

Haitian journalist claims police punched him, threatened to kill him for allegedly supporting Aristide in broadcasts

By **PETER PRENGAMAN**

c The Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - A Haitian radio journalist said Friday police punched him in the face and threatened to kill him after accusing him of supporting ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide on the air.

Makenson Remy, 29, said he was driving home after finishing his Friday afternoon shift at Radio Megastar's offices in the capital when a police truck carrying about eight officers began following him.

After stopping at a traffic light in the Nazon neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Remy said police jumped out of the truck, surrounded his car and ordered him out.

He said the officers then slammed him on the hood of his car, punched him once in the face and threatened to kill him if he continued working for the radio station.

"They told me that I was supporting Aristide on the radio, and that if it had been at night they would have killed me," Mackenson told The Associated Press.

Police spokeswoman Gessy Coicou said she had no information about the alleged attack, which comes about three weeks after another Radio Megastar reporter, Raoul Saint-Louis, was shot in the hand after leaving work.

Saint-Louis has said he doesn't know who shot him.

In January, radio reporter Abdias Jean was shot to death while covering a police raid in a Port-au-Prince slum. Rights activists accused police of killing Jean after he witnessed them shoot two other people.

Police say they are investigating Jean's killing but have no suspects.

In its annual report, Paris-based Reporters Without Borders said security conditions had improved for journalists in Haiti after Aristide's ouster, but criticized the interim government for not investigating the slaying of two prominent journalists while Aristide was in power.

Aristide fled Haiti on Feb. 29 after a three-week rebellion.

More than 250 people have died in clashes in the capital since September, when Aristide supporters stepped up demands for his return from exile in South Africa.

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