

Target:

1568 - 8888

Assassination attempt, 13<sup>th</sup> may 1981, Rome.



Tasking:

Move to the optimum position and time - describe the target event in the image in detail

Feedback:

### **981: Thousands see Pope shot in Rome**

The Pope has been shot four times as he blessed the crowds in St Peter's Square in Rome.

Surgeons have performed a five-hour operation and say they hope he will make a full recovery.

At about 1715 local time, the Pope was being driven in his Popemobile through a crowd of about 20,000 worshippers when he was hit by four bullets fired from a 9mm pistol some 15 feet away.

Two struck him in the stomach, one in his right arm and the fourth hit his little finger.

Police arrested a 23-year-old man who said he was a Turkish citizen and gave his name as Mehmet Ali Hagca.

He kept repeating: "I couldn't care less about life."

The Turkish press has reported Hagca was jailed for the killing of Turkish newspaper editor Abdi Ipecki in February 1979. But he escaped from prison and left behind a letter vowing to kill the pontiff just before the Pope visited Turkey in 1979.

### **Horrificed witnesses**

Many of those who witnessed the shooting in the crowded square burst into tears, or screamed and fell to their knees in disbelief.

The Pope collapsed and was driven at speed into the Vatican complex and from there by ambulance to hospital.

Vatican Radio has appealed to the world to pray for his survival.

The Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury have expressed their shock and deep sympathy for the Pope and his followers.

Pope John Paul II, formerly Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Poland, became Pope in 1978. He is the first non-Italian pope in 455 years.

He is also the most widely travelled pontiff in the Vatican's history. Vatican officials have often said in private that they feared for his safety during his frequent contacts with enthusiastic crowds wherever he goes.