

US shooting

VIRGINIA GUNMAN URGED TO SEEK MEDICAL HELP

Roanoke

An ex-TV journalist who shot dead two ex-colleagues live on air in Virginia had been ordered to seek medical help by his bosses, memos reveal.

Internal memos from Dan Dennison, then news chief of WDBJ7, show concerns about Vester Flanagan's "aggressive" behaviour towards colleagues.

They indicate the station tried to help him before firing him in February 2013.

Flanagan shot dead Alison Parker and Adam Ward at a shopping centre in Moneta on Wednesday.

He filmed the attack and posted it on social media. He sent a rambling manifesto to ABC News, saying he was a "human powder keg... just waiting to go BOOM!!!"

Flanagan voiced a host of anger-laced grievances, as well as some praise, in a disjointed 23-page document that authorities say he faxed after shooting the two WDBJ-

TV journalists live on air - killings that he attempted to explain.

In one document that he called a "suicide note for friends and family," Flanagan, wrote, "I am so sorry for dumping on you ... I am just so sick of this s*** man."

Flanagan talked about his past, including his time growing up in Northern California and his claims to have worked as a teen model and later as a male escort in addition to his time in television news. He delved into his personal life, including his being a gay black man, offering praise for some relatives, friends and one romantic interest and condemnation for others. He admits to being "somewhat racist against whites, blacks and Latinos."

He referenced a number of grievances, some of them decades old, and mentioned being bullied and suffering other injustices. Some of



Vester Lee Flanagan

these involve places where he worked, including WDBJ.

The document does not mention either of Wednesday's victims by name, though it does detail his gripes with the Roanoke television station.

Flanagan expressed his admiration for Seung-Hui Cho, who killed 32 people at Virginia Tech in 2007. He also referenced the June shootings at a predominantly black African-American church in Charleston, South Carolina, carried out by Dylann Roof. Roof claimed he wanted to start a "race war."

Gun control debate

The brazen killing of two US journalists during a live television broadcast by a former reporter who was fired by the station reignited calls for tougher gun control in America - though hope for change is limited.

Parker's father Andy made an impassioned plea for change, saying his daughter's death had left his heart broken.

"I'm for the Second Amendment, but there has to be a way to force politicians that are cowards and in the pockets of the NRA to come to grips and make sense - have sensible laws so that crazy people can't get guns," he said.

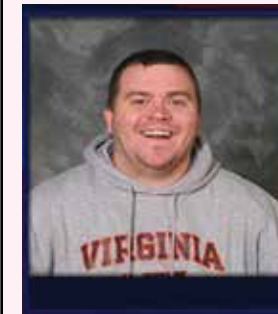
"It can't be that hard, and yet politicians from the local level to the state level to the national level, they side step the issue. They kick the can down the road. This can't happen anymore."

Who were the two journalists?



Alison Parker

- Aged 24, was a reporter for WDBJ7's Mornin' show
- Grew up in Martinsville, Virginia and edited her university newspaper
- Joined WDBJ7 after internship and said she grew up watching the station
- Was dating station anchor Chris Hurst



Adam Ward

- Aged 27, was a cameraman for WDBJ7
- Went to school in Salem, Virginia, and graduated from Virginia Tech
- Described by his employer as committed and a "fine photojournalist"
- Was engaged to station producer Melissa Ott



This TV video frame grab courtesy of WDBJ7-TV in Roanoke, Virginia shows Alison Parker (L) the moment shots ring out during an interview on tourism with Vicki Gardner

US TV station mourns murdered journalists

Roanoke

Staff at a US TV station in Virginia have held a minute's silence in memory of the two journalists shot dead by a disgruntled ex-colleague live on air.

"We will, over time, heal from this," WDBJ7 anchor Kim McBroom told viewers, holding hands with two colleagues.

Colleagues at WDBJ7 in Roanoke, Virginia, held a moment of silence at 06:45

(10:45 GMT) yesterday- 24 hours on from the exact moment the reporter and cameraman were shot dead as they broadcast live from a shopping centre in Moneta.

"Joining hands here on the desk," said Ms McBroom. "It's the only way to do it."

Outside the channel's headquarters in Roanoke, bunches of flowers and black ribbons have been placed in memory of the two journalists.



Flowers are left for the two journalists

Tragic end

'Newborn dies after rat bites in Indian hospital'



Three health officials have been suspended over the incident

New Delhi

A newborn has died after being bitten by rats in a government-run hospital in southern India where he was undergoing treatment, the baby's mother alleged yesterday.

Three health officials have been suspended over the incident at the Guntur Government Hospital in Andhra Pradesh state where the 10-day-old boy was being treated for a urinary tract problem.

His mother, Chavali

Lakshmi, said she alerted staff after noticing some of her son's fingers appeared to have been nibbled off during his stay in the neonatal intensive care unit.

"Our son was about to undergo a surgery, but we noticed wounds on his right hand on Wednesday," she said.

"Rats had nibbled them (fingers) off," Lakshmi added.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu said he has suspended

three officials and ordered an inquiry into the incident.

"Shocked and deeply disturbed after learning that a baby boy died after bitten by rats in Guntur hospital," Naidu said on Twitter.

"Warned officials that such an incident should not recur."

The hospital's top official, medical superintendent T. Venugopala Rao was quoted in the *Times of India* newspaper as saying the boy's death occurred despite putting up rat mesh in the

neonatal intensive care unit after receiving complaints about rodents.

"It is an unfortunate incident," he added.

Most of India's 1.2 billion-strong population rely on under-staffed and run-down government hospitals for free treatment.

Last year, a hospital in the central state of Madhya Pradesh hired pest controllers after incidents of rodents damaging hospital equipment and biting patients.