

Osama named 26/11 terror team

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Most-wanted terrorist had named the group 'Jund-Ul-Fida', according to an NIA report on Headley's interrogation

The butchers of Mumbai had the blessings of al-Qaeda supremo Osama bin Laden.

For the first time the name of the world's most wanted terrorist has been named in connection with the 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai. The fact that Osama himself named the fidayeen team chosen for the terror strikes on the megapolis was revealed by Lashkar operative David Coleman Headley during his interrogation by the officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).



David Headley told the National Investigating Agency how the 26/11 mastermind had gone to Osama to seek his blessings

"Lashkar commander Abdur Rehman alias Pasha is directly in touch with the top brass of al-Qaeda, including Illyas Kashmiri who is now number 3 in the al-Qaeda hierarchy in Pakistan. Abdur Rehman has met Osama a number of times. Rehman once told Headley that his set up has been given the name Jund-ul-fida (Army of Fidayeens) by Osama-bin-Laden himself," Headley told NIA, as per the interrogation report of the Pakistani-American a copy of which is with MiD DAY.

Headley, who scouted targets in Mumbai for Lashkar, was arrested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and on India's persistent request the US authorities provided the NIA access to the fugitive from June 3-9, 2010 in the presence of his counsels, FBI prosecutors and FBI officials. No audio and

video recording was allowed.
The interrogation took 34 hours.

He told NIA officials that the camera, which he carried up to his seventh visit to India, was given to him by his mother-in-law in Pakistan.

"During his visits to India in April and June 2008 Headley carried a Sony Ericsson model mobile camera phone which was given to him by Major Iqbal and a GPS device given by Lashkar commander Sajid Majid," the report said.

Headley used the same mobile phone camera for reconnaissance activities in the year 2009 during his visits to India and Denmark. The mobile phone was seized from his possession by the FBI.

Headley knew that Sajid Majid and their fellow commander Muzammil had paid Rs 8.5 lakh to a Pakistani drug lord to smuggle arms and explosives into India. "Niyamat Shah, a member of the Shirwari tribe, of the restive Khyber agency, was paid Rs 8.5 lakh. Shah is also involved in drug smuggling in India," the report said.

According to Headley, initially Sajid Majid had planned to send the attackers through either Nepal or Bangladesh and only Hotel Taj Palace was on their radar. "Sajid Majid had discussed the plan like attacking the Taj Hotel during the conference of software engineers by two-three attackers."

"It was only after March 2008, that the Lashkar commanders decided on launching multiple attacks in Mumbai by multiple attackers and thought about using sea routes," Headley told NIA officials.

After the attacks, Sajid Majid briefed Headley about the attacks and he (Sajid) told Headley that two of the crew of MV Kuber were killed by him.

Headley also mentioned the 'Karachi Project' , the brainchild of Pasha, which was aimed at launching operations into India by using militants of Indian origin.

"In July 2006 when Headley was in USA he saw the news about Mumbai train attacks on TV. When he came back he asked Sajid and Pasha about the attacks and Pasha said that he knew who the boys were that they were local Indian boys. Col Shah of the ISI, handler of Pasha, was actively involved in Karachi Project," the report said.

THE THACKERAY ANGLE

Headley maintains that Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Saeed had full knowledge of Mumbai attacks and it was only launched after his approval. Headley believes that Saeed never acknowledges it publicly, though he remains abreast with each and every stage of planning and execution (of terror operations). During his meeting with Saeed, he also mentioned Bal Thackeray (Shiv Sena chief) and the damage he (Thackeray) had done to the Muslim Ummah. Headley believed that this was an indication that LeT wanted to take action on this front," the report stated.

Playboy

Sleuths from the National Investigation Agency (NIA) probing the role of suspected Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) operative David Coleman Headley in the Mumbai terror attacks of November 26, say the man spent as much time setting up sleeper cells as he did being a playboy.

Headley allegedly partied hard and played harder to develop contacts, conduct recces at terror targets, and meet people from former sleeper cells, and maintain a semblance of a social life to ensure normalcy.

Headley frequented upmarket bars like Topaz in Grant Road, Mansi in Andheri, Sandesh in Dahisar and Mayuri Park at Sahar. Sources say that he was sometimes accompanied by foreigners.

ID PARADE

The NIA team carried the recorded voices and the photographs of the instructors of 26/11 Mumbai attacks. Headley recognised the voices of Sajid Majid alias Mir, Abu Al Qama and Abu Qahafa but could not place the fourth voice. "Headley believes that the person giving instructions to the terrorists at Chabad house was Sajid Majid. Sajid instructed the terrorists to kill everybody, including women, in Chabad House. Abu Al Qama was also talking to the terrorists and it was he who was saying to the attackers that the entire Muslim Ummah is looking up to them and they should not fail them. Sajid later told Headley that Abu Hamza was also present in the control room," stated the report.

9 The number of times Headley visited India between 2006 and 2009

16 Headley's age when he moved out of Pakistan and left for America