

Deadly Oregon Shopping Mall Shooting Appeared to Be Random Rampage

The masked gunman who opened fire in a crowded Oregon shopping mall, killing two people and wounding a third before taking his own life, appeared to have acted in a blind rampage with no known motive, authorities said on Wednesday.

The Tuesday afternoon shooting frenzy at the Clackamas Town Center in the Portland suburb of Happy Valley triggered pandemonium inside the mall at the height of the busy holiday season, sending thousands of shoppers streaming out of the complex as authorities arrived on the scene.

Two people were shot to death and the lone gunman died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Police were expected to release the identities of the dead at a news conference in the nearby town of Clackamas on Wednesday.

In the meantime, a 15-year-old girl wounded in the attack was listed in serious condition, a hospital official said. She was identified as Kristina Shevchenko.

"The family is doing OK," said her brother, Yevgeniy, declining to comment further.

In a Facebook posting on Tuesday night, he said: "As of now she is stable and sleeping. The bullet went (through) bruising her lung, it missed any vital organs and it missed her ribs. She will need two more operations. We appreciate any and all support including your prayers! Thank you."

Authorities remained baffled at what led the suspect to open fire in the mall, the latest in a flurry of U.S. gun violence this year, most notably the killing of 12 people and wounding

of 58 others at a midnight screening of the Batman film *The Dark Knight Rises* in Colorado in July.

"It did not appear as though he was targeting any specific individuals," Clackamas County Sheriff Craig Roberts told the NBC morning news program *Today*. "It really looked as though it was a random shooting."

Mission to Take Lives at Mall

Asked what may have motivated him to carry out the attack, Roberts said, "He had a mission set forth to take the lives of people at that mall." Roberts added that he believed the shooting only came to a halt after the gun jammed.

Undersheriff Matt Ellington said on CNN that police had recovered a rifle, multiple shell casings and a mask matching the one witnesses said was worn by the shooter. He said the gunman had no known connection to those he shot.

Police converging on the mall on Tuesday evacuated terrified shoppers, who were reported by local media and via Twitter to have hidden in the back rooms of shops as gunshots rang out in the 1.4 million-square-foot mall.

High school student Hannah Baggs, 14, told *The Oregonian* newspaper that she got a close look at the gunman before he entered the mall and opened fire.

"He was, like, 10 feet away from us, wearing a white mask and carrying something heavy with both hands," Baggs said in a report on the newspaper's website. "He went running into the store."

Police and SWAT teams established a perimeter around the scene and worked to evacuate the mall as they searched for the gunman. Video footage from inside the mall, aired on CNN, showed shoppers heading toward exits with their arms raised above their heads.

Ellington said the Clackamas Town Center mall had been used recently by police for a mass evacuation drill.

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