

Separate attacks injure 5 Yemeni journalists, relatives
Committee to Protect Journalists
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New York -- The Committee to Protect Journalists condemns a series of serious assaults on the Yemeni press that have left at least five journalists or their family members injured.

Unidentified men shot at Mansoor Noor, a journalist for the news website 26 September, on April 17. The gunmen fired on Noor in the street in the southern city of Aden as he was on his way to the office, the Yemen Journalists Syndicate and the media watchdog Freedom Foundation said. Doctors were forced to amputate Noor's right leg, which had been hit several times.

On April 21, unknown individuals attempted to abduct the 13-year-old son of Mohammed al-Hudhaifi, a reporter for the news website Mareb Press, in the Al-Rawdah neighborhood of Taiz, the website reported. The assailants, who were riding in a white Toyota HiLux truck with license plate 3/39528, ran over Wahib al-Hudhaifi after they failed to kidnap him. Wahib is now recovering from head and leg injuries.

Al-Hudhaifi told CPJ that he had not received any previous threats, but he believes the attack on his son may be related to his work as a journalist. He said he has recently written several articles about youth revolutionary activities as well as corruption and malpractice in the former regime.

In an unrelated attack, a journalist for the news website Al-Ahale, Nasser Ali, was shot in the hand on April 8 while covering clashes between the army and local tribesmen in the city of Rada'a in Al-Bayda governorate, the website reported. Ali told Al-Ahale that he was covering protests which devolved into armed clashes. During the melee, an armed man tried to confiscate his camera, and after the clashes grew more intense, he was shot in the hand. He is now in stable condition.

Al-Bayda governorate has witnessed significant unrest in the past two years, with local tribes accusing the government of neglecting the area's economy. In January 2012, Al-Qaeda-affiliated militants took control of Rada'a for 10 days before leaving in a negotiated withdrawal.

Beyond the shooting of Noor, the southern city of Aden has witnessed a series of beatings by the federal Central Security Forces (CSF) against journalists covering demonstrations and strikes protesting the federal government based in the north. On April 3, CSF soldiers beat Maher Derhim, a correspondent for the daily newspaper Aden Al-Ghad, as he was taking pictures of shops in the Crater district that closed as part of a call for public disobedience, the newspaper reported alongside pictures of his injuries. The newspaper's editor-in-chief, Fathi Bin Lazrak, told Freedom Foundation that its distribution truck was fired on by unknown gunmen last week.

In another incident in Aden, the Aden Live TV correspondent Ali Shaddad was temporarily detained and beaten by CSF soldiers on April 17, the channel reported. Shaddad told the station in a live broadcast he was reporting on strikes in the Crater district of Aden when he was assaulted, and showed bruises from the beating. The channel is known for its vehement opposition to the federal government, referring to the CSF as "occupation soldiers."

Aden is home to a powerful popular movement named Hirak, which calls for South Yemen to once again become independent.

"The government should immediately investigate these attacks and hold those responsible accountable," said CPJ Middle East and North Africa Coordinator Sherif Mansour. "Whether from the north or south, east or west, journalists in Yemen have the right to document unrest and all matters of public interest."

April has proven a particularly dangerous month for Yemeni journalists. In addition to these five attacks, CPJ has documented cases in which police defused a bomb targeting a media building; journalists from three separate news outlets received death threats; and two journalists were temporarily abducted by armed gunmen.

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