

BBC

CATEGORIES TV RADIO COMMUNICATE WHERE I LIVE INDEX

SEARCH

Go

BBC NEWS



You are in: World: **South Asia**
 Tuesday, 22 January, 2002, 11:04 GMT

Front Page
 World



Africa
 Americas
 Asia-Pacific
 Europe
 Middle East
 South Asia

From Our Own
 Correspondent

Gunmen attack US centre in Calcutta



Letter From **America** Four police officers were killed on the spot

America
UK
 UK Politics
 Business
 Sci/Tech
 Health
 Education
 Entertainment
 Talking Point
 In Depth
 AudioVideo

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

BBC SPORT

BBC Weather

SERVICES

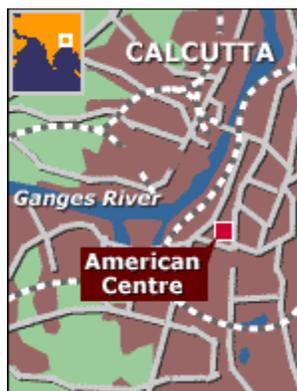
Daily E-mail
 News Ticker
 Mobiles/PDAs

Feedback
 Help

Low Graphics

Heavily-armed gunmen have attacked the US Government's information centre near the American consulate in Calcutta, killing five policemen.

Indian police said the four men, draped in shawls, sped up to the American Centre building on two motorcycles at about 0615 local time (0045GMT), refusing to stop at checkpoints and shooting at police guards who returned fire.



Sixteen other guards were injured in the attack, three critically, before the attackers fled. The area has now been sealed off.

Four of the dead officers were killed on the spot. They were all from the Calcutta police or a private security agency, Group Four.

The US consul-general in Calcutta, Christopher Sandrolini, said consular staff had escaped unscathed.

Indian Home Minister Lal Krishna Advani said that a senior member of a militant group

“
We have tightened the entire security arrangements at the US embassy and all US establishments
 ”

Police commissioner
Suresh Roy

WATCH/LISTEN ON THIS STORY

- The BBC's George Eykyn**
 'The attack came without warning'
- Rex Moser from the US consulate in Calcutta**
 "There were no Americans injured"

See also:

- 22 Jan 02 | Americas
 Protecting Americans abroad
- 31 Dec 01 | South Asia
 India hands Pakistan 'wanted' list
- 28 Sep 01 | South Asia
 India arrests militant chief
- 21 Jan 02 | South Asia
 India keeps pressure on Pakistan
- 13 Dec 01 | South Asia
 India attack prompts crackdown

Internet links:

- US consulate in Calcutta
- American Centre, Calcutta
- Indian parliament

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

Top South Asia stories now:

- Karachi bomb suspects arrested
- Pentagon team to examine bomb error
- Bangladesh floods maroon thousands
- Sri Lanka truce violations recorded
- Al-Qaeda 'may have killed minister'
- Regional media views Afghan killing
- More arrests in Pakistan gang rape
- England crash to defeat

Links to more South Asia stories are at the foot of the page.

which had links with Pakistan's main intelligence agency had claimed responsibility. Mr Advani did not name the group.

Pakistan was swift to deny any involvement in the attack.

"These are totally baseless charges. As far as you know, Pakistan has condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," a Foreign Ministry spokesman told reporters.

Guilt claims

Two groups telephoned newspaper offices saying they carried out the attack.

One caller said he was from Harkat-ul Jihad-ul Islami (HUGI), which is active in northern India, and said the attack was in protest against "the evil empire of America".

The other said the Asif Raza Commandos, a group named after their leader, a Calcutta criminal with links to radical Islamic groups, were responsible.



Security has been increased at US missions in India

The American Centre, one of two US Government buildings in Calcutta, houses the US Information Service library, as well as the embassy's public affairs office, the press section and a wing where cultural events are held.

A spokesman for the US consulate in Calcutta, Rex Mozzer, told the BBC there was no warning for the attacks.

He refused to speculate on who the attackers were or what was being attacked - a symbol of the US Government or the Indian police.

Protests

Mr Mozzer said there had been demonstrations outside the centre, but not for several weeks and they had all been peaceful.

But India's joint commissioner of police, Suresh Roy, told the Associated Press there had been intelligence reports of a possible strike against US interests ahead of India's

Republic Day celebrations on Saturday.

"We have tightened the entire security arrangements at the US embassy and all US establishments here," he said. "A general alert has been sounded. This is a serious matter. We're keeping a close watch."

Security at American missions in India had already been stepped up following the 11 September attacks in the United States.

The authorities in India also increased security in the wake of the attack on the Indian parliament last month.

West Bengal's chief minister, Buddhadev Bhattacharya, said local police had joined federal intelligence agencies in trying to track down the attackers.

But he said there was no way any US agency would be allowed to join the investigation.

[✉ E-mail this story to a friend](#)

Links to more South Asia stories



[^^ Back to top](#)

[News Front Page](#) | [World](#) | [UK](#) | [UK Politics](#) | [Business](#) | [Sci/Tech](#) | [Health](#) | [Education](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Talking Point](#) | [In Depth](#) | [AudioVideo](#)

[To BBC Sport>>](#) | [To BBC Weather>>](#)

© MMIII | [News Sources](#) | [Privacy](#)