

Saffron extremists desecrated temple to trigger riots: Cops

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HYDERABAD: The city police have launched a manhunt for four persons belonging to the Hindu community who they suspect triggered the communal disturbances in Old City last Sunday by hurling a piece of beef on the walls of the Hanuman Temple at Kurmaguda in Madannapet. All the four are residents of Kurmaguda and in their late twenties, police said, and claimed that the accused would be nabbed within the next 48 hours.

Reaping political benefits by intensifying communal polarization in the city is said to be the motive behind the attack. "We have reliable information confirming the role of four Hindu extremists in the Kurmaguda incident that started the recent communal disturbances. One of the accused was earlier arrested in the post-Bakrid communal violence incidents in the city." All the accused are on the run and special teams have been formed to nab them," a top investigating officer told TOI.

While the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the city police is probing the 26 cases of communal clashes that took place in Old City since last Sunday, there is a special emphasis on the investigation into the Kurmaguda Hanuman temple desecration as it was the triggering point for the series of clashes. SIT officers visited Kurmaguda on Thursday and questioned several people. "We have specific information that the incident was executed by locals from the same community," said a source. Intelligence sleuths are also closely monitoring the probe and confirmed the role of Hindu fundamentalist elements behind the attack.

An officer, who is part of the probe, revealed that the four suspects who have been on the run now are just mere pawns in the big political game and the main challenge would be to get to the conspirators who used them to reap political benefits. In the 2010 communal clashes, the SIT team had made several arrests but failed to nail the conspirators who provoked the mob. The same was the situation in the probe related to the post-Bakrid communal attacks in 2011. "A middle level politico interested in contesting the assembly election in 2014 is possibly the brain behind the attack," police sources averred. Analysts said that this gave a new dimension to the communal tension and revealed that polarization was being deliberately fomented to garner votes.

Police have also confirmed the involvement of local Hindus in a temple desecration at Nandi Musalaiguda in Bahadurpura police limits and suspect a similar conspiracy behind the temple desecration at Moghulpura. "While the Nandi Musalaiguda temple desecration was engineered to ensure the posting of a police picket in their communally sensitive area, we suspect that the Moghulpura incident was to instigate the people. Thankfully, the perpetrators at Moghulpura did not succeed," said an official.

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