

Assault on Mumbai - Update



Who was responsible?

We continue to believe that the level of sophistication and planning employed demonstrates that a highly capable and established group conducted the attacks. Early reports of the assault beginning with an amphibious landing (possibly from Karachi) appear to have been confirmed, as have claims that the terrorists had pre-prepared control rooms, complete with explosives and supplies, in the Trident and Taj Mahal hotels. These aspects demonstrate a tactical development hitherto not seen in India, and rarely seen elsewhere.

There are strong indications of the involvement of a local domestic terrorist group, possibly Indian Mujahideen (IM), and the involvement of a larger and higher-capability Pakistan-based group (such as LeT). If this is indeed the case, it would suggest that the attacks will have had some level of operational or ideological linkage to Al-Qaeda.

Unconfirmed reports of British and Mauritian citizens carrying out the attacks support Janusian's theory of a specially created cell of Islamist

terrorists, fusing both domestic and international agendas and capabilities into one coordinated assault. The name of the group that claimed responsibility, the 'Deccan Mujahideen', appears to be a disposable operational name for this cell and intended to obfuscate their true identity.

Likely impact

The Indian government has been swift to imply the attackers came from

Pakistan. The Pakistani government has responded by declaring that the two countries share a common enemy in the form of Islamist terrorism and has sought to establish a common cause, rather than conflict, with India.

Although relations between the two neighbours have improved in recent years, ties remain fragile. Given the serious nature of these attacks, a deterioration of cross-border relations is the most likely outcome, undoubtedly one of the terrorist planners' broader objectives.

India's government and security forces will feel considerable public and political pressure to respond quickly and forcefully. If they do so in concert with Pakistan, the worst-case scenario could be averted. However, in the initial stages of its response, the Indian government will be tempted to flex its muscle and increase military operations against Pakistani jihadist groups in Kashmir, which will serve to raise tensions along the heavily militarised border.

India's internal situation in some areas is likely to be equally fraught in the aftermath of this event. The attacks are already being described as India's 9/11 and the wider social and political ramifications should not be underestimated; India already experiences high levels of terrorism linked to inter-communal tensions throughout the country, and we anticipate that violence between Muslim and Hindu communities is likely to intensify in some areas.

Advice

The situation in Mumbai continues to remain unstable. On the ground, the local environment remains high-risk and uncertain and we advise clients to avoid non-essential travel to the city, and particularly the affected locations, until the situation is stabilised. It is evident that international terrorism now poses a greater risk to India and, until the perpetrators of these attacks are captured or killed, the country's elevated threat level will remain in place.

intelligence@janusian.com

Latest Developments

- The death toll has risen to over 155 dead and 327 wounded; these figures are likely to rise.
- According to an Indian marine commander and other sources, the terrorists smuggled caches of weapons and explosives into both the Trident (Oberoi) and Taj Mahal hotels prior to the attack. If true, this could explain how they replenished their supplies.
- The city police has reported that the four boats used by the terrorists have been recovered. A large quantity of RDX and some automatic weapons are said to have been recovered from the boats.
- Police have arrested nine terrorists. Well-placed sources in the Indian police state that three of these are Pakistani nationals and members of Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT).
- Of the foreigners confirmed dead are: two Americans, three Germans, two French nationals, at least five Israelis. At least one citizen of Canada, Australia, the UK, Japan, Singapore and China was also killed.
- The 22 foreigners confirmed injured include: Five Britons, two Americans, two Omanis, and one each from Norway, Spain, Canada, Finland, the Philippines, Australia, Italy, China, and two of unknown nationality.
- The Pakistani Intelligence Services (ISI) has sent a team to Mumbai in order to investigate the attacks.
- Indian news sources reported that British citizens of Pakistani origin were among the attackers, a claim that has not yet been confirmed.