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## Fisherman recalls attacks

On reflection, he says he could not have done any more to prevent the attack. -AFP

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AFP

MUMBAI - BHARAT Tandel was on the dockside at the Koliwada fishermen's colony in south Mumbai when he saw the rubber dinghy that would bring carnage to the city motoring towards the shore.

'I thought it was strange when I saw them get off the boat and noticed that they were carrying rucksacks,' said the bare-foot fisherman.

'I asked them what they were doing here and they told me to mind my own business.'

Minutes later, the daring assault on India's financial capital began. By the time it ended Saturday morning, 188 people had died and 313 others were left injured.

The attackers sprayed automatic gunfire and threw grenades at the city's main railway station and took hostages at two luxury hotels.

Hostages were also taken at Nariman House - a Jewish cultural centre - and the popular Leopold Cafe in the Colaba district was also attacked.

'They came in a speedboat at about 9:00 pm. They quickly took off their life jackets and put on their rucksacks,' said Mr Parshuram Meher, an official from the local fishing union.

'When these terrorists arrived, the few people who were on the quayside asked them what they were doing because they looked like they weren't from the area.'

'They told them to mind their own business and left quickly. In any case, we wouldn't have been able to overpower them.'

The events at Koliwada - named after the Koli fishermen who were the original inhabitants of the seven islands that were joined to become Bombay and later Mumbai - marked the end of the militants' journey by sea.

According to the official version of events, the 10 men first captured an Indian trawler, the Kuber, before launching two small speedboats into the Arabian Sea and making their way to Mumbai.

The bodies of a number of men, thought to be the crew of the Kuber, were later pulled from the sea. The captain, Mr Amarsingh Solanki, was found on board his drifting vessel with his hands tied and throat cut, coastguards said.

As questions are asked about how the atrocity took place, it emerged that the country's military intelligence had issued information several days before about reports of an imminent attack from the Arabian Sea.

US reports also said that American intelligence agencies had warned their Indian counterparts of a possible attack from the sea on targets in Mumbai.

Indian intelligence officials told ABC News that on November 18 they intercepted a satellite phone call to an address in Pakistan used by the leader of the hardline Lashkar-e-Taiba group, revealing a possible sea-borne attack.

Amid the finger-pointing and anguish, Mr Bharat Tandel said that on reflection he could not have done any more to prevent the attack.

'About 10 minutes after they left, I heard shots coming from Nariman House.

I thought it was them. But if we'd tried to stop them we would have all been killed.'

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