

Hostage-taking in French town ends, hostages safe

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Paris: One suspected gunman was found dead when a hostage-taking situation in the northern French town of Roubaix ended with the hostages being brought to safety, local officials said.

The prefect of the Nord region said all hostages were safe after the hours-long incident yesterday night, during which the hostage-takers reportedly fired at police.

Prosecutor Frederic Fevre said one suspect was found dead in the house in a residential street where the hostage-taking had taken place and that a Kalashnikov assault rifle was also found there. At least one suspect who had tossed away his pistol was found outside the house and was detained, while a number of hostage-takers escaped, he said.

Fevre didn't specify how many were on the run or what had motivated the hostage-taking.

Local media reported the hostage-taking was not terrorism-related but the result of a possible robbery, although reports on the motive were conflicting.

Police special forces were deployed to the area and local roads were temporarily cordoned off during the incident.

- AP