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# U.S. Rabbi: I Spoke to Mumbai Terrorist on Slain Rabbi's Phone

Rabbi Shemtov: When I asked to talk to Holtzberg, terrorist said 'you've asked for too much already.'

The Associated Press | 30.11.2008 16:22 Updated: 9:24 PM

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An American rabbi said Sunday that he heard a woman's desperate cry for help as he spoke to one of the assailants at the Mumbai Chabad House before everyone inside the building was killed.

Rabbi Levi Shemtov said he made contact with the gunman when he called the cell phone of Gavriel Holtzberg, one of the hostages at the Chabad House, after the attack began on Wednesday.

Shemtov, of Washington, D.C., is a member of Chabad-Lubavitch, the Hasidic sect that sent Holtzberg and his wife, Rivka, as envoys to work with Jewish residents and travelers in Mumbai.

"I tried and tried and tried, and in the end someone answered and said 'hello,'" Shemtov told Israel's Army Radio. Someone answered and said he was an Urdu speaker, so Shemtov found an Urdu speaker and dialed again. The man who answered sounded very calm and said his name was Imran.

"He didn't want to tell me what he wanted. He said the rabbi was okay, everyone was okay, that if they did what he wanted he would free them." Shemtov asked the man not to hurt the hostages and promised to help him get in touch with the Indian government.

"I asked if we could hear the voice of the rabbi, or someone who was alive there, and we only heard the voice of one woman screaming in English, 'Please help immediately,'" he said.

"I asked him to pass the phone to the rabbi. He said, 'You've already



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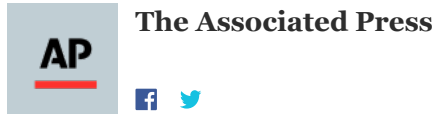


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asked for too much."

Shemtov called repeatedly, estimating he spoke to the man around five times. Eventually the assailant said the battery was dying and hung up.

Indian commandos raided the building before dawn Friday. When the raid ended at sundown, everyone inside the building was dead. Israel's Foreign Ministry said nine hostages, including the Holtzbergs, had been killed.



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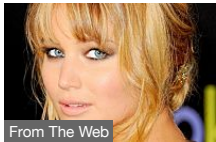
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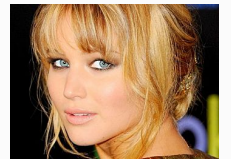
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