

RESTAURANT OWNER SAYS GUNMAN IS FIRED DISHWASHER

Posted on August 24, 2017 by Tyler Barker



CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) - The Latest on shooting and hostage situation in Charleston, S.C.

2:45 p.m.

An owner of a South Carolina restaurant where a gunman is holding hostages says he's been told the man is a dishwasher who was angry with and shot a male chef.

John Aquino told WCSC-TV that he thinks the gunman was fired and came back to Virginia's in downtown Charleston on Thursday to get revenge.

Aquino says he doesn't know how badly the chef was injured.

Charleston Police spokesman Charles Francis says officers were able to get the injured man out of the restaurant after the lunchtime shooting. Francis did not give any details of the man's condition.

Francis says the shooter is holding a small number of hostages, but he has declined to give an exact number.

Witnesses say the man let diners, waitresses, and some kitchen staff out of the restaurant.



Authorities say a hostage negotiation team is trying to talk to the gunman.

2 p.m.

Authorities say a disgruntled employee shot one person and is holding hostages in a restaurant in an area of Charleston, South Carolina, that is popular with tourists.

Mayor John Tecklenburg said at a news conference that the shooting Thursday at Virginia's in downtown Charleston was not an act of terrorism or racism.

Charleston Police spokesman Charles Francis told reporters the shooter was holding "a couple" of hostages. He did not immediately respond to follow-up telephone calls asking whether there were more than two.

Witnesses said a man emerged from the kitchen of the restaurant, told diners there was a new boss in Charleston and ordered them to leave.

Charleston Police sent SWAT teams and a bomb disposal unit to the area and warned people nearby to stay inside buildings or leave.

The site is a few blocks away from Emanuel AME church, where nine black members of a church were killed by a white man during a June 2015 Bible study. Dylann Roof was sentenced to death in the case.

1 p.m.

Dozens of police officers are rushing to downtown Charleston, South Carolina, after police reported a possible "active shooter situation" near a stretch of restaurants and shops popular with tourists.

The shooting was reported just after noon on King Street, Police spokesman Charles Francis said in a statement. He did not say whether there were any injuries or give any description of a suspect.

Tom and Patsy Plant told The Post and Courier of Charleston they were eating at Virginia's restaurant and saw a man come out of the kitchen with a gun in his hand who said, "There's a new boss in town."

The man looked like "an ordinary grandpa, but he had a crazy look," the couple said. They were able to escape out a back door.

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