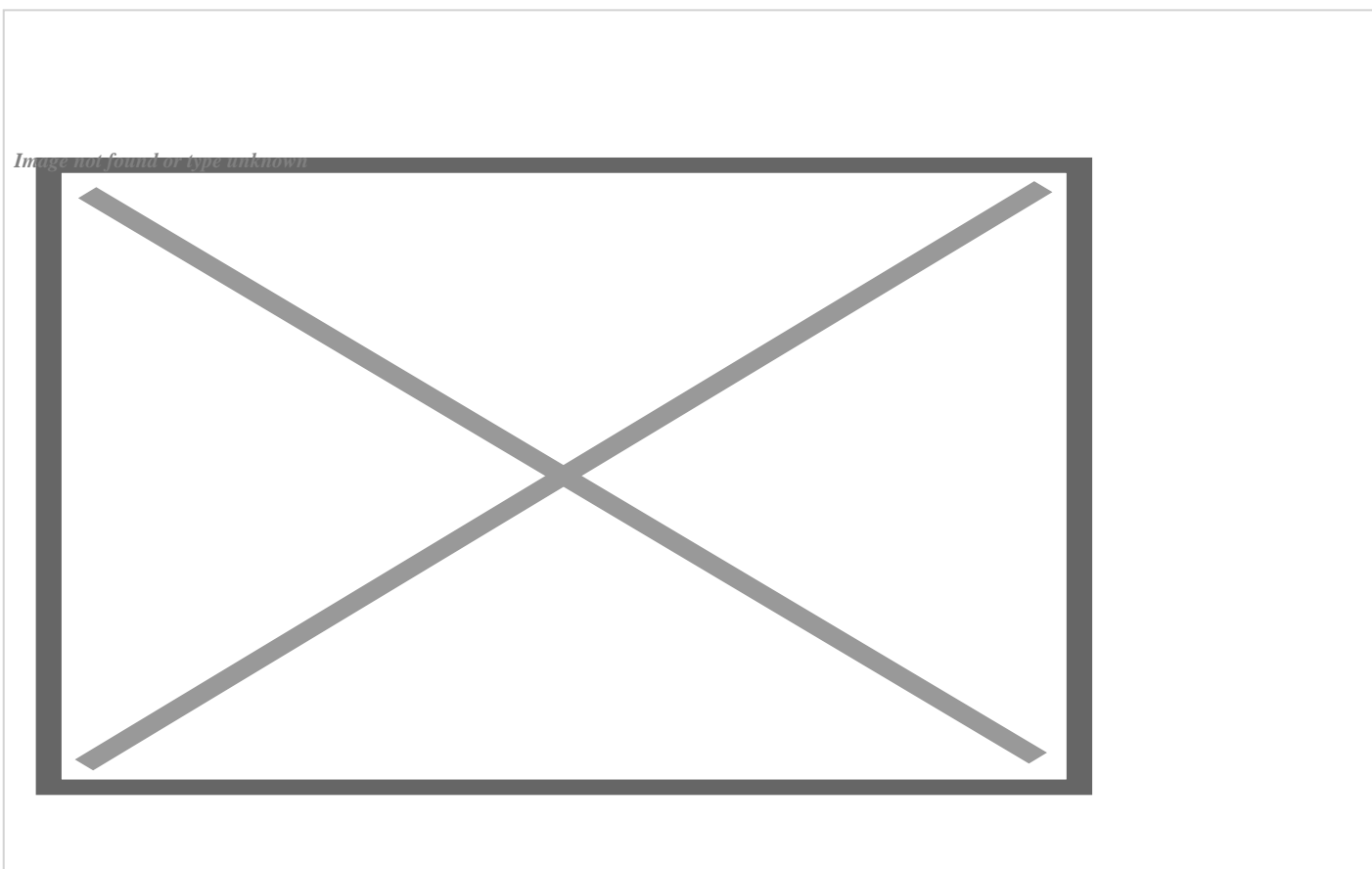


Eight dead in mass shooting at Jehovah's Witnesses center in Germany



Hamburg, March 10 (RHC)-- A gunman opened fire and killed at least eight people at a Jehovah's Witnesses centre in the German city of Hamburg. An unspecified number of others were wounded, some seriously, on Thursday evening in the attack that stunned Germany's second-biggest city. Police gave the casualty figure on its website, and there was still no word on a possible motive.

"According to the current state of affairs, we assume that there is one perpetrator," police said in a message on Twitter. "Police activities in the surrounding area are being successively discontinued. Investigations into the motives behind the crime are continuing."

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a former Hamburg mayor, described the shooting as "a brutal act of violence." Police officials said during the night they believe there was only one shooter, and this could be a person who was found dead in the building.

Investigators worked through the night to secure evidence. On Friday morning, forensic investigators in protective white suits could still be seen outside the building as light snow fell. Officers placed yellow cones on the ground and windowsills to mark evidence. Police have asked witnesses to come forward and upload any pictures or videos they may have to a special website.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said investigators were “working flat-out to determine the background” to the attack. News weekly Der Spiegel reported the suspected attacker was a former member of the Jehovah’s Witness community who was not known to police as dangerous. The magazine, which did not cite its sources, described him as a man aged 30-40 and said he had been armed with a handgun.

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