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26/11 attackers had left notes saying "this is pointer to war"

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MUMBAI: Terrorists of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks had planted two powerful bombs with timers in metal boxes at different places near the Taj hotel with notes scribbled in Urdu saying "yeh jung ki aur ishara hai" (this is pointer to war), a witness told the trial court here on Wednesday.

One of the boxes was found near Taj hotel where renovation work of Gateway of India was in progress and the other was located near Gokul hotel behind Taj, police inspector Prakash Bhoite, told special public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam.

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Both the boxes contained eight kg RDX with timers and notes in Urdu saying that "this was pointer to war", the witness said.

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Nikam said that the version of the witness fortified the case of the prosecution that the aim of terrorists was not only to create terror in Mumbai but to wage war against India.

The prosecutor said the probe had revealed that the 26/11 terrorists were given these RDX-laden boxes by Lashkar-e-Taiba conspirators in Pakistan and they had forgotten to remove the notes in Urdu.

The witness said he was on duty at Colaba Police station on the day of terror attacks when he heard the firing shots outside. He rushed outside and learnt that two persons had entered hotel Taj after firing at Cafe Leopold.

Bhoite further said he was asked to look for explosives and during search he found two boxes near Taj hotel laden with explosives. Bomb detection and disposal squad was immediately summoned which defused the bombs.

Another witness, Sachin Sorte, a watchman at a well known garments shop in downtown Colaba, said on November 26, 2008 that he had heard a loud explosion followed by firing shots. He saw two armed persons coming out of Cafe Leopold.

"As our shop was located opposite Cafe Leopold I downed the shutters and soon thereafter one of the guys fired shots at the shop. Two bullets hit the shutter," Sorte said.

Asked to describe the person who had fired shots at the shop, the witness said the gunman was of medium built wearing a grey T-shirt and carrying a gun in hand and a blue bag on his shoulders.

The two terrorists who had attacked Cafe Leopold and hotel Taj had been gunned down by security forces in a pitched battle.

Sorte told prosecutor Nikam that he had identified the body of a terrorist who was shot dead on January 7 this year at a morgue in government-run J J Hospital.

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The witness said he had gone to his native place after the terror attacks because he was scared and returned to the city on December 11, 2008. His statement was recorded by police the following day.

Lone surviving Pakistani gunman Ajmal Kasab and two Indians Faheem Ansari and Sabauddin Ahmed are facing the trial which commenced in April.

The prosecution has examined 183 witnesses so far. The accused are facing charges of killing 166 persons and injuring several others in the terror attacks.

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