

MUMBAI: Officials privy to the David Headley case say the coded communication between Headley and his Pakistan-based counterparts indicate they wanted to use terror group Harkat-ul-Jihad-al Islami (HuJI) for fresh attacks on Mumbai and other Indian cities. Pakistani handlers had used the LeT for the 26/11 attacks.

Ilyas Kashmiri of HuJI was in regular contact with Headley for some time and their communications suggested that they were in the process of plotting fresh attacks in India.

FBI documents submitted in the US court, for the proceedings against Rana and Headley, reveal their handlers were keen to launch a series of terror attacks in India and had directed Headley to visit the country to locate fresh targets (in Mumbai and elsewhere).

Officials here said a National Investigation Agency (NIA) team was in Mumbai, looking for possible leads into the case, at the places Headley and Pakistan-born accomplice Tahawwur Rana frequented in Mumbai. "They are following their own line of probe and, so far, have not asked us for any help," a senior official said.

Headley suggested to his handlers that they "revisit" Mumbai. Officials also believe that he played a key role in the selection of 26/11 targets and collected "inside information" about them.

Both NIA and Mumbai police officials say solving the codes would give them a clearer idea of what Headley, Rana and their Pakistan-based handlers were trying to achieve.

"The people with whom Headley was in touch seem to be senior members of Pakistan's terror-exporting establishment," an official said.