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Doctors shocked at hostages's torture

Krishnakumar P and Vicky Nanjappa in Mumbai | November 30, 2008 19:53 IST

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They said that just one look at the bodies of the dead hostages as well as terrorists showed it was a battle of attrition that was fought over three days at the Oberoi and the Taj hotels in Mumbai.

Doctors working in a hospital where all the bodies, including that of the terrorists, were taken said they had not seen anything like this in their lives.

"Bombay has a long history of terror. I have seen bodies of riot victims, gang war and previous terror attacks like bomb blasts. But this was entirely different. It was shocking and disturbing," a doctor said.

Asked what was different about the victims of the incident, another doctor said: "It was very strange. I have seen so many dead bodies in my life, and was yet traumatised. A bomb blast victim's body might have been torn apart and could be a very disturbing sight. But the bodies of the victims

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in this attack bore such signs about the kind of violence of urban warfare that I am still unable to put my thoughts to words," he said.

Asked specifically if he was talking of torture marks, he said: "It was apparent that most of the dead were tortured. What shocked me were the telltale signs showing clearly how the hostages were executed in cold blood," one doctor said.

The other doctor, who had also conducted the post-mortem of the victims, said: "Of all the bodies, the Israeli victims bore the maximum torture marks. It was clear that they were killed on the 26th itself. It was obvious that they were tied up and tortured before they were killed. It was so bad that I do not want to go over the details even in my head again," he said.

Corroborating the doctors' claims about torture was the information that the Intelligence Bureau had about the terror plan. "During his interrogation, Ajmal Kamal said they were specifically asked to target the foreigners, especially the

Israelis," an IB source said.

It is also said that the Israeli hostages were killed on the first day as keeping them hostage for too long would have focused too much international attention. "They also might have feared the chances of Israeli security agencies taking over the operations at the Nariman House," he reasoned.

On the other hand, there is enough to suggest that the terrorists also did not meet a clean, death.

The doctors who conducted the post mortem said the bodies of the terrorists were beyond recognition. "Their faces were beyond recognition."

There was no way of identifying them," he said. Asked how, if this is the case, they knew the bodies were indeed those of the terrorists, he said: "The security forces that brought the bodies told us that those were the bodies of the terrorists," he said, adding there was no other way they could have identified the bodies.

An intelligence agency source added: "One of the terrorists was shot through either eye."

A senior National Security Guard officer, who had earlier explained the operation in detail to *rediff.com*, said the commandos went all out after they ascertained that there were no more hostages left. When asked if the commandos attempted to capture them alive at that stage, he replied: "*Unko bachana kaun chahega (Who will want to save them)?*"

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