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Panel blasts Taj, Oberoi for ignoring warnings

Prafulla Marpakwar, TNN | Jun 15, 2009, 04:32 AM IST

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MUMBAI: The Pradhan committee report on the police actions during 26/11 found that there were basic problems with the ATS being in the dual control of the DGP's office as well as the Mumbai police's office.

The committee also came down heavily on the managements of both the Oberoi and Taj hotels for their alleged failure to take note of specific warnings passed on by Nagre-Patil before the attacks. Despite several communications to both hotels, they failed to take corrective measures as per the recommendations of the Mumbai police,

the panel has said.

On the intelligence alerts submitted by the Centre, the committee observed that whether they were specific or otherwise, it was the responsibility of the Mumbai police as well as the state government to ensure that serious note was taken of these alerts and follow-up actions were accordingly taken. Prima facie it appears that most of these messages were processed mechanically at the state level. However, with the situation during the attacks being war-like, it would have been difficult for intelligence or police officers to quickly respond to the situation.

The Pradhan committee has also made recommendations to help establish effective coordination between the central and state intelligence wings and between the DGP's office and the home department. It has also recommended nodal officers at the state level as well as at the DGP's office to tackle terrorist attacks and other similar situations.

On security in private establishments, the committee felt that there should be more coordination between the private sector and government and for that purpose too the government should appoint a nodal officer of the rank of DCP. The two-member committee was appointed by then chief minister Vilasrao Deshmukh in January to examine the role of the Mumbai police in tackling terror, whether inputs from central intelligence agencies were used and what measures have to be taken in the future.

After the terrorist attack on November 26, the state's Shiv Sena-BJP opposition had demanded the removal of Roy and Gafoor from their posts and also the removal of then additional chief secretary (home) Chitkala Zutshi. The issue had rocked both houses of the legislature during the Nagpur session. Roy's appointment as DGP was set aside in February by the Bombay HC in a separate case and Zutshi retired a few months ago.

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