his car was intercepted by a black car causing a collision. One of the occupants of the car pointed a pistol at the journalist and said "Mr Hasan get in the car". Hasan was blindfolded and after having been driven around for 90 minutes, he was taken into a house. Throughout his six-hour detention, he was kept blindfolded. The intelligence personnel dropped him near his car in the evening.

### Television reporter and cameraman detained

Mehboob Shah, correspondent and cameraman Mohammad Sami of AAJ TV were briefly detained on November 11, 2008 in Jamrud in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Local authorities detained the pair as they sought to report on the funeral of six people. They were freed after images were removed from their camera.

### Four journalists escaped unharmed in targeted firing

Four journalists escaped unharmed when they were fired at from two sides near the Kohat Tunnel in militancy-hit Darra Adamkhel town.

Among them was The News photojournalist Mohammad Sajjad. "We had a narrow escape. Four bullets hit our car but somehow we survived," he said upon reaching Peshawar. Other journalists in the car were Saiful Islam Saifi and Mian Asif of a television channel, and Amer Ali Shah of a daily published from Peshawar. They were covering the military operation against militants in the gun-manufacturing town of Darra Adamkhel, located about 40 kilometres from Peshawar.

The journalists were able to drive on a side road to enter the tribal territory of Darra Adamkhel. They drove on an almost deserted road

and headed for the Friendship Tunnel, which is about two kilometres long. According to photojournalist Sajjad, they had just reached near the entrance of the Kohat Tunnel when unidentified people positioned on the left side of the hill above the tunnel began firing at their car. He said Mian Asif was alert enough to pull away and drive back. He wasn't sure if those firing at them from the hill were militants or soldiers.

The journalists said the next moment the two soldiers standing guard at the mouth of the Kohat Tunnel also started firing at their car. They felt it was possible the soldiers mistook them for suicide bombers and began firing at their car.

### Taliban threaten journalists in South Waziristan

Local Taliban threatened four journalists in South Waziristan to give up their profession or face the consequences, a private television channel reported on June 30, 2008.

According to Dawn News, the threat was issued by pamphlets circulated by local Taliban in the main town of Wana in South Waziristan. The pamphlets allege that four journalists Anwar Shakeel, Zafar Wazir, Din Muhammad and Gull Khan were involved in making false reports on Taliban militants and local tribesmen, the channel said.

Four family members of Din Muhammad including his father, brother and uncle were killed by local Taliban last year, the channel added.

### Rocket attack damages Bajaur Press Club

Two rockets hit the Bajaur Press Club on December 13, 2008 smashed windowpanes and damaged the walls of the building.

According to press reports the attack did not cause any loss of life as journalists had long stopped visiting the press club due to the precarious security situation. It seemed the militants wanted to target the security personnel who had set up a bunker on roof of the press club building, which is close to the heavily-guarded government offices, political agent's office and residence and military camp.

The office-bearers of Bajaur Press Club and Tribal Union of Journalists (TUI) condemned rocket attack on the club and expressed their deep concern over growing threat to security of tribal journalists.

### Pakistani Taliban warn news vendors to stop selling two daily newspapers

The Taliban in Pakistan's Tribal Areas bordering Afghanistan have warned newspaper vendors to stop the sale of two daily newspapers which they claim were publishing "un-Islamic and immoral photographs of women"

According to press reports, newspaper vendors in the town of Mirali in the North Waziristan Tribal Agency received a warning on March 12, to stop distribution of Urdu dailies Aaj Kal and Waqt.

The Taliban warned that if these newspapers continued to be sold, the newspapers would be burnt at Mirali Town Square.

### Taliban continue violent campaign against cable television, music and video shows

The Taliban continued their violent campaign against television, music and video shows. They have imposed a ban on these forms of entertainment and have forced local businesses to close down by threats of violence.

Those that do not comply are indeed targeted and there are numerous examples of shops selling music and video cassettes and disks being destroyed by explosive devices.

Scores of shops and markets selling music and videos were blown up in Kohat, Peshawar, Buner, Tank, Bajaur Agency Karak district, Shahwali, Batkhela, Swat, Nowshera, Landi Kotal, Malakand, Mardan, Miranshah, Bannu, Dargai, Attock, Karak Gumbat, Mingora, Hangu and Nowshera.

## Cable television operators in Kohat suspend transmissions after threats from Taliban

The cable operators suspended service throughout the district Kohat following threats from the Taliban on June 22, 2008.

One such example was when cable TV transmissions in Kohat went off-air on June 22 following a blast at a music centre in the busy Tirah bazaar in which shops were completely destroyed and two people were injured.

Earlier the Taliban had given a deadline for the cable operators to switch off telecasts by the evening “or get ready to be made an example for violating the Sharia law”.

The All Cables Service Association, at an emergency meeting, decided to suspend transmissions with immediate effect until “the government provides them security and starts peace negotiations with the Taliban”. However, the operators said that they wanted to sort out the matter by directly negotiating with the Taliban as under the prevailing situation in the NWFP, police security was not enough as the police were the main target of the militants.

According to the President of the association, the cable operators had been receiving threatening calls from a telephone number threatening them to suspend transmissions and wind up their businesses.

The office-bearers of the cable operators association said that the government had failed to provide them security and ensure transmission of TV programmes in Kohat and adjoining Darra Adamkhel region.

## Taliban launch drive against TV sets, CDs players and dish antennas in Swat

Dozens of masked Taliban launched an operation in Swat on June 28, 2008 against TV sets, CDs players and dish antennas and removed the electronic devices from the houses, terming them as un-Islamic, sources told.

They removed CDs players and dish antennas and TV sets from the houses and broke them into pieces. The operation continued for over two hours without any hurdle and no one resisted, they added.

## Taliban disrupt music show

The local Taliban interrupted a music show at a marriage party in the Mail area of the Haleemzai Tehsil, four kilometres from Ghalanai, on May 14, 2008.

According to press reports, tribal elder Zarbash Khan, the father of the bridegroom, was asked to appear before the Taliban to explain why he had arranged a music show at the marriage party of his son Nazar Hussain, despite the ban imposed by the Taliban on such activities, which were ‘un-Islamic’.

The Taliban also broke music instruments and manhandled local artists invited for the function by the family and friends of the bridegroom according to tribal customs and tradition.

They also threatened area people with dire consequences if they violated the code of ethics set by their local leadership.

## Pressures On Media During The Judicial Crisis

The judicial crisis was perhaps the first time in Pakistan that a major political crisis is being covered live on television, and in the process the media themselves became the centre of attention

As the rallies in support of the Chief Justice grew larger, so did media coverage. TV channels devoted hours of coverage to enthusiastic crowds showering rose petals on him. The government fearful that the campaign would become a national movement made repeated attempts to intimidate the media into submission.

Another tactic employed unsuccessfully to harass television channels was to ask cable operators to suspend transmission of selected channels.

It is not only the bureaucracy and the ruling political parties that have tried to control media coverage of the crisis. Pakistan's Supreme Court was also irked by reports about some judges and issued a restrictive code of conduct for the print and the electronic media. It warned that media coverage that could influence court proceedings or scandalises the issue fall within the rules of contempt of court.

On the other side of the divide, the media has received wholehearted support from political parties, media groups, civil society organisations and human rights groups. Attacks on the media are met with an avalanche of condemnations from within and outside the country. Another positive element is that the media refused to be intimidated by the pressures exerted by those in authority.

The media continued to give coverage to the lawyers' movement for the restoration of judiciary and played a key role in the success of the movement and the restoration of the judiciary on March 21, 2009.

## Role Of Media In Elections

The February 18 general election in Pakistan was a unique experience of electoral history of this country. These polls were held in conflict situation, but due to close vigil of media and civil society, they were held in relatively peaceful, fair and free manner, reflecting the will of people. They also dealt a severe blow to ruling junta of President Gen (Retd) Pervez Musharraf and ushered in a new era of democracy.

When the general election of 2008 was held, Pakistan already had a robust private media ready for unbiased coverage of polls.

The main problem faced by the media during the coverage of 2008 election was the charged and tense political atmosphere. Any error during election coverage could have proven costly; however, the media played a responsible role and no untoward incident was reported during the poll coverage as a result of media coverage

Realizing that free and fair elections are essential for democracy

consolidation and conflict prevention, and their proper coverage by media would help in their impartiality and fairness, the media and civil society organizations in Pakistan had made preparations well before the polls.

In 2006, a number of leading civil society organizations formed the Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN) to monitor the fairness in elections in Pakistan. The FAFEN deputed 19000 observers on 12 percent of polling stations in 256 constituencies in Pakistan, who observed the polls and presented their reports.

Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF), the country's leading media development organization was among the founders of FAFEN. Later Intermedia, the local affiliate of Internews was also admitted as a member.

For effective media coverage, especially in conflict areas, it was necessary to train journalists for professional election reporting, taking measures for their safety, knowing their right to work without threats, understanding and following the election guidelines, and focusing on democratic rights and freedom of expression. The PPF arranged a series of training workshops for reporters, photojournalists, cameramen and desk staff of print and electronic media organizations to improve the capacity of media outlets to cover the election process in the country.

Due to close polls monitoring before, during and after the polls, Pakistan witnessed a reasonably free and fair elections, which was also confirmed by the independent international observers. The Pakistani media played a key role in keeping the citizens informed of the weaknesses in the electoral process, which in turn resulted in pressure to those in authority to remove some of the most glaring irregularities.

Another problem was the negative attitude of both ruling and opposition parties, that wanted to manipulate the election coverage in their favour, discouraging neutral and independent reporting.

From some rural areas complaints were received that some influential candidates tried to rig polls and block their coverage through violence. These elements in some cases also beat up reporters.

These curbs gave a new sense of unity to independent media in Pakistan, compelling it to play a vanguard role in the movement for restoration of democracy. It, however, paid a heavy price for this. A number of journalists were murdered and injured in Pakistan during 2008.

### Other Cases Of Violence And Intimidation Against Media

While militancy, judicial crisis and national and provincial elections caused specific problems for journalists and media institutions, attacks and intimidation are a sad part of life for the Pakistani media. 2008 saw many cases of attacks on media in all parts of the country.

#### Drug mafia suspected to be behind murder of journalist in Mianwali

Abdul Razzaq Johara reporter of Royal television network and of daily Sahafat was killed in the town of Mianwali, in the Punjab province, on November 3, 2008, the day after he did a report on drug trafficking. Johra, 45, was reportedly dragged out of his home by six armed men, before being killed.

Royal TV said Johra had prepared several reports on drug-related crime, and he is believed to have received threats from drug dealers some time. The local police said they arrested several suspects, although five other suspects remain at large.

#### Film-maker kidnapped

A prominent film-maker, film distributor and well-known figure of the television, newspapers and advertisement world, Satish Anand, was kidnapped by unknown men in Karachi on Monday, October 20, 2008.

According to press reports, two unidentified men kidnapped Satish Anand when he was going home in his car with his driver. According to his driver when the car reached near the Hockey Stadium two men came to them. He said one of the two men gave an injection on his hand after which he became unconscious. Later, when he gained senses he was in the car but Anand was not there.

#### Four journalists abducted, assaulted during armed attack on press club

On 14 September 2008, a group of about 50 armed men attacked the Shahpur Jehanian Press Club, of Tehsil Daulatpur, in Nawabshah District of Pakistan's southern province of Sindh. The attackers beat and abducted four journalists and took physical control of the press club.

Among those assaulted were: Manthar Dahiri, correspondent of the daily newspaper Sobh and president of the press club; Abdul Aziz Channa, correspondent of the daily Koshish and general secretary of the press club; Zahid Bughio, correspondent of the daily Sindh; and Haji Mohammed Haroon, correspondent of the daily Mehran.

The armed men broke into the press club, where the journalists were sleeping, at around 4:00 a.m. They attacked the journalists and tied them up with ropes before abducting them.

The next morning police found Dahiri and Haroon in the backyard of a private home, while Channa was found unconscious on a highway eight kilometres from the city. Bughio was found bruised and battered on 15 September on the outskirts of Daulatpur.

Local journalists said that the armed men work for an influential landlord of the area, Maqsood Ali Shah.

The journalists staged a demonstration to protest the assault and alleged that the police were supporting the attackers, who still retain physical control of the press club premises. The journalists demanded that the authorities immediately arrest the culprits and return possession of the press club to the journalists.

Local journalists told PPF that they have received threatening messages on their cell phones from the attackers.

## Journalists assaulted, their equipment destroyed, media vehicles burned during civic disturbances in Karachi

Five journalists, including a female cameraperson, were attacked and their cameras were destroyed while they attempted to cover the incidents of violence that erupted on 9 April 2008 in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city.

According to press reports, masked men attacked journalists who were covering the violence in different parts of the city. The vehicles of at least two reporters were also set on fire during the disturbances.

Lala Rukh, cameraperson with Pakistan's leading private television network Geo News, suffered a fracture to her arm while trying to resist the attackers. Other journalists who were attacked included Arshad Mahmood, a reporter of the Sindhi-language television channel KTN; Mohammad Junaid of Express television channel; Sabir Mazhar of an Urdu daily; and Makhdoom Adil of Online.

## Cameraman and reporter injured while covering a clash between rival student groups

A cameraman and reporter were seriously injured reporting on a clash between students at a college in Karachi on October 12, 2008. Farhan Somroo, a cameraman with Aaj TV, was critically injured after he was hit in the stomach by two bullets. Reporter Osama Chaudhry, was also injured.

According to press reports, Somroo and Chaudhry were reporting on pre-admission entry exams for students at Karachi's Swedish Technical College when animosity between rival student factions erupted in violence. Four other people were also hurt in the incident.

## Activists of political party beat journalists

Activists of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) political party from FATA attacked photojournalists on April 3, 2008 at the Islamabad Press Club.

The activists came to the press club to address a press conference to

condemn the repeal of the Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR). According to press reports the PTI members attacked the photojournalists after they prevented the activists entering the club because it was full. 13 journalists sustained minor injuries.

PTI Chairman Imran Khan later apologised to the journalists over the incident.

## Reporter of Dawn News beaten while filming news documentary on land encroachment

A reporter of Dawn News television channel and two villagers suffered injuries when some people believed to be supporters of former MPA Ghulam Qadir Palijo snatched the camera of the TV team in Makli necropolis in Sindh on Thursday Sept 25, 2008.

Press reports quoting eyewitnesses said that the Dawn News reporter, Abid Hassan, and his two colleagues were filming for a documentary about encroachments on Makli hill monuments when a funeral procession of herdsman Ghulam Nabi Jakhro passed by.

The reporter called a man from the procession to record his opinion about the disputed land when a group of people came rushing to him and one of them, identified as Ibrahim Palijo, slapped him hard across his face. He started bleeding while the assailant and his associates hurled insults.

People in the funeral procession and Palijo's men pelted each other with stones. The fight for all went on for quite some time.

In the meantime, a man snatched the equipment of Dawn TV cameraman Yousuf. The camera was later retrieved by some people but without the recorded footage.

## Journalist manhandled by police for filming police beating in Quetta

A reporter of Aaj TV Sohail Ahmad Kasi was manhandled by police in Quetta, the capital city of Balochistan on November 18, 2008.

Kasi told PPF that he was standing with a police party where some policemen beat a person who was riding his bike during a blockade. Kasi shoot the scene and asked them why they were beating the man.

In response, a policeman hit butt of rifle on the Kasi's shoulder, snatched his camera and destroyed the cassette. Then four police men started beating him and some also aimed their guns at him.

### Hospital staff manhandles a female journalist and cameraman

Maria Tayyab a reporter of News One television channel and cameraman Attek Ahmed were manhandled by deputy medical superintendent at Mayo Hospital, Lahore on November 21, 2008.

Tayyab told PPF that she was covering a story on dengue patients at the Mayo Hospital, where she saw an ailing person with his family outside the hospital. She brought him inside the hospital where the on duty doctor refused to admit the patient because his duty timings were over. She then went to make a complaint of the doctor to the Deputy Medical Superintendent Dr. Aleem along with the cameraman where they were mistreated by the doctor and other staff who snatched the camera from Ahmed and broke it. When Tayyab tried to report the manhandling to her Bureau Chief on her cell phone, Dr. Aleem took away her cell phone and hurled abuses to the reporter.

Journalists and members of the opposition staged a walkout during Punjab Assembly proceeding on Friday to protest against the incident. They staged a sat-in at the assembly building demanding the government order the suspension of Dr Aleem.

Senior Minister of Punjab, Raja Riaz Ahmed and Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan called the provincial health secretary and the superintendent of police concerned for action against the accused. The Health Secretary issued the suspension orders of Dr Aleem.

### Two newspapers banned for being "a source of inspiration for Jehadi outfits and youth"

The Sindh government imposed a ban on circulation of the newspaper

weekly Zarb e Momin, Karachi and daily Islam, Karachi in the province, an official handout said on 14 November 2008.

According to the handout the government ordered that all copies in circulation should be forfeited. "The weekly Zarbe Momin Karachi and Daily Islam contain material that can be a source of inspiration for Jihadi outfits and youth, which is prejudicial to the national integration and will promote anti-state feelings, and they are liable to forfeiture for containing objectionable material under section 99-A CrPC 1898", the official handout said. Where in the staff of the newspaper continued their work as per routine till late night.

A Daily Islam spokesman said that the newspaper management did not receive any official order and was unaware of the allegations made against the paper. According to him the paper is published from six cities simultaneously including Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi,

Muzaffarabad and Peshawar. Earlier in the day, the newspaper was seen being circulated free of cost outside the main gates of some mosques in the city.

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