

German SWAT teams rescue hostages after standoff

By MATT MOORE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ENNEPETAL, Germany — German police commandos slipped into a house where a knife-wielding man was holding four schoolgirls hostage Tuesday, surprising the suspect and taking him into custody while rescuing his captives after a five-hour standoff.

The man inflicted a superficial knife wound on the stomach of a 16-year-old hostage, whom he held with three 11-year-olds, before he was captured by a police SWAT team that entered the red brick house at the end of a cul-de-sac shortly after 6 p.m., lead investigator Ulrich Kuhne said.

Police earlier said the suspect, identified as a 50-year-old Iranian asylum-seeker who has been in Germany since the 1990s, was injured as he was overpowered, but Kuhne gave no further details.

The man apparently wanted to be allowed to bring his children from Iran to Germany.

The SWAT team acted with particular caution, because the man was known to have psychological problems and the

house in which he held the girls was owned by a hunter who had rifles and handguns on the premises, Kuhne said.

"Thank God, he did not use that opportunity," Kuhne said.

Police jumped the man after he had bound his four captives together to take them to the bathroom, Kuhne said.

The man had pulled the girls off a public bus he commandeered and forced them into the basement of the home at about 1 p.m.

The bus was packed with children on their way home from school in the town of Ennepetal, between the cities of Duesseldorf and Dortmund.

The mother of one child said the man told them he wanted to bring his family to Germany from Iran, a motive backed up by a letter in Arabic that police found on the bus, said investigating prosecutor Wolfgang Rahmer.

Renate Schulte said her 16-year-old son, Marvin, who fled after the man forced the bus driver to stop, told her the man read a statement saying his children were in Iran and he wanted to be allowed to bring them to Germany.

The man then herded some of the children to the back of the bus and tied several of them together by their belt buckles with a cord. He told the children to stay calm and said he wanted to talk to the German government, Marvin Schulte said.

"He didn't seem aggressive," the teenager said. "He said we should stay quiet and he didn't want to harm us."

The man forced the bus driver to stop and hustled the group of captives off the bus, but apparently let several of them go.

He forced the others toward a house where a woman was returning home and forced her to give him the front-door key, Marvin Schulte said. The man pushed the woman aside, shoved the children into the house and locked the door. Neighbors said the man lived in the area.

Police sharpshooters and other officers quickly surrounded the home, and other officers established contact with him by telephone, Blaszyk said.

The man will likely be remanded to a psychiatric hospital for treatment, Rahmer said.



FRANK AUGSTEIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A freed hostage is wheeled to an ambulance by paramedics in Ennepetal, Germany, on Tuesday.

I-COMM

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Peter Howe will speak today about paparazzi and society's obsession with celebrity. Howe, the former photography editor of Life Magazine and the New York Times Sunday Magazine, will discuss the public's obsession with celebrity life and the control of the paparazzi.

"That should relate to all students especially now with the way we get our media from People magazine and Us Weekly," Horne said. "Even David Letterman opens his monologue with the Michael Jackson case. Everyone is obsessed with knowing all the time what is going on with celebrities."

Howe's lecture begins at 11:15 a.m. in the Carolina Coliseum.

A print job fair is also taking place today.

I-Comm week will end April 13 with an Honors and Awards Night

in the law school auditorium at 6 p.m. The program will honor students in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

For more information about I-Comm week, visit the College of

Mass Communications and Information Studies Web site at www.sc.edu/cmciis.

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The **GOOD NEWS** is that there will be better study space in the building.

Level 5 is being renovated to allow for more study space on the Main Level which will be renovated this summer.

In the meantime, there's still plenty of study space on Levels 1-4 and the Mezzanine Level.

Staff members at the Reference and Circulation Desks can help you find a place to study.

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