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## 'I saw Karkare, Kamte in a pool of blood'

Thursday, Jul 16, 2009, 2:27 IST | Place: Mumbai | Agency: DNA

Menka Rao

Wireless operator of slain senior officer Hemant Karkare, who was present with the former ATS chief before he was shot dead by terrorists outside Cama hospital.

Wireless operator of slain senior officer Hemant Karkare, who was present with the former ATS chief before he was shot dead by terrorists outside Cama hospital, deposed on Monday.

Nitin Mathane told the court he had left with Karkare and his five-member team on November 26 last year from his Dadar residence a little before 10 pm. He said Karkare had met senior officers Vasant Koregaonkar, Sanjay Mohite and KP Raghuvanshi near Haj house.

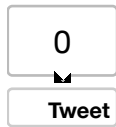
He informed Karkare that terrorists had opened fire at CST. Karkare then wore his bullet proof jacket and helmet and walked towards the rear gate of the hospital. The team was joined by Ashok Kamte's team and police inspector Vijay Salaskar while the firing was going on, said Mathane.

The team rescued the injured wireless operator of additional commissioner of police Sadanand Date and helped him come out of the Cama hospital.

The firing stopped for a while and at about 10:45 pm, the team heard firing near St Xavier's college. Then Karkare, Kamte, Salaskar and two others left in a Qualis with Salaskar in the driving seat. At about 10:55 pm, Mathane said the team heard some firing. "We thought it was police firing," said Mathane.

About 25 minutes after the firing, Mathane took a police van towards special branch 1 gate. He said he saw Karkare, Kamte, Salaskar in a pool of blood near Rang Bhavan. There were glass pieces and empty cartridges around.

Mathane then sent all the police officers to different hospitals and took Kamte to Bombay Hospital. Kamte was declared dead on arrival, he said. He then rushed to JJ hospital and found out that Karkare was also dead. After Karkare's postmortem, he went to Dadar and broke the news to Karkare's wife, Kavita. Mathane then registered a complaint with the Azad Maidan police station.



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