

Reporters Without Borders

http://www.rsf.org/chine-journalist-murdered-while-covering-20-09-2011_41024.html

Asia - China

Sensitive investigation?

Journalist murdered while covering illegal cooking oil scandal

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Reporters Without Borders is appalled to learn that **Li Xiang**, a journalist with *Luoyang Television* in Luoyang (in the eastern province of Henan) who had been following an illegal cooking oil scandal and had written about it in his blog, was stabbed to death yesterday.

"We hope the authorities will carry out a thorough investigation and will seriously consider the possibility that Li was killed in connection with his work as a journalist," Reporters Without Borders said, offering its condolences to Li's family and colleagues.

Aged 30, Li was stabbed more than 10 times as he was returning to his home in Luoyang at dawn. He covered social issues and had been following a police investigation into the sale of cooking oil made from residues taken from gutters. His assailants took his laptop and the police are reportedly working on the assumption that the motive for the stabbing was robbery.

The last entry in his blog was about the cooking oil scandal. No *Luoyang Television* journalist has commented on his murder but bloggers have said they think it is clearly linked to his coverage of the scandal.

Although there have been several cases of physical attacks this year, murders of journalists are very rare in China.

Sun Hongjie (孙虹杰), a reporter for the daily *Beijing Chengbao* (北疆晨报), died as a result of the head injuries he received in an attack in December 2010. Both the circumstances of the attack and the haste with which the authorities concluded that it was not linked to his work were suspicious. He had been working on sensitive stories including the demolition of housing to make way for new homes for officials. ([read the article](#))

In another case involving a public health scandal, the activist **Zhao Lianhai** (赵连海) was jailed in 2008 after creating a website about the dangers of baby formula manufactured by a leading Chinese company that turned out to be tainted. ([read the article](#))

China is ranked 171st out of 178 countries in the 2010 Reporters Without Borders [press freedom index](#).
