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Dozens Killed After Terrorists Attack in India

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ERICA HILL, CNN CORRESPONDENT: More now for you on our breaking story out of Mumbai where hours ago terrorists launched a brazen attack apparently, targeting Americans and other westerners.

But we want to begin for you tonight with CNN's Andrew Stevens who was actually staying at the Taj Mahal Hotel. He joins us now live from outside that hotel.

Andrew, and give us an idea what is happening at this moment there on the ground? You mentioned a little earlier it was somewhat more subdued outside the hotel. But I imagine the city itself is still in utter chaos....The police chief has said that all hostages have been evacuated safely....witnesses say gunmen were looking for U.S. and British citizens.

... STEVENS: The army has now moved into the hotel and across the city. Several terrorists have been killed or arrested. Others remain on the loose. Yasmin Wong is a CNN employee visiting Mumbai.

YASMIN WONG, CNN EMPLOYEE: We heard -- you know, consistent gunfire, grenades, smashing glass, all sorts of commotion. And I saw a guy outside my window above me, on my window who basically had smashed through the window and was hanging out of the window.

Stevens: It's believed thousands of U.S. citizens are in a city that is now under siege.

KEN ROBINSON, Terrorism Analyst: Well, I think there is an opportunity today for the United States that it hasn't had in the last eight years. And that is, the reaction that we saw throughout the world to the United States elections was one of optimism. And the optimism was that there was a potential policy change. That policy change might include shaping the behavior of our allies to cooperate more heavily with us.

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HILL: ... We've also learned that two, perhaps three of the top anti- terrorism folks in Mumbai were killed. Does this perhaps point to an inside job of some sort, someone who may have been involved who could keep it from being known?

CRUICKSHANK: There are lots of rumors flying around. But some of these police cars were going around, and people were opening fire on civilians from the police cars. That's adding to

the rumor mill at the moment in Mumbai.

KELLI ARENA, CNN JUSTICE CORRESPONDENT: Well, there are. I mean, here are the things that stand out about this attack. It's far more sophisticated and coordinated than anything we've ever seen before in the region. The terrorists were specifically targeting westerners....So yes, it is similar to an Al Qaeda attack....What is more significant is that analysts believe that these terrorists may have gotten outside help and U.S. officials tell me that investigators are looking into that group that we heard about before, Lashkar-el-Taiba, it's called LET. It's a terrorist organization that originated in Pakistan and has a very long, violent history, and it does have ties to Al Qaeda.

HILL: So then what is the benefit though, if Al Qaeda is involved here, to being involved in an attack like this? Is it simply expanding that web of terror?

ARENA: Well, that's part of it. Al Qaeda and its affiliated groups, though, would really love nothing more than to distract the Pakistani military and intelligence forces. So let's say, for example, it is LET. That would draw Pakistan into the mix. And so it diverts attention, which is exactly what Al Qaeda would love, because that's where Al Qaeda has been rebuilding, in those tribal areas of Pakistan so Pakistani forces get off their backs and on to someone else's.

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CRUICKSHANK: Well, it seems to be targeted against Americans so there may be an involvement by the FBI, of some point, other agencies maybe sent to go and help. They'll certainly offer that help to a very close ally.

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HILL: They allegedly targeted -- apparently targeted Americans. They may be holding U.S. citizens hostage.

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SMRITI MUNDHRA, EYEWITNESS (New York City film maker): We're told to stay indoors, not leave our houses. Stay away from windows. I know that the people who are in buildings surrounding the Oberoi have been advised to keep their lights off and keep windows and blind closed.

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MALLIKA KAPUR, CNN CORRESPONDENT: That's right, the police commissioner of Maharashtra, he did tell CNN earlier that the hostage situation at the Taj Hotel behind me had been resolved and that people who were being held inside have been released.

Kapur: Residents are being told not to leave and they are listening to authorities, because when we came here this morning, the streets were absolutely deserted...This morning, there were barely any cars on the road, very few buses and the buses even, there's barely enough room to stand and today there was seats -- plenty of seats available. Schools and colleges have been shut. The stock market has been shut today. So definitely people scared, people staying indoors, people not really sure what might happen next...Security is very, very, very tight throughout Mumbai. Cars have been stopped at every couple of blocks. Security is very tight in an effort to not let this happen again.