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U.S. Journalist Shot Dead in Ukraine

By Dmitry Zaks for AFP

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Ukrainian soldiers are on guard in Irpin, north of Kyiv. **Sergei SUPINSKY / AFP**

A U.S. journalist was shot dead and another wounded on Sunday in Irpin, a frontline suburb of Kyiv that has witnessed some of the fiercest fighting since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Papers found on the American reporter's body identified him as 50-year-old video documentary shooter Brent Renaud, of New York.

A New York Times identity card was among the papers, leading to reports he worked for the paper, but the U.S. daily said he was not working for it at the time of his death.

The International Federation of Journalists identified the wounded reporter as American photographer Juan Arredondo.

A third victim, a Ukrainian who had been in the same car as the Americans, was also wounded, according to a medic at the scene.

AFP reporters in Irpin saw Ukrainian volunteer soldiers rush the body on a stretcher to a more

secure location before laying it out on the ground for further identification.

Danylo Shapovalov, a surgeon volunteering for the Ukrainian territorial defence, said Renaud died instantly from a gunshot wound to his neck.

Ukrainian officials were quick to blame Russian forces for the shooting but the exact circumstances were unclear.

AFP reporters heard small arms and artillery fire in the area, which runs along the front splitting Ukrainian positions from advancing Russian forces

"The car was shot at. There were two journalists and one of ours," Shapovalov told AFP.

"Our guy and the journalist are wounded, I provided them first aid, the other one received a wound in the neck, he died immediately."

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'They kept shooting'

The New York Times called Renaud "a talented photographer and filmmaker" who last contributed to the paper in 2015.

"He was not on assignment for any desk at The Times in Ukraine," said a statement tweeted by deputy managing editor Cliff Levy.

Arredondo said in a news video shot of him in his hospital bed that the reporters' vehicle came under attack after crossing a Ukrainian-controled checkpoint.

"We were going to film other refugees leaving. We got into a car, someone offered to take us to the other bridge," he said.

"We crossed a checkpoint and they started shooting at us, so the driver turned around and they kept shooting."

Ukrainian officials immediately blamed Russian forces for the attack, which occurred near a bridge leading from Irpin to the flashpoint town of Bucha, now under Russian control.

White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said U.S. officials would consult with Kyiv to determine the circumstances of the attack.

"We'll be consulting with the Ukrainians to determine how this happened and then to measure and execute appropriate consequences as a result of it," Sullivan told CBS television.

Renaud won Harvard University's Nieman Fellowship in 2019, which he used to report on a wide range of global issues, including Black Lives Matter protests in his native Little Rock, Arkansas.

His other work included an HBO documentary on heroin addiction and reports on Africa and the Middle East, according to his official Nieman biography.

Renaud becomes the first foreign reporter killed in Ukraine since the Russian assault began on Feb. 24.

A Ukrainian journalist died during a Russian missile strike aimed at Kyiv's television tower, which killed five people walking in the area on March 1.

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