



**International  
Federation  
of Journalists**

**AIDAN WHITE**  
General Secretary  
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**January 7, 2008**

To IFJ Asia-Pacific affiliates and friends

Welcome to IFJ Asia-Pacific's monthly e-bulletin. The next bulletin will be sent on February 11, and contributions from affiliates are most welcome. To contribute, email [ifj@ifj-asia.org](mailto:ifj@ifj-asia.org)

Please distribute this bulletin widely among colleagues in the media.

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### **1. IFJ Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting in Kuala Lumpur**

Union leaders from the IFJ's Asia-Pacific affiliates will gather in Kuala Lumpur for a regional meeting on February 2-3, 2008. Representatives will be involved in planning and developing strategies for increased regional solidarity and cooperation. As shown by the recent mobilisation of protest actions around the world in support of journalists in Pakistan, advocacy, information sharing and capacity building is paramount to provide extra support to journalists in times of crisis. The meeting in Malaysia will develop strategies to address the challenges facing journalists' unions in the Asia-Pacific region, consider ways to strengthen unions, and assess regional training needs.

For more information contact [ifj@ifj-asia.org](mailto:ifj@ifj-asia.org)

### **2. Two More Killed in Philippines**

One journalist was shot dead and a former journalist's body was discovered in the last week of December, raising the 2007 death toll for journalists in the Philippines to five. According to the National Union of Journalists, Philippines (NUJP), Fernando Lintuan, a radio broadcaster for dxGO radio in Davao, was shot dead after work on December 24. His companions, fellow radio journalists Louie Ceniza and Edgar Banzon, were not hurt but were unable to identify the attackers. Lintuan's murder comes after the discovery of the body of former journalist and consultant with *Pilipino Banfay Kalikasan* in a shallow grave in Butuan City, northern Mindanao. In its 2007 report, *Confronting the Perils of Journalism in the Philippines*, the IFJ-NUJP Safety Office recorded 90 murders of journalists in the Philippines over the past 20 years. While only three perpetrators have been convicted and a mere eight cases remain active, the IFJ joins the NUJP in welcoming the recent arrests of two suspects in the murder of Aklan broadcaster Rolando Ureta in 2001. To read the report [click here](#)

For more information, contact [www.nujp.org](http://www.nujp.org)

### **3. Journalists in Pakistan Maintain Fight For Freedom**



The IFJ strongly supported its affiliate, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), in calling for all political parties in Pakistan to sign a declaration that they will not support any move to pass or entrench anti-media laws after national elections, now postponed to mid-February. The PFUJ's President, Huma Ali, and Secretary General, Mazhar Abbas, met with the heads of all political parties to request they sign a declaration regarding their position on amendments to the Registration of Printing and Publication Ordinance, RPPO-2002, and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority, PEMRA-2002. The amendments, which severely restrict media freedom, were made after President Pervez Musharraf imposed a state of emergency on November 3. The report of a mission by the IFJ and South Asia Media Solidarity Network (SAMSAN) to Pakistan in November will be released shortly.

For more information, visit [www.pfuj.info](http://www.pfuj.info)

#### **4. Journalists in Indonesia Confront Violence in 2007**

Violence against media personnel in Indonesia continues to rise and concentrate in urban areas, according to Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (AJI), an IFJ affiliate. In its end-of-year statement, *Free the Indonesian Press from Threats of Violence and Prosecution!*, AJI reported 75 attacks against journalists during the year, 22 more than last year. Jakarta remained the most dangerous city followed by East Java and West Java. Several serious legal battles over criminal defamation charges continue, with trials against *Koran Tempo* columnist Bersihar Lubis and *Investigasi Tabloid* chief editor Eddy Sumarsono. Former *Radar Jogja* general manager Risang Bima Wijaya and the chief editor of the Medan-based *Oposisi Tabloid*, Dahri Uhum Nasution, both remain in prison on defamation charges. In all cases, charges were laid under the Criminal Code rather than under the jurisprudence of the Press Law, as was recommended by the Supreme Court in 2005. The IFJ supports AJI in condemning the violence and criminal prosecution of journalists and insists that authorities must ensure freedom of the press and an open and independent media.

For more information visit [www.ifj-asia.org](http://www.ifj-asia.org) or [www.ajiindonesia.org](http://www.ajiindonesia.org)

#### **5. IFJ and FMM Demand Dismissal of Minister in Sri Lanka**

Abusive behaviour by Sri Lanka's Labour Minister toward officials of the Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation (SLRC) has been condemned by the IFJ and its affiliate, the Free Media Movement (FMM). The IFJ and FMM condemned Mervyn Silva after he assaulted SLRC's news director, TMG Chandrasekara, at the main public television broadcaster's office on December 27, 2007. Despite well-documented reports of attacks against media personnel by government ministers, the FMM reported that the President of Sri Lanka had not condemned the latest incident but instead initiated a criminal investigation against SLRC. The case highlights a critical need for legal and constitutional reform to guarantee a genuinely independent and autonomous public service media in Sri Lanka. The IFJ and FMM have campaigned on this issue for many years.

For more information, visit [www.freemediasrilanka.org](http://www.freemediasrilanka.org)

#### **6. Journalist Shot Dead in Bus Attack in Afghanistan**

The IFJ condemned the killing of Abdul Munir, the producer and presenter of Afghanistan Radio Television in Jawzjan (RTA-Jawzjan), while he was travelling from Jawzjan to Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of Balkh province. Munir was killed on December 28 at 2.30am when the bus in which he was travelling was attacked by a group of armed people at Temoral, close to Mazar-e-Sharif. The gunmen shelled and shot at the vehicle. According to the Afghanistan Independent Journalists' Association (AIJA), Munir died on the way to hospital from severe bleeding as a result of a gunshot wound. The armed group escaped and a police investigation is under way.



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## 7. IFJ Representative Joins Press Freedom Mission to Nepal

The IFJ joins an international press freedom and freedom of expression mission to Nepal from January 13 to 17. The mission, organised by the Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ), an IFJ affiliate, and including about 15 international delegates, will meet political and civil society leaders, media organisations, different social groups and representatives of major international governments and donors in Kathmandu. Key issues to be assessed include Nepal's political transition and recent constitutional crisis in relation to impacts on media and freedom of expression, as well as continuing violence against journalists and media workers in the country. Advocacy will focus on ensuring new laws deal adequately with freedom of expression and the media.

For more information, contact [ifj@ifj-asia.org](mailto:ifj@ifj-asia.org)

## 8. IFJ Annual Report Names Pakistan As Region's Most Dangerous

Pakistan is one of the three most dangerous countries for journalists, along with Somalia and Iraq, according to the IFJ's 2007 annual report, *Tragedy Unlimited*. Seven journalists and media personnel were murdered in Pakistan during the year. Despite IFJ international emergency missions to Pakistan in February and November, local and national authorities continue to display a disturbing lack of will to protect journalists and outright hostility toward the principles of independent and critical media. Political and civil unrest in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and the Philippines has also resulted in multiple attacks in those countries. The Asia-Pacific region continues to contend with a culture of impunity against the media, with the toll of all journalists killed in the region at 34, only one short of the 2006 toll. The alarming number of deaths as a result of bombings, cross-fire and murder are indicators of the region's heightened insecurity. Yet these figures do not reveal the even darker reality of journalists who are reported missing or abducted and whose whereabouts remain unknown. The IFJ reiterates its commitment to strengthening local and regional solidarity in order to defend journalists' safety and media freedom and salutes the courage of its local affiliates in their tireless work.

For more information visit [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org)

### Latest IFJ Asia Pacific protests

#### January 2008

[\*\*Afghanistan: journalist Shot Dead in Bus Attack in Afghanistan - -3/01/2008\*\*](#)

[\*\*Philippines: Two Journalists Killed in the Philippines - 03/01/2008\*\*](#)

[\*\*Sri Lanka: Sack Sri Lankan Minister for Assault on Media Personnel - 03/01/2008\*\*](#)

#### December 2007

[\*\*IFJ: 'Tragedy Unlimited' Says IFJ As Killings of Journalists in 2007 Maintain Record Levels - 31/12/2007\*\*](#)

[\*\*Pakistan: IFJ Calls for Dialogue and Lifting of Pakistan's Anti-Media Laws 21/12/2007\*\*](#)

[\*\*Philippines: IFJ Welcomes Arrests of Murder Suspects in the Philippines - 19/12/2007\*\*](#)

[\*\*Indonesia: Defamation Cases Obstruct Press Freedom - 18/12/2007\*\*](#)

[\*\*Pakistan: Pakistan Parties Urged to Sign for Free Media - 18/12/2007\*\*](#)



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If affiliates have any information on a press freedom violation, please make sure you immediately contact staff at IFJ Asia so action can be taken.

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