

Maoists torch CPM leaders' houses

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MIDNAPORE: Suspected Maoists set fire to the houses of three CPM leaders in Chainpur and Kundalboni villages on Monday night. This came close on the heels of the murder of three party workers in Binpur, Salboni and Lalgah.

The houses of Nitai Pal CPM's Dherua local committee member and teacher at Chandra High School and DYFI leader Manoj Pal in Chainpur were torched. The Maoists had taken out a huge rally and attacked the CPM members' houses. There were no casualties.

Nitai has been living in a rented house at Rangamati, Midnapore town, for some time. Manoj, too, left the village two months ago with his family. Villagers alleged that the Maoists targeted Nitai and Manoj saying "they led the recent CPM rally from Kankaboti to Enayetpur".

Manoj's father Sukumar Pal, who had stayed back in Chainpur to look after farmland and cattle, said: "I ran out of home on seeing a huge mob and jumped into a pond. I spent three hours in the pond fearing an attack. They destroyed our house and looted rice and utensils."

Maoists also set the house of CPM's Chandra local committee member Manik Mahapatra ablaze in Kundalboni. Manik had left the house two months ago.

Joint forces could reach the place only on Tuesday afternoon due to a "road blockade by Maoists", said police. Maoist leader Bikash said locals targeted Nitai as he did not return to the village to teach the children. SP Manoj Verma said Maoists are felling trees to block roads.

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