

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/india-murder-attempt-on-woman-journalist-25-07-2012,43102.html>

Asia - India

Investigation stalled

Murder attempt on woman journalist must not go unpunished

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Reporters Without Borders is worried by the lack of progress in the police investigation into the 15 July shooting of *Arunachal Times* journalist **Tongam Rina** in Itanagar, the capital of the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, and supports calls by civil society organizations and news media for the investigation to be assigned to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

"We welcome the news about the improvement in Rina's condition and the state's decision to cover the cost of her treatment, but we are disturbed by the lacks of significant progress in the investigation into this murder attempt more than a week after it took place," Reporters Without Borders said.

"We hope that the federal government will demonstrate a total commitment to combating impunity for crimes of violence against the media, which are on the increase in India, and that it will do this by ordering the Central Bureau of Investigation to take over the investigation and identify both the perpetrators and instigators of the shooting."

Critically injured by a shot to the abdomen, Rina was declared out of danger by doctors at Rama Krishna Mission Hospital after they carried out an operation to remove the bullet lodged near her spine. Arunachal Pradesh chief minister Nabam Tuki said the state would pay all of her medical bills.

On the basis of witness interviews, the police were able to issue a facial composite of the suspected gunman on 17 July but no arrest followed. Several media and civil society organizations have responded to the lack of progress by staging silent marches and calling for the CBI to be put in charge of the investigation.

Reporters Without Borders is concerned about the increase in violence against journalists. **Rajesh Mishra** of the weekly *Media Raj*, in the central state of Madhya Pradesh, was fatally injured by men who attacked and beat him while he was at a tea stand on 1 March. **Chandrika Rai**, a reporter for the dailies *Navbharat* and *The Hitavada*, and his wife and two children were beaten to death in their home in the same state on 18 February. No one has so far been arrested for these murders.

India is ranked 131st out of 179 countries in the 2011-2012 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index.
