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41 hrs later, Oberoi crisis finally over

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MUMBAI: It took 41 hours for [the National Security Guards](#) (NSG) and the Indian army to end the hostage crisis at the Oberoi and [Trident Hotels](#). At around 3.30 pm on Friday, cries of "[Bharat Mata](#) ki Jai" filled the air. Two terrorists were killed in the rescue mission undertaken by the NSG, with aid from the Navy and the Air Force.

NSG chief J Dutta, said: "The process of sanitisation is going on floor by floor, and all explosives have been diffused. We are still evacuating the building. There are several hotel

guests who are unaware of the operation coming to an end, and are still locked in their rooms," he said. Officials added that ankle-deep water had accumulated in several floors as the fire brigade had attempted to control the smoke emanating from the buildings on account of the grenades lobbed by the terrorists.

Mumbai police commissioner Hassan Gafoor confirmed that satellite phones were recovered from the bodies of terrorists. "The terrorists had also confiscated cellphones from their hostages and were using them to communicate with their superiors," he said. The families of hostages, who hadn't been released till Friday afternoon, were frantic with worry.

"Our family friend called us briefly. He told us that he'd been hit by three bullets, but was hanging on. He was eating dinner at [the Kandahar restaurant](#) with his friends, two of whom have been killed. He is traumatised," said Vinita Kantwala. Later in the day, the man was found alive by the NSG, and was taken to a private hospital.

[Nitin Mehta](#) was waiting to see his 78-year-old uncle, Kamlesh Patel. "He had gone out for dinner at Kandahar restaurant with four other people, two of whom were French. Of the group, three managed to escape via the kitchen. My uncle's cellphone was working till 2am on Friday, but has now stopped ringing," he said. At the time of writing the story, Mehta was still awaiting news of his uncle. Shock and trauma was visible on the faces of the hostages who were released. Guests, some dragging their suitcases, trickled out of the hotel, and were escorted into waiting buses and cars.

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