

# 4,000 kg explosives may be needed to raze twin towers

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**Noida:** It is likely to take more than 4,000kg of explosives to bring down the Supertech twin towers, officials said on Sunday after conducting a test blast on six pillars of one of the buildings.

Uncertainty also hangs over the date of demolition of the two towers — May 22. Officials of Edifice Engineering, the Mumbai-based company entrusted with the responsibility of bringing down the towers, said both the buildings were strong and it could take longer than expected to make the final preparations.

The test blast was conducted at 2.30pm, with police teams guarding the approach roads to Sector 93A to ensure no one ventured near the area. Residents of nearby buildings — Emerald Court and ATS Greens Village — were asked to remain indoors for half an hour from 2.15pm.

“All six pillars were loaded with different quantities of explosives. There were also different types of protection for each pillar. We got good results from the test blast. We will now study them and work on the final demolition design. It’s a huge challenge to bring down the two towers, but with the right crew and plan, we will complete the work. But the buildings are strong and we will need more explosives to bring them down,” said Joe Brinkmann, the managing director of Jet Demolitions, the South African partner of Edifice that is preparing the blast design.

Officials had initially estimated that 2,500-4,000kg of explosives would be needed for the demolition. The test blast — where less than 4kg of explosives were used — was conducted to ascertain the amount of explosives that would be needed to bring down the two 32-storey buildings.

But with officials saying that more explosives would be needed, the May 22 date for the demolition looks uncertain now. “It will take abo-

ut 15 days for the final analysis to come. That report will tell us the exact quantity of explosives required for the demolition, besides the number of wraps of geotextile cloth and iron mesh that needs to be draped around each pillar,” said Uttkarsh Mehta, a partner at Edifice. “Teams from IIT-Chennai and a Kochi-based geo-structural agency also monitored the vibration levels during the test blast. They will also have to submit their reports. We will not press the final button until every parameter is met and our partners are satisfied with the preparations.”

For measuring the vibration levels, four devices were placed near the GAIL pipeline and one each in Emerald Court and ATS Greens Village.

## JET DEMOLITIONS' MD SAYS

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Earlier in the day, the explosives to be used in the test blast and the ignition system were transported from a magazine in Haryana's Palwal in two separate vans. After the explosives reached Sector 93A around 8am, a three-member team started “charging” the six pillars. This process went on till 1pm and by 1.30pm, all officials and workers of Edifice and Jet Demolitions had vacated the premises.

N Gopalakrishnan, the director of Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), whose advice the Supreme Court had asked to be taken, monitored the entire process. Officials from the Noida Authority and Supertech were also present.