



The long vigil at the Oberoi and Trident

TNN | Nov 28, 2008, 12.47AM IST

 Like  Share 0  Tweet  +1 0  Share

Jashan Mirpuri scans the faces of the hostages that are slowly trickling out of the Oberoi and the Trident hotels, in the hope that one of them is his daughter. "Both my daughters had gone to Tiffin [the popular restaurant at the old Oberoi for dinner. One of my daughters escaped. But I haven't seen my second child, or her husband, since November 26," he says, the anguish clearly visible on his tired face. News of the operation coming to an end, and the sight of the NSG and army reinforcements are of little comfort.

At Tiffin, relatives say, that the terrorists barricaded the doors, locking the people inside, before moving on to the other rooms and floors. A few people, like Mirpuri's daughter, escaped through the kitchen backdoor. But he can't get through to the rest of his family, and has been standing outside the hotel since 10am in the morning. Leaving is not an option for him or the other family members whose loved ones are trapped in the hotel.

At the time of going to press, there were eight blasts (probably grenades) heard along with sporadic firing, sometimes as long as 20 minutes continuously. The ambulances, with the injured and the dead, depart under the blanket of smoke, leaving the people outside clueless.

Ads by Google

[Buy 4BHK Flats in Mumbai](#)
4 BHK Special Edition Apartment. Pay 20% Now & Rest on Possession.
[ajmerailand-mumbai.in/Book_Now](#)

[Hotel Room In Mumbai](#)
Easy, Safe & Quick. Book Your Stay In Mumbai With Stayzilla Today.
[stayzilla.com/Hotel-Rooms-Mumbai](#)

The hostages who have been freed-about 30 to 40 at the time of writing this story-are being shepherded out via a side entrance, near Inox and taken to the nearby Air India Building for safety. A few flash wan smiles and victory signs for the cameras, before they leave. A group of eight people who work at Morgan and Stanley were released. But the Lufthansa and Air France crew are still trapped inside the hotel.



The Oberoi and Trident hotels are believed to have had 90% occupancy on November 26, with an additional 9,00 to 1,000 hotel personnel on duty. Many did manage to escape, like Esperanza Aguirre, the Spanish regional president of Madrid. She had come to Mumbai with a delegation of Spanish nationals, in the hope of forging business ties with companies here. She managed to escape, and is now safe home in Madrid, but two of her male colleagues are still trapped on the 14th floor. According to the Spanish Consulate the men are alive. Chandresh Vyas, the vice president of Bipico, however, was not so lucky. He was shot in the shoulder while trying to escape on the night of November 26, but he was taken hostage. Vyas's second attempt to escape was successful, and he emerged from the hotel at 11.30am.

To say that the mood is bleak is an understatement. The hotel has been cordoned off from three sides: at the Inox multiplex, Marine Drive and at the back, near the Express Towers. The lights in the hotel rooms - where many people have locked themselves in - are constantly changing, from dim night lamps to bright yellow. But you can't see anyone, except for the occasional heavily-armed terrorist.

Niren Shah's friend and colleague, Vikram Ramakrishnan, is in one of the rooms on the 21st floor. "He kept contacting us on the phone. He said, 'I'm locked in my room, but I'm scared. I can hear sounds'. We told him to sit tight, and keep his documents and I-card ready," says Shah. At the time of going to press, he was still in his room. Actor Ashish Choudhary, along with his father Inder, are waiting anxiously for news of his sister Monica Chhabria, and her husband, Ajit. "We heard that they were herded into the banquet room," says Inder, who the information from a common friend who managed to sneak out. We are praying that they are well," says Inder. Another blast can be heard, and the people outside stand on alert. Even the police, guarding the crowd, are tense.

LIVE

2ND TEST

 246/8 

BAN 88.1 Ov RSA

Day 4: Stumps


FROM AROUND THE WEB

 **When Do You Use Heat or Cold for Injuries?**
ACE® Brand


 **100 Top American Universities Ranked**
Forbes

 **Here's How a 23-Year Old Millionaire Is Investing His Money**
CNN Money

MORE FROM THE TIMES OF INDIA

 **Less famous star kids**
Jul 24, 2015

 **Hindu terror: BJP accuses Congress of doublespeak**
Aug 02, 2015

 **Viral video: Next time an autowallah refuses to go where you want, do this**
Jul 06, 2015

Recommended by 

TOP STORIES ACROSS CITIES

- All-faith prayer meeting for Prez Kalam in Delhi
- NDMC to digitise birth, death records from 1917 to 1985
- Batch of 444 pilgrims leave Jammu for Amarnath
- Criminal arrested from Mumbai in late night ops
- Trouble for tipplers getting over 1l liquor to Delhi
- Writer assaulted at Mumbai's Versova
- Cylinder thief held at Mumbai's Charkop

- Bangalore errant driver steals auto seized by police, caught on WhatsApp
- Short supply shoots onion prices over Rs 60 in Ahmedabad
- Indian coast guard helicopter sighted highly inflammable drums near Mumbai

more

NAVBHARAT TIMES



There's another development: people are bringing their families and children to watch the events unfold. A man walking his dog has stopped to watch the action. But Jashan Mirpuri and the others are looking to the entrance, hoping to see a familiar face.

Stay updated on the go with Times of India News App. Click [here](#) to download it for your device.

Promoted Stories

- [6 Amazing US Destinations Most People Don't Know About](#) AARP
- [12 Things in Cuba You Really Shouldn't Do](#) Destination Tips
- [14 Of The Most Beautiful Natural Swimming Pools In The World](#) Pixte
- [This Much of Your \\$300 Airline Ticket is Taxes](#) Airlines For America on POLITICO
- [27,000 Times a Day, This Gives the Economy a Jolt](#) Airlines For America on POLITICO
- [Exploring the United States: 5 Up and Coming Destinations](#) CHASE Bank

More from The Times of India

- ['Mercy plea, fitness level only options left against death'](#) 22 Jul 2015
- [Abdul Kalam was an ordinary scientist: A Q Khan](#) 29 Jul 2015
- ['Let Indian intelligence help him, but we'll find and kill him'](#) 04 Jul 2015
- [Indian nationals receiving extortion calls in NZ](#) 30 Jul 2015
- [Landslide near Khandala tunnel on Mumbai-Pune expressway disrupts traffic](#) 01 Aug 2015
- [Overnight downpour sinks Kolkata](#) 02 Aug 2015

Recommended by Outbrain

Ajmera Iland, Mumbai

[ajmerailand-mumbai.in/Book_Now](#)
4 BHK Special Edition Apartment. Pay 20% Now & Rest on Possession.

8% Annual Annuity Return

[advisorworld.com/CompareAnnuities](#)
Get guaranteed lifetime income and reduced risks to retirees all here.

Ads by Google

Recent Messages (0)

Comment for this article has been closed

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Powered by **INDIATIMES**

- » [About us](#)
- » [Advertise with us](#)
- » [Terms of Use and Grievance Redressal Policy](#)
- » [Privacy policy](#)
- » [Feedback](#)
- » [RSS](#)
- » [New sletter](#)
- » [TOI Mobile](#)
- » [ePaper](#)
- » [Sitemap](#)
- » [Archives](#)

Other Times Group news sites

- Times Crest | The Economic Times
- Mumbai Mirror | Times Now
- Indiatimes
- Go Green

Living and entertainment

- Timescity | iDiva | Bollywood | Zoom
- Healthmeup | Luxpresso | Technoholik
- Gyulife

Interest Network

- itimes | Email

Hot on the Web

- Hotklix

Services

- Book print ads | Online shopping | Business solutions | Book domains | Web hosting
- Business email | Free SMS | Free email | Website design | CRM | Tenders | Remit
- Cheap air tickets | Matrimonial | Ringtones | Astrology | Jobs | Property | Buy car
- Bikes in India | Deals | Free Classifieds

Copyright © 2014 Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. All rights reserved. For reprint rights: Times Syndication Service