

**News - City** Print**Mystery woman had accompanied terrorists at Cama**

Residents of staff quarters, shopkeeper at Colaba insist they had seen a young burqa clad women accompanying the militants

**By Hetal Vyas, Anand Holla and Dipti Sonawala****Posted On Sunday, November 30, 2008**

Residents of staff quarters at the hospital state the terrorists had knocked on their doors and asked for water. The Vaghelas lost a member of their family when they offered the water

Were the terrorists, who wrecked havoc in Mumbai since Wednesday, accompanied by women?

There are several accounts, including staff members from Cama and Albless at Dhobi Talao and a shopkeeper at Colaba, who insist there had been at least one woman who had accompanied them.

Employees of Cama hospital who live at staff quarters behind the hospital, claimed the terrorists had entered the hospital in two groups. "A man and a burqa clad woman entered from the gate opposite our quarters. The man started firing towards the hospital immediately after entering. Moments before, the woman, in a salwar

kameez underneath her burqa, had even tried to enter the hospital by climbing a water pipe. As the man continued firing, the woman, who wasn't armed, knocked on one of the houses. They then asked the family for water. The woman tried to say something but when the family did not react, the man opened fire again. Those 5-7 minutes while they were knocking on the doors were horrifying," said one of the residents.

Residents added that the couple had then run towards a path that led to another gate, towards the common toilets before they disappeared. "As they ran, they kept firing to ensure no one came out of their quarters," said residents, pointing to bullet marks on walls.

A shopkeeper at Colaba also claimed to have seen captured terrorist, Azam Amir Kasav, with a girl in a salwar-kameez on Wednesday afternoon. He said the two had come to his shop to buy food supplies. The shopkeeper who is currently out of the city on work, could not be contacted. However, his friend confirmed the news.

The shopkeeper's friend said, "He told me that when he saw Azam's picture in Mumbai Mirror on Thursday, he realised it was the same youth who had visited his shop with a woman, who was also young. He mentioned they had been like any other youths."



Residents have covered the gate terrorists entered from, with plastic sheets

### **Cook, table boy were appointed as guards**

Cama staff, in the meanwhile, rued the lack of trained security personnel at the hospital. They said a cook and a table boy had been deployed as security guards at the hospital. "Baban Valu Ughde, 55 and Bhanu Devu Narkar, 48 were cooks and table boys respectively at the hospital canteen. They had been guarding the hospital on Wednesday when the terrorists entered and killed both of them," said a staff member on the condition of anonymity.

The staff also claimed the terrorists had knocked on many doors of grade four staff quarters, asking for water. "They knocked on our door too. When we didn't open it, they threatened to set our house on fire. but within minutes the man fired at the old hospital building again, before leaving," said Dayaram Vaghela, resident of the quarters.

One of the gate the terrorists had entered from, still does not have any security guards. Residents have now written a letter to the commissioner of police and senior police inspector of Azad Maidan police station, requesting them to deploy two police officials or guards at the gate.



The other gate which residents say needs security guards

### **Families flee Cama hospital**

Following the attack, many families have fled the quarters. Shanta Maroo, a

resident said, "Around ten families have left the staff quarters and gone to suburbs like Virar and Nalasopara. The police officials are deployed at the front gate of the hospital but not a single security guard has been deployed at the gate the terrorists had entered from. Families are so scared that they are keeping their doors locked all day."

Another staff member added, "Officials from the state government had conducted a survey at the hospital four months ago. They had identified 12 spots that needed security guards. They said the grounds needed 36 guards to work in three shifts, but nothing was done about it."

Commenting on the issue, said senior police inspector Prakash Shishupal of Azad Maidan police station, "We provided them adequate security the very night the incident occurred. Their grievances will be taken care of."

Copyright 2008 Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd. . All rights reserved.