



NIA ARRESTS 2 KEY CONSPIRATORS IN W. BENGAL BLAST CASE AMID RESISTANCE FROM UNRULY CROWD, 1 NIA OFFICER INJURED, OFFICIAL VEHICLE DAMAGED IN ASSAULT BY AGGRESSIVE CROWD

In a major breakthrough in West Bengal's Bhupatinagar blast case, in which three persons were killed in December 2022, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday arrested two key conspirators amid stiff resistance from an unruly crowd in the state's East Medinipore district.

The duo, Balai Charan Maity and Manobrata Jana, were arrested after extensive searches at five locations, including the house of Jana, where a crowd of local residents tried to obstruct the NIA team. One NIA team member suffered minor injury and the agency's official vehicle was also damaged as some miscreants in the crowd assaulted them. The aggressive crowd tried to stop the NIA team and its security component from moving towards Bhupatinagar police station to complete the arrest formalities. NIA has lodged a complaint at the local police station in this regard.

Manobrata Jana, and the other arrested accused, identified as Balai Charan Maity, were found to have conspired to manufacture and explode crude bombs to spread terror.

Three persons were killed in the December 2022 explosion in the house of one Rajkumar Manna in village Naruabilla, District East Medinipur, West Bengal. Manna himself was seriously injured in the blast, along with two others, Biswajit Gayen and Buddhadeb Manna. All three succumbed to their injuries later.

The State police initially registered an FIR on 3rd December 2022 against the three men killed in the explosion but the provisions of the Explosive Substances Act were not applied. Subsequently, a writ petition was filed before Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta with a prayer for invoking the relevant sections of the Act and transferring of the case to NIA.

NIA took over the case on 4th June 2023, as per the High Court order dated 21st March 2023, and re-registered it as RC 16/2023/NIA/DLI under various sections of law, including the Explosive Substances Act.

During investigation, NIA uncovered the role of several other accused in the case, including the arrested accused, Manobrata Jana of village Naruabila, and Balai Charan Maity of Ninaruya Analberia. The two men had actively participated in the conspiracy to make crude bombs and had extended support for the same, NIA had found in its probe, which led to today's searches and arrests.

The arrested accused will be produced before the Special NIA Court, Kolkata, as per law. Investigations in the case are continuing.

