

CASE STUDY ON
2008 AHMEDABAD SERIAL BOMB BLAST



Centurion
UNIVERSITY

BACHELORS OF SCIENCE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE (SEMESTER 6)

SUBJECT

CUFS2416- EXPLOSIVE ANALYSIS AND POST BLAST INVESTIGATION

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2008 Ahmedabad bombings

The 2008 Ahmedabad bombings were a series of 21 bomb blasts that hit Ahmedabad, India, on 26 July 2008, within a span of 70 minutes. Ahmedabad is the cultural and commercial heart of Gujarat state, and a large part of western India. The blasts are considered to be of low intensity, and were similar to the Bangalore blasts, Karnataka which occurred the day before.

Bombing:-

The bombs were planted in Tiffin carriers on bicycles, a pattern similar to the 13 May 2008 Jaipur bombings. Many of the blasts targeted the city bus service of AMTS (Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service), ripping apart portions of the vehicles. Two blasts took place inside the premises of two hospitals, about 40 minutes after the initial series of blasts. One of the blasts in the hospital occurred when injured victims of the initial series of the blasts were being admitted there. Another bomb was found and defused on the following day in the Hatkeshwar area. Two live bombs were also retrieved from Maninagar, Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi's constituency. Fifty-six people were killed and over 200 people were injured. Gujarat police recovered and defused two more bombs in Surat, another major city in Gujarat, a day after the Ahmedabad blasts. Two cars filled with materials required to make explosives, including detonators, one of them sparked on roadside near a hospital, and the other in the outskirts of Surat.



Bombing Locations:-

- Ahmedabad Civil Hospital, trauma center
- Khadia
- Raipur
- Sarangpur
- L.G. Hospital, Maninagar
- Maninagar
- Hatkeshwar Circle
- Bapunagar
- Thakkarbapa nagar
- Jawahar chowk
- Govindwadi
- Isanpur
- Naroj
- Sarkhej

Several news agencies reported receiving a 14 page e-mail five minutes before the explosions with the subject line: “Await 5 minutes for the revenge of Gujarat”, apparently referring to the 2002 Gujarat Violence which took place after the Godhra train burning incident. The e-mail was sent by the Islamic extremist group known as Indian Mujahideen on 26 July at around 6:41pm.

The e-mail also contained threats against Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Vilasrao Deshmukh, and his deputy, R.R. Patil, with the claim, “We Wounder at your memory”. Furthermore, the threats went on to warn Indian businessman Mukesh Ambani of Reliance Industries and several Bollywood actors, asking them to stop acting.

Investigation:-

Soon after the blast the investigation began and Gujarat Police found the cars used for bombings in Amedabad and those that were defused in Surat were evenly traced to Navi Mumbai, from where they had been stolen on 7 and 15 July 2008. Investigation revealed that they were subsequently laden with explosives in Vadodara, before being brought to Ahmedabad and Surat. The investigators used the IP address of the threaded mail to go

close to the accused. On 29 July 2008, the police detained three suspects, Abdul Qadir, Hasil Mohammad and Hussain Ibrahim, near Limid on Rajkot Ahmedabad highway in Surendranagar district, while they were leaving Ahmedabad soon after the blasts. On 30 July 2008, it was reported that the police had found CCTV footage of the driver of one of the cars used for the bombings which helps to find the person. On 4 August 2008, the Gujarat police claimed to have their first breakthrough in the case with the identification of the shop from where the LPG cylinders used for the blasts were bought. The police also claimed that the crates in which the bombs were planted were from locally purchased wood. On 15 August, the Gujarat police arrested Mufti Abu Bashir, and nine others, in connection to the bombings.

On 24 October, a SIMI activist, Abdul Razik Manuri, a resident of Gomtipur area Nagda district, on 11 November, the Madhya Pradesh Anti-Terror Squad (ATS) arrested Qayamuddin Kapadia, a top ranking member of SIMI and a key conspirator and executor of the attack. On 13 November, Rafiuddin Kapadia, the brother of the key accused, Qayamuddin Kapadia, was arrested by the city police of Ahmedabad. On 26 March 2012, Maharashtra ATS arrested one blast suspect Mohammed Abrar Babu Khan alias Abrar Shaikh in an encounter in Sambhajinagar. At last on 19 June 2016, Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad, arrested Nasir Rangrez from Belgaum.

Initially, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh sanctioned an ex gratia payment of Rs 100,000 to the people who died on the blast. However upon visiting Ahmedabad, he raised the ex gratia figure to Rs 350,000. In addition, he also announced a compensation of Rs 50,000 for those injured in the blast. Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi announced a compensation of Rs 500,000 to each victim of a bomb case.



Conclusion:-

The trail merged 35 separated cases as a single case and was heard in a special court of judge. A.R. Patel in Ahmedabad. The trail began in 2009 and lasted for about 13 years. The hearing was concluded in September 2021. On 8 February 2022 the verdict was delivered pronouncing 28 accused acquitted due to lack of acceptable evidence while 49 was convicted. The sentences were provided on 18 February 2022, including 38 death sentences and 11 life imprisonments.

Challenges faced by Forensic Investigators:-

- The bombs were planted in different place of Gujarat; the investigators gave a strong effort to retrieve some live bombs from Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi's constituency and surat, another major city in Gujarat.
- Several threatening emails about the attack were coming which became a challenge for the investigators. Police questioned U.S. national Ken Haywood from whose IP address the threatening email was sent. Haywood's residence was raided by ATS officials on 27 July after the IP address from which a threatening email was sent minutes before the Ahmedabad blasts was found to be his.
- The "historic" judgement in this case is a testimony to the hard work and the team spirit of investigators who painstakingly gathered evidence by busting separate modules and arresting accused from various states in a short time.

- The terrorists worked with proper planning with different modules working separately. Detecting a crime committed with such planning is difficult and the investigator surpassed the challenge with a team effort. They detected the crime in a very short time.

Inference:-

2008 Ahmedabad serial blast is a dreadful situation which took many innocent lives. The verdict given by the special court took 13 years which could have also given earlier as lot of the victims were waiting for the justice. Investigators also did not take the case much seriously when they got the threatening email just before the blast, this email the key evidence in the investigation. The investigation also defused some bombs but they could have defused more bombs before they have blast.

Reference:-

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