



Is the Mumbai Police Geared up to the Task of Combating Terrorism?

Amit Kumar

Amit Kumar is Research Assistant at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSAs), New Delhi.

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Summary

The Police Force stands at the cutting-edge of countering terrorism. However, the preparedness of the Mumbai police leaves much to be desired. The problems police forces in Mumbai and elsewhere in the country face are many and warrant a concerted effort on the part of the centre and the states. The central and state governments have indeed tried to address this issue and a comprehensive police modernization programme is underway. This Issue Brief reviews the progress or lack thereof on the front of modernization of police forces under the Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) Scheme, with specific reference to the Mumbai Police..

The July 13, 2011 terrorist carnage in Mumbai was a grim reminder of the fact that the Indian State has failed to tackle the menace of terrorism. The city of Mumbai has been targeted on at least 14 occasions since March 1993, which together have led to the death of 708 people and injury to 2383 others (see table 1). Soon after the November 26, 2008 Mumbai attacks, both the Central and the State Government had made promises to secure the city, the State as well as the rest of the country by strengthening the security apparatus. Yet, in the wake of the July 13 attack, Maharashtra Chief Minister (CM) Prithviraj Chavan acknowledged that Mumbai was ill-equipped to tackle terror.

The Police Force stands at the cutting-edge of countering terrorism. However, the preparedness of the Mumbai police leaves much to be desired. The problems police forces in Mumbai and elsewhere in the country face are many and warrant a concerted effort on the part of the centre and the states. The central and state governments have indeed tried to address this issue and a comprehensive police modernization programme is underway. This Issue Brief reviews the progress or lack thereof on the front of modernization of police forces under the Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) Scheme.

Table 1: Casualties in Terrorist Attacks in Mumbai since 1993

S.No.	Date	Place	Killed	Injured
1	March 12, 1993	13 blasts across the city	257	713
2	August 28, 1997	Near Jama Masjid	0	3
3	January 24, 1998	Malad	0	1
4	February 27, 1998	Virar	9	0
5	December 2, 2002	Ghatkopar	3	31
6	December 6, 2002	Mumbai Central railway station	0	25
7	January 27, 2003	Vile Parle	1	25
8	March 13, 2003	Mulund Railway Station	11	80
9	April 14, 2003	Bandra	1	0
10	July 29, 2003	Ghatkopar	3	34
11	August 25, 2003	Gateway of India and Zaveri Bazaar	50	150
12	July 11, 2006	7 blasts at 7 locations in local trains across the city	181	890
13	November 26, 2008	Multiple terrorist attacks across the city	166	300
14	July 13, 2011	Serial blasts in Mumbai	26	131
Total			708	2383

Source: South Asia Terrorism Portal¹

¹ http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/database/mumbai_blast.htm.

“Police” and “law and order” is a State subject (Entry 2 of the List II of the VII Schedule to the Constitution of India) and it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to modernize and adequately equip their police forces for meeting the challenges to law and order and internal security. However, due to financial and other constraints, their efforts have often not been up to the desired level. It is in this context that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has been supplementing their efforts and resources from time to time by way of measures like the Non-Plan Scheme for Modernization of State Police Forces (MPF) since 1969-70 on a Centre-State cost sharing (50:50)² basis. Initially, Rs. 50 lakh was allocated annually for the Scheme. In 1978-79 the allocation was raised from Rs. 50 Lac to Rs. 7 crore per annum. From 1999-2000, allocation was further enhanced to Rs. 100 crore. In 2001, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) enhanced the annual allocation to Rs. 1000 crore and approved the continuance of the MPF Scheme up to 2009-10.³ The scheme is still operational; though the funds for 2011-12 have not yet been released to States.⁴

The main objective of the scheme is to overcome the identified shortcomings in various aspects of police administration, which were worked out in a 2000 study by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D). Another important objective is to reduce the dependence of the State Governments on the Army and Central Para Military Forces for dealing with internal security and maintaining law and order. The scheme aims to modernize police forces in terms of, Mobility (including purchase of bullet proof and mine proof vehicles), Weaponry, Communication Systems, Training, Forensic Science Laboratory/Finger Printing Bureau, Equipments, and Buildings.

In addition, the MHA introduced a new concept of Mega City Policing (MCP) as a sub-Plan under the MPF Scheme from the year 2005-06 onwards. MCP covers seven cities, viz., Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Ahmedabad. Based on the approved plan, funds are given to mega cities for procurement of modern equipment like portable X-ray machines, vehicle scanners, vehicle number plate identification systems, integrated GIS based automated vehicle tracking, etc.⁵ The following are the funds released for Mumbai under the mega city policing scheme

² The Scheme was again reviewed in the year 2005 and in view of the changed security scenario, States were recategorized into two groups, namely, ‘A’ and ‘B’ providing for central assistance at 100 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively. The State of J&K and all 8 NE States (including Sikkim with effect from 2007-08) fall in Category ‘A’ entitling them to 100 per cent central assistance and the remaining 19 States are in category ‘B’, getting 75 per cent central assistance.

³ Modernisation of Police Force (MPF) Scheme Book, Draft, 9 November, 2010, Ministry of Home Affairs.

⁴ <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=74654>.

⁵ Modernisation of Police Force (MPF) Scheme Book, Draft, 9 November, 2010, Ministry of Home Affairs.

between 2005-06 and 2008-09, and included in the approved Annual Action Plan for 2009-10 for Mumbai:-

Table 2: Central Fund Released and Approved for Mega City Policing Scheme of MPF for Mumbai

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	Total
Rs. (In Crore)	5.00	27.00	20.00	22.44	33.23	107.67

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs⁶

Table 2 shows that the total amount released and approved over a period of five years for Mumbai under MCP has been a little more than 100 crore. But this is clearly inadequate given that the estimated cost of installing the proposed 5000 CCTVs⁷ alone is Rs 150-200 crore. According to the Power Grid Corporation of Indian Ltd's proposal, which was submitted initially but got mired in red tape, CCTV installation would be a turnkey project estimated to cost Rs. 157 crore. It would include a CCTV network that enables motion detection, bio-matrix, optical character recognition (for screening number plates of vehicles), night vision, thermal imaging, and also pan, tilt and zoom capabilities.⁸ Thus, the Mumbai police clearly did not have the capability to procure the various weapons and equipment under the MCP scheme given the limited resources allocated. Given below in Table 3 is the cost of some of the other equipment to be procured under the MCP scheme, which further highlights the imperative of considerably stepping up the allocation of resources for police modernization.

Table 3: Security Equipment to be Procured for Police Forces under the MCP Scheme

S.No.	Name of Equipment	Utility	Approx. unit cost (Rs. In lac)
1	Portable X-Ray Unit (RTVS)	For checking inside suspected Briefcases, closed packets etc. Images are viewed on a display monitor	12.0
2	Nigh Vision devices	For night time surveillance in the security areas	2.5
3	CCTV Systems	For monitoring unauthorized intrusion	5.0
4	Vehicle tracking system with GPS	For auto tracking of police vehicles	25.00
5	Iridium Satellite Phone	For long distance communication using a portable set	1.80

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs⁹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Mega City Policing Scheme of MPF provides for the procurement of CCTVs.

⁸ <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/5-000-cctv-cameras-to-watch-mumbai-round-the/410952/>.

⁹ Modernisation of Police Force (MPF) Scheme Book, Draft, 9 November, 2010, Ministry of Home Affairs.

The other source of finance for the city police, apart from the funds released under MCP, is the centre's allocation under the MPF scheme, which was Rs 65.4 Crore in FY 2009-10 and Rs 82.34 crore in FY 2010-2011 for Maharashtra. As far as the State's funding of its police force is concerned, it is limited to running costs under heads like pay and allowances, telephone, electricity and water charges, office expenses, and supplies and materials, etc. No concerted effort to build-up policing infrastructure, buildings, housing, training, and mobility, etc. has been made in all these years. There is a huge gap between the demand for resources and what is made available. Further, when we look at the high unit cost of some of the essential equipment (see table 4) to be procured under the MPF scheme (leave aside training, forensic science laboratory/finger printing bureau, buildings and mobility aspects of modernisation), it appears that the funds available for Mumbai Police modernization is grossly insufficient. To illustrate the point; in the Modernisation of Police Force (MPF) Scheme Book (draft) 2010 under the head "Scale of Equipment Requirement of the Indian Police-Phase-I", it is provided that one per cent of the total police strength of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh should be equipped with Bullet Proof Jackets. The Sanctioned and Actual Strength of Maharashtra Civil Police Including District Armed Police as on 31.12.2009 was 186980, and 166611, respectively.¹⁰ Equipping one percent of the Maharashtra police force with Bullet Proof Jackets would require a sum of around 13 crore, which amounts to approximately 1/5th of the centre's allocation¹¹ of Rs 65.4 crore in FY 2009-10 to Maharashtra under the MPF scheme. Therefore, to equip Mumbai's 43,000 policemen with bullet proof jackets any time soon appears to be a challenging task for the city police as the state government does not seem to have sufficient resources. Indeed, the Mumbai Police has not been able to purchase a single bullet proof jacket since 26/11, and was eventually prevailed upon to accept a gift of 100 jackets from private sector companies.¹² This, despite the fact that the lack of adequate numbers of quality bullet proof jackets cost precious lives in the 26/11 terror attacks. Moreover, when it did provide such bullet proof jackets, these were incapable of withstanding bullets fired from AK-47 assault rifles and self-loading rifles (SLRs). As aptly noted by J.K. Dutt, former director general of the National Security Guard, "Considering that Mumbai has faced terrorists with automatic weapons in the past and the threat perception

¹⁰ Crime in India, 2009, Statistics, National Crime Records Bureau, page no. 587.

¹¹ So far, the Centre has released less than 40% of the estimated modernisation budget. Further, cost escalation of items and inflation over the years will make the BPR&D's projected requirement of Rs 25,000 Crore for MPF scheme itself meagre, let alone the amounts actually allocated. For details see, Om Shankar Jha, "Impact of Modernisation of Police Forces Scheme on Combat Capability of the Police Forces in Naxal-Affected States: A Critical Evaluation", *IDSA Occasional Paper No.7*, December 2009, http://www.idsa.in/occasionalpapers/ImpactofModernisationofPoliceForcesSchemeonCombatCapabilityofthePoliceForcesinNaxal_osjha_2009.

¹² <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/ajaisahni/10AS-usi.htm#24>.

for the city has always been high, authorities should have purchased the bullet-proof jackets which could withstand fire from automatic weapons like AK-47s."¹³

Table 4: Security Equipment to be Procured for Police Forces under the MPF Scheme

S.No.	Name of Equipment	Utility	Approx. unit cost (Rs. In lac)
1	Bomb Truck	Transport equipment for bomb disposal	5.0
2	Explosive Detector (Model-97 with Viper)	Useful for detection of explosives	10.5
3	Bomb disposal robotic vehicle	For remote controlled disposal of bombs & explosives	90.0
4	Bomb-suit	Guards against bomb explosion	2.5
5	Bullet Proof light vehicle	For protection from bullets & ambush	5.0
6	Alarm Systems	For perimeter security	10.0
7	Fire Arms Training system	For training of troops without expending ammunition	55.0
8	Small Arms Trg. Simulator	For fire arms training indoors	12.5
9	Frequency Jammer	For preventing IEDs explosion	70.0

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs¹⁴

The Mumbai police can be expected to perform optimally only when the items and facilities envisaged under the MCP & MPF scheme are provided to them. However, there is a considerable gap between the requirements of the Mumbai Police and the financial resources at its disposal which has affected the performance of the police force in countering terrorism. Policemen frequently complain about the mismatch in the quality of weapons and equipments used by them and those used by terrorists. In addition, training, which is one of the most neglected areas in Police departments across the country, warrants urgent attention.¹⁵ Residential buildings for policemen and family accommodation need to be constructed on priority to maintain morale, particularly for policemen who are posted in Mega Cities like Mumbai, since housing is a big problem

¹³ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/Bulletproof-jackets-failed-test-but-not-contract/Article1-494177.aspx>.

¹⁴ Modernisation of Police Force (MPF) Scheme Book, Draft, 9 November, 2010, Ministry of Home Affairs.

¹⁵ In June 1995 a survey of 100 out of 145 Police training institutions in the country conducted by the BPR&D had revealed that police training is highly neglected. The BPR&D study had further found that only 1,105 Head Constables and 9,861 constables were given refresher training out of 13 lakh police personnel in the country. For details, see Om Shankar Jha, "Impact of Modernisation of Police Forces Scheme," op. cit.

in these cities.¹⁶ The present scheme has not been able to achieve the desired level of satisfaction in the above aspects primarily because the allocation has been inadequate so far.

A look at some facts on Mumbai police will further illustrate this point:-

- Earlier this year, the Union home ministry had drastically cut its share of financial assistance to Maharashtra. As per the original plan, the Centre had promised Rs 123.30 crore for modernization of the police force in the previous year (2010-11). However, subsequently, the grant had been reduced to Rs 82.34 crore. The Centre's decision came at a juncture when the state government was in the process of drafting an ambitious plan to modernize the police force to tackle terror threats. This was confirmed by Maharashtra home minister R.R. Patil who said: "It is true that the Centre has cut financial assistance for Maharashtra. We have received such a communication from the Centre."¹⁷
- Lack of availability of modern communication gadgets was highlighted when Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan said after the recent 13/7 attacks on Mumbai that for over 15 minutes after the bomb blasts, he was unable to get in touch with Mumbai police commissioner Arup Patnaik or any senior police officer or bureaucrat. "There was a complete jam in the mobile network.....Even the wireless network was not functioning, since it works only within a limited radius. I have taken it up with the Centre."¹⁸
- The Mumbai Police has declined to procure Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for aerial surveillance of the city by bluntly stating that they do not have trained staff to operate the UAVs. In December 2010, the central government had sanctioned Rs1 crore for the purchase of 24 UAVs for the Mumbai police, which would have been useful to keep a check on terrorist elements.¹⁹
- Maharashtra chief minister Prithviraj Chavan admitted after 13/7 that owing to rampant red-tape and procedural wrangles, his government was not able to install around 5,000 CCTV cameras and was unable to procure sensitive weapons, bullet-

¹⁶ Keeping in view the recommendation of the National Police commission that 100 per cent housing should be provided to all police personnel, BPR&D while making the initial projection, estimated that police housing would require Rs 24,608.92 Crore. However, owing to paucity of funds, allocation for housing was drastically cut, thereby, making it impossible to achieve 100 per cent satisfaction level for this requirement. See, *ibid*.

¹⁷ http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-02-21/mumbai/28618672_1_police-force-modernization-terror-attacks.

¹⁸ <http://m.economictimes.com/PDAET/news/politics/nation/Mumbai-blasts-Mumbai-not-equipped-to-tackle-terror-says-Prithviraj-Chavan/articleshow/9243546.cms>.

¹⁹ http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report_no-uavs-for-us-please-mumbai-police_1541784.

proof jackets and security equipment.²⁰ Installing CCTVs across the city was one of the key recommendations in Ram Pradhan committee which was set up after the 26/11 attacks. The CCTVs are proposed to be installed at 480 traffic junctions in the city to monitor the movements of vehicles and individuals round the clock. The network of CCTVs would also monitor important government installations and buildings, railway stations, BEST depots and beaches. So far only 300 CCTVs have been installed in Mumbai. Moreover, no personnel have been trained to monitor the CCTVs. Stressing the importance of CCTVs, Maharashtra's present rural development minister Jayant Patil, who held the home portfolio for a brief while in the wake of the 26/11 terror attacks, said recently: "Police cannot be deployed everywhere, however CCTVs can be installed at vital locations, which can help police...Even if five thousand CCTVs are installed across the city, then too it will not be enough."²¹

- The problems that even a specialized counter terrorism force like Force One²² is facing are plenty, ranging from shortage of bullet-proof jackets to inadequate numbers of walkie-talkies, absence of night-vision equipment and specialized eyewear to deal with blasts. In the absence of a permanent base, it currently operates from the state reserve police force campus at Kalina, a Mumbai suburb. However, the most critical issue is the lack of motivated officers who want to join the force. The Force has a sanctioned strength of 350, including 47 officers ranging from sub-inspectors to superintendents. However, 20 officer positions in the force are still vacant, even though there is no dearth of enthusiasm for joining the constabulary. Since its inception in 2009, Force One has not been able to hold adequate training sessions with its Israeli trainers due to lack of funds. Each session costs the state Rs. 10 lakh. The commando force also faces a serious equipment crunch. Only ten per cent of the commandos have bullet-proof vests and helmets. Other essentials of counter-terrorism like blast-proof eyewear, goggles with rear view, stun grenades and digital radios, were promised but never provided.²³
- Official data indicates that the Mumbai police have a vacancy rate of 40 per cent at the lower-level of police officers, including that of assistant police inspectors and police sub-inspectors. It is the lower level police officers who are directly responsible for maintaining law and order and intelligence gathering.²⁴ Mumbai has 300 policemen per 100,000 population, which is much below the 222 policemen per

²⁰ <http://m.economicstimes.com/PDAET/news/politics/nation/Mumbai-blasts-Mumbai-not-equipped-to-tackle-terror-says-Prithviraj-Chavan/articleshow/9243546.cms>.

²¹ http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-07-18/india/29786508_1_cctvs-r-r-patil-home-minister.

²² Force One is a special commando unit expected to guard the city like a fort and be ready 24 hours to repel any terror attack.

²³ <http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/26-11-no-force-in-force-one-68649>.

²⁴ <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/07/14/157683.html>.

100,000 population recommended by the United Nations. This is a serious deficiency that the Mumbai police face.

- To strengthen the patrolling of the coastline, the state police's marine wing was to get 28 bullet-proof speedboats equipped with radar, GPS and marine communication facility after the 26/11 attacks. So far, only 12 such boats have been deployed. State governments in general have consistently not shown much interest towards coastal security. This is particularly true for Maharashtra, a fact noted by the October 2008 Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on the Coastal Security Scheme.²⁵
- Mumbai trains ferry about seven million commuters daily. But major railway stations such as Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Churchgate, Dadar, Andheri, Bandra, Kurla and Borivali are not adequately monitored.²⁶

It is universally acknowledged that counter terrorism is best carried out by police and intelligence agencies. However, there is a lack of political will to initiate the reform of police forces which are the first responders to an event and which moreover should be the main source of intelligence about the activities of suspicious individuals and groups. As is the norm, a number of committees over the years have been appointed in the aftermath of a particularly outrageous incident and these have pointed out to the imperative of initiating the necessary reforms and have mapped these in great detail. But there has been very poor follow-up.²⁷ A case in point here is of the Ram Pradhan Committee. Ram Pradhan, chief of the committee which was appointed after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack has been quoted as saying, "It's been a year since we submitted the report, but no one from the state government has even met me to discuss the report or tell me how they're implementing the recommendations made. The people deserve answers. I realised that they are busy, but isn't this important."²⁸ When asked if the Mumbai police have learnt their lessons post the 26/11 attacks, Ram Pradhan, chief of the Ram Pradhan Committee said "No". He added, "The police department's primary responsibility is to protect the people. It is unable to perform this basic function because

²⁵ Pushpita Das, "Coastal Security Arrangement: A Case Study of Gujarat and Maharashtra Coasts", *IDSA Occasional Paper No.6*, November 2009, http://www.idsa.in/occasionalpapers/CoastalSecurityArrangement_pdas_2009.

²⁶ http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-05-16/mumbai/29547847_1_metro-rail-mono-metal-detectors.

²⁷ S. Kalyanaraman, "Thinking about Counter Terrorism in India's National Strategy", Draft paper, Presented at *IDSA International Workshop on National Security Strategy*, December 2010, http://www.idsa.in/nationalstrategy/eventDec10/WP_SKalyanraman.pdf.

²⁸ <http://news.oneindia.in/2011/07/17/mum-blast-26-11-probe-chief-slams-govt-for-inaction-aid0113.html>.

they are understaffed and overworked. Policemen work long hour. If the police department is strengthened, all these lapses will stop. But no one is really working toward strengthening the police system.”²⁹

Keeping in view the scale of threat that terrorists pose to Mumbai, preparedness of the city police seems to be lacking. The Mumbai police face problems ranging from lack of modern weapons and state of the art communication gadgets to improper training and insufficient accommodation, leaving them unprepared to face a threat as potent as that of terrorism. Apart from announcements little has happened on the ground as a result of the lackadaisical efforts of the central and Maharashtra governments post 26/11. No wonder Mumbai continues to be an easy target.

²⁹ <http://news.oneindia.in/2011/07/17/mum-blast-26-11-probe-chief-slams-govt-for->