

## Man storms building, takes hostages

by UPI

BINGHAMTON, N.Y. -- A man walked into the American Civic Association building near downtown Binghamton, N.Y. Friday, and shot at least four people, police said.

Initial reports conflicted about number of deaths and injuries at the American Civic Association. As many as 13 reported dead.

Media reports were conflicted about whether the four people known to be shot were injured or killed.

Up to 41 people were in the building, 15 in a closet and 26 in the boiler room, the Press and Sun-Bulletin newspaper in Binghamton reported. Other media outlets reported between 20-40 people were taken hostage.

Binghamton Police surrounded the building and SWAT personnel were on the scene, WBNG-TV in Binghamton reported.

Four people left the building with their hands on their heads and police searched them, the newspaper said. Emergency services personnel were seen removing several people on stretchers.

The suspect was described as an Asian male in his 20s, between 5 feet 8 inches and 6 feet tall, wearing a bright green nylon jacket and dark-rimmed glasses. Officials said he had a high-powered rifle.

A nearby high school was under lockdown and patrons and workers at downtown businesses and restaurants were told to stay inside. Local apartments were evacuated and neighboring facilities such as a nearby nursing home also were under lockdown.

The American Civic Association helps immigrants and refugees with counseling, resettlement, citizenship, family reunification and translators, the facility's Web site said.

Copyright © 2009, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

*Man storms building, takes hostages by UPI*