

Mumbai police arrest 20 IM activists for serial blasts

The [Mumbai](#) police Monday announced they had arrested 20 activists of the shadowy Indian Mujahideen (IM) terror group, including four software professionals the authorities say had sent emails to media outlets moments before the serial bombings in [New Delhi](#) and Ahmedabad.

The arrests had taken place over a 10 day period, with the software professionals being picked up Sunday, Police Commissioner Hasan Gafoor said.

Preliminary interrogation of the accused had revealed that they planned to carry out terror blasts in Mumbai during the ongoing Navratri festival, Gafoor told a press conference here that was televised live by many TV news channels.

Gafoor said 10 IM activists who had planted the bombs in [Ahmedabad](#) and Surat were among those who had been arrested. They had travelled from Karnataka to Pune and then to Surat and Ahmedabad with the explosives, he added.

The IT professionals who have been arrested include Mohammed Mansoor Asghar Peerbhoy (31), working as a principal software engineer in an MNC on a salary of Rs.1.9 million per annum, who is considered the mastermind; Mobin Kadir Shaikh (24), working as a senior technical advisor in an IT firm; and Asif Bashiruddin Shaikh (22), a mechanical engineer.

The emails were sent from three locations - Sanpada suburb of Navi Mumbai, Khalsa College, Matunga and a private company in Chembur, both Mumbai suburbs, using the Wi-Fi connections available at these locations.

The accused have also revealed that they have been involved in all the bomb blasts around India since 2005, Gafoor said.

All those held are highly educated and aged between 20-35. They were arrested from Azamgarh, in Uttar Pradesh, Pune in Maharashtra, in and around Mangalore in Karnataka, and from Kochi in Kerala in the past 10 days, Joint Police Commissioner (Crime) Rakesh Maria said.

The IM has spread its tentacles all over the country and the investigating agencies were now attempting to identify all its operatives to neutralize the organisation's nefarious intentions, Maria added.

According to Maria, the four professionals had visited Mumbai five times prior to sending the emails and conducted a recce of the areas in Mumbai where Wi-Fi connections were available that they could hack into.

They were instructed to send the emails a few minutes before the Ahmedabad and Delhi blasts, which they did on the dot, Gafoor said.

For instance, prior to the Ahmedabad blasts, they had come from Pune to Mumbai in a blue Maruti Esteem and sent the emails using the Wi-Fi connection of the residential Internet of American software professional Kenneth Haywood in Sanpada, Navi Mumbai, Gafoor said.

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