



## Cow Vigilantism and Mob Lynching

**For Prelims:** States which have passed laws against mob lynching, Haryana mob lynching, Provisions available against mob lynching.

**For Mains:** Causes for Mob Lynching and measures taken to address it.

### Why in News?

Recent incident of killing and burning of two men in Haryana on suspicion of illegal transportation, smuggling or slaughtering of cows by cow vigilantes **highlight the issue of Mob Lynching.**

### What is Mob Lynching?

- **Mob lynching** refers to **targeted violence by a large group of people** which includes **offenses against the human body or property, whether public or private.**
- The mob believes they are punishing the victim for some perceived wrongdoing, even if it's not necessarily illegal and **take the law into their own hands disregarding legal rules and procedures.**

**Cow Vigilantism:** Cow vigilantism or lynching in the name of **Cow Protection** poses a serious threat to the **secular fabric of the nation.** Killing of people just on the suspicion of beef depicts the intolerance among the vigilantes.

### What are the Causes of Mob Lynching?

- **Biases:**
  - Mob lynching is a hate crime that is rising due to the biases or prejudices among various castes, classes of people, and religions.
- **Rise of Cow Vigilante:**
  - In Hindu religion, cows are revered and worshipped. This sometimes leads to Cow vigilantism.
  - It is perpetrated by the majority towards the minority on the presumption that the minorities are in regular consumption of bovine meat.
- **Lack of Speedy Justice:**
  - Inefficient working of justice rendering authorities is the primary reason why people take law into their own hands and have no fear of the consequences.
- **The Inefficiency of Police Administration:**
  - Ineffective investigation and lack of trust in the legal process is one reason that promotes people to take matters in their own hands.

### What are the Issues related to Mob Lynching?

- Mob lynching is a **violation of human dignity, Article 21 of the Constitution**, and a gross infringement of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.
- Such incidents **violate the Right to Equality and Prohibition of discrimination**, which are enshrined in **Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India**.
- However, it is **nowhere mentioned in the law of the land** and is hence simply put as murder since it has not been yet incorporated under the **Indian Penal Code**.

## What are the Government Steps on the Issue?

- **Preventive Measures:**
  - In July 2017, the Supreme Court in the case of **Tahseen s. Poonawala v. UOI** had laid down several preventives, remedial and punitive measures to deal with lynching and mob violence.
    - The Supreme Court in this case aptly **referred to mob lynching as a 'horrendous act of mobocracy.'**
- **Designated Fast Track Courts:**
  - States were directed to set up **designated fast track courts in every district** to exclusively deal with cases involving mob lynchings.
- **Special Task Force:**
  - The court had also mooted the **setting up of a special task force** with the objective of **procuring intelligence reports about the people involved** in spreading hate speeches, provocative statements and fake news which could lead to mob lynchings.
- **Victim Compensation Schemes:**
  - Directions were also issued to set up **Victim compensation schemes** for relief and rehabilitation of victims.
  - A year later in **July 2019 the Supreme Court** issued notices to the Centre and several states asking them to submit the steps taken by them towards implementing the measures and file compliance reports.
  - As of now **only three states Manipur, West Bengal and Rajasthan have enacted laws against mob lynching**.
    - The **Jharkhand** Assembly has passed **Prevention of Mob Violence and Mob Lynching Bill, 2021** which has been returned by governor recently for reconsideration of a few provisions.

## Way Forward

- Lynchings have no place in a democratic society like India. As a country that prides itself on being democratic, it is **crucial that mob violence is eradicated**.
- In a disturbing trend, **police inaction in cases of mob violence is often reciprocated by public sanction of extrajudicial punishments by the police**. Thus, it is important to gain public trust on legal proceedings.
- All the states and centre should look forward to bringing **comprehensive legislation** on the matter as brought by states like **Manipur, West Bengal and Rajasthan**.
- Measures need to be taken to curb the spread of fake news and hate speech.

**Source: IE**