

# ARCHIVE

## Trade Stock CFDs

Trade Stocks-Apple, DeutscheBank. Be smart, Your capital is at risk.

# Lashkar came via sea from Karachi, used Gujarat boat to reach Mumbai

PRANAB DHAL SAMANTA & SHISHIR GUPTA in NEW DELHI, VIKRAM RAUTELA in AHMEDABAD, SHALINI NAIR in MUMBAI

, Fri Nov 28 2008, 02:59 hrs



### Studenten lesen billiger

Über 400 attraktive Studentenabos mit Preisvorteilen von bis zu 75% [www.studenten-presse.com](http://www.studenten-presse.com)

Ads by Google



### TOP STORIES

**Udhampur attackers backed by ISI, says JK Police**

**Militants attack police post in Udhampur; 2 SPOs injured**

**Cong rejects Sushma Swaraj's defence as "tear-jerker" full of "holes"**

**Pulwama encounter: Story of a student who turned terrorist**

**Kerala press owner refuses to print student magazine featuring PM Modi in 'top 10 criminals' list**

As Operation Black Tornado, the mission launched by security forces against the most audacious terror strike on Indian soil crossed its 24th hour tonight, security agencies said that all available evidence pointed to the Pakistan-based terror outfit Lashkar-e-Toiba whose men used the sea route to reach Mumbai from Karachi.

Lashkar spokesman Abdullah Ghaznavi denied any role but sources said the go-ahead for the attack came after a Lashkar conference at Muridke in Pakistan on Sunday.

At this meeting of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa — it now fronts for the Lashkar — which was held after a gap of two years, Lashkar founder and JuD chief Hafiz Saeed is said to have attacked India very strongly, stating that India ought to be punished for its activities in Afghanistan.

From what has been put together through intelligence inputs and brief questioning of Ismail, the terrorist who survived the encounter with the police at Girgaum Chowpatty, at least 20 terrorists reached Mumbai last night via the sea route from Karachi.

One of the key men in the attack, sources said, was one Imran Babbar, possibly controlling the entire operation.

It is learnt that the Lashkar men got into an Indian fishing trawler that had either been arranged or hijacked for this purpose just before entering Indian territorial waters. Having monitored Coast Guard patrols closely, sources said, a mother ship dropped them off in small boats from where they moved into an Indian fishing trawler to avoid detection. Once they reached close to the alighting point, they lowered themselves again into smaller boats arranged for them locally and then split into at least two groups for the attacks.

Intelligence sources said that at least one of the boats used to carry out the attack was Kuber, a private Indian fishing boat from Porbandar in Gujarat. Kuber was found abandoned some five nautical miles off the Mumbai coast. The Coast Guard, which seized the boat after an aerial reconnaissance, found a body in it — of a middle-aged man who is yet to be identified.

The 45-feet long, 15-feet wide Kuber is owned by Porbandar fisherman Vinod Masani. It left Porbandar on November 13 with six men on board. "This morning we were told about Kuber being spotted near Mumbai. We have no news about the crew," said Manish Lodhani, secretary of the National Fishworkers Forum in Porbandar.



### EDITORS' PICK



**Arrested terrorist trained in same Lashkar camp as Ajmal Kasab, pushed across LoC in April**



**Beyond gridlock, n-deal, an exciting India-US story**



**Journalist leaves Mumbai saying he will join IS, police question wife**



**Failing IIT - They get leg-up at JEE but hard landing on campus**



**OPINION: No one loves Parliament**

Masani is being questioned by the police and Coast Guard. Apart from Kuber, Masani owns four other fishing trawlers. Two of his boats had been seized earlier by Pakistan security agencies for straying into their waters. He told The Indian Express he was not sure if the Kuber that had been seized near Mumbai was his or another by the same name.

Porbandar SP Dipanker Trivedi said: "It is true there are preliminary reports of a boat named Kuber having been used by the terrorists to reach Mumbai. We are still verifying it." Lodhani said: "Whether Kuber was captured by Pakistani agencies after it strayed into their waters or was hijacked specifically for the mission is being investigated."

The Navy today sent two warships and a fast-attack craft to intercept a merchant ship which was suspected to have launched the terrorists. Its last port of call was Saudi Arabia. Top government sources said Naval Headquarters directed two warships to intercept the ship and one vessel was asked to join the chase mid-way. The suspect ship was said to be 50-70 nautical miles north-west of Mumbai.

Official sources said this suspect ship came to Mumbai port either November 19 or 21 but left Wednesday. It is not clear whether this ship docked at the port or discharged its cargo at the anchorage — the inner anchorage in Mumbai is three-four nautical miles from the port while the outer anchorage is 25-30 nautical miles.

Earlier, it was suspected that M V Alpha was the mother ship that brought in the terrorists but the Coast Guard, which boarded the ship, found its papers in order.

At Macchimar Nagar in Colaba in Mumbai, Bharat Tandel said he saw 10 "gore-chikne" young men who came ashore in an inflatable raft around 9 pm Wednesday. "They must have all been in the age group 25-30. Each was carrying two bags and had heavy school bags strapped on their shoulders," he said. "When I tried to speak to one of them, he said 'tension mein hoon (I am tense)'. They walked away hurriedly."

According to Tandel, eight men get off while the remaining two took off on the black-yellow raft towards Nariman Point. This raft, abandoned at Nariman Point, was later dragged to Macchimar Nagar by one of the local boys late Wednesday night.

Bharat Tamare, an assistant supervisor at the Taj Hotel, was on his way to the hotel for the night shift. "I stopped the moment I saw a boat pulling in. I asked them what they were up to. One boy told me they were students," said Tamare.

Damodar Tandel, president of Akhil Maharashtra Macchimar Kriti Samiti, said he had received information about the possibility of arms landing on Mumbai shores from Gujarat. He said he had had immediately written a letter to DCP (Port Zone) Madhukar Kohe.

"About 950 trawlers carrying 8,000 fishermen come to Mumbai from Gujarati for eight months beginning August every year. Four months ago, Gujarat-based fisherfolk leader Devabhai Bhagat got information that a handful of these fishermen had connections with the underworld. He even tipped me off about the possibility of arms, grenades and RDX being brought to Mumbai via this route but the police did not take our tip-off seriously," alleged Tandel. In a phone interview, Devabhai Bhagat said he had alerted Tandel and had even come to meet him about this matter four days ago.

DCP Kohe confirmed he had received a letter from Damodar Tandel. "The letter mentioned transportation of arms to Mumbai via the sea. But it was just a general statement, there was no specific information," said Kohe. He said police jurisdiction extended to only 12 nautical miles into the sea. "The Customs, Navy and Coast Guard have a greater role. On our part, we have been regularly checking ships coming in every morning," Kohe said.

Meanwhile, officials said they do not rule out the possibility that one or two associates of the attackers were already staying in the Taj Mahal and Trident hotels which made it easier for these men to navigate their way through these large hotels. Top sources also confirmed that local support was available to these terrorists and was possibly arranged by remnants of the Mumbai underworld, many of who now reside in Karachi.

Earlier this year, Lashkar operative Raziuddin Nasir, who was picked up in Karnataka, had revealed in his interrogation that the Lashkar was making preparations for an attack using the sea route. The attack on Mumbai, sources said, was planned at least over six months or even more, but did not get a go-ahead from the outfit top brass until the Muridke meeting.