

# German media seek police protection after anti-Islam protest assault

BERLIN, GERMANY: German media on Tuesday demanded police protection after journalists came under attack by anti-Islam protesters, saying those responsible for such assaults must be brought to justice.



Journalists covering the PEGIDA movement's weekly demonstrations on Monday evenings have been increasingly subjected to verbal assaults such as being called the "lying press".

But last week, the incidents turned physical with one reporter punched in the face and another kicked at.

Regional media groups and journalist associations from the eastern states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia issued a joint statement urging an end to the violence.

"The constant chant of 'liar press' poisons the atmosphere, and can no longer be accepted," they said.

"Those who attack and hurt journalists must be brought to justice. The recent assaults should get politicians thinking about how PEGIDA events as well as other similar groups should be dealt with," said the media associations.

They added that they "expect the interior ministers and police to prevent attacks on journalists". The anti-Islam "Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident" (PEGIDA) emerged about a year ago, with its rallies drawing up to 25,000 people at their peak in their eastern home base city of Dresden.

But they fizzled early this year after PEGIDA's co-founder Lutz Bachmann, 42, sparked a public uproar with Facebook selfies showing him sporting a Hitler moustache and hair-do.

With Germany now expecting to take in up to one million people fleeing war and poverty this year, anger has once again

flared among anti-foreigner groups and backers of the anti-Islam movement, with a rally on Monday drawing thousands of people.

*Source: AFP*

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