
WhatsApp Groups Used To Incite, Organise Delhi Violence: Police Sources

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New Delhi: Encrypted messaging platform WhatsApp has come under scrutiny after police sources said today that the armed goons who have laid waste to parts of Delhi since Sunday, leaving at least 38 dead over 200 injured in violence over the citizenship law, may have used the service to organise themselves and conduct targeted strikes at various localities.

[Unrelenting violence has consumed northeast Delhi](#) for five straight days as roving mobs armed with iron rods, sticks and guns have defied police orders banning large gatherings to rampage through the streets, committing arson and vandalism and terrifying residents.

Delhi Police, which has come under fierce criticism for its apparent inaction - they were hauled up by the Delhi High Court for [delay in filing FIRs against BJP leaders](#) whose speeches allegedly incited the violence - say they have, so far, filed 48 FIRs and arrested 130 people in connection with the clashes.

Alleging a large-scale conspiracy behind the violence, police sources said over 50 mobile phones seized from the accused indicated both groups may have used WhatsApp to incite violence and organise themselves.

The platform was also reportedly used to direct hired thugs coming from neighbouring Uttar Pradesh.

Police also said WhatsApp groups were used to forward videos and messages designed to whip

up frenzy. They were also used to coordinate travel across state borders, raising a point Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal spoke about on Tuesday.

Sources said probe into the violence, which [Union Minister Prakash Javadekar today said had been fast-tracked](#), would extend to CCTV footage, social media and viral posts on Facebook and Twitter.



Violence in Delhi has laid waste to home, shops and schools

Earlier this week government sources suggested something similar, saying the violence appeared to have been orchestrated by persons unknown with an eye on the visit of US President Donald Trump.

Mr Trump was in India on Monday and Tuesday - the two worst days of clashes so far - and, at one point, was only 15 km from affected areas. Asked for his reaction, he said they were "[up to India](#)".

Delhi Police and the Home Ministry, to whom the cops report, have both said the situation is under control, but the violence has not abated and the death toll has climbed steadily since the first day.



Violence broke out in northeast Delhi as groups clashed over the controversial citizenship law

Horrific stories and visuals have emerged of injured children, schools and homes being burnt and, in one case, an [85-year-old woman choking to death](#) after her house was set on fire.

Meanwhile, reports that WhatsApp groups were used to incite and organise violence brings back [memories of the horrific mob attack on Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University](#) last month.

Masked goons carrying sledgehammers and other weapons had coordinated via WhatsApp groups and went on an unchecked and brutal assault that left at least 34 injured.

The cops, who have yet to make a single arrest in the case, claimed to have identified several members of a 60-member WhatsApp group that they linked to the violence.