



Bracing for Bali  
Sanjaya Baru



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# 'Kasab confessed under duress, did not get fair trial'

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Ajmal Kasab, 26/11 terror attack gunman, on Tuesday began his defence in the Supreme Court against his death penalty by contending that his right for a fair trial was jeopardised in the name of speedy trial.

On the first day of the hearing on Kasab's appeal, senior advocate Raju Ramachandran, the amicus curiae appointed by the SC to defend him, said Kasab confessed under duress without access to legal aid.

The confession, made to a Magistrate Court, provides crucial evidence on the entire case history and identity of Kasab as a Pakistani.

"The confession was made in February 2009, more than two months after his capture. There was no counsel at the time, but when counsel was allotted, statements were retracted immediately. The period from November to February, there was no lawyer," Ramachandran argued before a Bench, headed by Justice Aftab Alam.

On the still photographs identifying Kasab, taken by news cameramen, Ramachandran sought to

poke holes saying that the memory cards in the cameras were not seized immediately.

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He said there was no proof to show that Kasab was part of a larger conspiracy against the Government of India, while adding that even his arrest was recorded after nearly 24 hours of his capture. "And right from the time of his arrest to the confession, he was in police remand," Ramachandran -said

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