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Asia - Pakistan

Stray bullet?

TV cameraman shot in the back, police blame “stray bullet”

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Reporters Without Borders has learned that *Dunya News TV* cameraman **Fayyaz** was shot in the back today while covering a meeting of the Punjab provincial assembly in Lahore. It was unclear who fired the shot but fellow journalists said they thought it was a targeted attack linked to his coverage of criticism of an important local party called Nawaz.

Fayyaz was rushed to hospital after the shooting and was said to be out of danger.

Reporters Without Borders urges the police to carry out a serious investigation with the aim of quickly identifying those responsible for the shooting. It also calls on Punjab law minister Rana Sanaullah Khan to keep his promise to cooperate with the media and to ensure that the police do not rule out the possibility that today's shooting was targeted.

Fayyaz was shot when he and other journalists went to interview members of the provincial assembly in a tent that had been specially erected for the occasion.

The police said Fayyaz appeared to have been hit by a “stray bullet.” But, in the absence of any other shooting in the area, this was strongly disputed by members of the Punjab Union of Journalists (PUJ), who said they would boycott the assembly until an independent investigation into the shooting was carried out.

“It was deliberate attempt and the journalist was targeted,” PUJ president Rana Azeem told Reporters Without Borders.

Today's incident was preceded by tension and scathing media criticism of Nawaz, which had been accused of advocating anti-democratic standards and taking bribes from controversial Muslim pressure groups.
