



► **TRAVEL RISK INTELLIGENCE SERVICE**

Australians may boycott IPL over security threat

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The success of the third Indian Premier League, due to start on March 12, is in serious doubt because of the growing threat of a boycott by two dozen Australian cricketers, and others from the southern hemisphere, on security grounds. A specific threat to Australian players comes from the militant group Shiv Sena, who said that "kangaroo cricketers" would not be welcome after a spate of attacks in Australia on Indian students.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE : Travel Alert

29/01/2010

The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens to ongoing security concerns in India. The U.S. government continues to receive information that terrorist groups may be planning attacks in India. Terrorists and their sympathizers have demonstrated their willingness and capability to attack targets where U.S. citizens or Westerners are known to congregate or visit. This replaces the Travel Alert dated 29 December 2009, and expires on 30 April 2010.

Increased security on Air India flights after terror threat

22/01/2010 08:16:19

Extra security measures are being put in place after officials say militants have threatened to hijack an Air India aeroplane. "We have alerted our civil aviation security people against a possible attempt to hijack an Indian airlines flight," U.K. Bansal, the special secretary for internal security in the Home Ministry, told Reuters. "This would obviously be from terrorist groups who are arraigned against Indian interests," he added, but did not specify which group. He added that the greatest threat was on flights to and from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and suggested deploying more sky marshals and carrying out more stringent security checks on passengers.

► **BACKGROUND TO REPORTS**

Going back to September 2009, senior American military, intelligence and counterterrorism officials expressed certainty that Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was plotting new attacks. LeT is the Pakistan based terrorist organisation responsible for the deadly assault on Mumbai in November 2008.

This prompted a spate of travel advisories over the ensuing months warning visitors to India of a terror strike. These were generated by the UK, Canada, one from the Israeli counter-terrorism unit and most recently by the U.S.A.

In January 2010, a federal grand jury in Chicago returned an indictment against one of the main planners of the Mumbai attack, David Coleman Headley, and three other defendants.

They are Canadian-Pakistani doctor Tahawwur Hussain Rana, who is a permanent resident of the U.S.A., Ilyas Kashmiri, described as an influential terrorist organisation leader in Pakistan who is alleged to be in regular contact with leaders of Al Qaeda, and Abdur Rehman Hashim Syed (Abdur Rehman), a retired major in the Pakistani military.

They have been indicted for participating in "conspiracies involving a planned terrorist attack against the Danish newspaper Jyllands Posten and the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai that killed approximately 164 people, including six Americans".

The FBI has a recorded conversation of 7 September 2009 between Headley and Rana, in which the two are heard discussing their terror targets using code words. Intelligence Bureau sources said that terrorists could target tourist spots or five-star hotels in a repeat of 26 November 2008.

In November 2009, federal American prosecutors told the court in Chicago that LeT planned to attack The National Defence College in New Delhi, as well as two boarding schools outside the capital.

On 18 January 2010, the Hyderabad police foiled the attempts of LeT to organise major 'attacks' in south India, with the arrest of its south Indian chief Shaik Abdul Khaja. The arrested man was allegedly involved in the twin blasts in Hyderabad in 2007, New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Jaipur, and Ahmedabad. Also on 19 January 2010, an Al-Qaeda terrorist carrying a Pakistani passport was arrested in Purnia, Bihar.

Meanwhile, on 22 January 2010, it was reported that LeT had acquired more than 50 para-gliders from Europe. This report suggested that the equipment could be used to carry out air-borne suicide attacks in the country, putting security forces across India on high alert. Intelligence sources also reported that Indian airliners especially Air India were facing a massive hijack threat. The aviation industry and all major airports were also put on high alert and security procedures at all airports were further tightened.

Although no official warnings have been issued advising people not to travel to India, we advise you to exercise particular caution when in the vicinity of key government installations, tourist sites and other public places such as hotels, airports, shopping malls, markets or when travelling on public transport. You should reconsider your need to attend public events (including religious and sporting events).

The ANVIL Group offers a range of assistance services for corporate travellers and expatriates, please contact us to discuss your security arrangements.