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## Latest Developments in **Mumbai Attack**

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STEVE INSKEEP, host:

It's Morning Edition from NPR News. Good morning, I'm Steve Inskeep. Here's the latest we have on the attacks on the Indian city of Mumbai. So far, more than one hundred people have been killed, some 300 wounded, after gunmen attacked multiple sites in the city. They struck a couple of luxury hotels. They struck a hospital and a train station and a popular restaurant. And witnesses contend that militants singled out British and American guests at the Taj Mahal and Trident Oberoi Hotels. We do know Westerners are among the dead and wounded, although there are no firm figures at this hour.

Let's go now to Somini Sengupta. She's a reporter for The New York Times in Mumbai. Welcome to the program.

Ms. SOMINI SENGUPTA (Reporter, The New York Times): Thanks.

INSKEEP: Would you just describe what you've been seeing in the last couple of hours?

Ms. SENGUPTA: Yeah. This whole day has been incredibly tense and scary. The two hotels, the Taj Mahal Hotel, which is a real landmark in the city, and the Oberoi Trident Hotel, which is not far away, they've both been the scene of a standoff which has continued, really, into the second day. There are still gunmen holed up in both of those hotels. There's still an unconfirmed number of hostages who are unable to leave those hotels.

In the Oberoi Trident Hotel, we have heard throughout the afternoon several very loud explosions. In the Taj Hotel we've seen smoke billowing from the hotel for most of the day. And it looks like, in the last couple of hours, it has looked like Indian soldiers and paramilitary troops have been preparing to, kind of, you know, go in with a major assault. But how long that's going to take, when that's going to happen is really, really unclear. And we have no idea how many civilians there might be in either of those buildings.

INSKEEP: When you look at the images of these hotels, especially the Taj Mahal Hotel, which is a historic hotel - it's been there more than a century - you have this amazing sense of the beauty and grandeur of them and also how vast and intricate they must be as a battlefield, as it were.

Ms. SENGUPTA: Yes. I mean, it's a large, sprawling hotel. It was really just quite stunning to see this morning, you know, those large, firefighting cranes trying to douse the flames on top of that hotel. And then on one of the floors, I believe it was the seventh floor, a window opened and a woman just sort of stuck her head out. And you couldn't really see her very well. Of course, we

didn't know what she must have been going through. And there were just, there were pigeons hovering overhead the whole time. It was a sort of gorgeous, sunny, very strange day.

INSKEEP: And a strange day throughout the city. I'm told that the city seems to have come to a halt, or it had earlier, according to our correspondent Philip Reeves. Is that still the case?

Ms. SENGUPTA: That is certainly true for South Bombay, which is the most bustling part of the city. And that's been really just deserted all day today. All the shops are shuttered. There a few people sort of standing, sitting outside their shops. There are army soldiers on every major street and lots of spectators sort of watching what, you know, soldiers and paramilitary troops are going to do.

INSKEEP: We're talking with Somini Sengupta. She's a reporter for The New York Times. She's live in Mumbai, talking with us from Mumbai. I want to ask about one other thing. I mentioned that there were a number of targets. There are also reports of an attack on a Jewish center. Can you tell us what information you have about that aspect of this?

Ms. SENGUPTA: Yeah. I mean, we know very little about what's, you know, what's happening in any of these sites. But this is a Chabad House which is kind of in between the two hotels. We really have no idea how many people live there. We were told by the local - by neighbors that there was a couple and a child there. We were told by the neighbors that they weren't actually in it earlier this morning but that a standoff continued throughout the afternoon between Indian troops and presumably gunmen holed up in there.

But it is very difficult to get really close to that place. But apparently, over the last day, there have been - there has been gunfire from there. Grenades have been shot from that - grenades have been thrown out of that building. There have been civilians, local people, killed in that neighborhood by gunmen holed up in that building.

INSKEEP: Somini Sengupta is a reporter for The New York Times. She is in Mumbai where fighting continues after militants attacked a number of targets in that gigantic city. Thank you very much.

Ms. SENGUPTA: Thank you.

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