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# A STATE OF SHOCK

## MSU South Asian students react to Mumbai terror attack

DANNIE HIGGINBOTHAM | staff writer

Rahul Patel spoke with his uncle in Mumbai during the terrorist attacks at the city's Taj Mahal hotel.

"No one in my family knew how to react to what was going on," Patel, the president of Minnesota State's India Student Association, said. "Everything was so intense and it happened so quickly that they didn't have time to react."

Last week's terrorist attacks in Mumbai, a mix of bombings and gunfire at multiple spots that killed a reported 188 people, shook not only the people living in the city but those studying abroad as well.

"I was shocked," Patel said. "Nobody really expected anything this big. No one knew who did it or why, they just attacked."

Some media outlets blame Pakistan for the attacks, and the one attacker police caught is Pakistani. Pakistan, which had a strained relationship with India that has improved in recent years, immediately offered its support in finding those

responsible for the attack.

Salman Hakim, an MSU mechanical engineering freshman, is from Pakistan.

"I am in shock," Hakim said. "Half of my family is living in India."

Hakim said he would like to see the two governments work together to find those responsible for the attacks.

"The blame game won't take us anywhere," he said.

Hakim compared the attacks in Mumbai to a September hotel bombing in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan. Two-hundred fifty people were killed in the blast. He said when that bombing occurred, India offered Pakistan help. Now, he said, Pakistan is offering India help.

Information systems sophomore Atif Faiyaz, also from Pakistan, indicated he was disgusted when the blame game started.

"I have sympathy for those that died, but you can't blame another country without an investigation first," Faiyaz said. "Pakistan isn't the only option."



Punit Paranjpe • Reuters

Top: The Taj Mahal hotel in flames after the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai. Above: A woman grieves the loss of a relative.

Faiyaz stressed that the idea of Pakistanis and Indians not getting along is normally untrue.

"When it comes to Pakistanis and Indians being separate nations and not liking each other, that's just not true," Faiyaz said. "One of my best friends is from India."

"It doesn't matter if the terrorists are from Pakistan or Bangladesh," said computer science freshman Mubasser

Kamal, from Bangladesh. "All that matters is that they are terrorists."

Amin-Abdul Mohamed, former president of the Student Association of India, said the government should stop playing the blame game and instead work to find the perpetrators.

"People have to stop blaming others and get justice to the victims and their families by finding out who the real attackers are and giving them

their proper sentence," Abdul-Mohomed said.

Abdul-Mohomed said he hopes India and Pakistan won't let the attack affect the relationship between the two countries.

"India and Pakistan have worked hard on mending relations," he said. "An incident of this caliber hurts but they should continue working together and mending. What happened represents a minority interest and doesn't represent the interests of both countries at large."

"Cooperating is the only way they can move forward in the 21st century," Abdul-Mohomed said.

Kamal said tensions between the two countries would only help terrorists.

"They're going to get the courage to do it again if they are able to destroy relations between countries," Kamal said.

People are blaming India's government, saying they had

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