# 70 journalists killed in 2013

Syria, Iraq, Egypt most deadly nations for journalists. In South Africa, as and when the contraversial POIB becomes law, journalists could face very stiff penalties.



The Protection of State Information Bill (POIB), when signed into law in South Africa, will place members of the media – magazines, newspapers, online, radio and TV – at the risk of severe penalties if found guilty of breaking the law. (Image: Rod Baker)

NEW YORK CITY, US: Syria remained the most deadly place for journalists on the job in 2013, while Iraq and Egypt each saw a spike in fatal violence, the Committee to Protect Journalists found in a new report.

At least 70 journalists were killed for their work during the year, compared with 74 in 2012. The Middle East accounted for two-thirds of the deaths in 2013.

The long-standing conflict in Syria claimed the lives of at least 29 journalists in 2013. That brings the number of journalists killed covering the conflict to at least 63, including some who died over the border in Lebanon or Turkey. Yet the huge number of deaths in Syria does not tell the complete story of the danger there, given an unprecedented number of kidnappings. About 60 journalists were abducted at least briefly during the year, according to CPJ research, and about 30 are currently missing.

In Iraq, violence returned to levels not seen since 2011, with 10 journalists killed. Egypt experienced a dramatic increase in deaths in 2013, with six journalists killed for their work.

## A killing field

"The Middle East has become a killing field for journalists. While the number of journalists killed for their work has declined in some places, the civil war in Syria ?and a renewal of sectarian attacks in Iraq have taken an agonising toll," said CPJ Deputy Director Robert Mahoney. "The international community must prevail on all governments and armed groups to respect the civilian status of reporters and to prosecute the killers of journalists."

Despite continuing dangers to journalists in Pakistan and Somalia, the number of confirmed work-related deaths in those countries declined in 2013 to five and four, respectively.

Brazil and Russia - host countries of next year's World Cup and Olympics - saw three and two journalists killed, respectively.

Most journalists who die for their work are local people covering local stories, according to CPJ research. In 2013, nine out of 10 journalists killed were local, in line with the historical trend.

CPJ's database of journalists killed for their work in 2013 includes capsule reports on each victim and a statistical analysis. CPJ also maintains a database of all journalists killed since 1992.

The database is continually updated.

CPJ's report is also available in Arabic, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

## And in South Africa?

Journalists, particularly investigative journalists, here in South Africa face a number of challenges as so many reports in Bizcommunity.com's Media Freedom & Right to Know special section shows... From harassment, such as being threatened by SAPS using an apartheid-era law to dismissal...

And as and when the controversial Protection of State Information Bill (POIB) becomes law, local journalists will be in danger of being subjected to draconian penalties should they contravene the law.

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