

Ghastly conversations of the bone-chilling episode

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Were Pakistani 'state' actors directing the 26/11 assault on Mumbai? It is hard to believe that the Pakistani military or its intelligence was not involved in the attacks after listening to taped intercepts between the attackers and their handlers played out recently on Headlines Today.

HANDLER: Take position... it's possible they will toss a grenade down the stairs before descending...

NARIMAN HOUSE TERRORIST: Yes, that's possible.

HANDLER: Stay in the room, but keep the staircase in your crosshairs...

NARIMAN HOUSE TERRORIST: If the stairs near the room...

HANDLER: Do you see any Indian soldiers to your left or right...

NARIMAN HOUSE TERRORIST: We can see snipers in front... they're sitting at the windows of the building in front..

HANDLER: Shoot them... shoot a burst at them...

NARIMAN HOUSE: They're firing at us openly... should we open fire...

Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari had gone on record immediately after the attacks to claim that Pakistan cannot be held responsible for the actions of so called 'non-state' actors.

Headlines Today has in its exclusive possession seven hours of taped conversations of the terrorists and their masters. Parts of the conversations were shown over the last two days on the channel. Experts on the show including Former Army Chief General VP Malik and General Shankar Roychowdhury agreed that the voices on the tape sounded genuine and were likely to belong to trained members of the Pakistan army.

The tapes, which contain multiple recordings of conversations at all three locations that were attacked in Mumbai – the Taj, the Trident and Nariman House – include minute by minute tactical inputs on what positions to take, when to fire, when to lob grenades and what preparations to make to make the best of any given situation.

The tapes for the first time broadcast a conversation between an Jewish woman hostage, Nurma, and a suspected Pakistani mastermind, Wasi. The conversation, which took place at the Nariman House on the 27th of November last year lasts only a few minutes. The handler speaks in perfect English, demands that the hostage bring the Israeli Consulate and Indian government to the negotiating table.

NURMA (Jewish hostage): Hello, who is this?

WASI (Suspected Pak handler): Have you spoken...

NURMA: Huh?

WASI: Have you spoken to the Consulate?

NURMA: I'm speaking to them. They are on it. They will call. They will speak with you directly any time now.

WASI: Have you already called them, or are you about to?

NURMA: Hang on. Who is this?

WASI: Have you spoken with the Consulate?

NURMA: Yes

WASI: Speak to them.

NURMA: I have spoken to them. I spoke to them just a few moments ago. They will call shortly. They have said keep the line free, so they can call you. They are pleased. Do you understand?

WASI: Say it again. I don't understand.

NURMA: They are calling the Army, the Prime Minister... the Indian Army... they are calling from our Embassy in Delhi.

WASI: Okay

NURMA: They have asked that you keep your line free so they can call at any time.

Wasi: They'll call us?

NURMA: Yes, shortly.

What follows is particularly chilling. This recording was taped moments before the hostage is summarily executed.

HANDLER: Where will you do it? Stand her up on this side of your door. Shoot her such that the bullet goes right through her head and out the other side. The bullet should not get stuck in her body.

NARIMAN HOUSE TERRORIST: Okay

HANDLER: Do it. I'm listening. Shoot one of them. I hope she's tied up securely.

NARIMAN HOUSE TERRORIST: Yes, should I untie her legs?

HANDLER: Yes, stand her up. If they're tied up, let them be. If they're untied, it's alright.

Indian television news station Headlines Today put out significant portions of the exhaustive recordings as part of continuous broadcasts over the last two days. The station obtained a copy of the tape last week through an investigative effort.

During a live broadcast of the taped conversations, South Asia scholar Lisa Curtis of the Heritage Foundation spoke to Headlines Today from Washington DC, and said, "This raises a lot of questions about the role of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and there's no doubt that the terror attacks were masterminded from Pakistan. The international pressure on Pakistan will be kept up."

The taped conversations were played out on the eve of the chargesheet against the lone surviving perpetrator of the Mumbai attacks, Ajmal Amir Kasab and two others. The taped conversations will be vital evidence in the case against Kasab.