**Mumbai blasts - Wednesday 13 July 2011**

3.28pm: Three explosions have rocked Mumbai during rush hour, in a series of coordinated terrorist attacks on the city, India's home ministry said.

There were no confirmed numbers of fatalities or injuries but [NDTV quoted reports saying 10 people have been killed](http://www.ndtv.com/video/live/channel/ndtv24x7).

Two of the explosions took place in the Opera House district in South Mumbai at Opera House and in Zaveri bazaar. A third occurred in Dadar in the centre of the city.

Six people have died in the Dadar blast and four in the explosion at Zaveri Bazaar, according to NDTV.  
 [NDTV has rolling television coverage here.](http://www.ndtv.com/video/live/channel/ndtv24x7)

3.38pm: The blasts occurred about an hour ago. At least 60 people have been injured, according to the Maharashtra home secretary (Maharashtra is the state in which Mumbai lies).

The Maharastra government is not describing the blasts as terrorist attacks at the moment but the home ministry in Delhi has unequivocally said that the explosions were acts of terrorism.

Mumbai was of course the scene of 2008 terrorist attacks by gunmen, which killed 166 people.

3.50pm: On [the Mumbai Help blog](http://mumbaihelp.blogspot.com/2011/07/can-we-help.html), a series of useful phone numbers have been posted. They are also offering to try to contact people you know in the city if you're having trouble reaching them.

[People are also putting their phone numbers and in some case twitter names in a google spreadsheet](https://spreadsheets.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0AmlFN3_L6ZeZdEUtb2twd3dZZ1FhdmlhNW9wZ1pTRUE&hl=en_US#gid=0) being rapidly updated to offer other people in the area help.

(Links provided by my colleague Laura Oliver)

3.53pm: Police say at least 8 people have been killed and 70 others injured, Reuters reports.

NDTV says Mumbai police are blaming the Indian Mujahideen for the attacks.

3.57pm: Maseeh Rahman sends these details from Delhi:

The home ministry said it's a terrorist attack and has rushed three teams from the newly-created National Intelligence Agency to Mumbai, including forensic experts.

Most people were injured at Zaveri Bazaar, where Mumbai's bullion traders and jewellery shops are located, and at Opera House, where diamond exporters have their offices and workshops.

Zaveri Bazaar is close to the city police headquarters, and has been bombed by terrorists twice in the past - in 1993 and in 2002. This time the improvised explosive device was placed inside an electrical meter box.

The third blast was near Dadar Railway Station in central Mumbai at a road intersection known as Kabutar Khana (Pigeon House), where devout Hindus come to feed the city's pigeons.

Manohar Joshi, former parliament speaker and a leader of the militant Mumbai Shiv Sena party said: "The message from this is not good."

4.07pm: I mentioned that Mumbai police are reportedly blaming the Indian Mujahideen. This group was [described by NDTV in 2008, before the terrorist attacks the same year, as a "front for groups operating out of Pakistan most likely the Lashkar-e-Taiba"](http://www.ndtv.com/convergence/ndtv/mumbaiterrorstrike/Story.aspx?ID=NEWEN20080058894&type=News).

Lashkar-e-Taiba planned the commando-style attacks in the city in November 2008.

[The BBC says of today's blasts](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14141454): "According to some reports, the blasts came on the birthday of Mohammad Ajmal Amir Qasab, the sole surviving gunman from the 2008 attacks."

4.10pm: Here's a map of where the attacks took place, provided by my colleague Paddy Allen:

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4.18pm: If you have are an eyewitness or have any information/links you believe may be useful please contact me on email at haroon.siddique@guardian.co.uk or on twitter [@haroon\_siddique](https://twitter.com/#%21/haroon_siddique).

4.28pm: At a press conference, south Mumbai representative Milend Deora said:

The message that I would liek to give to the people is the same I gave after the 26/11 attacks. People should be calm and refrain from rumour mongering.

He urged people not to believe what was being said on text messages and on the internet and called for "communal harmony".

4.31pm: **The union home minister, P Chidambaram, just confirmed that 10 people have been killed and 54 admitted to hospital.**

4.34pm: Union home minister, P Chidambaram also said   
• there have been three blasts (there have been reports circulating of others)  
• the entire city has been put on "high alert"

He also urged people to "remain calm and not panic".

4.38pm: I've just received information from the Mumbai bureau of [Outlook magazine](http://www.outlookindia.com/) which says the report that today's attacks come on the birthday of the only surviving gunmen in the November 2008 attacks ([see 4.07pm](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/jul/13/mumbai-blasts#block-6)) appears to be wrong.

Doubts about today being Kasab's birthday. General view is the BBC picked it up from Wikipedia which had been edited to push the revenge story.

4.39pm: **The chief minister of Maharastra says 13 have been killed and 81 injured.**

4.48pm: Raw video is emerging taken in the aftermath of the attacks. [This one (**WARNING VERY GRAPHIC**) is said to have been taken at Zaveri bazaar](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILipdCRST6U). It shows a fire and at one point pans to a dismembered body.

Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan said Opera House was subjected to the highest intensisy blast. He said it was too early to say who was responsible for the attacks.

An eyewitness at Opera House told NDTV:

There was too much big noise. First we see there's a fire but after five minutes [there was] too much smoke [for it to be a fire].

We saw 20 to 20 people are on the road. We see that there is too much bomb and so many people are injured.

I think two or three people have lost their legs.

5.04pm: NDTV is reporting that two members of the Indian Mujahideen, who have been blamed by Mumbai police for the attacks, were arrested in the city yesterday.

Meanwhile, Press Trust of [India](http://www.theguardian.com/world/india), is reporting a red alert has been issued in Kolkata and its vicinity following the blasts in Mumbai.

Police sources said a close watch was being kept on railway and metro stations, airport, port, hotels and shopping malls.

5.19pm: **The death toll has risen to 17, according to Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan .**

He told CNN-IBN: "The vehicles used were scooters and motorcycles (in the attacks)."

Aagam Doshi, a witness of the blast at the Opera House and a diamond merchant in south Mumbai, said:

We heard a big blast. The building shook, the windows shattered. It was deafening.  
We came outside, and the area was filled with black smoke. There were bodies lying all over the street, there was lots of blood...We saw many bodies missing arms and missing legs.

5.23pm: I've received an email from Kunal Kothari, who said one of the blasts was outside his workplace:

The one at Opera House happened outside my office building. The sound it made made us immediately aware that it was a bomb going off. The watchman said many many people are dead. He was shaken and crying. His windows were shattered as well. It was an extremely crowded area, one where you can't walk at anywhere close to normal speed. Jam packed. So if it was a powerful bomb, I am sure dozens could be dead.

5.33pm: My colleague Hannah Waldram has created this map which displays tweets using the #Mumbaiblasts hastag in the last 24hours which are geotagged and coming from the Mumbai area. Click on the bubbles to view the tweets and zoom in for more detail.

Several hashtags including #here2help and #mumbaihelp are being used on Twitter to try to coordinate help.  
 [@indianomics tweets](http://twitter.com/#%21/indianomics/status/91176978404741120):

#needhelp "Is anybody near Dadar? Prathamesh Shirsat needs more hands to move the blast victims to hospital. Contact him at 9768957812.

5.36pm: [Zee News has been collating the reaction of Bollywood stars on Twitter to the attacks](http://zeenews.india.com/entertainment/articles/story92110.htm) (link passed on by my colleague Saptarshi Ray). Here's a selection:

**Amitabh Bachchan**- "Bomb blasts in Mumbai .. !! God ! I hope people are safe !!"

**Shahid Kapoor**- "3 blasts in mumbai .. Please head home !!!!!"

**Abhishek Bachchan**- "Hope and pray that you people are safe and home"  
 **Dia Mirza**- "People please don't panic. Stay calm. Get home safe."

**Anupam Kher**- "#MumbaiBlasts. Anger, frustration and helplessness is NOT the answer. Hanging the terrorists already convicted is. Prayers for all."  
 **Priyanka Chopra**- "Terrible news about the blasts. A request - please do not cause panic by tweeting/ spreading rumors / unconfirmed news."

5.43pm: **The death toll has been raised to 20** with the majority at Opera House and Zaveri bazaar, the home minister said. The blasts took place between 6.50pm and 7.04pm (2.20pm and 2.34pm BST)

5.45pm: **The home ministry says 113 people were injured.**

5.52pm: Here's an extract from the latest story by the Associated Press, which paints a vivid picture of the carnage following the blasts:

Blood-covered bodies lay on the streets and people hugged and wept. Others carried the wounded to taxis. Crowds gathered in the blast areas as police questioned witnesses, and bomb squads inspected the undercarriages of vehicles searching for clues and other explosives.

Motorcycles were charred, shopfronts shattered and a bus stop ripped apart. A photograph showed victims crowding into the back of a cargo truck to be taken to a hospital.

The first blast struck the Zaveri Bazaar at 6.54pm, tearing through the famed jewellery market. A minute later, a second blast hit the busy business district of Opera House, several miles away in southern Mumbai. At 7:05 p.m., the third bomb exploded in the crowded neighboUrhood of Dadar in central Mumbai, according to police.

An eyewitness at Zaveri Bazaar described two motorcycles exploding in flames and saw at least six bodies. "People were shouting 'Help me, help me,'" the man told Headlines Today television. Another witness showed cellphone clips of several bodies sprawled across the street to the NDTV news station.

6.02pm: Delhi and Chennai have also been put on high alert following the Mumbai blasts, reports NDTV. (They join Kolkata and of course Mumbai).

6.11pm: **Another fatality has been confirmed taking the death toll to 21.**

6.23pm: [I've just been speaking to Kunal Kothari in Mumbai](http://audioboo.fm/boos/411670-kunal-kothari-in-mumbai-i-saw-hundreds-and-thosands-of-people-running-away), who was in his office in the Opera House district when the blast occurred (apologies for the quality of the audio). He said people were angry that the only surviving perpetrator of the 2008 attacks has not received the death penalty and they were already pointing the finger at Pakistan:

We were in the office, eight to 10 of us and we heard a big big blast.

The watchman of our building had a look at the blast...he was very shaken. Actually he must have had a look at the scene. He was crying and telling us many people had died.

I saw hundreds and thousands of people running away from the scene.

The anger is very much there. Everyone is really angry, not just about this blast but the fact that previous blasts were not punished the way they should.

It's probably some groups who have support from across the border, from across the border in Pakistan, that's what people are thinking.

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6.25pm: The home ministry has confirmed that the blast at Opera House was caused by an improvised explosive device hidden under an umbrella, NDTV reports.

6.31pm: The UK foreign secretary, William Hague, has condemned the attacks. He said:

I send my deepest condolences to all those who have lost relatives or been injured in the bomb blasts in Mumbai. These were deplorable acts of terrorism. The UK stands firmly with India in the face of such atrocities. We are committed to working with the Indian government and our allies and partners to combat the threat from terrorism in all its forms.  
  
A Foreign Office consular team is already in Mumbai to provide consular support to any British nationals who may have been caught up in these events, and the Foreign Office is in close contact with the Indian authorities.

6.35pm: Barack Obama has described the attacks as outrageous in a statement (via USA Today). The US president said:

I strongly condemn the outrageous attacks in Mumbai, and my thoughts and prayers are with the wounded and those who have lost loved ones.

The US government continues to monitor the situation, including the safety and security of our citizens. India is a close friend and partner of the United States.

The American people will stand with the Indian people in times of trial, and we will offer support to India's efforts to bring the perpetrators of these terrible crimes to justice.

During my trip to Mumbai, I saw first-hand the strength and resilience of the Indian people, and I have no doubt that the India will overcome these deplorable terrorist attacks.

6.46pm: Kunal Kothari, who I spoke to earlier ([see 6.23pm](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2011/jul/13/mumbai-blasts#block-22#block-26)), has sent me some more details he said he forgot to mention earlier. He said:

The blast happened right smack bang in the middle of the biggest diamond market of the world, where people routinely trade in them on the streets of the market. So very very crowded (so much so that women avoid taking these streets), and I wouldn't be surprised if millions of dollars worth of diamonds are strewn on the street/washed away in the rain.

The security in the diamond market is lax/non-existent. Anyone/any car can enter the main streets of the market. Only some of the main buildings are somewhat protected. This might be due to complacence since there has been no attack so far on the diamond market in spite of it's vulnerability. Me and my brother reflect upon this anomaly many times, the standard conclusion is that terrorists groups or their masters have some kind of vested interest in the diamond market, although there is no evidence, and only a few anecdotes to validate this theory.

While we were rushing out, I must mention that there were a lot of fearless people helping the injured to get to the hospitals.

6.48pm: [The Indian tabloid Mid Day is tweeting the names of some of the injured in hospital.](https://twitter.com/#%21/mid_day)

6.52pm: Pakistan's president and prime minister have condemned the attacks in Mumbai, [Dawn.com reports](http://www.dawn.com/2011/07/13/pakistan-condemns-mumbai-blasts.html).

A statement from Pakistan's foreign ministry said:

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, the government and the people of Pakistan, have condemned the blasts in Mumbai and expressed distress on the loss of lives and injuries.

The President and the Prime Minister have expressed their deepest sympathies to the Indian leadership.

India's Hindu nationalist party, [the BJP, is already calling for an investigation into whether there is any Pakistani link to the attacks](http://www.hindustantimes.com/Investigate-if-Pakistan-linked-to-today-s-blasts-urges-BJP/H1-Article1-720751.aspx). India's home ministry says it is [too soon to assign responsibility](http://www.hindustantimes.com/Premature-to-name-terror-group-behind-blasts-Home-ministry/H1-Article1-720747.aspx).

7.06pm: The Indian home minister is going to Mumbai in the aftermath of the blasts, the Press Trust of India reports (thanks to my colleague Saptarshi Ray for passing this on):

Home minister P Chidambaram is arriving here tonight to take stock of the situation and meet the injured and victims and their family members. Official sources said the home minister is expected to arrive late in the night and then visit the three blast sites, meet the injured admitted in the hospitals and some of the family members of the dead. Chidambaram will chair a meeting with Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan and top civil and police officers to take stock of the situation in Mumbai following this evening's three explosions.

I'm handing over the blog to my colleague **Barry Neild** now.

7.24pm: This is [Barry Neild](http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/barry-neild), taking over from [Haroon](http://www.guardian.co.uk/profile/haroonsiddique). We've switched off our comment section below, but feel free to email me with any details or comments you might have. I'm reachable at [this address](mailto:barry.neild.casual@guardian.co.uk)

7.36pm: IBN has published a [document listing names of the dead and injured](http://ibnlive.in.com/news/mumbai-blasts-names-of-the-dead-and-injured/167315-53.html) it says has been released by local authorities. This list, credited to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, puts the death toll at **17** with **130** hurt.

7.57pm: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has condemned the attacks in a statement that also urges calm, the [Times of India](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Manmohan-asks-Mumbaikars-to-be-calm-united/articleshow/9214796.cms) reports.

Singh said he had asked Ashok Chavan, the chief minister of Maharashtrathe region to provide relief to the injured and to the families of the deceased.

Meanwhile, NDTV has been speaking to Chavan on his way to visit some of the injured in hospitals. The minister said many were being treated for serious burn injuries similar to those caused by Molotov cocktails.

8.13pm: Inevitably, a lot of comparisons are being made to the last [major attack on Mumbai in November 2008](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/mumbai-terror-attacks) in which more than 160 people were killed when Pakistan-based militants went on the rampage across the city. Several people have pointed out that whereas the 2008 attacks targeted luxury hotels used by foreigners, today's focused on areas frequented by ordinary Mumbai citizens. The tactics are also different with improvised explosive devices causing today's blasts rather than a crew of well-drilled militants arriving by speedboat.

Reuters quotes Stratfor, a strategic affairs think tank with this to say:

This tactic is much more in line with those used by more amateurish groups such as the Indian Mujahideen who have targeted crowded urban areas before.

The same Reuters report adds that today's attacks come two days after the fifth anniversary of a series of train bombings in Mumbai that killed 188 people, many of them diamond merchants, an attack also blamed on Pakistan-based militants.

It goes on to say:

There was no immediate indication any Pakistan group was involved. But any suggestion of attributing blame to Islamabad would complicate a fraught relationship with India and further unravel ties with the United States which has withheld some military aid to Pakistan to pressure it to buckle down in the war on terror.

8.28pm: More on previous attacks endured by India in recent years from the Hindu newspaper, which has published a [chronology charting more than 20 bomb attacks](http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article2224460.ece) since 2005. The worst of these appears to the 2006 Mumbai train bombings and the 2008 hotel attacks.

8.53pm: This via the Associated Press: Hillary Clinton, the US secretary of state, is planning to go ahead with a scheduled trip to New Delhi and Chennai starting next Tuesday. Clinton said she believes "it is more important than ever that we stand with India".

8.57pm: Further to the last post, here's a [link to fuller version of the Clinton statement](http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/07/168446.htm?utm_source=twitterfeed&utm_medium=twitter) and a video. courtesy of the US State Department.

9.17pm: A couple of images taken from the sites of the blasts here. They're not as graphic as some I've seen on Indian news websites that show pretty gruesome scenes in terms of casualties.

This first, shows the aftermath in the Opera House area, where the second explosive device was detonated.

This second photo shows a blast victim being taken to hospital. More than 130 are reported injured. The latest official death toll is 21.

I've seen a few other images published on Indian news website that show some pretty graphic scenes in terms of injuries and casualties.

9.35pm: Some [first-draft analysis here from B Raman](http://ibnlive.in.com/videos/167319/indian-mujahideen-could-be-behind-the-blasts.html), a former Indian government official turned strategic expert. Raman tells IBN the attack bears hallmarks of earlier strikes by the Indian Mujahideen, a homegrown Islamist terror outfit said to have links with Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Pakistan-based group blamed for the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

9.43pm: My colleague Jason Burke has some background on Mumbai's past as stage for previous outbreaks of violence, and a bit more on the Indian Mujahideen. The [full article is here](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/13/mumbai-explosions-india-commercial-capital), but here's a few of key paragraphs:

Over the years, India's commercial capital has witnessed much violence, from communal riots to gangland wars to terrorist operations. The most spectacular of the latter were the attacks of November 2008, which saw Pakistani militants from the Lashkar-e-Taiba group raid a series of targets in the city, killing more than 160 people. Two luxury hotels, a Jewish centre, a cafe and a main railway terminal were attacked.

In Delhi in October, gunmen opened fire on tourists shortly before the opening of the Commonwealth Games in Varanasi, and a bomb exploded beside worshippers along the river Ganges in the holy city. Following this attack, a home-grown militant outfit calling itself the Indian Mujahideen threatened to unleash violence. It is this organisation that was blamed for Wednesday's blasts.

The "Indian mujahideen" is a label applied to a range of groups. There are also theories that several recent attacks originally blamed on Muslim extremists were in fact the work of Hindu radicals.

10.07pm: And here's [our news piece on today's blasts](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jul/13/mumbai-bomb-blasts-india), by Maseeh Rahman in Delhi.

There will be more on this topic tomorrow. At this point, the death toll from the three blasts is 21 people.