

Manhunt in Paris after gunman wounds photographer at *Libération* offices

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19 November 2013

A police manhunt was ongoing as of last night in Paris for a gunman who broke into the reception area of the office of the centre-left newspaper *Libération* at 10.15am yesterday. He fired two shots, severely wounding a young photographer, and left without speaking.

A police guard was subsequently placed in front of all the main media buildings in the city.

Then, at 11.40am, a man of similar appearance—with stocky build, aged between 40 and 45, wearing a long, dark overcoat—fired shots at the Société Générale bank in the La Défense business district, smashing a window but not wounding anyone. Eye witnesses said he did not enter the bank, but walked down some stairs away from the building.

Just before 1pm, a motorist reported that he had been hijacked in Nanterre, close to *La Défense*, by a gunman in possession of several grenades, who forced him to take him to the Champs Elysées and drop him near the luxury George V hotel. The hotel is close to the offices of the Europe 1 and RTL radio stations and to the presidential palace.

A police helicopter was dispatched to the area, and people were encouraged to stay indoors. Interior Minister Manuel Valls said, “As long as this person is still on the loose and we do not know the motives, this represents a threat. We must move fast.”

As of last night, however, no suspects had been caught, even after the media published extensive security camera footage of the person believed to be the shooter. Police apparently lost his trail after he went into a subway station.

Paris prosecutor Francis Molins said the “most likely possibility” was that a lone gunman was behind the attacks and the hijacking. He said the suspect had not yet been identified, and that while the police had been

actively searching all the western areas of Paris since the late morning, the motive was still unclear.

A possible link is being suggested between these events and an incident last Friday, when a man opened fire in the lobby of the BFM TV/RMC building without wounding anyone. Cartridges of the sort used for hunting wild boars that were found there are similar to those found at the *Libération* offices. The gunman had walked into BFM TV building and emptied the chamber of his gun in the reception area. *Libération* reported images of the suspect corresponded with those of the attacker at BFM-TV, where the man told an editor, “Next time, I will not miss you.”

While on a state visit to Israel, French President François Hollande commented on the Paris shooting, saying: “An arrest as quickly as possible, that is the only order that has been given. There were two media outlets that were targeted ... freedom of information is being targeted.” *Libération* also reported a cyber-attack at 3:37 p.m. on its web site, without stating the origin of the attack. “We have been the target of a denial of service attack since just under a half an hour. We are working with our service provider to deal with this issue. Concretely, our site is still online and visible, but we cannot update it.”



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