



An Indian soldier aims his weapon towards the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai yesterday during a military operation. Three militants were killed in the final assault on the hotel ending the 60-hour siege.

US intelligence sees Lashkar-e-Taiba behind Mumbai attacks

AFP, Washington

There was mounting evidence that a Kashmiri-based Pakistani militant group, most likely Lashkar-e-Taiba, was responsible for the deadly attacks in Mumbai, The New York Times reported on its website late Friday.

Citing unnamed intelligence and counterterrorism officials, the newspaper said that US intelligence agencies so far had reached no firm conclusion about who was responsible for the attacks.

But they said that evidence gathered in the past two days pointed to a role for Lashkar-e-Taiba or possibly another group based in Kashmir, Jaish-e-Muhammad, according to the report.

The report came as Indian

commandos were locked in heavy fighting inside Mumbai's Taj Mahal Hotel Saturday as they battled to end two-day-old assault by Pakistan-linked militants which has left up to 155 dead, including foreigners.

The paper said the officials declined to discuss specific intelligence. But it pointed out that in the past, US and Indian intelligence services have used communications intercepts to tie Kashmiri militants to terrorist strikes.

According to one Indian intelligence official, during the siege the militants have been using non-Indian cellphones and receiving calls from outside the country, The Times said.

This evidence has led Indian officials to speak publicly about the militants' external ties, the reports said.

Lashkar-e-Taiba has denied any responsibility for the terrorist strikes.

US intelligence agencies have said that the group has received some training and logistical support in the past from Pakistan's powerful spy service, the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence, The Times noted.

US and Indian officials are investigating the possibility that the attackers arrived off the coast of Mumbai in a large ship and then boarded smaller boats before initiating their attack, the papers said.

A US counterterrorism official said there was strong evidence that Lashkar-e-Taiba had a "maritime capability" and would have been able to mount the sophisticated operation in Mumbai.

Terrorists will not defeat India's 'great democracy'

Says Obama

AFP, Washington

President-elect Barack Obama on Friday expressed sorrow for the victims of the attacks on Mumbai and said the militants who staged the assault would not defeat India's "great democracy" or the global coalition arrayed against them.

"Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the loved ones of the American citizens who lost their lives in the outrageous terrorist attacks in Mumbai," Obama said in a statement, following reports that a Virginia man and his daughter had been killed as well as a rabbi from New York.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with them, and with all who have been touched by this terrible tragedy," Obama said.

Pakistan holds crisis talks after Mumbai atrocity

Islamabad pledges action if any Pak group involved

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's cabinet was holding crisis talks yesterday to discuss a response to the Mumbai attacks after Islamabad reversed a decision to send the head of military intelligence to India.

Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told a press conference Saturday that Pakistan will take action against any group within its borders if it was involved in the Mumbai attacks.

"Any entity or group involved in the ghastly act, the Pakistani government will proceed against it," he told reporters in a televised press conference.

He was briefing reporters after Pakistan's cabinet held crisis talks about growing tensions over Indian accusations that attackers originated in Pakistan.

Qureshi stressed that no one in India's government had directly pointed the finger of responsibility for the attacks at Pakistan.

"They are suspecting groups that could have presence here," he said. "What we have said is if they have information, if they have evidence, they should share it with us."

"We are a responsible nation and a responsible neighbour and we will behave and act responsibly," he said.

The powerful chief of the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agency had been due to fly to Mumbai to help the investigation, amid Indian allegations of Pakistani involvement in the terror attacks that claimed 195 lives.

The special session of the cabinet will take stock of the situation arising out of the allegations by India and the change in level of ISI participation into the probe," a government official told AFP.

Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani rushed to Islamabad from the eastern city of Lahore late Friday to chair the special cabinet meeting and his foreign minister cut short a visit to India and returned home

by special plane.

The meeting comes after an abrupt change of plan by Islamabad, saying it will send only a representative of the ISI to India, and not its head, Lieutenant General Ahmed Shuja Pasha.

No explanation was given in a short statement issued by the prime minister's office for the change of plan. The chief was to have gone at the request of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

However, government sources here said the change came after reservations in top military circles over the unprecedented move.

"The military leadership was not consulted before an announcement was made to the media regarding the decision to send the ISI chief to India," a senior government official said.

Before the government U-turn, chief army spokesman Major General Athar Abbas had told AFP that the decision to send the ISI chief had not been conveyed officially to the army.

Dawood behind Mumbai attacks: ATS sources



CNN-IBN, Mumbai

Underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, who is hiding in Pakistan, may be involved in organising the attack on Mumbai, claimed Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad sources.

The sources said that the terrorists, who attacked and took hostages at three places in Mumbai, included two British-born Pakistanis while one of them was a Yemeni national.

They also added that the terrorists were heavily drugged and were using BlackBerry to communicate.

The information was gathered by the investigating

agencies following the interrogation of 21-year-old terrorist Ajmal Amir Kamal, a resident of Faridkot, Multan in Pakistan.

Kamal who was captured on Wednesday revealed that the group numbering 12 travelled from Rawalpindi to Karachi and then from Karachi to Mumbai.

The port from which they had boarded is controlled by Dawood. Sources said that all the terrorists trained and brainwashed in Pakistan.

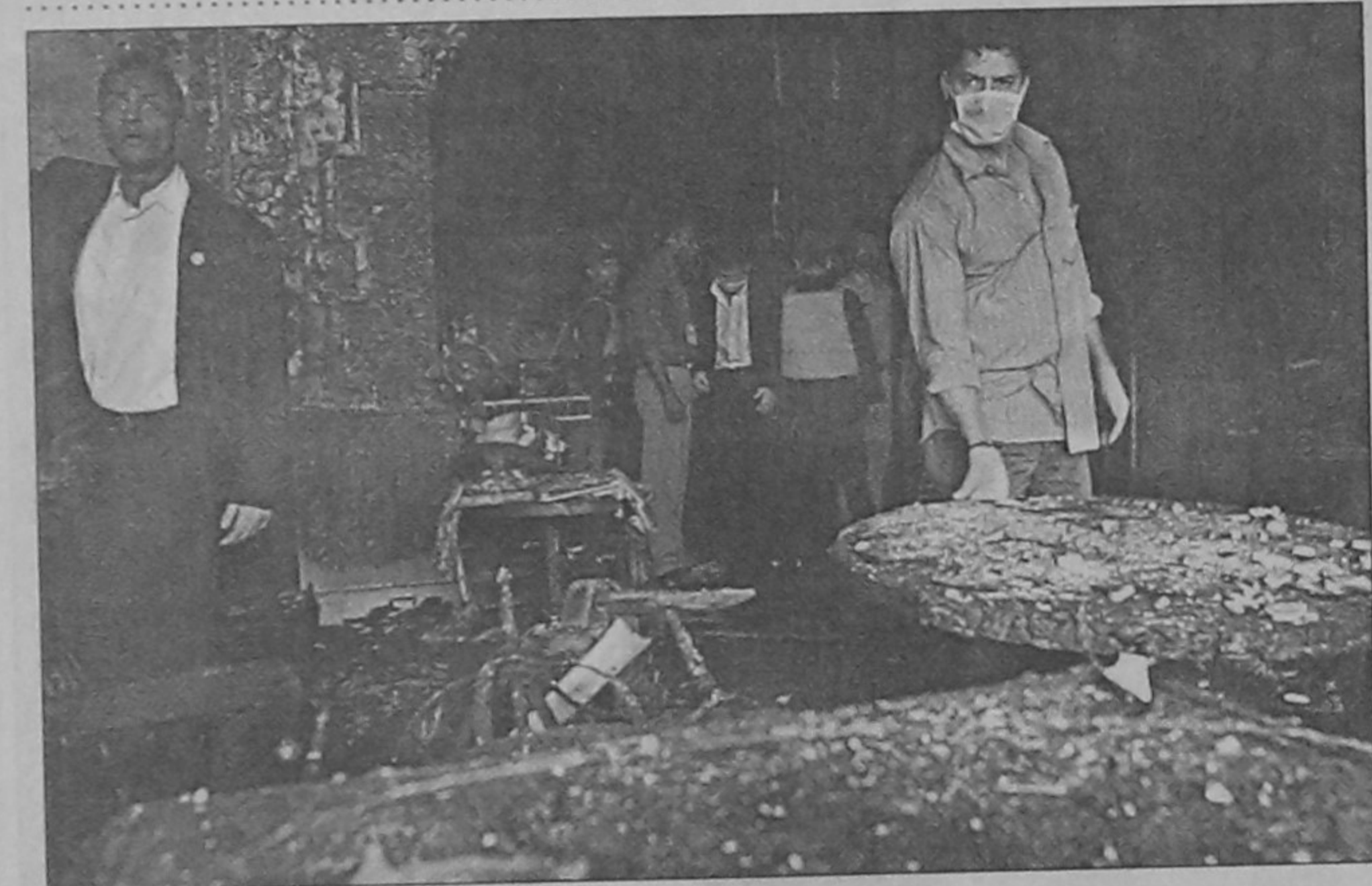
Kamal's blood and urine test showed that he was under the influence of drugs, which reportedly helped the terrorists sustain themselves during the attacks by the security forces.

All the terrorists had also been instructed to kill till their death.

One group of terrorists had also done a race of the targets that they planned to attack about four months ago.



Akash Karkare, the daughter of slain Indian Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) chief Hemant Karkare, pays her last respect during her father's funeral ceremony in Mumbai yesterday following his death in the Mumbai attacks.



Indian officials inspect the charred ruins of a reception area inside the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai yesterday after simultaneous attacks by gunmen in the western Indian city.

Militants infiltrated Mumbai before attacks

AFP, New Delhi

Eight of the Islamic militants involved in the attack on India's economic capital Mumbai infiltrated the city a month before the raid, Indian military intelligence sources told AFP yesterday.

The sources said the pre-positioned militants, who posed as students, conducted "extensive reconnaissance missions as a prelude to the attacks".

"These eight men rented a house posing as Malaysian students," an intelligence source said on condition he was not named.

There were also believed to be other infiltrators who stockpiled weapons and ammunition, including in one of the two luxury hotels that were attacked.

They were joined on Wednesday evening, when the assault began, by a second group who reached Mumbai from the sea, the sources said.

The officials said the attackers were "all well-built and at the peak of their health, aged between 24 and 30, and were heavily trained in military tactics".

"For nourishment, they were well stocked with dried fruits, almonds and so on," the source said, explaining how some of the militants managed to fight Indian commandos for 60 hours.

The intelligence sources declined to confirm or deny that the militants were either Pakistani nationals or had been trained in Pakistan, citing "political sensitivities".

Indian papers slam official response to attacks

AFP, New Delhi

Indian newspapers yesterday lambasted security chiefs and politicians for a panicked and selfish response to the Mumbai terror attacks.

They accused government agencies and elected officials of refusing to accept responsibility for the failure to prevent the carnage and of competing to claim credit for successes even while troops were still fighting to rescue hostages.

Under the headline "Deadly Confusion", the Indian Express was appalled to see secret service commandos "wheeled out in front of the cameras before the operation of which they were technically a part had even been completed".

The paper attacked "credit-grabbing press conferences, and attempts by all the services to get in a word with the media while the National Security Guard was still mopping up resistance".

"There was no single command structure for

the operations being conducted," it said, adding that the costs of delays "could be measured in lives".

The Hindustan Times predicted that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's calls for immediate action improving India's anti-terror measures would likely set off a "talk-cycle" that would result only in the usual official apathy.

"A first test will be whether any official suffers because of what has happened in Mumbai," it said in its editorial. "A second one is constant review."

"Countries with successful counter-terrorism policies like the US and Israel... hunt for new ideas, try to predict the future, check and recheck their existing systems."

The Asian Age lamented India's lack of organisation, saying that "unlike America and Europe, we simply do not possess cohesive social and political systems, and a work culture that is tidy, efficient and prompt".



আমার ভোট আমি দেবো
দেখে শুনে জেনে দেবো



প্রকাশনা: ১১/১২/০৮



British Euro MP Sajjad Karim (L) is kissed by his six year old daughter Rabin on his return from Mumbai to Manchester Airport in Manchester north-west England on Friday.

Mumbai witness tells of encounter with smiling gunman

AFP, Washington

A survivor of the Mumbai attacks told US television Friday of a harrowing encounter with a smiling gunman at the Taj Mahal hotel, at the start of the bloody wave of attacks in the Indian city that has killed up to 155 people.

"You never expect to have to deal with this sort of a situation, but... I found things happen literally within split seconds," Sajjad Karim said in

an interview with CNN television from the British city of Manchester.

"He appeared in front of us. My concentration was more on the gun, the weapon that he was carrying than on him, himself," he added of the gunman, whom he described as "a fairly young man of south Asian appearance."

"And he was wearing a smile on his face as he started to spray the bullets," he added.



Combining the highest level of patient care with most experienced and internationally acclaimed expertise

Dr. Ashok Seth, Chairman & Chief Cardiologist

Escorts Heart Institute and Research Centre Ltd., one of the largest stand-alone cardiac centres of the world, completes 20 years of excellence in cardiac care. During these 20 years, it has earned international respect and recognition for providing the highest standards of comprehensive and advanced cardiac care. The hospital has an internationally renowned team of cardiologists and cardiac surgeons, headed by Dr. Ashok Seth, who are respected by peers and patients for their expertise and skills. Admired for its patient care processes, it is one of the most advanced hospitals in terms of technology, research and training. For all this and more, the hospital is often quoted as 'India's number one' heart hospital.

A Tradition of Excellence

- 20 years of Cardiac Care
- The hospital has 329 Beds, 9 Operation Theatres, 4 Cath Labs, 3 Heart Command Centres & 2 Heart Stations
- Over 114,700 Angiographies
- Over 27,000 Angioplasties
- Over 65,000 Cardiac Surgical Procedures
- 99.6% success rate for Cardiac Procedures
- Infection rate of less than 0.3%

For Appointments:
(+91) 9871447474
(+91) 9910505814
(+91) 11-26515050, Extn. 4288
imktg@ehirc.com, ashok.seth@ehirc.com



ESCORTS
A Fortis NETWORK HOSPITAL



Escorts Heart Institute and Research Centre Ltd. Okhla Road, New Delhi - 110 025 (INDIA)
Phone: +91-11-26825000, 26825001, Fax: +91-11-26825048 Emergency: +91-11-26825002, Website: www.ehirc.com

CRAYONS