

Saturday, 28 February 2026

MEDIA RELEASE

An attack on one journalist is an attack on the media industry

THE Media Council of Papua New Guinea (MCPNG) is demanding a full independent investigation by police investigators into an attack on a female reporter on the morning of Friday, February 27th, 2026.

The reporter, who is employed by *The National* newspaper was about to enter Correctional Service Headquarters around 11am to attend a press conference when she was confronted by five Correctional Service male officers who questioned her about an article that she had reported on in relation to injuries sustained by prisoners at the Bomana Correctional Service facility.

One of the CS officers punched the female reporter on her left ear, to which she reacted by pushing him away in self-defence, while another officer attempted to slap her across the face.

Following the incident, the reporter returned to the office and reported the matter to her Editor before filing a formal police complaint regarding the attack.

The unprovoked attack was in relation to a news article in *The National* carrying the reporter's byline entitled "50-plus prisoners injured in 'failed' jail break.

The National Newspaper Management in a brief statement said:

"The National merely reported a serious assault upon prisoners perpetrated, it has been confirmed, by warders. The Prime Minister has ordered an investigation. For warders to now assault a journalist is reprehensible and does nothing to improve the image of the service. We are fully supporting our journalist in filing a criminal assault case. We are calling on the CS command to look into this and discipline the officers responsible. We have lodged a complaint with the CS management. Regardless of this we will continue to report fairly all matters to do with CS including this incident."

Since the incident, the Council has received damning evidence which includes Whatsapp messages and voice noted which reflects the very worrying conduct of officers within the Correctional Services.

The Council again reminds the public in general that "**Freedom of the press is the fundamental right of journalists and media organizations to report, publish, and disseminate information, news, and opinions without government censorship, intimidation, or undue restriction.**"

MCPNG President, Neville Choi, has condemned the attack and threat against one of its own members and said reporters in Papua New Guinea must be respected for the work that they do in informing and educating the public of what is happening around them.

He further stated that if and when a citizen is not happy with a news report or has evidence to prove that a reporter was compromised when writing a story, he or she can simply inform the Media Council by raising a formal complaint in writing to the Media Council of PNG, or via the MCPNG website complaints page: <https://www.mcpng.net/complaints-tribunal>



The Media Council of PNG has received the backing of its Editors in this industry and the region in calling for this investigation which remains an important step in ensuring freedom of the press in this country is respected so reporters can feel safe and free to continue to write the stories that matter.

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