



**JAMES W. MCJUNKIN
DEPUTY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY
AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION
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Good afternoon Chairwoman Jackson-Lee, Ranking Member Dent, and members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to be here today to discuss the FBI's role in investigating the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India. I will also describe how we are working with our U.S. intelligence and law enforcement partners to apply lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks to protect the U.S. Homeland, as well as how we are collaborating with our international partners to help prevent attacks on U.S. interests and our allies overseas.

FBI Role in Mumbai Investigation

As the Committee knows, on November 26, 2008, several men armed with hand grenades, automatic weapons, and satellite phones landed in a rubber raft on the shores of Mumbai. They scattered to soft targets across the city, launched simultaneous attacks that held India's financial capital under siege for days, and killed more than 170 individuals, including six American citizens. Within hours of the first attacks, the FBI had a representative on the scene: our Assistant Legal Attaché in the FBI's New Delhi office, who was traveling in the general direction of Mumbai when he was notified of the attacks. He immediately made his way to the Taj Mahal hotel, which was still under siege, and contacted his Indian counterparts. From there, he took part in efforts to rescue Americans trapped in the hotel, set up lines of communication with his FBI and U.S. Intelligence Community (USIC) counterparts, and coordinated the arrival of our Los Angeles Rapid Deployment Team.

Even before the crisis ended, the investigation had begun. Agents from FBI offices in New Delhi, Islamabad, and Los Angeles joined forces with the Indian government, the CIA, the State Department and foreign partners. Through these partnerships, we had unprecedented access to evidence and intelligence. Agents and analysts interviewed more than 70 individuals, including the sole surviving attacker. Our forensic specialists pulled fingerprints from improvised explosive devices. They recovered data from damaged cell phones, in one case by literally wiring a smashed phone back together.

At the same time, we collected, analyzed, and disseminated intelligence to our partners at home and abroad—not only to determine how these attacks were planned, and by whom,

but to ensure that if a second wave of attacks was planned, we had the intelligence to stop it.

I also want to acknowledge the very fine work that the FBI's Office of Victim Assistance, working in concert with U.S. consular officers in Mumbai and the State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs, undertook to assist the U.S. citizen victims and their families. That work continues to this day.

Threats Posed by Suspected Sponsors of Mumbai Attackers

The surviving Mumbai attacker has claimed that the Pakistan-based terrorist organization Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LT) provided him training and direction for the attack. The FBI assesses that LT, which is well known to the U.S. Intelligence Community (USIC), remains a threat to U.S. interests in South Asia and to the U.S. Homeland. We have no current intelligence indicating that there is an organized LT presence in the United States or that LT senior leadership is seeking to attack the U.S. Homeland. LT does maintain facilitation, procurement, fundraising, and recruitment activities worldwide, including in the United States. For example, in 2003, several followers of "Virginia Jihad" cleric Sheikh Ali Al-Timimi were convicted of providing material support to terrorism relating to their training at an LT-sponsored training camp in Pakistan, with the intention of fighting against Coalition Forces in Afghanistan. In addition, the FBI is investigating a number of individuals across the United States who are linked in some way to LT—primarily through witting and unwitting fundraising for the group, as well as the recruitment of individuals from the United States to attend LT camps.

Lessons Learned from Mumbai Attacks

The principal lesson from the Mumbai attacks remains that a small number of trained and determined attackers with relatively unsophisticated weapons can do a great deal of damage. Last week's attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore, Pakistan, is another example of a low-tech, but potentially high-impact operation. We are concerned about the possibility that other terrorist groups, including Al-Qa'ida or its affiliates, will take note of these attacks and attempt to emulate them.

The FBI is implementing the lessons learned from the Mumbai attacks by continuing to maintain a high level of vigilance for all indications of developing terrorist activity. We recognize that the planning for the Mumbai attacks likely unfolded over a relatively long period of time with careful surveillance of the target sites and transportation routes. We are continuing to work closely with our state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners in our Joint Terrorism Task Forces to follow up on indications of suspicious activity that could potentially be related to terrorism.

We are also sharing relevant information from the Mumbai investigation with our intelligence and law enforcement partners. Classified information is available to cleared state and local law enforcement personnel in Joint Terrorism Task Forces and Fusion Centers. In addition, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) jointly

issued an unclassified alert about the attacks to state, local, and tribal officials on November 27, 2008. The FBI and DHS also issued an Intelligence Bulletin on December 3, 2008, to building owners and operators, as well as the law enforcement community, to alert them to preliminary findings regarding the techniques and tactics terrorists used in the Mumbai attacks. The bulletin indicated that the FBI and DHS had no credible or specific information that terrorists were planning similar operations against public buildings in the United States, but urged local authorities and building owners and operators to be aware of potential attack tactics. We continue to work with our partners to heighten the public's awareness of the continued threat of terrorist attacks and the need to report suspicious incidents.

One key lesson the Mumbai attacks have reinforced is the importance of international partnerships. The unprecedented collaboration we developed with our Indian law enforcement and intelligence counterparts in this investigation has strengthened our relationship with the Government of India. As Director Mueller said during his visit to India and Pakistan last week, terrorism is not an issue for one country alone—we are all fighting a common enemy. We will continue to work with our counterparts in India, and around the world, to bring the perpetrators of these attacks to justice, and to prevent further attacks.

Conclusion

As the investigation into the Mumbai attacks progresses, FBI counterterrorism agents and analysts continue to analyze all available information to determine who was responsible, assess lessons learned, determine if the United States may be vulnerable to a similar attack, and determine the threat posed by the group—or individuals tied to the group—to the United States. We are working closely with our USIC and law enforcement partners in these efforts, and will continue to disseminate information about lessons learned.

In summary, Madam Chairwoman, as the threats to our nation and our allies become ever-more globalized, the FBI is expanding our collaboration with our international and U.S. law enforcement and intelligence partners to prevent terrorist attacks and to assist in investigating them when they do occur. We will continue to build on these relationships to advance the FBI's national security mission. And, as we have done with the Mumbai attacks, we will continue to analyze and share lessons learned from these investigations to help prevent future attacks at home or against U.S. interests abroad.