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Today's Edition

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Shopping

IN TODAY'S PAPER

Front Page
 Nation
 Calcutta
 Bengal
 Opinion
 International
 Business
 Sports
 Entertainment
 Sudoku
 Sudoku New **BETA**
 Crossword
 Jumble
 Gallery
 Horse Racing
 Press Releases
 Travel

WEEKLY FEATURES

7days
 Graphiti
 Knowhow
 Jobs
 Jobs
 Telekids
 Careergraph
Personal TT

CITIES AND REGIONS

Metro
 North Bengal
 Northeast

[Front Page](#) > [Nation](#) > [Story](#)

 [email this page](#)  [Print this page](#)

NSG to depose in 26/11 trial

SATISH NANDGAONKAR



Singer Shankar Mahadevan holds a gun at an event to celebrate the silver jubilee of the NSG in Manesar, Haryana, on Friday. (PTI)

Mumbai, Oct. 16: Three NSG officers who led the offensive against the Mumbai terrorists will appear as witnesses, the first time anyone from the elite commando force will depose in the 26/11 trial.

Special court judge M.L. Tahilyani today asked Mumbai police to summon Captain Anil Jakad and Major Prashant, overruling the prosecution's objections that examining the officers would compromise counter-terror strategies in future attacks. Jakad had played a key role in the operation at the Taj hotel, while Prashant had done so at Nariman House. Tahilyani picked the two as

their names had emerged during testimonies by other witnesses.

The third NSG officer, Lt Col. R.K. Sharma, who led the operation at the Oberoi-Trident hotel, was summoned a couple of days back to appear in court on October 27.

Tahilyani countered special public prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam's submission that the commandos' deposition would harm security interests by pointing out that counter-terror strategies were often discussed at workshops and that sometimes the contents of such discussions were placed online.

He also said such strategies varied according to the "topography, arms and ammunition of (the) terrorists, and the resistance offered by them".

Jharkhand

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None of the prosecution witnesses has so far provided any evidence on the “difficulties” the NSG officers faced during the operation. Unless this part is clear, it will be difficult for me to give findings on these charges,” Tahilyani said. He said the prosecution should have ideally filed a supplementary chargesheet containing the statements of the NSG officials. “I cannot be (a) silent spectator to what is being presented to me by the prosecution.”

Tahilyani promised to look into a claim by Ajmal Kasab, the lone gunman captured, that jail guards were mixing a white powder in his meals.



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