

2 Virginia Television Journalists Killed in On-Air Shooting

Two television journalists were shot and killed in Virginia on Wednesday morning while conducting a live television interview, the station said.

The shooting, apparently by a disgruntled current or former employee of the television station, occurred at about 6:45 a.m. EDT during a live broadcast. The incident took place in Bedford County, in the south-central part of the state and about 120 miles (190 km) from the capital of Richmond.

Shots were heard and the reporter and the person she was interviewing screamed and ducked for cover.

The station, WDBJ7 in Roanoke, Virginia, said the reporter Alison Parker, 24, and the cameraman, Adam Ward, 27, died in the incident.

In an interview on Washington radio station WTOP, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe said the suspected shooter had been identified as a disgruntled current or former station employee.

The suspect was being pursued by police in a car chase, he told WTOP.

McAuliffe said in a Twitter message that state police were working with local law enforcement agencies to capture the suspect, adding, "Heartbroken over senseless murders today in Smith Mountain Lake."

Parker and Ward were filming a feature segment for the morning news program at Bridgewater Plaza, a shopping and recreation plaza.

Asked on CNN if the station had been targeted or had been threatened, Marks said, "Every now and then you get a crazy email or something and we'll look into it. Nothing of this nature than any of us could recall."

He said the interview was to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of Smith Mountain Lake, a resort area, and the woman being interviewed was from the local chamber of commerce. She had been talking about the anniversary and tourism.

The woman was wounded and was undergoing surgery, he said. "We don't make a secret of where we report from, we may start now," Marks said.

The wounded woman was identified as Vicki Gardner, executive director of the Smith Mountain Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce.

A video of the shooting showed the camera being held by Ward hitting the ground amid screams.

The station said on its website that both the dead journalists were from the region. Parker grew up in Martinsville and attended Patrick Henry Community College and James Madison University, while Ward graduated from Salem High School and Virginia Tech, the station said.

They were both engaged to be married to other people.

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