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## The evolution of Lashkar-E-Tayyiba in India and the road to 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks

### *Abstract*

Though Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) has acted as the best organized, best trained, most heavily armed, and indeed most prolific terrorist organization operating from Pakistan, it only began to gather significant international attention following the brutal and audacious terrorist attacks of 26 November 2008 in Mumbai. In order to carry out the attacks, ten terrorists, landed by sea, divided into five pairs and carefully targeted selected places in Mumbai. The attack lasted nearly for 66 hours and ultimately resulted in death of 166 people and 238 people injured, including civilians and security personnel. After the attacks, the evidence from the investigation overwhelmingly pointed to the Pakistan-based group, LeT, as the perpetrator of the attack. However, the 26/11 attack is not the first LeT-supported attack in India. India has been facing terrorist attacks (cross border-terrorism) for several years. This paper seeks to understand the evolution of LeT in India and map the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. Secondly this paper will try to propose how the 26/11 attack is different from the previous attacks and why Mumbai has been targeted several times and what is the real motive behind.

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## 1.1 Introduction

On 26 November 2008, ten terrorists carried out audacious terrorist attacks in Mumbai. The terrorists entered in Mumbai through the sea and split into five pairs to carry out attacks on five carefully selected targets. They also struck other five incidental targets during the extended siege. The attack lasted nearly for 66 hours and ultimately resulted in death of 166 people and 238 people injured, including civilians and security personnel. The civilians killed included 26 foreigners, four of whom were American, four Israeli, three German, two French, two Australian, two Canadian and two Italian. On 23 November, the terrorists sailed from Karachi in a small fishing boat towards Mumbai. The group then boarded Al Hussein, a Pakistani vessel and then hijacked an Indian trawler MV Kuber to cross the porous Indian (water) maritime border. The trawler mingled with thousands of other vessels sailing towards Mumbai coast.<sup>1</sup> The meticulous planning, the thorough training of the 10 terrorists who carried it out, and the close coordination of the attacks from the Pakistan-based handlers had the stamp of Al Qaeda and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Both these organizations have a close relationship with the LeT<sup>2</sup> and the evidence overwhelmingly pointed to LeT as the perpetrator of the attack.

The November 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, in many ways, marked both a culmination of old trends, as well as set new precedents. The modus routine of the attack was not new; LeT had employed the Fedayeen style of attack in numerous occasions over the previous decade. In December 2001, five Militant attackers associated with Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) attacked India's parliament in New Delhi, killing 10 people. In July 2006, Pakistani operatives of LeT, with members of domestic terror group Indian Mujahedeen, launched a coordinated attack on multiple sites within the Mumbai's commuter rail system, claiming 209 lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Dixit, Nikhil S. (2009), "*Mumbai under Siege 26/11 What Happened and What Went Wrong, Mumbai*", Jaico Publishing House.

<sup>2</sup> Raman, B. (2009), "*Mumbai 26/11: A Day of Infamy*", New Delhi: Casemate Pub & Book Dist Llc.

## 1.2 LET OPERATIONS IN INDIA

After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, LeT shifted to Jammu & Kashmir.<sup>3</sup> LeT extended its networks in India's heartland as early as August 1999, allowing it to operate far beyond Jammu and Kashmir. It staged its first attack (against jeep carrying Indian air force personnel) in Kashmir in 1990 while outside Jammu and Kashmir the first major attack carried out was on Red Fort in New Delhi in December 2000. In this attack the terrorists killed three security force personnel, and also succeed to escape. In the same year, Indian security forces intercepted three Pakistani LeT cadres who were planning to kill Bal Thackeray, leader of the Shiv Sena.<sup>4</sup> In 2004, another LeT cell was disrupted that aimed to attack the Bombay Stock Exchange. It had been attacked previously in 1993. The then India-based Mafia, Dawood Ibrahim, arranged that attack using Indian militants with Pakistani support.<sup>5</sup> In June 2006, the Maharashtra Police arrested 11 members of LeT that had managed to ship an incredible amount of explosives (43 kilograms), along with assault rifles and grenades.<sup>6</sup> The LeT, over the years, developed links with organised crime networks and underworld operatives. The most prominent groups among them included the Dawood Ibrahim group popularly known as the D-company which made its presence felt in a new form of terrorism in early 1990s after the demolition of Babri Masjid. The Company launched a series of bombing attacks in Mumbai on 12 March, 1993, in which 257 people were killed. According to Kalyanaraman (2010) after the Mumbai attacks in 1993 Ibrahim moved his organization's headquarters to Karachi, Pakistan. There, D-Company is believed to have both deepened its strategic alliance with the ISI and developed links to LeT. A United State based source said in 2002 that the Pakistan-based terrorist groups,

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<sup>3</sup> Fair, Christine. (2009), "*Militants in the Kargil conflict: myths, realities, and impacts*", P. Lavoy (Ed.) Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of Kargil Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Swami, Praveen, *The Road to Unimaginable Horror*, The Hindu, 13 July 2006, Retrieved from <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/the-road-to-unimaginable-horror/article3104137.ece>

<sup>5</sup> Fair, Christine. (2009), "*Militants in the Kargil conflict: myths, realities, and impacts*", P. Lavoy (Ed.) Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of Kargil Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> Swami, Praveen, *The Road to Unimaginable Horror*, The Hindu, 13 July 2006, Retrieved from <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/the-road-to-unimaginable-horror/article3104137>

including the LeT and other Pakistani terrorist groups have also been provided with financial support from the D-company to carry out attacks in the Indian hinterland.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.3 WHY MUMBAI?

Mumbai is considered as the commercial capital of India. The city witnessed communal unrest after the *Babri Masjid* demolition of 1992. It was one of the worst riots since partition and the tensions have continuously been on rise since then. Perhaps, it is this idea that the attackers intended to disturb the democratic fabric of the nation by targeting a powerful symbol of India's growing might as well as to tarnish the country's image internationally by attacking foreign nationals.

Apart from that, Mumbai is the world's fourth largest urban cluster and entertainment industry in India.<sup>8</sup> From the terrorists' perspective, the Taj and the Oberoi Hotels provided ideal venues for laying killing fields as these were lucrative targets filled with people (foreigners and the local elite) as well as the psychological effect that the victims would undergo after the attacks on them. The attacks on such important places, which meant having foreign nationals as victims, had eventually guaranteed an international media coverage. The incidents had taken place with an intention to deliver a message to India as; "*your government cannot protect you, no place is safe*".<sup>9</sup> As argued by Rabasa, et al. the coverage by International media would inevitably have negative results for Indian tourism, and therefore damage India's economy. Further, the selection of targets—Americans, Britons and Jews, as well as Indians—suggests that LeT planned the attack to serve a multiplicity of objectives that extended beyond the imagination of a common man.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Kalyanaraman, S. (2010), "India and the Challenge of Terrorism in the Hinterland", *Strategic analysis*, 34 (5) 702-716

<sup>8</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., Fair, C. C., Jackson, B. A., Jenkins B. M., Jones, S. G., Shestak, N. & Tell is, A. J. (2009), "*The Lessons of Mumbai*" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation).

<sup>9</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., Fair, C. C., Jackson, B. A., Jenkins B. M., Jones, S. G., Shestak, N. & Tell is, A. J. (2009), "*The Lessons of Mumbai*", (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation).

<sup>10</sup> The Economic Times, *India Faces Serious Threat of a Mumbai Rerun: US Study*, The Economic Times, 18 January 2009, Retrieved from [http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2009-01-18/news/27651576\\_1\\_terror-attacks-india-and-pakistan-mumbai-attack](http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2009-01-18/news/27651576_1_terror-attacks-india-and-pakistan-mumbai-attack)

#### 1.4 26/11 HOW IT IS DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS ATTACKS?

As observed by the Pradhan Committee Report, 26/11 witnessed commando-style attacks, while the previous attacks saw bomb blasts set through timer devices.<sup>11</sup> The city of Mumbai had witnessed a number of serious terrorist incidents especially bomb blasts previously in 1993, 2003 and 2006. These incidents had claimed several lives and challenged the democratic character of the country occasionally. Over the years, a total of 566 persons lost their lives and 1952 persons were injured in the blasts. But the 26/11 Mumbai attacks were different from the previous string of bombing incidents because they involved varied target locations, lasted for several days, and saw a corresponding 'siege' of worldwide-media-coverage.<sup>12</sup>

Al Qaeda and allied Islamist groups have conducted complex military assault on military and non-military targets in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Somalia, Algeria, and Pakistan. But these countries are either actively in a state of war or emerging from a recent war, meaning that resources and established fighting units already exist. In Jammu & Kashmir terrorist groups such as LeT and JeM have used the combination of *Fedayeen* attack to breach the security cordon followed by armed attack on security force installations. But these attacks occurred on a single target. Previous terror attacks in India consisted of *Fedayeen* attack or bombing on one or more 'soft targets' such as local trains, crowded market place or an individual. The only attack similar to the Mumbai attacks was the assault on the Indian parliament by Pak-based terrorists of JeM supported by local modules. The terrorists made an attempt to storm the Indian Parliament building during the session. Alert security forces retaliated successfully and a major tragedy was averted and all the terrorists involved in the attacks were killed.

Moreover, the 26/11 Mumbai attacks received attention from the whole world for the military precision, meticulous planning, use of ultra-modern electronic equipment and

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<sup>11</sup> Government of Maharashtra, *Pradhan Committee Report of the High Level Enquiry Committee* (2009), on 26/11 Mumbai attack, Retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/23474630/Pradhan-Committee-Reportabout-26-11>

<sup>12</sup> Kolas, Ashild (2010), "The 2008 Mumbai Terror attacks: (re-)Constructing Indian (Counter) Terrorism", *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 3(1): 83-98.

sophisticated weaponry. The attacks were deliberately aimed at rich people and they also had the explicit aim of killing large numbers of innocent civilians, foreign visitors, and to destroy some of the best known symbols of India's commercial capital.<sup>13</sup>

## 1.5 PLANNING AND PREPARATION

Terrorist attacks of this magnitude require planning, training, financing and support network to aid the terrorists. Analysis in subsequent paragraphs would demonstrate that the attacks were originated and planned in Pakistan and that it was part of Pakistan's strategy to instigate and perpetrate terrorist violence in India. Available evidence, including subsequent police investigations suggested that LeT devoted a sufficient time and made efforts towards planning and providing training to the operatives who undertook the attacks. The training process was quite extensive and involved multiple modules and a number of people.<sup>14</sup> A total of 32 people were enlisted and trained for the Mumbai operation and only 10 terrorists were finally selected for carrying out the attacks.<sup>15</sup> Besides the foot soldiers, there were a total of 35 persons who were involved in strategising, training and providing equipment and collaborating in the logistics.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, a few other Pakistani nationals were involved in the planning and providing other arrangements for communication and financing of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, certain reports suggest that the terrorists also got some support from the local people. These local support networks were also involved in various stages of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.<sup>18</sup> This was done by two Indian nationals affiliated

<sup>13</sup> Singh Manmohan, *PM's opening remarks at the All Party Meeting*, 2008, Prime Minister Government of India, Retrieved from <http://pmindia.gov.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=734>

<sup>14</sup> Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer, "*Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*", Government of India, 25 February 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Rajesh, Y P and Sagnik Chowdhury, *26/11 The Indian Hand*, The Indian Express, 27 Feb 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/2611-The-Indian-hand/428565/>

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, *Mumbai Terrorist Attacks 2008 India*, Ministry of External Affairs, January 2009 Government of India, Retrieved from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/MumbaiTerrorAttacksDossier.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, *Mumbai Terrorist Attacks 2008 India*, Ministry of External Affairs, January 2009 Government of India, Retrieved from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/MumbaiTerrorAttacksDossier.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer, *Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*, Government of India, 25 February 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

with the LeT, whom were later arrested and identified as Fahim Arshad Mohammad, Yusuf Ansari and Sabauddin Ahmed Shaikh. Fahim Ansari stayed in Room No. 2409, Chawl No. 303, Motilal Nagar, M G road, Oregon (W) in Mumbai and Sabauddin Ahmed Shaikh stayed at Gandwar (Sakri police station), Pandol, district Madhubani, in Bihar.<sup>19</sup>

The involvement of ISI and Pakistan was, once again, reaffirmed reportedly by David Headley, also known as Daood Gilani, an American citizen of Pakistani origin.<sup>20</sup> The NIA interrogated Headley in 2010. While their report remains classified, excerpts leaked to the press indicated that Headley claimed that ISI was heavily involved in the planning and funding of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. The report further proposed that he recounted meeting with ISI handlers, and speculated on their motives for supporting the attack. Specifically, Headley claimed that ISI wanted to refocus Islamic militants' attention to India, rather than on the Pakistani state.<sup>21</sup>

Headley was drawn into the LeT to help them plan the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. David Headley was born in 1960. His father was a Pakistani diplomat and his mother an American. He attended an elite military School. After schooling, David Headley joined the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) in America.<sup>22</sup> Headley spent time in prison for drugs trafficking and gave evidence to the US authorities in return for a lesser sentence. He joined LeT and made his first trip to a training camp in February 2002. He became a surveillance scout for the group and made numerous trips to Mumbai to planning the attack.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> Government of India, *Interrogation report of David Colman Headly*. National investigation Agency, 2010 New Delhi, Retrieved from [http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case\\_docs/1602.pdf](http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1602.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> Wax, Emily and Greg Miller, *Indian Report Accuses Pakistan's Intelligence service of significant role in Mumbai siege*, Washington Post, 19 October 2010, Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/19/AR2010101907356.html>

<sup>22</sup> Rotella, Sebastia, *Scout in Mumbai Attacks was DEA Informant While in Terror Aamp. Authorities Say*, Washing tan post, 17 October 2010, Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2010/10/16/AR2010101604458.html?sid=ST2010101505105%201/>

<sup>23</sup> Buncombe, Andrew, *Did Pakistani intelligence help plan and finance Mumbai attacks?*, independent.co.uk, 17 May 2011, Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/did-pakistani-intelligence-help-plan-and-finance-mumbai-attacks-2285016.html>



## 1.6 BALLASTING AND TRAINING

Available evidence suggests that the entire preparation for the attacks was planned over a period of two years. Most of the recruited terrorists came from poor backgrounds. The only survivor caught by the Police, Ajmal Kasab was one of them. Kasab hailed from Faridcot village in Punjab province of Pakistan and had studied up to fourth standard in an Urdu medium school in Pakistan. He left school in 2001 and ran away from home after a fight with his father and joined LeT in search of a better job.<sup>24</sup> The terrorists involved in the attacks were put through rigorous mind-moulding exercises, and weaponry training. The handling of sophisticated weapons, familiarity of the target sites and dexterity in the use of automatic equipment conclusively point to extensive trainings and was reported to be conducted by professionals.<sup>25</sup> The nefarious designs of the attacks shows the training to be precisely planned, while the detail investigation found the attacks were based on thorough preparation with both physical and mental readiness to carry out the attack for 66 hours.<sup>26</sup> The way the terrorists reached India by sailing a huge distance of 582 nautical miles from Karachi to Mumbai by boat can only be possible only if they underwent a serious training, including deep knowledge of navigation techniques and maritime logistics.

The investigation further suggested that the terrorists also demonstrated expertise in the usage of electronics equipment's and other advanced technologies. They routed from Karachi to Mumbai using Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment. They carried satellite phones, compact discs with high-resolution satellite images, Google Earth maps and had multiple cell phones with interchangeable SIM cards. They were also proficient in the use of explosives and use of small arms/automatic weapons, grenades that suggested combat Closed Quarters Battle (CQB) training and imparting this

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<sup>24</sup> Rath, Saroj Kumar (2011), "New Terror Architecture in South Asia: 26/11 Mumbai Attacks Inquiry India" *Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 2010 (66): 359-381.

<sup>25</sup> Acharya, a. Arabinda and Sonal Marwah. (2011), "Nizam, la Tanzim (System, not Organization): Do Organizations Matter in Terrorism Today? A Study of the November 2008 Mumbai Attacks", *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 34 (1): 1-16.

<sup>26</sup> Rabasa, A., Blackwill, R. D., Chalk, P., Cragin, K., Fair, C. C., Jackson, B. A., Jenkins B. M., Jones, S. G., Shestak, N. & Tell is, A. J. (2009), "The Lessons of Mumbai" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation).



training not only entails high levels of expertise on the part of the trainers, but also required sophisticated facilities, equipment, and logistics.<sup>27</sup>

Training was conducted in several places from December 2007 to November 2008 in different training camps in Pakistan and Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK). The training was rigorous, arduous, and disciplined. On a graduating scale, the trainings were held at Muzaffarabad (PoK), Azizabad (near Karachi), Paanch Teni (Patyani Creek, located near Thattha district of Sindh) Muridke (Karachi) and Manshera (North Western Frontier Province—NWFP). The Muridke training camp is one of the oldest and most important training camps of LeT. In all these training camps, terrorist were trained in improving their physical performance, weapon handling, swimming, guerrilla warfare, battle inoculation, firing sophisticated assault weapons, use of rocket launchers, hand grenades and handling of GPS and satellite phone, map reading, and other analytical skills. In this, number of highly skilled and battle hardened trainers were involved.

## 1.7 FINANCING OF THE ATTACK

Although specific details are not available, investigations revealed that financing for 26/11 Mumbai attack could have come from multiple sources, and in different ways. David Headley reportedly told interrogators from NIA that the ISI provided training and funds for the Mumbai attack.<sup>281</sup> The LeT also maintains a website under the name of JuD. The JuD also uses its charity network (both social and political), like Idara Khidmat- e-Khalq, Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation and Tehrik-e-tahafuz-e-Hurmat-e-Rasool, to collect funds. Other sources included individual donors,

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<sup>27</sup> Acharya, a. Arabinda and Sonal Marwah. (2011), “Nizam, la Tanzim (System, not Organization): Do Organizations Matter in Terrorism Today? A Study of the November 2008 Mumbai Attacks”, *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 34 (1): 1-16.

<sup>28</sup> Government of India, Interrogation report of David Colman Headly, National investigation Agency, 2010 New Delhi India. Retrieved from [http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case\\_docs/1602.pdf](http://www.investigativeproject.org/documents/case_docs/1602.pdf)

charities/institutions, and money spent by some of the supporters from their own pocket and from criminal means.<sup>29</sup>

### 1.8 TERRORISTS' JOURNEY TOWARDS MUMBAI

The Mumbai attackers came through the Arabian Sea from Karachi on a Pakistani cargo vessel. On 22 November 2008, between 7.00 PM and 8:00 PM, the terrorists started their journey on a small boat from Karachi port. After traveling for 40 minutes, they transferred to big boat called Al Hosseini. On 23 November 2008, they hijacked an Indian fishing trawler, M V Kuber, (registered at Porbandar, Gujarat), within Indian waters in the Jakhau area by killing four sailors and left the captain alive, and sailed towards Mumbai. Later they killed the captain of MV Kuber and kept his body in the engine room of the trawler. After reaching the seashore, the heavily-armed terrorists were divided into four teams, one with four men and three with two men each.<sup>30</sup> Their journey from Karachi to Mumbai went unnoticed by Indian Coast Guard and Navy, guarding our maritime borders. This aspect was later debated extensively highlighting glaring lapses in maritime security structure particularly when some reports suggested that prior specific intelligence was available indicating that terrorists used water routes to infiltrate Indian coastline.<sup>31</sup>

### 1.9 TARGET PLACES

As discussed above, the places of the attacks were not randomly selected but very carefully chosen to inflict the most physical damage and mental trauma.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Sharma S K (2011) "The Tangled Web They Weave", The Times Of India, 27 May 2011, Retrieved from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/edit-page/The-Tangled-Web-They-Weave/articleshow/8588750.cms>

<sup>30</sup> Rath, Saroj Kumar (2011), "New Terror Architecture in South Asia: 26/11 Mumbai Attacks Inquiry", *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs* 2010 (66): 359. Analysis, 34(5): 702-716

<sup>31</sup> Das, P. (2013) "Coastal Security: the Indian experience", Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses New Delhi (IDSA Monograph Series No. 22) September 2013.

<sup>32</sup> BBC News, *Timeline: Mumbai Under Attack*, BBC News, 1 December 2008, Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7754438.stm>

### 1.9.1 Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST) Railway Station

The CST Railway Station is the Headquarters of the Central Railways, handling traffic of more than 3.5 million passengers every day.<sup>33</sup> The terrorists, after entering in the city reached CST from Badhwar Park at around 21:15. They tried to contact Abu Hamza but could not succeed.<sup>34</sup> At around 21:40, two terrorists named Mohammad Ajmal Kasab and Ismail Khan planted IED in the CST premises and started throwing grenades and opened fire indiscriminately. Several passengers including one security personnel of the Railway Protection Force (RPF) were killed in the incident.<sup>35</sup> They continued their assault on innocent passengers and security forces. While crossing the passage between the main waiting hall of long journey trains and the waiting hall of local journey trains, they killed one of the police officers on duty. They had also killed one book stall owner. After reaching the local railway waiting hall, Kasab and Abu Ismail fired on the policemen belonging to the Government Railway Police (GRP). This indiscriminate firing from AK-47 assault rifles and lobbing of deadly hand-grenades on the hopeless and unsuspecting passengers waiting at the main Hall resulting in the massacre of innocent ladies, senior citizens, and children claimed 53 lives and left 110 people injured.<sup>36</sup>

After the CST attack, Kasab and Ismail went out and landed in a lane known as Badruddin Tayyabji Marg (B.T.Marg) and entered in the street adjoining the Times of India building, occasionally firing shots to intimidate the passersby. Although a group of police team was chasing them, they managed to elude them by firing and injuring two police constables. A few hundred meters down the lane they seemed to have entered Cama Hospital compound by jumping over the hospital's rear wall. Before doing this they shot at some huts near Cama Rear Gate No. 3 killing some residents.

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, Mumbai, *Terrorist Attacks 2008*, India Ministry of External Affairs January 2009, Government of India, Retrieved from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/MumbaiTerrorAttacksDossier.pdf>

<sup>34</sup> Bombay High Court. In the High court of judicature at Bombay criminal appellate jurisdiction confirmation case no. 2 of 2010 in session's case no.175 of 2009. Retrieved from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/photo/7539165.cms>

<sup>35</sup> Government of Maharashtra, 'Pradhan Committee Report of the High Level Enquiry Committee, on 26/11 Mumbai attack', Retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/23474630/Pradhan-Committee-Reportabout-26-11>.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

While jumping over the wall they killed Cama Hospital watchman outside Maternity Hospital side and headed towards the tall building on the opposite side, again killing another watchman.<sup>37</sup>

A police team led by Sadanand Date, Additional Commissioner of Police, (ACP) Central Region reached Cama Hospital and engaged the terrorists in encounter. But they were overwhelmed by superior fire power of terrorists and two police personnel were killed and almost all police officials were injured during the encounter. Also Sadanand Date was injured and perhaps thinking that he was dead, the terrorists descended the stairs, adjoining the lifts and ran towards the front gate of Cama Hospital on Mahapalika Marg. Continuing with the carnage, the terrorists killed a police sub-Inspector, BS Durgude of ATS, who was regulating the movement of police.<sup>38</sup> The terrorists also fired at a government vehicle, passing through the Rang Bhawan lane and attempted to kill the driver. Advancing towards the vehicle with the intention to hijack it, they were forced to retrace their steps and seek cover behind a tree nearby as they noticed the approach of a Police vehicle towards the spot. Simultaneously, the senior ranked Police officers and one of the constables sitting in that vehicle commenced firing towards the terrorists on noticing their suspicious movements. The two terrorists retaliated by indiscriminately firing their ultramodern AK-47 rifles killing three senior Police officers and three Police constables seated in the Qualis vehicle and injuring a Police constable who lay prone on the rear seat of the Police vehicle.<sup>39</sup>

However, due to the firing at the Cama rear gate (situated on Prof.U.U. Bhatt Marg, popularly known as Anjuman -E -Islam Lane) a police team led by the Hemant Karkare, Joint Commissioner of police ATS, Vijay Salaskar, Senior Inspector of police, Crime Branch Mumbai, and, Ashok Kamte, Additional Commissioner of police, East region, the terrorists rushed towards the Cama Hospital. Ajmal Kasab was injured in both hands. Taking charge of the Qualis by throwing out the three high ranking Police

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer. *Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*, Government of India, 25 February, 2009 Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

officers, the terrorists attempted to remove the dead bodies of the constables from the rear seat. They further fired indiscriminately from the Police vehicle at the unsuspecting crowd which had gathered at Metro Junction. Two people including a Policeman died in this firing. One standerby was seriously injured.<sup>40</sup>

Now, in the Police Vehicle both terrorists reached the opposite Mittal Tower ‘B-Wing’. During this journey, one rear tyre and tyre tube of the Police jeep, developed a puncture and the vehicle started to wobble. Compelled to abandon the Police vehicle, the two terrorists then hijacked, a Skoda car which was traveling from the opposite direction. The driver and two other occupants of the Skoda car were forcibly evicted and the two terrorists then commenced their onward journey in this car. As soon as the two terrorists abandoned the Police vehicle, the seriously injured Police Naik Arun Jadhav, who was lying helpless in the rear portion of the vehicle, picked up the wireless set installed in the Police vehicle and informed the Police Control about the situation.<sup>41</sup>

### 1.9.2 Nariman House

The Nariman House, a five storey building, had been purchased two years before by Chabad of India Trust, an orthodox Jewish organization and renamed as Chabad House. The second team of terrorists which included Babar Imran alias Abu Akasha and Nasir alias Abu Umar reached the Nariman House.<sup>42</sup> Before entering, one terrorist planted a RDX-laden IED at a short distance away from the petrol pump at Shahid Bhagatsingh Road, Colaba. While entering this building, the second terrorist planted another RDX-laden IED near the staircase at ground (parking) level area. Subsequently, both these RDX-laden IEDs exploded.

Both these terrorists held some residents of the building as hostages and under the fear of dire consequences, compelled one of the Jewish hostages to speak to their embassy

<sup>40</sup> ibid

<sup>41</sup> Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer. *Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*, Government of India, 25 February 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, *Mumbai Terrorist Attacks 2008*, Ministry of External Affairs January 2009” Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs. Retrieved from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/MumbaiTerrorAttacksDossier.pdf>

on the phone. The two terrorists also repeatedly contacted their Co-conspirators in Pakistan and received operational and motivational inputs.<sup>43</sup> This conversation has been telecasted by India TV. The terrorists, using their huge stockpile of illegal fire arms and hand grenades, not only opened fire inside the Nariman House, but also specifically aimed at the nearby building killing many innocent residents. A total of 8 people were killed including 3 women. During this time, the terrorists also killed a NSG Commando, Head Constable Gajendra Singh. The ACP from Azad Maidan Division has acted with great presence of mind in pinning down terrorists and saving lives as the NSG arrived a little bit later before the exchange of fire started.<sup>44</sup>

### 1.9.3 Leopold Cafe

Leopold Café, established in 1871, is a highly tourist spot visited by foreigners as well as high profile Indians. The third team of terrorists, included Shoaib alias Abu Sahebb and Nazir alias Abu Umer, landed on Indian soil at the Bhai Bhandarkar Macchimar Colony opposite to Badhwar Park, in the Cafe Parade in Mumbai, and reached their assigned target, Leopold Café by hiring a cab. The terrorists planted an RDX laden IED below the driver's seat. These two terrorists then left the taxi near the Leopold Cafe and walked in and began indiscriminate shooting with their AK-47 rifles. They also lobbed hand grenades killing 11 people, including two foreigners, and 28 persons including 9 foreign nationals were injured seriously.<sup>45</sup> In this case, there was no chance for the police to respond, as multiple attacks were going on simultaneously in many parts of the city and the Maharashtra Police Department had never witnessed this type of attacks in the past.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer “*Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*”, Government of India, 25 February, 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Government of Maharashtra, ‘Pradhan Committee Report of the High Level Enquiry Committee, on 26/11 Mumbai attack’, Retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/23474630/Pradhan-Committee-Reportabout-26-11>.

<sup>45</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, *Mumbai Terrorist Attacks 2008*, Ministry of External Affairs January 2009” Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs. Retrieved from <http://www.paperlessarchives.com/FreeTitles/MumbaiTerrorAttacksDossier.pdf>

<sup>46</sup> Government of Maharashtra, ‘Pradhan Committee Report of the High Level Enquiry Committee, on 26/11 Mumbai attack’, Retrieved from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/23474630/Pradhan-Committee-Reportabout-26-11>.

On completion of this mayhem, both these terrorists walked immediately towards the Hotel Taj located on P. Ramchandani Marg, Coalbin Mumbai. Along their way, one terrorist planted RDX laden IED, but it was detected by the public that informed the Colaba police station and in the morning of 27 November 2008, Bomb Detection Disposal Squad (BDDS) defused the bomb. The RDX-laden IED planted by these two terrorists in the cab, during their journey from Badhwar Park to Leopold Cafe, caused a huge explosion when the cab reached opposite Bombay Port Trust (BPT) Mazgaon Mumbai, killing instantly the two lady passengers, the taxi driver and also injuring 19 standersby.<sup>47</sup>

#### **1.9.4 Hotel Taj**

Hotel Taj is a heritage building and an iconic structure constructed in 1903. The fourth team of terrorists, which included Hafiz Arshad alias Abdul Rehman Bada and Javed alias Abu Ali, reached the Hotel Taj Palace and Towers by cab. Before entering the Hotel both the terrorists planted 8 to 10 kgs RDX laden IED outside the main porch of the Taj Hotel.<sup>48</sup> The two terrorists entered the Hotel from the front gate entrance. Subsequently, Abdul Rehman Bada and Abu Ali fired indiscriminately on the Indian and foreign tourists who were present at that time.

Meanwhile, the two terrorists who had done the shooting at Leopold Café (Abu Sohaib and Abu Umar) entered the Taj Hotel from the North gate and began firing indiscriminately in and around the swimming pool area. Soon, these four terrorists let loose a reign of terror, panic and mayhem in the entire hotel. All these four terrorists started moving on various floors of the Hotel Taj shooting at everything that moved. Soon, the Army columns and the Naval Commandos (MCF) (MARCOS) were also requisitioned to assist the civilian police to repel the unprecedented terrorist attack.<sup>49</sup> These four heavily armed terrorists not only fired indiscriminately with the AK-47 rifles but, time and again, gained an advantage due to their vantage location and use of

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<sup>47</sup>Duraphe, Ashok. T, Chief Investigating Officer. *Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*, Government of India, 25 February, 2009 Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Ibid

<sup>49</sup> Ibid



hand grenades. They planted an RDX-laden IED weighing about 8 to 10 kgs on the 5th floor below the central dome. It exploded causing damage to the structure. They also set the sixth floor of this world famous heritage hotel on fire.<sup>50</sup>

### 1.9.5 Hotel Oberoi

Another team of terrorist, including Fahadullah and Abdul Rehman alias Abdul Rehman Chhota entered the Hotel Oberoi; one of the terrorists planted 8 to 10 kgs RDX-laden IED on the slope of the flowerbed adjacent to the Trident Hotel Main entrance Gate. Subsequently, this IED exploded but the damage was absolutely minimized by the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS). After entering the Hotel, the terrorists' started firing from their AK-47 rifles and lobbed hand-grenades that led to numerous innocent lives being lost at the Bell Desk, Reception counter, lobby, Tiffin Restaurant, etc. The terrorists also planted another 8 to 10 kgs RDX laden IED near the Tiffin Restaurant which subsequently exploded. The Pradhan Committee Report 2009 noted that, "Since they were no match to them in fire power the police had to retreat".

As per the strategy adopted by the terrorists, they forcibly took hostages from the Kandahar Restaurant and went to the higher floors. From this vantage location they held the security forces at bay by firing intermittently from their AK- 47 assault rifles and hurling the deadly hand-grenades to deter the latter from gaining any tactical advantage. The terrorists also contacted a T.V. Channel and provided them with misleading information with the objective of masking their true identities. After a bitter fight which lasted nearly 42 hours, the security forces ultimately succeeded in killing the two terrorists but not before 35 persons including 9 foreigners were killed and 24 guests (including 5 foreigners and 4 security personnel) were injured.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Duraphe, Ashok, T. Chief Investigating Officer *Final Report: Mumbai Terror Attack Cases 26 November 2008*, Government of India, 25 February 2009, Retrieved from <http://www.hindu.com/nic/mumbai-terror-attack-final-form.pdf>

## 1.10 Conclusions

The Mumbai attack left India as well as the whole world in state of shock with its high number of casualties and method of attacking. The security forces seemed handicapped before terrorists with their highly advanced technological weapons and their strategy of well-planned multiple attacks simultaneously. Though terrorist attacks are not new to India, this attack left a deep scar and also posed questions on the helplessness of the armed forces and raised the need for new and advanced policy mechanisms to tackle such atrocities. ISI backed the LeT and after withdrawing from the Soviet Union it shifted its area of operation from Afghanistan to India via Jammu and Kashmir and collaborated with JeM. Though the modus operandi of the attack was not new (as the Fedayeen style of attack) it went a step forward in Mumbai by including new strategies. The 2002 Indian Parliament attack was the biggest demonstration of deadly attacks that can be carried outside of Kashmir. But the 26/11 Mumbai attacks were different from the previous string of bombing incidents because they involved varied locations of targets, lasted for several days, and saw a corresponding 'siege' of worldwide-media-coverage.

Mumbai is considered as the commercial hub of India. Previously, the city had witnessed communal tensions after the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992 and a terrorist attack in 2008. It might have been in the mind of the terrorists to disturb the democratic fabric of the country by attacking Mumbai to show the world how poorly the country has protected its citizens and its foreign nationals. The attack known as 26/11 got worldwide attentions for its well planned, ultra-modern electronic equipment and sophisticated weaponry. It aimed at targeting the elite strata of Indian society in order to touch India's aching nerve. The attack claimed 166 lives along with heavy damages to India's potential and might, at national as well as international level. After the attacks, various committees were formed to invest and find out loop holes in the defence strategy and to make immediate reforms at policy making level. The lone survivor of attack, Ajmal Kasab, was executed after a long judicial proceedings. Such attacks left also question why it is that we tend to wake up when such atrocities already happened and why India was not prepared.

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