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'Two people started firing from next table'

Manoj C G : New Delhi, Fri Nov 28 2008, 01:25 hrs



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It was a night Lok Sabha MP N N Krishnadas will never forget. In 12 excruciating hours, he saw death and destruction all around and escaped terrorist bullets. He is still in a state of shock even as he recounted the horror he saw.

November 26 was like any other day for the 49-year-old MP. He was staying in the Taj Palace Hotel near the Gateway of India and was having dinner with his colleagues when the unprecedented terror carnage began. "I was having dinner with other MPs at the Shamiana restaurant in the hotel at around 9.15 pm. We had checked into the hotel after 6 pm. It was crowded with locals and foreigners. Suddenly, two persons who were at the next table started firing from some kind of automatic weapons," he told The Indian Express over phone from Mumbai.

Krishnadas remembers that the assailants had covered their faces with black clothes and were firing indiscriminately. "Two foreigners were hit immediately and collapsed in front of us. We didn't know what to do. It all happened in a fraction of a second," he said.

"We could only duck under the table. The duo had withdrawn by then. We were still under the table. Then, an employee of the hotel pushed all of us towards an emergency door which opened near a

swimming pool," he said.

There, Krishnadas, along with another MP Bhupendra Singh Solanki and several Lok Sabha Secretariat staff, took refuge behind a thicket near a wall. "We sat there crouching for over an hour. We could hear gunshots and explosions all around. Then somebody escorted us to a kitchen storeroom where we sat for some time. From there, the hotel employees escorted us to the hotel lobby," he said.

"There were already some 150 people there crouching under tables and desk. We also went there and took shelter under a table. We stayed in the lobby all night and there was firing throughout. We had no idea from where the shots were being fired," he said, recounting that he saw two foreigners being shot at when they tried to sneak out through the door. "It was a big lobby. We have no idea from where the shots came from," he said.

"The bodies of those two persons who tried to escape lay there all night. We could just sit and watch," he said.

Krishnadas and others along with him were finally rescued by commandoes at around 9.30 in the morning and taken to the Azad Nagar police station. But two other MPs — Lalmani Prasad and Baburao Gaekwad Patil — were locked up in their rooms all night.



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chairman, were scheduled to have meetings with officials of Bank of Baroda, Air India, BPCL and Nabard on Thursday and Friday.



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