

Durban writer praises Rushdie, attacked

NEWSWATCH: Durban writer Zainub Priya Dala believes she was assaulted for expressing admiration for controversial novelist Salman Rushdie, reports *Mail & Guardian*...



Praising Salman Rushdie (pictured) resulted in a physical assault on Durban writer Zainub Priya Dala. (Image: Public Domain)

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- *Mail & Guardian*: [Durban writer believes praise for Rushdie behind vicious attack...](#) Durban writer Zainub Priya (ZP) Dala believes she was assaulted for expressing admiration for controversial novelist Salman Rushdie, her publisher said on Saturday.

Mail & Guardian reports Umuzi publishers, the South African imprint of Penguin Random House publishers, said in a statement that "Author ZP Dala... was assaulted in Overport, Durban, on Wednesday."

The attack apparently happened on Wednesday. On learning the news, Rushdie tweeted his support of Dala, as have other publishers, [reports BooksLive](#).

Penguin Random House South Africa condemns the attack on writer ZP Dala

The publisher has issued the following statement:

"Dala, one of the featured writers at the Time of the Writer Festival taking place in Durban from 16 to 21 March, was

assaulted a day after expressing her admiration for the writing style of Salman Rushdie.

"On Wednesday, 18 March, Dala's car was followed from the festival hotel and she was harassed by three men in a vehicle who forced her to stop. She was hit in the face with a brick and called "Rushdie's bitch".

"She has been treated by her doctor and has reported the incident to the police.

"Dala believes that the attack occurred as a result of a comment she made during a writing forum for schools at the Chatsworth Education Centre. Dala, when asked which writers she admired, answered that she liked Salman Rushdie's literary style. A group of teachers and learners left the forum.

"Steve Connolly, Managing Director of Penguin Random House in South Africa, says: 'We condemn completely the brutish attack on author ZP Dala. Her crime? To have expressed her admiration for the writing of Salman Rushdie, which heralded a walk-out by teachers and students. Have we reached such a state of intolerance that we cannot listen to one writer profess admiration for another without wanting to attack her with a brick and a knife? If our constitution is to mean anything we must ensure our right to free speech.'"

- *Mail & Guardian: [Broadband failure costs SA dearly...](#) Dominic Cull, writing in an earlier analysis published on the Mail & Guardian website, says the state's incompetence is hindering connectivity as well as its own developmental goals.*

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