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Mineta Transportation Institute Expert Says Mumbai Derailment Could Have Serious Implications for Rail Security Worldwide

India has suffered the most numerous attacks, but terrorists can take lessons from these and apply them in other countries.

San Jose, Calif., May 29, 2010 – [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://www.mti.sjsu.edu) (MTI) counter-terrorism expert Brian Michael Jenkins says that the Mumbai train derailment two days ago could point to a growing trend in India. But it also could have serious implications for other countries. Terrorists make note of methods, taking lessons from all attempts, whether successful or not. These lessons could be applied to other systems.

At the same time, transportation security and counter-terrorism experts must take their own lessons so they can create safer and more secure systems in their countries.

Sabotage of the rail line sent the Calcutta-to-Mumbai express hurtling off the tracks into the path of an oncoming freight train, killing more than 100 people and injuring scores of others. According to Indian police, a Maoist guerrilla group has claimed responsibility for the attack. Earlier in May, Maoist guerrillas in India's Chhattisgarh State detonated a mine under a passenger bus, killing 44.

“The threat seems to be growing, with at least 30 deliberate derailments in India since January 2000, almost four times the number of derailments in the 1990s, and 15 times the number of incidents in the 1980s,” said Mr. Jenkins, director of MTI’s National Transportation Security Center of Excellence. “The death toll between 2000 and 2010 is 13 times greater than that in the 1990s, although, owing to two bloody incidents, it is only slightly greater than the 1980s.”

MTI will be examining this case and other recent attacks in India to see what lessons might be learned and how these may be applied to other countries.

According to MTI’s comprehensive database of attacks on surface transportation, this death toll makes the May 28 derailment India’s worst terrorist attack on passenger rail since 2006, and its bloodiest deliberate derailment in decades. On July 11, 2006 terrorists detonated seven bombs on Mumbai’s crowded commuter trains, killing 207 people and injuring hundreds of others. The last comparable derailment occurred in 1989, when sabotage derailed the Bangalore-Delhi Express killing 67.

A recent MTI report on deliberate derailments, *Off the Rails: The 1995 Attempted Derailing of the French TGV (High Speed Train) and Quantitative Analysis of 181 Rail Sabotage Attempts* by Mr. Jenkins, Bruce R. Butterworth, and Jean-François Clair, shows India’s rail system suffering the

most terrorists derailments with 42 incidents or 23 percent of the total number of such incidents. According to MTI's database, India also leads the world in the number of terrorist bomb attacks against train and bus targets with 387 incidents since 1970, or 17 percent of the total.

Mr. Jenkins flew to Mumbai in September 2009 at the invitation of Indian officials to discuss surface transportation security issues, and he will return to India later this year. MTI also briefed Indian officials visiting the U.S. in January 2010.

The report may be downloaded at no cost from www.mti.sjsu.edu. Click on "Security" and "Publications," then scroll down for the report.

ABOUT BRIAN MICHAEL JENKINS

Brian Michael Jenkins is an international authority on terrorism and sophisticated crime. He directs MTI's research on protecting surface transportation against terrorist attacks. He is also a senior advisor to the president of RAND. From 1989-98, Mr. Jenkins was deputy chairman of Kroll Associates, an international investigative and consulting firm. Before that, he was chairman of RAND's Political Science Department, where he also directed research on political violence.

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE:

The [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://www.mti.sjsu.edu) (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including the US Department of Homeland Security. The US DOT selected MTI as a national "Center of Excellence" following 2002 and 2005 competitions.

The Institute has a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from a broad assessment of the industry's unmet needs and led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer focusing on multi-modal surface transportation policy and management issues. Visit www.transweb.sjsu.edu