

Printed from

**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

## Mumbai attacks: BJP expects vote swing

*Rumu Banerjee*, TNN | Nov 27, 2008, 11:58 PM IST

NEW DELHI : The Mumbai terror attacks have infused new life into the city BJP leadership. It was hard at work on Thursday to ensure that it converted the outrage into votes on poll day. And political observers feel this may swing some votes.

While the central leaders tried to refrain from politicising the issue, on the ground, party workers were quick to take advantage of the incident. It's Voice of the Youth, Radio BJP, a motorised float, talked about the terror strike as it criss-crossed parts of the city even as workers made it a talking point in the various informal meetings held in parks and elsewhere.

The day unfolded with BJP's CM-designate, VK Malhotra, underlining the failure of the government in reining in terror. Said Malhotra, "After the Batla House incident, there's a lot of anguish in the people. The government has glamorised terror, with people even collecting money for the terrorists. Even the Mumbai strike has happened because the police's attention was diverted towards an innocent when this attack was being planned." The allusion to the Malegaon blast suspect, Sadhvi Pragya Thakur, in fact kept cropping up even as Malhotra described the terror strike as an intelligence failure, claiming the government's response to all terror attacks has been "soft" throughout.

Speaking to Times City, Malhotra admitted that the Mumbai terror strike was expected to play a role on November 29, the day the city goes to polls. "It's an attack on the country, and Delhi should come out to vote and let the government know what it thinks about its policies on Saturday," was all he would say though. He added that the party would push for the police coming under the ambit of the Delhi government if it comes to power. "The Puja, Diwali and Eid celebrations were all affected because of security fears in the city this year. Now with Mumbai, we need to ensure our city is safe," he claimed.


Insiders, meanwhile, admitted that the party was trying to convert the horror of the people into votes. Said a senior party member, "There's an immediate reaction from people on the Mumbai siege, and the feedback has been very positive for the party. Our challenge will be to convert this outrage into votes for the BJP."

On ground, the efforts seemed to have already started. The party's Radio BJP was hard at work drumming up reaction from the young, as party sympathisers wore T-shirts with the slogan, "Hame Jeene Do." Said Sanjay Kaul, part of the Radio BJP initiative and a BJP member, "The terror strikes were obviously not part of the earlier schedule but we incorporated it from morning onwards."

Meanwhile, another BJP campaign vehicle, Dr Harshvardhan's Vahini, which carries on interactive programmes with the public, asked people to talk about the issue as it went around parts of Krishna Nagar.

Meanwhile, BJP announced its 100-day manifesto if it comes to power, with a slew of promises. From ration coupons to "prompt measures" against terrorism to reviewing electricity meters, everything featured on the list.

Stay updated on the go with Times of India [News App](#). Click [here](#) to download it for your device.

 Post a comment