

#EndImpunity: Afghanistan

- Number of journalists killed since 1994: **73**
- Prosecutions: **4**
- Three journalists killed on average every year
- Most Dangerous: **Kabul, Helmand and Nangrahar**



Afghanistan is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, with 48 journalists killed in last 10 years; 31 over the last four years. As the country attempts to overcome the scars of war, journalists have paid a heavy price.

Since 1994, the country has recorded the killing of 73 journalists, 25 of them foreign journalists, and only in four cases has justice been delivered. In 2015, Afghanistan's Supreme Court convicted Nabiullah, a police officer, of murdering award-winning German photojournalist Anja Niedringhaus on April 4, 2014, and sentenced him to 20 years imprisonment.

Other convictions include the death penalty awarded to three for killing journalist Mohammad Rafiq Azizi, founder editor of Andisha-e-Moatlem magazine, and seven others with a remote-controlled bomb in Herat city in May 30, 2011. Herat Provincial Court sentenced them to death in November 2011.

**Only 1 out of 10 deaths
in the media is investigated**

#endimpunity



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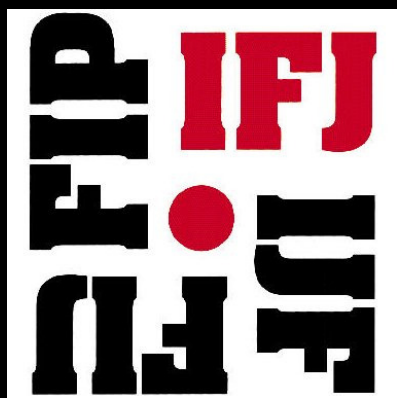
End impunity!

Another case where the investigation was complete is that of Ahmad Omaid Khpalwak who was killed by American soldiers on July 28, 2011 in Tarin Kowt, Uruzgan province. Khpalwak was reporting for BBC Pashto about the Taliban attack when the international forces searched a broadcast building for Taliban fighters. The American soldier shot 20 rounds at Khpalwak in the building as he tried to reach for his press card. The NATO closed the investigation concluding that the soldier's act was reasonable under the circumstances.

The continued threat from violent militant groups, coupled with the government's lack of political will to improve journalists' safety has resulted in impunity and increased violence against journalists. The National Unity Government, led by President Ashraf Ghani, has repeatedly made promises and expressed its commitment to improve the overall security situation, investigate cases of murders of journalists and to put an end to impunity for crimes against journalists and media workers. However, there has been no substantial change in the situation.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, on 2016 End Impunity Day, urged the Afghanistan government to end impunity for crimes against journalists saying that 'the cycle of violence and impunity in Afghanistan has been a longstanding challenge, but has been particularly troubling for'.

Investigation and prosecution on killing of and attacks on journalists are elusive in Afghanistan. The reign of lawlessness and terrorism leads to impunity which in turn makes journalists vulnerable, and journalism rendered a deadly profession. With only four completed investigations and/or conviction in 73 killings, impunity in Afghanistan is rife.



1 journalist is killed every 10 days in the Asia Pacific

International Federation of Journalists

<http://www.ifj.org/campaigns/end-impunity-2017/>

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