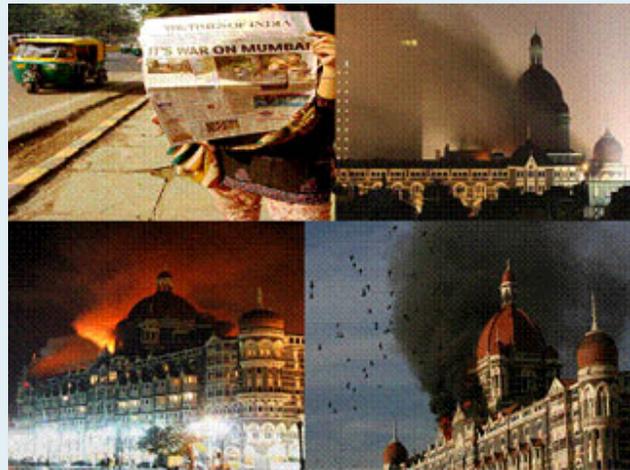


# MUMBAI TERRORIST ATTACKS

**Situation:** Multiple locations in Mumbai, India attacked by terrorists.

On 26 November 2008, a group of ten terrorists attacked multiple targets in Mumbai, India, one of the financial centers of the Indian subcontinent. Official government sources report that the attacks claimed the lives of 165 individuals and wounded more than 300.

The attacks were an attempt to embarrass and destabilize the Indian government and target Western interests. Several locations selected for attack were frequented by high-ranking Indian government officials, Western diplomats, and international tourists.



The attacks in Mumbai demonstrate the ability of terrorists to create havoc using small arms and explosives in coordinated attacks against multiple targets. The attacks also demonstrate the use of indiscriminate violence to further political objectives and gain worldwide media coverage.



Mumbai has suffered several terrorist attacks in recent years. Largely due to its proximity to Pakistan, Mumbai is an attractive target for Pakistani extremists who object to Indian policies, including partial control of the disputed Kashmir region. In addition, the commercial importance of Mumbai ensures the presence of a large number of Western officials and businessmen; an additional target for anti-Western extremists.

In March 1993, terrorists coordinated a series of 13 IED explosions that left 257 people dead and wounded over 700. Dual bombings in August 2003 killed 44 innocent people and wounded at least 150 others; and in July 2006, terrorists used seven bombs to kill 209 and wound over 700.

The history of terrorist activity in an area provides insights into potential current conditions. Before arriving, determine if acts of terrorism have occurred in the past and if the conditions surrounding those attacks still exist.

On 22 November 2008, ten terrorists sailed from Karachi, Pakistan. The next day, they hijacked an Indian-registered fishing vessel and killed the crew except the captain. On this vessel they sailed 550 nautical miles arriving at the coast of Mumbai on the afternoon of 26 November. After dark, they killed the captain and went ashore in Mumbai in an inflatable dinghy.



Once ashore, the terrorists divided into five two-man teams. They were young, in their early 20s, and wore jeans and t-shirts. Each terrorist was armed with an AK-47 assault rifle, six or seven 30-round magazines, 400 extra rounds of ammunition, hand grenades, a pistol, and an IED containing approximately 3 pounds of RDX.

They passed through a small fishing village to find taxis for the ride to downtown Mumbai. Fishing villages in India are close-knit communities and strangers are easily identified. At least two of the terrorist teams were stopped by local fishermen on the way to the taxis. When questioned, the terrorists responded that they were students and warned the fisherman to mind their own business. At least one fisherman reported the suspicious behavior to police, but later several villagers admitted they saw the suspicious men but did not bother to report them because an important cricket game was being televised that evening.

Report suspicious behavior to proper authorities immediately. Note any details authorities can use such as a physical description of individuals, clothing, suspicious activities, and direction of movement. This information might thwart a terrorist attack and save lives.



The first, two-man team targeted the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST). The CST is a primary railway station in Mumbai with approximately 3.5 million passengers a day.

Before they entered the terminal, they planted in their taxi an IED armed with a timer; the bomb later exploded killing two people. As they entered the CST, they opened fire on passengers and pedestrians and lobbed grenades. By the time they were challenged by police and fled, they had killed 58 innocent people and wounded over 100.

After fleeing, the terrorists fired on a parked police vehicle killing all but one of the occupants. The terrorists fled in the police vehicle but it was too badly damaged from the assault, so they

hijacked another vehicle. During a firefight at a police roadblock, one terrorist was killed. The other, Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, was arrested; the only terrorist to survive the attacks.

Terrorists may target places where large numbers of people congregate such as public transportation hubs, shopping centers, and sporting events. While in public areas, be vigilant and if you witness hostile actions immediately reduce your exposure to increase your chances for survival.

A second terrorist team took a taxi to their target, the Leopold Cafe. In their taxi they also left an IED on a timer that later killed 3 persons. The Leopold Café is a popular restaurant and bar on Colaba Causeway frequented by foreigners and affluent Indians. The two-man terrorist team open fired for five minutes with their AK-47s and threw several grenades. By the time the terrorists moved onto their next target, 10 people lay dead, including several foreigners.



While overseas, being an American may make you a target. If possible, you should avoid locations where Americans and other Westerners are known to congregate.



A third team of two terrorists entered the Taj Mahal Hotel. The hotel is popular with foreign officials and Western tourists and often hosts meetings of the Indian Government. At the time of the attack, representatives of the European Parliament and their staffs were at the hotel. The terrorists also believed that several senior members of the Indian Government were there.

They entered the main lobby and open-fired with AK-47s, killing approximately 20 people. Soon, the team that attacked the Leopold Café joined the assault, firing AK-47s and throwing grenades.

Joining forces, they went floor to floor killing anyone they could find; fortunately, many hotel guests barricaded themselves in their rooms. In an attempt to kill the high-ranking government officials they had not found, the terrorists set several fires to the hotel causing extensive damage. Indian forces assaulted the hotel, killed the terrorists, and rescued over 300 people.

If terrorists assault your location, your immediate actions could save your life. The decision to flee the scene or try to shelter in place is a difficult one you must make based on details of the specific situation.

A fourth terrorist team attacked the Oberoi–Trident Hotel. This hotel is also frequented by Indian Government officials and Western businessmen and tourists. It contains two wings, named Oberoi and Trident respectively, with conference facilities and nearly 900 guest rooms.



The attackers entered the main entrance of the Trident wing and indiscriminately fired their AK-47s and detonated two IEDs. Moving to the Oberoi wing, they worked their way up the floors, killing guests and securing several hostages. After conferring with their organization's leadership by cell phone, they began to execute all non-Muslim hostages. By the time the authorities were able to kill the terrorists, 33 people had perished.

Terrorists often select international hotels for attack due to the likelihood of American and Western guests staying at the hotel. When you travel to a place known for terrorist attacks, try to select a hotel with good security and standoff from the street.



The fifth terrorist team assaulted the Nariman House, a five-story building owned and operated by the orthodox Jewish organization Chabad-Lubavitch Movement of Hasidic Jews. The facility was run by a local Rabbi and was used to house visiting Jews.

The terrorists began the assault on the Nariman House by firing at the outside of the building from the street. Eventually, they moved into the building taking several hostages. A standoff between authorities and the terrorists began and gunfire was exchanged throughout the night. Eventually Indian commandos landed on the terrace of the building, killed the terrorists and rescued 14 hostages. However, five persons, including the Rabbi and his wife were found dead.

Places of religious worship or places associated with specific religious groups may be targeted by terrorists. Prior to visiting a new location, learn if there have been any attacks specifically directed against your religious affiliation. If so, consider avoiding areas associated with the religious affiliation while on travel.

Through intensive investigation and interrogation of Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, Indian authorities determined responsibility for the attack belongs to Lashkar-e-Taiha, a Pakistani-based militant organization. The Pakistani government originally denied the connection to Pakistan and claimed the attacks had been organized in Bangladesh and India. However, overwhelming evidence connects the attackers to Pakistan, including cell phone records of the terrorists, their nationalities, statements of Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, and Pakistani-made items recovered during the investigation. Primary inspiration for the attack seems to have come from the previous attack against the Islamabad Marriott Hotel.



Kasab, the one surviving terrorist, was convicted on 86 charges including the direct murder of seven people, conspiracy to commit murder, and waging war against India. In May 2010, Kasab was sentenced to death by hanging; a sentence that was upheld during the appeals process.

[Be aware of the history and pattern of terrorist attacks in any region you are visiting. Be vigilant and respond quickly to suspicious or hostile actions.](#)