



# A state of denial

The crisis of press freedom and journalist safety in Pakistan



**A state of denial: the crisis of press freedom and journalist safety in Pakistan**

Delegation report of IFJ-PFJ International Mission for Press Freedom and Journalist Safety in Pakistan February 22-25, 2007

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Cover Photo: The Islamabad police storming the Geo News TV offices on March 16, 2007.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Pakistan media is facing twin crises of press freedom and of journalist safety.

Nineteen journalists are believed to have been murdered since 2000, with four killed in just the past year. Numerous others have been attacked, assaulted and arrested during this time.

Sickeningly, this crisis goes beyond journalists and involves their families, with two cases of the brothers of journalists murdered to send a message to the journalist.

Yet, only in one case have the killers been convicted. Apart from the case of the *Wall Street Journal's* Daniel Pearl, none of the murderers have been brought to justice.

Worse, government representatives rely on off-the-record briefings to blame the murdered journalist for being killed and to suggest that the murder was unrelated to their work.

At the same time, journalists in Pakistan face a social crisis with the failure of the country's publishers to implement the 2001 Wage Board Award, which was to be implemented retrospectively from 2000, leaving the support for journalists stuck at 1990s levels.

These developments have taken place against the background of creeping restrictions on the ability of journalists to operate and a government approach that seeks to reward and punish individual media and journalists.

These twin crises illustrate the IFJ motto: There can be no press freedom if journalists exist in conditions of corruption, poverty or fear.

### Government representatives relying on off-the-record briefings to blame the murdered journalist for being killed and suggest that the murder was unrelated to their work

Taking note of the rising incidents of violence and the perturbing trend of victimising the journalists' families to curb truthful and investigative reporting, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) invited the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) to form a mission of international organisations to look into the critical situation arising in Pakistan.

From February 22-25, representatives of the IFJ, the PFUJ, the National Union of Journalists of UK and Ireland, Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), the International News Safety Institute (INSI) and an editor from the Indian media, visited Pakistan as part of a joint mission to investigate the crisis facing the media.

The mission saw international and South Asian press freedom representatives come together and take up these issues with the government. The mission members met with human rights representatives and visited families of some of the slain journalists.

The purpose of the mission's visit to Pakistan was to investigate the crisis; send a message of global solidarity to the Pakistani journalists' community; and to make concrete recommendations for further action.

The mission findings, presented here, call for immediate local and international action to address the crisis facing the Pakistan media community. Action needed includes government action in pursuing the journalist killers, immediate implementation of the wage award for journalists, local labour law reform, and the development of a culture of safety and security for journalists, particularly in the tribal areas.

These recommendations and suggestions must be heeded if the crisis of press freedom and safety currently facing the media in Pakistan is to be mitigated.

Christopher Warren  
President  
International Federation of Journalists

Mazhar Abbas  
General Secretary  
Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists



Christopher Warren  
President, IFJ



Mazhar Abbas  
General Secretary, PFUJ

## THE MISSION

Conceived after international concern at the rapidly deteriorating state of press freedom in Pakistan, the International Mission for Press Freedom and Journalist Safety in Pakistan was charged with looking into the unsolved murders, kidnapping, torture, harassment and intimidation of journalists.

Simultaneously, there has also been a serious erosion of the position of the professional journalist in Pakistan because of worsening conditions at work. So, while there is a 'crisis of safety', journalists also face a crisis of wages and conditions. The mission addressed all of these issues.

The mission took place between February 22 and 25, 2007 and visited Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad.

There has also been a serious erosion of the position of the professional journalist in Pakistan because of worsening conditions at work. So, while there is a 'crisis of safety', journalists also face a crisis of wages and conditions.



Members of the IFJ-PFUJ mission meeting with tribal journalists in Peshawar on March 23, 2007. The most vulnerable journalists in Pakistan are undoubtedly those operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and in Balochistan. Reporting has to be extremely sensitive, as many competing groups and communities have no respect for fair reporting.



The mission members at the Round Table Conference in Islamabad, February 24, 2007. The conference was attended by journalists, national leaders, legal and press freedom experts.

Its members included Bharat Bhushan, editor (Delhi), The Telegraph; Chris Morley, President, National Union of Journalists of UK and Ireland; Chris Warren, President, International Federation of Journalists; Iqbal Khattak, Bureau chief of *Daily Times* and representative of Reporters Sans Frontiers, Pakistan; and Sunanda Deshapriya, International News Safety Institute, based in Sri Lanka. Mission members worked closely with the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists at all times.

During the mission, members were able to meet and speak directly to working journalists from a wide variety of Pakistani media in Lahore, Peshawar and Islamabad, human rights experts and both regional and federal government ministers. A concluding Round Table Conference in Islamabad saw attendance and participation by a large number of newspaper and electronic media journalists, national political leaders, legal and press freedom experts.

The following outlines the major themes examined by the mission during its time in Pakistan.

## JOURNALISTS UNDER ATTACK

In 2006, according to the figures compiled by the IFJ, Pakistan became the third most dangerous country in which to be a journalist. Nineteen journalists have been murdered in Pakistan since 2000 (see below) and in only one case have the killers been brought to justice.

Meanwhile, the government is in denial about the crisis facing Pakistan's media community.

In a government-provided list giving details of each murder case involving journalists, Federal Interior Secretary Syed Kamal Shah underlined the government's success in the case of American journalist Daniel Pearl's murder case when the killers were brought to justice but he had no answers regarding the other unsolved murder cases involving Pakistani journalists.

The government believes the high-profile murder of tribal journalist Hayatullah Khan was the "result of a monetary dispute", according to an Interior Ministry document. The family denies the claims.

The document – 'Killing of journalists' – was made public after a meeting between Interior Secretary, Syed Kamal Shah and the mission members in Islamabad on February 24. It also discusses the murders of 8 other Pakistani journalists, none of whose killers have been tried. According to the document, the government acknowledged its failure to arrest Hayatullah's killers. "The culprits are not yet apprehended," it read.

Dilawar Wazir was kidnapped after a string of attacks and threats targeted at his family and the murder of his teenage brother. *The Dawn* newspaper wrote in its editorial after the kidnapping of Dilawar Wazir Khan and the murder of his younger brother:

"...Wishing to suppress information that journalists like Dilawar Wazir have been unearthing and disseminating through their media outlets, dictatorial governments with many skeletons to hide in their cupboard have taken to harassing and persecuting media persons — four have been mysteriously murdered since 2005 in Pakistan. Obviously, these journalists were not guilty of any infringement of the law for in that case they could have been put on trial. In the absence of that option, the powers that be or their underlings have made it more convenient to resort to the arbitrary tactic of picking up journalists — as well as others who are personae non gratae for any reason — in complete disregard of legal processes.

The least one can say is that the phenomenon of 'enforced disappearance', of which Mr Wazir apparently became a victim, is one of the most brutal practices common to countries ruled by oppressive regimes. It speaks of a government's arrogance and contempt for the rule of law which prompts it to act as it sees fit in a no-holds-barred fashion. In this case, there are powers who do not want any facts relating to the 'war on terror' being waged in Waziristan to be made public..."

### Journalists murdered: 2000-2006

On November 1, 2006, **Mohammad Ismail**, a senior journalist and bureau chief of Pakistan Press International (PPI), was brutally murdered when attacked by unknown assailants in Islamabad.

**Maqbool Hussain Sail**, a correspondent with the news agency On-Line, died after being shot by unidentified attackers on September 15, 2006. Sail was reportedly on his way to the house of the local leader of the opposition party, the Pakistan People Party, when he was shot.

**Hayatullah Khan** was found murdered on June 16, 2006, six months after his abduction. He was allegedly abducted near the tribal area of North Waziristan, after reporting on an explosion that killed senior Al Qaeda member, Maza Rabia.

**Munir Ahmed Sangi**, a cameraman for the Sindhi-language Kawaish Television Network (KTN) was shot on May 29, 2006. Sangi had been covering a story on a gunfight between members of the Unar and Abro tribes in the town of Larkana, in Pakistan's Sindh district, when he was shot.

**Mian Khalid Mahmood** of *Daily Inqilab* and former president of Lala Musa Press Club was murdered in December 2005. The police registered an FIR against unknown people but no arrests were made.

December 5, 2005, **Nasir Afridi**, the president of Darra Adam Press Club and journalist for a daily Urdu language newspaper, was shot and killed while driving in his car in Northern Pakistan. Afridi was killed by a stray bullet from a battle going on between the Bazi Khel and the Mala Khel tribes. A truck driver was also killed in the attack.

On July 5, 2005 **Ubadullah Azar**, a journalist for news agency Dargai, in north-west Pakistan, was ambushed in his car and murdered with his friend Gul Wahid. It is unclear who the attackers were or their motive.

At least two gunmen fired on a busload of journalists with AK-47 assault rifles, killing freelance cameraman **Amir Nawad** and journalist **Allah Noor** instantly on February 7, 2005. The two journalists were travelling near Wana, the main town in South Waziristan and were on their way back from covering the surrender of a suspected pro-Taliban, Pakistani militant named Baitullah Mehsud. Two other journalists riding in the bus were injured.

Mansehra-based **Sajid Tanoli**, of *Daily Shumal*, was murdered in 2004, allegedly by Khalid Khan, Nazim of Mansehra City. The case is still pending at the Session Court Mansehra.

**Amir Bux Brohi**, correspondent of *Daily Kawish* and Kawish Television Network (KTN) was murdered in Shikarpur in September 2003. His family has gone into hiding because of threats received from the five persons accused of his murder.

**Daniel Pearl** of the *Wall Street Journal* was kidnapped in Karachi in 2002 while trying to interview leaders of radical Islamic groups. He was beheaded and later found buried at an unidentified location. Sheikh Ahmed Omer Saed, was sentenced to death by the trial court while his three accomplices were sentenced to jail for life. The death attracted worldwide attention including that of US President George Bush and Pakistan's President Musharraf.

In 2002, **Jaffar Khan**, of *Daily Pakistan* was shot dead in his house by a 15-member police party in Head-Marala near Sialkot. The police party, led by inspector Rana Basharat, ambushed his house under the pretext of raiding a hideout of dacoits. Khan's wife was injured in the attack.

**Shahid Soomro**, a correspondent of *Daily Kawish* in Kandhkot, was murdered on October 20, 2002.

**Rana Akram** of *Daily Pakistan* was killed outside his Lahore office in 2001 when an unidentified man blew up a hand grenade.

A bomb was detonated in the Karachi office of the Urdu-language daily Nawa-e-Waqt in November 2000. Three of the paper's employees died from injuries sustained in the blast: **Najmul Hasan Zaidi**, the newspaper's advertising manager; **Ziaul Haq**, assistant circulation manager; and **Sajid Mehmood**, a computer operator.



Hundreds of people including members of the PFUJ protest in Karachi on June 19, 2006, demanding action over the killings of reporters which include Hayatulla Khan and Muni Ahmed Sangi. The findings of a High Court investigation into Khan's death are still to be made public. Photo by REUTERS/Athar Hussain.

electric shocks and other forms of torture, in an attempt to make him confess ties with the Baluch nationalist movement.

**Saeed Sarbazi**, joint secretary of the Karachi Press Club, senior sub-editor of daily *Business Recorder* and a member of the All Pakistan Newspapers Employees Confederation's National Executive Committee, was abducted and tortured on September 20, 2006. He was released on September 22.

On June 26, 2006 two missing journalists were officially arrested in Pakistan and released on bail after their abduction earlier in the year. **Mukesh Rupeta**, a Geo News correspondent, and **Sanjay Kumar**, a freelance cameraman,

reportedly disappeared on March 6. According to a spokesperson from Geo News, Pakistani authorities reported that the two were detained for videoing the Jacobabad air-base in Sindh. There were concerns for the poor health of both journalists, raising serious questions about their treatment.

### Attacks, threats and abuse

Reports on December 15, 2006 suggested that a new press regulatory body that may be established in Pakistan is a replication of an infamous 'black law' dating back to the 1960s. According to the PFUJ, a report appeared in a leading Urdu language daily newspaper stating the government was about to instate a new body called the Press and Publication Regulatory Authority (PAPRA). The PAPRA was likely to be a mirror of the Press and Publication Ordinance from the 1960s, tagged a 'black law'.

On November 10, 2006 several journalists were detained and intimidated, in what appeared to be a deliberate attempt to block access to information and silence journalists. Five journalists – **Masood Khan, Anwar Hakim, Haseen Ahmed, Zafarullah** and **Mohammad Ibrahim** – were harassed and detained by officials when travelling to the tribal region of Bajour to investigate the killing of 83 people on October 30.

On September 17, 2006 it was reported that police attacked journalists at a public meeting of a religious organisation in Lahore. According to the PFUJ, **Wadood Mushtaq**, from ANYONE World, received serious wounds on his face and jaw, ATV's **Malik Zahid** endured internal injuries and **Mohammad Nazi** received a fractured arm.

The senior journalist and union leader **Cr. Shamsi** was brutally attacked by the security guards of the Federal Minister for Labour in Islamabad on September 13, 2006, after Shamsi demanded the implementation of the Seventh Wage Award.

The **Peshawar Press Club** was attacked by activists of the Pakistan Muslim League on June 29, 2006, injuring newsmen and staff members of the club. Additionally, three journalists, **Khalil Afredi** of the *Daily Khabrian*, **Sudhi Afredi** of the *Daily Frontier Post* and **Abu Zar Afredi** of the *Daily Express*,

**Sofi Muhammad Khan** was murdered on May 2, 2000. Khan was a correspondent for the Karachi-based, Urdu-language *Daily Ummat Karachi*. In mid-April Khan published an article alleging that Ayaz Khatak, a resident of the Tharparkar town of Shadi Large, was involved in drug trafficking. On April 30, according to Khan's editor, Khatak visited Khan's house and warned him to stop reporting on his activities. Refusing to be intimidated, Khan filed a story about Khatak's alleged involvement with a local prostitute. The article ran in *Daily Ummat Karachi* on May 2.

### Targeting of family members

The IFJ reported the murder of the child brother of slain journalist Hayatullah Khan on September 26, 2006. **Bashir Khan's** murder was allegedly a message to his family, who had been active in trying to expose Hayatullah Khan's killers.

On August 31, 2006, the IFJ reported the murder of BBC correspondent Dilawar Wazir's teenage brother in South Waziristan, a tribal-ruled region along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. According to the PFUJ, the murder of 16-year-old **Taimur Khan** may have been a message to Dilawar who had been under threat for his reporting for the past two years.

### Kidnappings and torture

**Suhail Qalandar**, a news editor with the *Daily Express* in Peshawar, disappeared on January 2, 2007. Local reports suggest he may have been targeted for political reasons. Demonstrations and rallies were held across Pakistan on February 19, 2007, in protest of his kidnapping, as well as of the government's lax response. Qalandar was released two-days later on February 21, after the protest rallies were held on the PFUJ call.

**Dilawar Khan Wazir**, a BBC Urdu-language reporter and a journalist for the daily publication *Dawn*, was reported missing on November 20, 2006 and was released one day later. Wazir, who could not identify his abductors, was blindfolded, harassed, physically attacked and questioned about his sources during the ordeal.

*Kawish* journalist **Mehruddin Marri**, who was abducted in Thatta on June 27, 2006, was released on October 24 after four months of torture. He was interrogated, beaten and suffered

## Geo News TV Raided

Tense reporting conditions in the recent judicial crisis within Pakistan has brought the safety issue out of the main conflict areas and into the newsrooms. The attack on Geo News TV offices on March 16, 2007, is a direct show of power against the media's mandate and in turn the IFJ principle of reporting the truth.



Geo TV reporter Asma, reporting live during attack on its offices on March 16, 2007.

After the president of Pakistan suspended the country's Chief Justice for 'misuse of authority' in what has been termed as an 'unconstitutional' move, local TV channels were given covert 'gag orders' to curb reportage of the nationwide protests that broke out amongst the lawyer fraternity immediately after the president's arbitrary decision.

Transmission signals of Aaj TV and Geo News TV were jammed for brief periods and the popular News programme, *Kamran Khan Key Saath* was ordered off the air. Geo TV however continued its telecast of the Supreme Judicial Council hearing and the lawyers being beaten up during their protest outside the court. But matters came to a head when on March 16, 2007, a police contingent broke into the Islamabad offices of the Geo News TV and its investigation cell, swinging batons, breaking through its entrance, smashing glass doors and threatening its staff.

While the Information Minister Mohammed Ali Durrani came on air saying this is not by the government's order, the President had to first apologise to Geo TV in a personal phone call and then personally appear on TV to apologise to the nation saying, it was not by his orders that such 'tactical errors' were made.



Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz visits the office of GEO TV in Islamabad on March 17, 2007. Pakistan has suspended 14 police for ransacking the GEO TV office during opposition protests over the sacking of the country's top judge. Photo by AFP PHOTO/Farooq Naeem.

were detained without charge for 24 hours for interviewing wanted head cleric of Lashkar-e-Islami, Mangal Afredi. Reports also revealed the group Lashkar-e-Islami threatened **Qazi Nasrullah** of the *Daily Mashriq* and **Qazi Rauf** of the *Daily Express* for reporting in favour of government policies.

On June 14, 2006 about 50 individuals reportedly attacked six media workers at the **Thari Mirwah Press Club**, punching, kicking and beating the press with sticks. The attack was allegedly in response to a story on contractors' use of unsatisfactory material in the construction of irrigation watercourses.

Eight media workers were injured in a bomb attack while covering a religious gathering to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Mohammad in Karachi on April 11, 2006. The attack killed 57 people and seriously injured close to 100 others.

On December 23, 2005, a group of armed men threw a petrol bomb into the offices of the Sukkur edition of the Sindhi-language daily newspaper **Khabroon**. The assailants are believed to be Sindhi nationalists. Prior to the attack, the entire staff of *Khabroon* had resigned over what they termed the 'misuse' of public money by the Federal Ministry of Information who had issued advertisements in favour of the controversial Kalabagh Dam.

## Journalists' economic conditions

On January 8, 2007 the IFJ renewed calls for implementation of the **Seventh Wage Award** in Pakistan and pressed the government to address the working conditions that journalists face.

On September 15, 2006, **Protest Sit-Ins** for wage justice for Pakistani journalists were hosted by the PFUJ. The protests took place outside the Governor's House in Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar and Quetta. The present economic situation for media workers in Pakistan continues to deteriorate, with little job stability or support from employers, coupled with low wages.

Pakistan newspaper owners are bound to pay the wages set out by the Seventh Wage Board decision, which handed down minimum job conditions and wages on October 8, 2001 and was backdated to 2000. However, these wages are still not being paid, and the government of Pakistan has done nothing to improve the economic conditions of journalists.

On October 4, 2005, journalists around the world united in a **global day of action** to protest the continued exploitation of Pakistani journalists by newspaper employers that has seen thousands of journalists suffer. The IFJ launched the global day of action on the anniversary of the Seventh Wage Award decision. Many Pakistani journalists work two or even three jobs to make ends meet and others have to work under daily wages, without the security of a permanent position or offer of appointment.

## October 8, 2005 – South Asia Earthquake

The South Asia earthquake killed more than 54,000 people, mostly in Pakistani-controlled areas of the disputed Kashmir region. Approximately 50 journalists based in Balakot, Muzaffarabad, Karachi and Islamabad were identified as killed, missing, injured or directly affected by the earthquake, through the loss of family members, their



The devastated city of Balakot after the October 8, 2005, earthquake in Pakistan. Approximately 50 journalists based in Balakot, Muzaffarabad, Karachi and Islamabad were identified as killed, missing, injured or directly affected by the earthquake.

homes or in many cases both. **Sardar Hanif** of daily *Jang*, **Abdul Hafeez**, the editor of *Juraat*, and **Javed Iqbal Butt**, a photographer for daily *Jinnah* all lost their lives as a result of the earthquake. A further five journalists were reported missing and over twenty journalists sustained injuries.

### Dilawar Khan Wazir

Dilawar Khan Wazir, a correspondent for *Dawn* and BBC Urdu service in South Waziristan, went missing from Islamabad on November 20, 2006 under what the BBC described as “suspicious circumstances”. He was released one day later. During his captivity he was kept blindfolded, beaten regularly and repeatedly questioned about his work in the tribal areas and his sources of information.

Dilawar was in the federal capital to visit his younger brother Zulfiqar Ali who is a student at the Islamic University. He was abducted while on his way back to his hometown Dera Ismail Khan after seeing his brother. Later, some plain clothed men came to Zulfiqar’s hostel (of the Islamic University) and told him that Dilawar had met with an accident and insisted that he should go with them to the hospital.

Hearing this Zulfiqar got suspicious and did not accompany them. When he called on Dilawar’s mobile phone, the call was received by someone who identified himself as Dr Jamshed. He reportedly asked Zulfiqar to rush to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS). When the BBC’s Islamabad correspondent visited the hospital in question there was no trace of Dilawar and no member of the staff by the name of Dr Jamshed.

The next day Dilawar turned up severely shaken at the BBC office in Islamabad minutes after he was freed in a nearby forest. He was in a state of shock and did not know who his captors were.

A few months earlier his teenaged brother was murdered in South Waziristan. According to the PFUJ, the murder of 16-year-old Taimur Khan may have been a message to Dilawar who had been under threat for his reporting for the past two years.

### Hayatullah Khan

Hayatullah Khan, who was the North Waziristan correspondent for two dailies, *Ausaf* and *Nation*, and a photographer for the European Pressphoto Agency (EPA) as well as the General Secretary of the Tribal Union of Journalists, was abducted on December 5, 2005, by five armed men while on his way to report on a protest against a missile attack in the town of Miran Shah in the North Waziristan region of northwest Pakistan. In the missile attack, alleged al-Qaeda operative Abu Hamza Rabia, an Egyptian national, his two Syrian bodyguards and two Pakistanis were apparently killed in the attack.

Five gunmen ran Khan’s car off the road, abducting the journalist as his younger brother Haseenullah watched helplessly.

Hayatullah’s reports had been contrary to the government version.

Government authorities insisted that Rabia had blown himself up while making a bomb. But Khan, who enjoyed a reputation as an intrepid reporter, snapped photographs of contrary evidence. He was the first journalist to photograph pieces of shrapnel, which local villagers said they had found in the rubble of the house. The shrapnel found at the site is reportedly stamped with the words ‘AGM-114’, ‘guided missile’ and the initials ‘US’; believed to be part of a Hellfire missile.

Hayatullah Khan’s brother claims that the journalist had expressed fears on the day before his abduction that intelligence agencies might take action against him for sending his photographs of the shrapnel to Pakistani and international media organisations.

On June 16, 2006, six months later, a Pakistani intelligence officer identifying himself as Major Kamal phoned his family and told them that Khan’s body had been dumped in Miran Shah’s marketplace. He had been handcuffed and appeared to have been shot from behind. However, no autopsy was performed.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz promised a judicial enquiry into the killing. An investigation led by High Court Justice Mohammed Reza Khan has been completed, but the results have not been made public.

Hayatullah was no stranger to trouble in Pakistan’s troubled Federally Administered Tribal Areas – the border region adjoining southeastern Afghanistan where the Taliban are fighting NATO forces. In 2002, US forces in Afghanistan’s Paktika province detained Khan for four days. Over the years, virtually every regional faction threatened him – Pakistan’s powerful Inter-Services Intelligence division (ISI), the military, the Taliban, and al-Qaeda.

In November, 2005, a few weeks before disappearing, Khan met a military intelligence major in Miran Shah and was warned, “to leave his profession or leave Waziristan or accept the government’s political policies,” another brother, Ihsanullah, recalls. “On the night of November 27,” he told Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), “Hayatullah passed his will to his tribe and explicitly stated, ‘If I am kidnapped or get killed, the government agencies will be responsible.’”



Slain North Waziristan correspondent and General Secretary of the Tribal Union of Journalists, Hayatullah Khan, was abducted on December 4, 2005, then held hostage for six months. In June 2006, his body – handcuffed and shot – was found dumped in a marketplace. In September 2006, his younger brother was also murdered – allegedly to send a message to the journalist’s family.



## THE MISSION FINDINGS

**Tribal areas and Balochistan:** The most vulnerable journalists in Pakistan are undoubtedly those operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and in Balochistan.

Meeting journalists who operated in the tribal areas along the North West Frontier province at Peshawar Press Club, it is clear theirs is an unenviable task. There are three competing sources of power:

**Political Agents** – the government’s autonomous law-keeping force operating the Frontier Crime Regulations in place of police;

**Tribal Elders** – wield considerable influence and have ability to impose sanctions such as fines or even ordering house demolition for offenders;

**Clerics** – impose a cultural stranglehold over free comment often with close links to religious militants.

This structure of customary law, rather than common law which exists in the rest of the country, has carried on since colonial times. But the authority of the Government has clearly slipped since 2003 when the system of federal Commissioners, who had responsibility for both FATA and settled areas, was dismantled and security powers were separated.

**The most vulnerable journalists in Pakistan are undoubtedly those operating in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and in Balochistan.**

Since 9/11, FATA has assumed increasing journalistic importance as a ‘window on the war on terror’. As a rich source of big stories capable of making headlines around the world, it is a magnet for reporters. Many will be local stringers working for international and national media, but there is also strong local coverage but from the settled areas such as Peshawar.

Local journalists report massive difficulties in doing their job. Many are simply not paid by their employers and only carry on through a sense of mission supported by their extended family. They say they do the work because they believe it is important to give their communities a voice and to educate their people. A fundamental problem is that the normal press laws of Pakistan do not apply to FATA. The political agent can take a case against an individual where the sanction is issued on the spot. The appeal is heard by him. Punishments are collective – an entire tribe, village or clan is liable to be punished for the ‘wrong-doing’ of an individual, including an individual journalist.

We heard from Sudhir Alfridi, of the *Daily Times* and *Frontier Post*, who refused to obey an order to not report an interview with the leader of an Islamic group (Lashkar-e-Islami) from the tribal area. He, along with two others, was put behind bars for 28 hours and despite protests by colleagues, the political agent brought in tribal elders to intimidate them into quitting their action.

Reporting has to be extremely sensitive. Many competing groups and communities have no respect for fair reporting. Khiyalmat Shah, of the *Daily Surkhab*, revealed how he had been reporting on the activities of two religious groups – Lashkar-I-Islami and Ansar-ul-Islam – but received threats for allegedly not respecting the perspective of one group. On June 29, 2006, the Peshawar Press Club was attacked by activists of the Pakistan Muslim League, injuring media workers and club staff.

Some journalists are able to report on what is happening in FATA and skilfully dodge the threats from militants, kidnappers for ransom and smugglers because they are identified with outside media. They have successfully built up a reputation for

impartiality. Sometimes they will break stories from tribal area journalists which they feel unsafe to do themselves.

But these media workers still feel under threat. They say the main problem is that the Government does not have enough influence on events and players in FATA. There is widespread agreement that while the Government says it is controlling tribal areas, this is not true and there is much influence from the Taliban. This carried the danger of journalists being under suspicion of being American spies.

In Balochistan, which like FATA also borders Afghanistan, the problems of the neighbouring country often spill over. There are quite a few freelancers in the provincial capital Quetta working for Western television and news agencies, keen on covering Afghan developments – especially relating to the Taliban – from the Pakistan side of the border. These journalists often endanger their lives while reporting on the Taliban ousted from power in Kabul. Once they get into trouble with the Pakistani authorities or the Taliban, their western principles tend to disown them. They are often not members of any journalists unions. They are a particularly vulnerable group as they cannot approach the state-machinery which is in a state of denial about the presence of Afghan Taliban in Pakistan.

**... media workers still feel under threat. They say the main problem is that the Government does not have enough influence on events and players in FATA. There is widespread agreement that while the Government says it is controlling tribal areas this is not true and there is much influence from the Taliban.**

**Large cities:** It is clear that here the major threat to journalists’ safety comes from the police and security services.

Overall, journalists report a lack of respect by the authorities for citizens’ rights. While there is plurality of media, it is difficult for journalists to question the privileges of the elite without reaction.

We spoke to Wadood Mushtaq in the Lahore Press Club about the reported incident on September 17, 2006 involving a public meeting of a religious organisation in the city. Wadood,



Journalists continue to battle for their rights to adequate wage awards during a Seventh Wage Award protest held in October, 2005. The majority of media workers in Pakistan earn between 2,500 PKR (40 USD) and 5,000 PKR (80 USD), well under the national average wage of 6,450 PKR (110 USD), and have no access to medical insurance. For contract employees, there is also no protection in a professional crisis.

a news producer with digital TV station ARY1, told how he had witnessed two other people being beaten by police with batons. They had then turned on him, causing serious injuries to his face and jaw before pushing him in a van, despite protestations he was a heart patient. He was detained for four to five hours without charge. He was eventually released only by signing something which absolved the police from any blame. Wadood insists that police put pressure on his family to persuade him to sign.

The director of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan alleges that rather than waste time instituting court cases against journalists to shut them up, the Government hires people to rough them up in the street making it hard to attribute the attack.

He says that since 9/11 there is constant pressure by the Government on journalists not to write certain things. The argument used is that it undermines the effort against terrorism. One feature has been to harass women journalists. In one such case, he said an intelligence officer had followed a woman reporter home because of what she had written.

### Press independence in Pakistan

There is no doubt that the media sector, particularly newspapers, is buoyant with considerable interest in freedom of expression and right to information within the country. But all is not as it seems.

While the English-speaking media appears to have a robust relationship with the Government, there is much comment that the Urdu media is much more compliant to the official view. It is a press freedom which is of little relevance to the people. This appears to show that while the Government is relatively relaxed to let the outward facing outlets of the 'elite' report relatively unpressured, it is far more watchful and active with the content of those facing inwards towards the masses.

One national newspaper editor spoke passionately at the pressure being put on editors. He described it eloquently as "the Government's threshold of tolerance is coming down". He said the calls from ministers to him were growing "daily" trying to persuade him not to carry a particular story or to put another one on the front page. While this undoubtedly happens around the world, it is the frequency and intensity of the approaches which cause concern.

**There is widespread suspicion that the government budget is used to reward those newspapers which are favourable to it – and a stick with which to punish those who do not do its bidding.**

There is also a new trend among newspapers for the role of professional editor to be firmly in decline. Instead, they are being supplanted by owners – or close relatives of the owners - who are taking on the title and editorial leadership. This causes a conflict of interest where commercial considerations compete with those of editorial interests. This is undoubtedly eroding independent journalism. Owner-editors will on the one hand be lobbying and pushing for lucrative government advertising but in doing so, they leave themselves open to behind-the-scenes influence.

Many of those we questioned emphasised that the ease with which a newspaper or radio station can be set up should not be taken as a sign of press freedom. Indeed, some owners are accused of entering the market as a defensive mechanism to protect their other business interests.

### PEMRA rules

The Pakistan Electronic Media Authority is the state watchdog over the country's broadcast media as well as its licensing authority. The fact that the title of this body is unlike any of its international peers reflects the superficiality of the state's understanding of this medium of information which is universally accepted as a telecommunication medium – Office of Communication (OFCOM) in UK, Federal Communication Commission (FCC) in the USA and Telecommunication Authority of India (TRAI) in India.

Established in 2002, as government loosened the age-old stranglehold on broadcasting in the country which saw a sudden mushrooming of private FM radio and television channels, PEMRA began as and continues to remain more of the government's whipping boy to keep the enthusiasm of private news broadcast channels within the bounds of 'safe reporting'.

The PEMRA Ordinance 2002, which was the first broadcast regulatory law, more or less embodied a jumble of poorly represented clauses of broadcast laws of other countries where the industry is much more mature and the regulatory bodies are not controlled by government, but are answerable to parliament. One of the clauses had banned cross-media ownership, without the realisation that till the new millennium, Pakistan had no broadcast industry save the sole state-run PTV, and none but the print-media groups were for the moment capable of opening up news channels. The cross-media ownership ban was eventually overturned, allowing the print media groups to apply for TV licenses and begin operations. There are currently almost 30 TV channels operating in Pakistan with many more in the pipeline.

The PEMRA Bill, which was run through parliament from 2004 onwards, was in its original draft prepared by the government, a masterpiece of third degree regulations.

One empowered the police to arrest a broadcaster or distributor without a warrant merely on the instructions of any PEMRA officer. Another did away with the right of defence of a broadcaster or distributor against any action of the Authority. A third and quite dangerous, empowered the Authority to appoint two additional 'ghost' members as and when required to its governing council, obviously to ensure decisions in the government's interest in the event of a tie among the regular members – none of whom represented the public or the broadcasters.

However, throughout 2005 and 2006, many outraged legislators, mainly of the opposition benches, advised by the broadcasting industry, convinced the government to make some changes, especially relating to the 'ghost' members and other stifling clauses. Passed by the Senate, the Bill languishes still in the National Assembly. The older Ordinance of 2002 still rules the roost.

The point to note is that the Chairman and many senior officers of this body are from the country's Police service, clearly reflecting the government's attitude towards the broadcast media. And knowing how the Police can wield power in Pakistan, one can imagine the rationale the Authority employs in regulating broadcasting in Pakistan. Of course the pet duty is strong advice to the broadcasters to go easy on the government. The recent Police ransacking of the Islamabad Offices of the GEO TV during the legal fraternity's agitation against the government's treatment of the sitting Chief Justice of Pakistan may not have been on the directives of PEMRA, however the Authority has been noticeably silent in condemning the act, even though President Musharraf immediately apologised to GEO on behalf of the government.

We heard how individual journalists who were ‘awkward’ and refused to toe the line, were shifted out of their offices and transferred to far away outposts.

Despite the proliferation of media, there is little increase in diversity as many newspapers say similar things in a similar way, shepherded in their content by the Government.

One editor complained that he felt “imprisoned” between the state, the employer and market. While he felt able to cope with the attentions of the state, he found the power of the market even harder to grapple with. A story about a major multi-national getting fined was dropped by the owner because of the value of advertising they paid for.

### Power of the Purse

The Government, including its regional arms, have enormous influence through its spending within the media. The public sector is very large, although there is a move to privatisation in a number of areas. With such large sums at its disposal, the Government is in a powerful position to wield influence.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Muhammad Ali Durrani says the government advertising spend is between Rs. 700-800 million, of which 25 per cent is set aside for the regional press.

While there are official denials to the contrary, there is widespread suspicion that the budget is used to reward those newspapers which are favourable to it, and a stick with which to punish those who do not do its bidding. Senate leader of the opposition, Mian Raza Rabbani, claimed in the Round Table discussion that daily *Dawn* had had government advertising withheld because of its reporting in the troubled Balochistan region.

### Wages and Conditions

This is a huge issue which is of critical importance to the future of journalism in Pakistan. The central issue is the non-implementation of the Seventh Wage Award. It was announced by the Wages Board in July, 2001 between the All Pakistan Newspaper Society (APNS), Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and All Pakistan Newspaper Employees Confederation (APNEC).

Service conditions in most newspapers and news agencies are extremely poor, especially those that never implemented Wage Awards in the past. Many journalists are employed without contracts and on an ad hoc basis so that the spectre of the axe hangs permanently on them.

With the last formal pay increase some eight years ago, there is massive frustration and anger at the employers’ stance. It is deeply corrosive on the morale of journalists and has had the impact of diminishing the profession within the eyes of the rest of society. Veteran journalists complain that the situation is leaving the industry open only to ideologues or the marginalised.

The PFUJ has campaigned vigorously to win implementation of what is, after all, an Act of Parliament. But it effectively has its hands tied behind its back because of Pakistan’s refusal to allow basic International Labour Organisation standards, including the right to withdraw labour. Journalists are prevented from pressing for justice by unjust labour laws.

Court actions have been shown contempt by the employers. The union has been successful in obtaining judgments for payment, but the orders have been flagrantly ignored. The Government has publicly urged the APNS to implement the Wage Award, also to no avail.

Minister Muhammad Ali Durrani assured the delegation that it was “top priority” for the Information ministry to settle the



Meeting of mission members with ministers in Islamabad on February 24, 2007.

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issue. He said negotiations were at their final stage. In the Round Table discussions, Senator Tariq Azeem Khan, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, insisted the Government was doing all it could to push the employers into meeting their obligations. He revealed that there had been a meeting before the Budget announcement with newspaper employers in an attempt to get a swift agreement to pay. He said there had been acceptance that duties could be relaxed for newspapers to facilitate a speedy settlement. As proof of the Government’s desire to complete the deal, the Budget measures were halted at the publishing stage to allow the alterations. Mr Khan is insistent that while the larger companies don’t have a problem paying the Award, the smaller ones are causing the problem by dragging their feet.

Nevertheless, the impasse indicates a willingness of owners to try to use the situation to wrestle fresh concessions out of the Government, while simultaneously continuing to save money by keeping employees’ wages down. This is an intolerable situation and it seems inexplicable that the newspaper employers can so publicly push the government around. While the outward noises from the Government is that they are doing all they can to cajole employers into paying up, it seems incredible that this situation has persisted for so long. It can only point to a lack of political will.

### The Government/Police View

**The Police Chief:** The delegation had the opportunity to interview Sharif Virk, Inspector-General in Peshawar.

He painted a convincing picture of the difficulties in policing the North West Frontier region. He said a new phenomenon were suicide bombings, of which there had been ten in the settled area in the past year, including the killing of his deputy. However, he denied journalists were being targeted for crime more than others. He said: “They are generally safe and do not have any particular threat.”

In his view, if journalists were the victims of a kidnap it was not that they were a journalist but because the kidnappers just wanted a target.

## The 7th Wage Award

### Background

Low economic conditions of the working journalist have weakened the working strength and calibre of the newspaper industry. Published reports show that out of some 5,000 newspaper workers, including non-journalist newspaper employees, some 85 per cent are working either on contract, on lineage basis, daily wages and without the appointment letter.

The Wage Board Award fixes the minimum wage structure for the newspaper employee.

It was first constituted in 1961 for working journalists under the Press Commission. The second board was constituted in 1969.

In 1973, Parliament at the time unanimously passed the Newspapers Employees (Condition of Services) Act, 1973 and included the non-journalist newspaper employees as well. There was actually a technical reason at the time to include the non-journalist newspaper employee as eligible for the Award. In 1970 when the PFUJ observed a countrywide strike to pressurise the implementation of the Wage Award, the newspaper owners used these employees to break the strike.

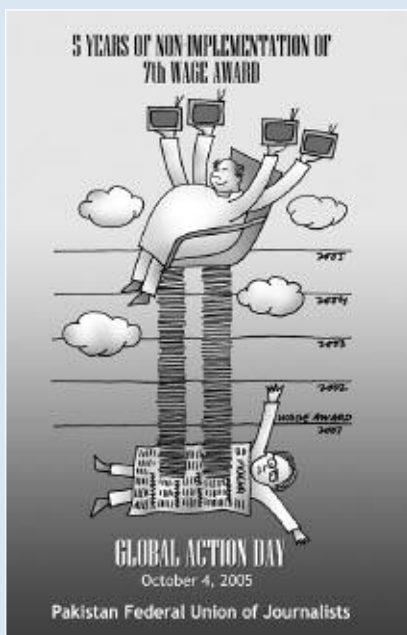
The wage structure as per the Wage Board is a transparent way of fixing wages. The government constitutes a retired Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court as Chairman of the Wage Board. Equal number of members from the employees and employers were nominated after consultation by the government. Both sides present their case and evidence and after long deliberations the Judge announces the Award.

The struggle for the 7th Wage Award started in 2001, when the 7th Wage Board was constituted and announced in October, 2001. The newspaper owners once again challenged the award in the Supreme Court. Since they had lost the battle for the 6th Wage Award in the Lahore High Court, the 7th Wage Award case was filed in the Supreme Court. After three years of deliberations, the court rejected their petition. A review petition was also dismissed. But not giving a definite time frame of compliance to the newspaper owners, allowed the owners to appeal to the High Court.

Despite numerous protest rallies, sit-ins outside Assemblies and unanimous resolutions in support of the Wage Award from the Senate, Provincial Assemblies and the National Assemblies the Wage Board Award has not been implemented.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has constituted a committee of senior Parliamentarians headed by the President of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) to resolve the issue within two months.

In fact, the Federal Information minister in the meeting with the mission members assured them that the implementation decision would be made within a few weeks of the meeting. But the struggle goes on.



**The Interior Secretary:** Syed Kamal Shah, Interior Secretary, gave an optimistic summation of the government position in relation to the media. He said the government believed in “complete freedom of the press” with the media “trusted as the fourth pillar of the state”. He said if journalists wanted to cover the FATA areas, the government would not hesitate to provide personal security and there would be no restrictions “whatsoever.”

Mr Shah also insisted – and spent a good deal of time pressing the point – that the government had been heavily involved in securing the release of *Daily Express* resident editor in Peshawar Sohail Qalander, who was snatched at the beginning of the year.

While it was obvious the minister understood the importance of the media, and the government’s responsibility to ensure it operated free from threats, the mask slipped slightly in discussion. Qalander had told the mission that although the gang which kidnapped him had been after ransom, he had previously incurred the displeasure of government figures over how militants who were killed should be referred to. When I put that to Mr Shah he insisted: “If a militant is called a hero, we are encouraging them.”



The Information Minister, Senator Muhammad Ali Durrani at the Geo TV offices during police action on March 16, 2007.

**The Information Minister:** Senator Muhammad Ali Durrani and deputy Tariq Azim Khan again gave wide ranging statements showing they understood the need and benefits of a free media. Mr Durrani said: “The criticism by media either specifies inefficient elements or assists the government correct any fumble. On the other hand, this vibrant media is also helping build social sectors, which is a positive indicator.”

He insisted that “all” newspapers get government advertisements with a ringfenced 25 per cent of the spend going to the regions. Mr Khan said nobody “had a given right” to ads but the policy was only to put it in the best medium for the purpose required.

As previously discussed, the Information Ministry is the main player in the push to get the 7th Wage Award implemented and many and passionate assurances were given that it was top priority.

### **The Provincial Information Minister (Peshawar):**

Asif Iqbal Daudzai was an encouraging example of commitment at a local level to facilitating an effective media. He outlined how practical steps – despite meagre resources – were being taken to create a residential media colony, welfare fund, financial aid for the medical treatment of working journalists, and provision of grants for press clubs. Given the impasse over the Wage Awards, this sort of local help is of value to local journalists and would be beneficial if a similar attitude was extended elsewhere.

Convincingly, he said the provincial government had welcomed media scrutiny and this had helped it achieve better performances than others as reflected in reports of the World Bank and Transparency International.

### **What is to be done?**

Despite helpful public statements and positions of various government figures, from President General Pervez Musharraf downwards, it is clear that massive difficulties face journalists in Pakistan from personal safety to professionalism and media freedom issues.

**Wage Awards:** The key starting point must be with journalists' own employers.

There is no excuse for the non-payment after so many years of the 7th Wage Award. By disgracefully holding out and stalling, the owners have severely undermined morale of their workers at a critical time. It has created a massive source of discontent that has diverted attention away, and prevented unity, in exposing the dangers of media work in Pakistan today.

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The Government should take cognisance of the fact that newspaper employers have used the Award to extract financial concessions from it and exploiting perceived weakness. It must resolve to take much tougher action in future and intervene at a much earlier stage. Although assurances from the government are that payment is close from the employers, it must be delivered to all immediately. No worker should be left out, no matter how small the newspaper s/he works for. And given the unjust prevarication by employers, the government should immediately constitute the 8th Wage Board to report in time for implementation in 12 months.

**Labour Law Reform:** As part of the much wider issue of fundamental workers' rights in Pakistan, the difficulties journalists have had in seeking justice for appalling workplace injustices highlights the need for massive structural reform. In particular, it is a stain on Pakistan's international image that it is unlawful for workers to withdraw their labour. This must be a starting point for urgent progress.

In addition, the contractual system of employment in all newspapers/news agencies and TV channels should be urgently reviewed because of the insecurity such a system introduces. Media workers constantly fearful of their employment status are not confident journalists and are vulnerable to unfair pressures.

Urgent attention needs to be devoted to ensuring that media employers also issue proper contracts of employment at the commencement of employment. Too many journalists are finding themselves open to abuse because contracts were

never issued to them in the first place. Allied to this, a network of simple labour courts or tribunals need to be established in the major urban centres to deal with employment disputes early, cheaply and speedily.

**Journalists' Safety:** Although the Government appears to have a commitment to a strong and free media, its actions, or lack of action, do not inspire confidence.

There is no safety structure provided for the journalists reporting in areas of conflict.

Besides the government, news organisations also have a responsibility. While foreign correspondents posted in conflict zones are protected by various rights to their person and families through their organisations, local Pakistani organisations do not take responsibility for life, family safety or equipment of the reporting journalist.

Training for conflict reporting focusing on safety cannot be stressed enough. At present there are hardly any guidelines given to reporters reporting from areas of conflict. They primarily do what others do in areas of no conflict.

Basic security arrangements should be made by the reporter's organisation. Organisations and unions both should be responsible for arranging safety workshops for conflict reporters and for sensitising journalists about hostile areas and security measures to be taken in conflict zones.

Some younger reporters believe getting news is more important than their personal security – such ambition needs to be properly channelled so that foolhardy behaviour leading to risk to life and limb can be prevented.

There is no trend of providing essential safety items like bullet-proof jackets or providing war insurance. Such provisions, along with training on how to cope with hostile reporting situations must begin at the earliest.

Unfair direct and indirect pressure on individual journalists over the stories they write and on editors for the stories they publish, must be reigned in. Physical intimidation and harassment must be seen to be outlawed at all levels. The order must come from the President's office and thorough enforcement carried through, throughout the chain of command. An independent commission with powers of censure to which journalists could report transgressions would aid transparency. In the longer term, this would help build confidence of the media in the good intentions of the government and defuse the current climate of suspicion. This commission would also be well placed to hear complaints of financial pressure exerted through the placing of government advertisements.

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It is critical that all attacks on journalists are investigated thoroughly and scrupulously. Investigators need to establish the motive for such attacks at an early stage and be willing to look into the possibility that their work may have been a factor in the crime. Clear evidence of this, made public, would help to restore confidence and defuse conspiracy theories. Courts must also make clear the targeting of journalists will not be tolerated and severely punish offenders in cases where this has happened.

Special consideration should be given by the government to improving security needs for journalists operating in FATA.

**International:** It is clear that the PFUJ is an effective and genuine voice of working journalists in Pakistan. Despite daunting obstacles, it has maintained its independence and remained constant in its battle to win justice in the workplace and defending the security of its members.

It is vital that the international community of media workers continues to recognise this and maximise the support which can be brought to bear to aid the PFUJ.

Political support is an effective tool in the battle to win implementation of the 7th Wage Award and the mission helped focus many influential minds on its importance. We hope rapid action is forthcoming as a result. However, the international gaze is also important in keeping the Pakistan Government's full attention to examples of attacks on journalists. Reports from the PFUJ for assistance in highlighting abuses need to assume high priority for the IFJ and sister affiliates.

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The PFUJ needs concrete material and moral support from the international donor, press freedom and media community to continue to run safety, press freedom and journalist rights campaigns in Pakistan. It needs practical support in monitoring media rights violations. It also needs support in getting the message of what is happening in Pakistan out to the rest of the world.

Expertise in journalists' safety training should be spread more widely. There is scope for a greater role for professional hands-on safety training courses, such as those co-ordinated by the IFJ and INSI, particularly for journalists working in FATA or North West Frontier, in conjunction with the PFUJ.

Finally, a follow-up mission to go back over the ground covered would be a useful way to ensure the Government was aware of our determination to see a difference being made for our journalist colleagues.

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Christopher Warren is the President of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the global organisation representing over 500,000 journalists in more than 115 countries. Before being elected IFJ President in 1998, he served as a senior vice president for three years and on the Executive Committee since 1988. Since 1987, Mr Warren has been the Federal Secretary of the Media Alliance, Australia, the union covering workers in the media and entertainment industries and includes 10,000 journalist members. Mr Warren worked as a journalist for 10 years for *The Sydney Morning Herald* and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.



### Chris Morley

Chris Morley is national president of the National Union of Journalists (UK and Ireland), will chair the union's centenary conference in Birmingham in April. He has been a member of the National Executive Council for six years. He is a working journalist and currently holds the position of Industrial Correspondent for the *Birmingham Mail*, a newspaper with more than 200,000 readers daily. Mr Morley has a wide interest in world affairs and represented the NUJ in 2005 at a IFJ-organised conference in Amman with journalists drawn from throughout Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan to plot the future for journalism in that country.



### Sunanda Deshapriya

Sunanda Deshapriya is the South Asia coordinator of the International News Safety Institute (INSI) based in Sri Lanka. He is a founder member of the Free Media Movement (FMM) Sri Lanka. Mr Deshapriya serves on the Board of Directors and also heads the media unit at the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA). He was also a member of the Editors Guild of Sri Lanka till 2003. He serves as a member of technical advisory committee of Media Resource and Training Centre (MRTC) in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. He is on the international Editorial Board of magazine *Democracy at Large*. A regular columnist, Mr Deshapriya is the Editor of the monthly *Balaya* and bimonthly *Saama Vimarshi*.



### Bharat Bhushan

Bharat Bhushan is the Editor (Delhi) of *The Telegraph*. Mr Bhushan has written extensively on conflict, and has a deep understanding of regional politics in South Asia. A senior journalist, Mr Bhushan has closely followed the Naga peace process, and is also an expert on international affairs. He is a member of the Editors' Guild of India.



### Iqbal Khattak

Iqbal Khattak is Peshawar-based Bureau Chief of *Daily Times*, and also special correspondent of weekly, both published out of Lahore. Since 1999, Mr Khattak has been the Pakistan representative of Reporters Sans Frontieres (Reporters Without Borders, RSF). RSF is a Paris-based organisation working for press freedom and freedom of expression, and ensures protection of journalists by highlighting human rights breaches



The IFJ is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation that promotes coordinated international action to defend press freedom and social justice through the development of strong, free and independent trade unions of journalists. IFJ Asia-Pacific coordinates IFJ activities in the Asia-Pacific region. The IFJ works closely with the United Nations Human Rights Commission, WIPO and the ILO, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the European Union, the Council for Europe and with a range of international trade union and freedom of expression organisations. The IFJ mandate covers both professional and industrial interests of journalists.

Visit [www.ifj-asia.org](http://www.ifj-asia.org) or [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org) for more information.