



amentalists violently attacked the Hindu community located inside Puran Bazaar, Chandpur, riled over the actions of one Miltan Kumar Dey whom they accuse of producing blasphemous content against towards Islam.

The Hindu community, a minority group in terms of the Chandpur's (and Bangladesh's) geography, where shaken by an attack reportedly coordinated by local Awami League and some Jamaat-E-Islami members in the area. The attack took place sometime after midnight on Saturday.

The culprits mercilessly wrecked everything in their path, including Hindu symbols in sanctuaries, Puja mantles, with some even attacking Hindu households in the area and the people within. Some locals reported hearing loud, energetic chants of 'Naraye Takbir' during the incident.

Saturday's fiasco is intimately connected to a local Chandpur man named Miltan Kumar Dey, son of Mr Sammbhu Nath Dey and Mrs Mamata Rani Dey. Our local correspondent dug around for some information on him in and around Chandpur. He came to discover that Mr Kumar Dey is Hindu blogger and online activist currently on a study leave in London.

Now the fundamentalist group which laid siege to the peaceful Hindu community in the area claimed that Mr Kumar Dey is guilty of composing and uploading profane articles about Islam on his personal blog.

Aside from the concentrated attack on Hindu establishments, there were also reports that local Awami League cadets surrounded Mr Kumar Dey's home. Local people who live there said that previously area's local chairman reportedly summoned Mr Kumar Dey's parents, and openly threatened them to either make their son stop what he is doing, or simply leave the area. We did track down his house in Chandpur and were surprised to find it locked, and uninhabited. We asked the neighbours about the incident and they informed us that they have not seen Mr Kumar Dey or his family for a long time now. The neighbours believe that the Mr Kumar dey's family abandoned the premises out of fear for their lives, given the fiasco in Chandpur over Mr Kumar Dey's activities as a blogger and activist.

Worryingly enough the local people claimed that fundamentalists blamed right from the start and

would rebuke them for seemingly trivial things such as celebrating their Puja festivals, performing 'kirtans', spiritual singing sessions etc and so on, claiming that the ensuing ruckus distracts them from conducting their own prayer sessions ('namaaz') properly. Taranath Das, a local resident complained to our reporter that, "local police did not come on time. In fact, the local Police officer Mr. Shahin was reluctant to take proper action against the attackers".

Mr Kumar Dey was in the UK at the time when the incident occurred and his home was surrounded, so was thus unavailable for comment. Unfortunately, we were also unable to get a hold of him through our contacts in London.

Such uncertainty leaves the air inside Puran Bazaar feeling heavy. It is plausible that things may escalate again in this current climate.