

## Three killed in firing in eviction drive

At least three people were killed and dozens, including policemen, injured when an eviction drive by government officials turned into a communal clash between the police and members of a community here Thursday.

Eyewitnesses put the number of dead at three. However, the administration said 20 civilians and a dozen policemen were injured.

Hospital sources said the condition of four of the injured men was critical.

The incident occurred at 8.00 p.m. Thursday when five officials of the district administration, accompanied by the police, went to Ram Park colony here to evacuate a state-owned land where a religious structure had been built by the alleged encroachers to evade government eviction.

The clerics warned the officials not to proceed with the eviction drive as it was a religious structure. When their warning went unheeded they called upon the residents to take up positions and resist the government move.

Soon the situation turned into a free for all as mobs started pelting stones at the police and in some cases even firing upon them.

A large mob jammed the traffic on the Delhi-Saharanpur road while others resorted to arson, setting on fire a police outpost, a sub-divisional magistrate's gypsy and many public and private vehicles.

Senior Superintendent of Police Deepak Rathore late Thursday night told reporters that the situation has been brought under control.

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