

Hindu temples vandalised, houses looted in Bangladesh; over 1000 people booked

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Dhaka: In the aftermath of a social media post allegedly showing disrespect towards Islam, at least 15 temples along with hundreds of Hindu community houses were vandalised and looted by an unruly mob in Bangladesh's Brahmanbaria district, police said.

Police have filed two cases against more than 1,000 people over Sunday's attack, a media report said on Monday.

The incident occurred on Sunday afternoon when hundreds of people armed with locally-made weapons attacked the Hindu community at Brahmanbaria's Nasirnagar upazila, reportedly in response to a Facebook post satirising the Masjid al-Haram, the holy site of Muslims.

Later, two temples in adjacent Habiganj's Madhabpur were also attacked.

The attackers ran amok through eight Hindu localities, including Kashipara, Daspara, Ghoshpara, Duttapara and Nomoshudropara, said Abdul Quader, officer-in-charge of Nasirnagar Police Station.

Brahmanbaria Superintendent of Police (SP) Mizanur Rahman told the Dhaka Tribune that around 150 to 200 people launched the attacks and vandalised at least seven to eight idols of temples in the area.

Among the temples vandalised were Duttobari temple, Nomoshudropara temple, Jagannath temple, Ghoshpara temple and Gouro temple.

Blaming the Jamaat-Shibir men for the attack, he said: "Those who were behind the attack will be arrested as soon as possible. Already we have detained six persons in this connection."

Several priests were injured in the attack, the police said.

A large number of security personnel from different agencies including police, Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), and paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) have been deployed in the area.

Locals said the incident started with a Facebook post by one Rasraj Das, son of Jagannath Das from Harinberh village under Haripur Union Parishad, bdnews reported.

Police detained Rasraj on Friday immediately after the allegation of blasphemy surfaced against him and he was sent to jail following a court order.

Protests against Rasraj's post were held under the banner of 'Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat' in Habiganj district headquarters and in Nasirnagar. Demonstrations were also announced in Habiganj's Madhabpur, bdnews24 reported.

- (With IANS inputs)