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I saw Hemant Karkare, Kamte and Salaskar lying in a pool of blood, says wireless operator

Mumbai Mirror Bureau ★★★★★

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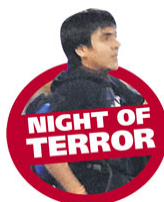
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Posted On Thursday, July 16, 2009 at 02:47:17 AM

Slain ATS chief Hemant Karkare's wireless operator, who was with him before he was shot dead by the terrorists outside Cama Hospital on 26/11, deposed before the special court Wednesday.

The operator, Nitin Mathane, had left with Karkare and his five-member team from his Dadar residence a little before 10 pm on November 26. Karkare met senior officers Vasant Koregaonkar, Sanjay Mohite, and K P Raghuvanshi near Haj House, who informed him that the terrorists had opened fire at CST and had left via the foot overbridge, Mathane deposed.



Karkare then wore his bulletproof jacket and helmet and walked towards the rear gate of Cama. Mathane said that the team was joined by senior officer Ashok Kamte's team and police inspector Vijay Salaskar, while the firing was going on.

They also helped the injured wireless operator of additional commissioner Sadanand Date get out of Cama and ensured that he got medical help. The firing stopped for a while and about 10.45 pm, the team heard firing near St Xavier's College.

At this juncture, Karkare, Kamte, Salaskar and two others left in a Qualis. About 10.55 pm, Mathane said they heard firing. "We thought it was police firing."

About 25 minutes after the firing stopped, Mathane approached the special branch gate No 1. He said he saw Karkare, Kamte and Salaskar lying in a pool of blood near Rang Bhavan. There were glass pieces and empty cartridges around.

Mathane then sent the police officers to different hospitals and took Kamte to Bombay Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival. He later went to JJ and learnt that Karkare too was dead. After Karkare's post-mortem, he went to Dadar and broke the news to Karkare's wife, Kavita. Mathane then registered a compliant with the Azad Maidan police station.

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