

I leaked CCTV footage at Gafoor's instance: DCP

S Balakrishnan | TNN

Mumbai: The secret behind the leakage of a CD containing video footage of the police operations at the Taj on 26/11 and recordings of conversations between the police team at the the hotel and the police control room has been unravelled. Vishwas Nagre-Patil, deputy commissioner of police (zone I), who risked his life in entering the Taj on the fateful night, has told the crime branch that he leaked the CD at the instance of the then commissioner Hasan Gafoor.

Highly-placed sources told TOI on Wednesday: "The then home minister Jayant Patil was furious that sensitive contents have been leaked to the media. He called for a high-power meeting, which was attended by Gafoor. The latter suggested that an offence be registered under the official secrets Act."

Accordingly, Patil asked the crime branch to register an offence. On March 2, an offence vide CR no. 50/2009 was registered at Azad Maidan police station and investigation was started. Among others, Nagre-Patil was questioned by the crime branch. It is learnt that the DCP admitted to have given the CD to the media at Gafoor's instance.

The CCTV footage from the Taj showed Nagre-Patil bravely entering the Taj and pinning down the terrorists. It is because of the timely action of Nagre-Patil and his team, which included inspector Deepak Dhole, sub-inspector Nitin Kakade, police naiks Arun Mane, Ashok Pawar, constables Amit Khetle, Saudagar Shinde, Rahul Shinde and Samadhan More that many of those trapped in the hotel could be rescued. Except Nagre-Patil, all the others were injured.

Asked about his statement to the crime branch, Nagre-Patil said his father had had a heart attack and he was busy with his treatment. Gafoor said: "I cannot say anything at this stage. I will neither confirm or deny anything because I cannot speak to the media." Gafoor is in trouble for reportedly accusing four senior IPS officers of not doing anything on 26/11 night. He later denied ever having levelled this allegation during a media interview.

Meanwhile, a senior police official is believed to have torn a page from the records of Colaba police station which contained his notings. The Ram Pradhan Committee had criticised the withdrawal of security at Taj. It is learnt that this official had endorsed the decision to withdraw the security, but when he realised that this could land him in trouble, he allegedly tore off the relevant sheet. An inquiry may be ordered into this incident.

'Chargesheet only after 26/11 trial is over' Mateen Hafeez | TNN

Mumbai: The crime branch plans to file a chargesheet in the case pertaining to leakage of details of a police log book and a control-room conversation that took place on the night of 26/11 only after the terror trial is over. The case has been registered under the Official Secrets Act, 1923.

Three private news channels aired the conversation between police officers on the field and those sitting and monitoring main control-room activities following the 26/11 terror strikes. The log book contained details of senior policemen's movements on 26/11.

Inspector Dattatrey Bhargude of the city crime branch lodged an FIR with the Azad Maidan police on March 2 against unidentified persons for stealing details of the conversation and details from the log book.

A senior crime branch officer told TOI that investigations were on. "We are planning to file the chargesheet once the trial in the 26/11 is over," a senior crime branch officer said, without explaining the reasons for the delay.

A chargesheet is generally filed within 90 days of the case being registered or, in some circumstances, within

180 days. However, it is now over nine months since the crime branch registered the case. It is also yet to arrest anyone in this regard, though 12 policemen, including two IPS officers, were questioned in this connection. Several media personnel have also been grilled.

