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## I was arrested 20 days before 26/11 attacks: Kasab

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Mohammed Ajmal Amir Kasab [ [Images](#) ], the lone terrorist captured in the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai, on Friday stood his ground in the witness box while recording his statement under Section 313 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (dealing with the power to examine the accused).

He rejected all the evidence produced against him so far in the special court.

He also stunned everybody present when he said that he was arrested 20 days before the November 26, 2008, attacks, from Juhu [ [Images](#) ] Chowpatty in north-west Mumbai.

Kasab told the court: "I was in police custody 20 days before the November 26, 2008, attacks and they (the Mumbai police) produced me as the lone captured

terrorist on the night of November 26 and 27.

"I was roaming at Juhu Chowpatty when the Mumbai police arrested me. I had come to Mumbai to act in a Bollywood movie. I was told by many boys in my village (Faridkhot in Punjab [ [Images](#) ], Pakistan) about it (movies). I was arrested when I was looking out for a place to rent. I had a legal Pakistani passport and a Sony Ericsson-500 mobile phone on me," Kasab told the court.

Kasab rejected all the evidence presented by the prosecution against him.

"I was not there. I don't know anything. The Mumbai police have fabricated all the evidence against me," he told Judge M L Tahilyani [ [Images](#) ] while deposing during the Mumbai terror attacks [ [Images](#) ] trial.

He alleged, "There must have one senior police official who has tutored all the witnesses as the language, descriptions and idioms used by all of them sound alike."

Kasab was referring to several witnesses identifying him in the courtroom as the *batku* (short) terrorist and his associate Abu Ismail as the "tall" terrorist. He emphasised this point several times before the judge.

"All witnesses must have seen my look-alike with Abu Ismail," he claimed.

Kasab also denied that he was present at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus [ [Images](#) ] during the terror strike, where he and Ismail allegedly gunned down several people.

"It was easy for all the witnesses to identify me in court as by then my photographs has been flashed across the world as the person who was in CST during the attack, when the two terrorists fired at the people and threw hand grenades," he told the court.

Kasab told the judge that his earlier confessions, accepting all the charges against him, before the magistrate was taken by force by the police.

But he admitted that he belonged to Fardikot village in Pakistan's Punjab province and was approximately 20 years old.

In the courtroom, Kasab initially stood with his head bowed, betraying no emotions or signs of apprehension before his testimony. He was made to sit inside the witness box on a stool.

He also answered all the questions posed by the judge loudly and clearly. Judge Tahilyani recorded only those statements given by Kasab that were relevant to the case.

He rejected the evidence of a witness, Bharat Tamore, that he was seen with ten terrorists at Badhwar Park when they alighted from a dinghy there.

Kasab said, "*Do baatein bolkar katham karna chaahtha hoon, aaj bhi mujhe bolne ka mauka nahin mila tho,*" (I want to finish by saying two lines, if I don't get a chance to speak then.)

The judge cut him short and told him that he had to answer questions the court put to him.

Several questions were put to Kasab based on the evidences given by witnesses. Asked about the dinghy, Kasab said that he did not know anything about that. "I saw the dingy for the first time in the court," he said.

Asked whether he confessed before the magistrate, Kasab said that he had confessed but it had been not recorded properly.

Kasab, in a statement to the court, also denied that he had planted a bomb in a taxi.

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**MIGROS**  
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Kasab denied that he had told the magistrate that he and Abu Ismail had hired a taxi to CST. He also said that he had not told the magistrate that he planted a bomb underneath the driver's seat while Ismail was talking to the driver.

"I did not tell the magistrate that on reaching CST, we saw a lesser crowd than what was shown to us in a training camp in Pakistan," Kasab said.

"I did not contact Abu Hamza (absconding accused). My mobile was lost and I was not in a position to talk to anybody," he said.

To a question that witness Natwarlal, father of a 11-year-old girl who was injured in the attack, had seen him and another terrorist at CST, Kasab replied that he was not present there.

"Maybe Natwarlal had said that there was firing on people but I was not there -- I don't know," Kasab said.

About Abu Ismail, Kasab said, "I don't know who he is. Ismail may have been involved in the attack but I don't know him."

Dressed in a white kurta, Kasab entered the court at 11.30 am. Kasab's medical report was perused by the court and the Judge noted that he did not have any mental illness.

"There is nothing of adverse concern. He does not have any complaint (and) as such he is fit to give a statement," the Judge said.

A medical examination of Kasab was conducted because his lawyer, K B Pawar, had earlier told the court that Kasab was not fit to give a statement.

Enquiries were made about his age and it was found that he was not a juvenile at the time of the offence and, therefore, he was tried by the court, the Judge said. The Judge also noted that Kasab was not a juvenile when the crime was committed.

Kasab also claimed that he had been interrogated by Federal Bureau of Investigation officials and that David Headley [ [Images](#) ], charged with conspiracy in the 26/11 attacks in a US court, was one of them. Judge M L Tahilyani, however, told Kasab that he should first answer the questions put to him by the court and then say whatever he wanted to.

At this point, defence lawyer, Ejaz Naqvi, defending another accused Sabbahudin Ahmed, told the Judge that Kasab had named Headley and that it should be recorded.

The judge, however, told the lawyer that he would first finish with Kasab's statement and that Kasab was free to say whatever he wanted after that.

Kasab added, "I totally deny the confession made before the Magistrate -- I was beaten up by the police and was interrogated by foreigners and one of them was Headley."

Headley, a suspected Lashkar-e-Tayiba [ [Images](#) ] operative, was arrested by the FBI in October for plotting terror attacks in India [ [Images](#) ] and Denmark.

Continuing with his befuddling statements, Kasab told Judge M L Tahilyani that he had come to Delhi [ [Images](#) ] by the Samjhauta Express.

"From Delhi I came to Mumbai," he said.

Later, he completely rejected the confession given to the judge sometime in July, when he had accepted that the person in the closed circuit television footage captured at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus was himself.

He told the judge he had given the confession because of the fear of the Crime Branch officials.

Kasab said he had lied then. "The police had written the statement in Urdu and I just recited that statement," he said.

When the judge asked him if there was exchange of fire between himself and the Railway Protection Force, he completely denied having knowledge of such crossfire.

However, in the earlier confession to the judge, he had admitted to exchanging fire with the RPF.

Repeating his charge that the person with Abu Ismail (one of the 10 terrorists of the 26/11 attacks) was in fact 'Abu Ali' firing at the people at the CST. He said 'Abu Ali' might have gone to the Taj as well.

Kasab asked the judge to tally the CCTV footage recorded at the CST (around 10.50 pm) and the CCTV footage captured at the Taj hotel [ [Images](#) ] at 4.30 am on November 27.

"If you match the two CDs, you will find that the two faces match," Kasab told the judge.

However, he accepted that the person in the CCTV footage giving confession to the judge earlier was him.

Kasab further told the judge he was expecting to be transferred to another jail after the statement.

"I was expecting that you would announce the judgment, punish me and send me to some other jail where I would not be facing the same police (the Crime Branch)."

*Additional Inputs from PTI*

**Photo courtesy: Sebastian D'souza/Mumbai Mirror**

[Prasanna D Zore](#) in Mumbai

**Tags:** Mohammed Ajmal Amir Kasab, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Judge M L Tahilyani, Abu Ismail, David Headley

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