

Press Release

National Investigation Agency (NIA) registered and investigated a case relating to the larger conspiracy of LeT and HUJI to organise spectacular terrorist attacks on places of iconic importance in India. The case was originally registered against two named accused persons viz. David Coleman Headley, Tahawwur Hussain Rana and other unknown persons. A team of NIA officers was deputed and investigation was launched. During the course of investigation, more than 300 witnesses were examined and evidence was collected from several sources such as banks, hotels, airlines, internet service providers and telephone service providers. The investigation of the case presented unique challenges, because all the accused persons were foreign nationals – seven being Pakistani citizens and two being citizens of US and Canada.

The conspiracy was hatched in or around 2005 by the leaders of LeT and HUJI such as Hafiz Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, Ilyas Kashmiri with active support and encouragement from serving officers of the Pakistani Army working for the ISI, such as Major Sameer Ali and Major Iqbal, to organise spectacular terrorist attacks on sensitive iconic targets in India over a long period of time. David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Hussain Rana, both members of LeT, were placed in a position where they could work for providing tactical, material and financial support in planning and carrying out terrorist attacks in India and other places. David Coleman Headley had the advantage of Caucasian looks, American upbringing / accent and American citizenship. Tahawwur Hussain Rana, a Canadian citizen and Pakistani Army deserter, had the benefit of a network which he had developed while running an office and doing business for an immigration consultancy in Chicago, USA.

Both David Coleman Headley and Tahawwur Hussain Rana had passed out from the Hassan Abdal Military College in Pakistan and both wanted to participate in *Jihad* against India and Western powers. Though born in the US to an American mother and Pakistani father,

Headley did his primary and higher school studies in Pakistan and went back at the age of 17 to live with his mother in the US, who was engaged in the business of running a bar. He was repeatedly arrested and imprisoned for being involved in contraband drugs smuggling. He came back to Pakistan and joined LeT after being persuaded by Hafiz Saeed. He attended several basic and specialised terrorist training programmes of LeT. When the LeT and HUJI decided to plan terrorist attacks in India over a long period of time, Headley became the obvious choice for collection of critical data / information required for planning and executing terror attacks. The immigration business of Tahawwur Hussain Rana came in handy, as a front office was opened in India for launching Headley in this country. Neutral contacts of Tahawwur Hussain Rana in India were easily available for David Coleman Headley's assistance in India. The factors which could have aroused suspicion were the original name of David Headley (Dawood Gilani), his Pakistani origin and his Islamic Religion. In furtherance of the conspiracy, therefore, the name was changed, new passport was obtained and false information was submitted to obtain long term multiple entry business visa to India. The office of Tahawwur Hussain Rana and his business partners in the US were used for providing documents for obtaining visa for Headley. David Headley furnished incorrect and false information relating to the name of his father and his marital status.

After obtaining visa, David Headley made multiple trips to India between 14th September, 2006 and 15th of March, 2009. During his trips he conducted tactical surveillance of potential targets of terrorist attacks. He collected tactical details including video footages of all the places which were attacked during 26/11/2008 in Mumbai. He also collected critical information and videos of places including but not limited to different Chabad houses in India, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mantralaya and Air India building in Mumbai, National Defence College in Delhi and so on. He befriended several individuals, who had no knowledge about his activities, during his stay in Mumbai for carrying out reconnaissance of important places in India.

Tahawwur Hussain Rana, who was in constant touch with Headley, provided him with financial resources and other support for running the office in Mumbai which did not process even one case of immigration during its entire period of existence. Rana visited India on 13th November, 2008 and left Mumbai in haste on 21st November 2008, just six days before the Mumbai attack.

The evidence collected during the course of investigation has brought out involvement of seven more accused persons viz. Hafiz Muhammed Saeed, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi, Sajid Majid, Abdur Rehman Hashim, Major Iqbal, Major Sameer Ali and Ilyas Kashmiri.

During the investigation of the case, a three member team of NIA had visited US and interrogated accused David Coleman Headley. On the basis of understandings between India and USA for cooperation in the terror crime cases and under the aegis of Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), two requests were made to US for transfer of evidence in the same case. The US Government transferred some essential evidences collected by FBI in the Headley-Rana case to India, which forms a part of the charge sheet filed by NIA.

Earlier Ld. Special Court, NIA, New Delhi had issued non bailable warrants against 05 accused persons in the NIA case and Interpol Red Notices (RN) are also existing against these accused persons.

A Letter of Request under section 166 (A) CrPC for transfer of evidence from Pakistan, has been sent in the instant case by the Ld. Special Court, NIA, Patiala House, New Delhi. For completion of the pending investigation in Pakistan and collection of further evidences a request for allowing NIA to carry out the further investigation of the said case under section 173(8) CrPC has been made to the Ld. Special Court, NIA, New Delhi.

On 24.12.2011, the charge sheet in the FIR No.04/09 of NIA was filed against 09 accused persons under section 120 B r/w 121, 121 A IPC 302, 468 and 471 IPC and 16, 18. 20 of UA(P) Act 1967 as amended in Act 35 of 2008. The accused persons are (1) David Coleman

Headley, (2) Tahawwur Hussain Rana, (3) Hafiz Muhammed Saeed, (4) Zaki-ur Rehman Ikhvi, (5) Sajid Majid, (6) Abdur Rehman Hashim, (7) Major Iqbal, (8) Major Sameer Ali and (9) Ilyas Kashmiri.

All these accused persons were charge sheeted after the sanction for the prosecution was received from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.