



Ahmad Omid Khpalwak

Journalist

Date of Birth: 1987

Date of Death: 2011

Site of the Incident: Uruzgan Province

Person/Group Responsible for the Incident: ISAF Forces

Life and Education

The Afghanistan Journalists Center states: "Ahmad Omid Khpalwak was born in 1987 in Kabul, where he completed his primary and secondary education. He also studied in Tarinkot, the capital of Uruzgan province." According to Pajhwok Afghan News, Khpalwak was killed on July 28, 2011, during a Taliban attack on the Radio-TV building in Uruzgan, when he was shot by ISAF forces. He is survived by a daughter.

Activities

As reported by the Afghanistan Journalists Center, Khpalwak joined Pajhwok Afghan News in 2007 and also worked with the Pashto service of the BBC.

Challenges During His Activism

The BBC Pashto section reported that one of Khpalwak's colleagues shared how he occasionally discussed receiving threats from certain Taliban commanders. These threats stemmed from his refusal to cover specific Taliban attacks or incorporate their views into his reports. After one of these threats, when asked how he responded to the Taliban commander, Khpalwak reportedly said, "I told the commander, do whatever you want; you are not God."

Memories and Quotes

A colleague of Khpalwak states: "Omid was only 25 years old, but the continuous events of his life made him seem much older. He was polite and sensitive, often listening quietly to conversations, yet he also had a great sense of humor that made us all laugh."

Aspirations and Goals

A significant goal for Khpalwak was to provide accurate information to the public, and he pursued this objective diligently, even amidst constant danger.

Reactions to the Incident

Pajhwok Afghan News reported that U.S. forces based in Bagram condemned the killing of Ahmad Omid Khpalwak. In a related report, citing the Afghanistan Analysts Network, Pajhwok states, "If the foreign forces had exercised tactical patience while responding to insurgent attacks, Khpalwak's death could have been prevented." The report further notes that ISAF forces claimed Khpalwak was unintentionally killed due to their gunfire. Additionally, the Afghanistan Analysts Network highlighted that "the incident resulted from a mistake by a battalion commander, who opted to clear the building without first confirming the presence of civilians in the Radio-TV building."

The BBC Persian website quotes Peter Horrocks, Director of BBC Global News: "This morning, we heard the very sad news of the killing of Ahmad Omid Khpalwak, a freelance BBC journalist in Uruzgan province, Afghanistan."

Reactions to the Incident

Mr. Khpalwak was killed in Tarinkot during a series of suicide attacks. The BBC and all of Mr. Khpalwak's friends and colleagues extend their deepest sympathies to his family."

On the other hand, Radio Azadi's website reported: "The Afghan government holds the armed Taliban responsible for the death of Ahmad Omid. Although the Taliban expressed regret over the incident, they did not directly take responsibility for Khpalwak's killing." Additionally, according to the BBC, several governmental and non-governmental organizations condemned the journalist's death through various statements.

Links

1. Afghanistan Journalists' Center:

<https://afjc.media/news/southern-province/urozgan/>-کشته شدن-خبرنگار-پژواک-و-بی-بی-سی-در-ترینکوت

2. Pajhwok Afghan News:

<https://pajhwok.com/fa/2012/04/26/>-تحقیق-قتل-امید-خیلواک-به-دلیل-عدم-کارگی

3. Radio Azadi:

<https://da.azadiradio.com/a/24282140.html>

4. BBC Pashto:

https://www.bbc.com/pashto/afghanistan/2011/07/110729_hh-khpulwak-remembering

Case Status

The Afghanistan Journalists' Center, in a report concerning the investigation into Ahmad Omid Khpalwak's death, writes: "Based on investigations ordered by General John Allen, the overall commander of international forces in Afghanistan, it was confirmed that Khpalwak was mistakenly targeted." The report reveals that an American ISAF soldier, believing Khpalwak was a member of the Taliban and potentially wearing a suicide vest, shot him. ISAF expressed regret over the incident, explaining that the soldier's actions were deemed "reasonable" under the rules of armed engagement.