

## Communal clashes claim three lives in Madhya Pradesh town

At least three people were killed and 21 injured in communal clashes that broke out in Madhya Pradesh's Burhanpur town Friday, that also saw shops and houses being torched despite curfew being imposed, officials said.

'While the death toll in the clashes is three, the number of injured is 21. The situation is now under control and additional police force from Indore and [Bhopal](#) has reached here,' Deputy Inspector General (Khargone) G. Janardhan told IANS by telephone.

Shoot-at-sight orders were issued Friday night, officials said.

Curfew was clamped in Burhanpur, over 300 km from here, earlier in the day following the communal tension.

'Indefinite curfew was clamped in all the five police station areas of the town following arson and stone-pelting,' said Burhanpur Police Superintendent M.K. Katakwar.

The communal tension began Thursday night when some miscreants pelted stones at a religious procession passing through Gandhi Chowk area. The situation was, however, immediately brought under control after elders from the communities intervened.

The police imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, barring the assembly of four or more people in the town.

Traders in Gandhi Chowk area Friday downed their shutters to protest the previous night's violence. But in the afternoon, a group of people damaged shops and set some of them ablaze.

Soon, members of the two communities started pelting stones at each other, injuring several people. Two houses were also torched in Lalbagh area even though curfew was in force, officials said.

'In Gandhi Chowk, at least eight shops were set ablaze by a mob. Curfew was imposed as firing in the air and lobbing tear gas shells failed to stop the violence,' said Anil Kumar, Inspector-General of Police (Indore range).

'More than three dozen shops and half a dozen houses have been torched in different areas of the town,' a witness said.

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