

Explosives found at Mumbai hostage hotel: police

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MUMBAI, INDIA - Police found explosives capable of causing "major damage" at Mumbai's Taj Mahal hotel after regaining control of the building from armed militants, a senior police official said Friday.

"We did find explosive boxes at two locations on either side of the Taj. That was a substantial amount of explosives to cause major damage," Maharashtra state police chief A.N. Roy told India's NDTV channel.

Roy said the discovery included some RDX plastic explosives, used in the military and for demolition work. Tests were to be carried out to determine the exact types of explosives found, he added.

The police chief added that "at least one terrorist or maximum two" were still holed up in the ballroom of the Taj, one of two luxury hotels seized by extremists late Wednesday after coordinated attacks across the city.

At least 130 people have been confirmed dead.

Roy's counterpart in the Mumbai city police said earlier that the rescue operation at the nearby Oberoi/Trident hotel was over and they had regained control.

No hostages were left inside the Taj "to the best of our knowledge" Roy added.

But a special forces operation to end a siege at a nearby Jewish centre was still ongoing, in part due to the death of a senior commando, he added.

Sporadic firing and a number of explosions could be heard throughout the day at the Nariman House complex, after black-clad commandos abseiled onto the building's roof at daybreak, AFP correspondents at the scene said.