



Bulldozer Justice | Uttar Pradesh | 14 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the [Supreme Court of India \(SC\)](#) criticized the practice of "**bulldozer justice**," highlighting that demolishing properties based on criminal allegations against individuals or their family members violates the [rule of law](#).

Key Points

- "Bulldozer justice" refers to the practice of [demolishing the property](#) of individuals suspected of criminal activities or involvement in riots using bulldozers, often without adhering to [due legal process](#).
 - This practice has been reported in several Indian states, including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Assam, and Maharashtra.
 - Demolitions are often **justified under municipal laws** for encroachment or **unauthorized construction**.
- This practice bypasses [due process requirements](#) outlined in Supreme Court judgments such as ***Sudama Singh & Ors. vs Government of Delhi*** and ***Ajay Maken & Ors vs Union of India***.
- The SC has recently condemned this practice, emphasizing that demolishing properties based on accusations [violates the rule of law](#) and [due process of law](#).
 - The SC has invited suggestions from the parties concerned to frame appropriate pan-India guidelines on extra-legal demolitions.
- An analysis has identified that **procedural guidelines** should be incorporated into **relevant legislation and rules**, structured in a phased manner with multiple checkpoints at each stage to ensure **all necessary steps are followed** before taking any adverse or irreversible actions.
 - **Pre-Demolition Phase:**
 - **Burden of Proof:** Shift the burden of proof to the authorities to justify demolition and displacement, ensuring protection of human rights.
 - **Notice and Publicity:** Provide a reasoned notice with information about land records and resettlement plans, and give ample time for affected individuals to respond.
 - **Independent Review:** An independent committee with judicial and civil society representatives should review proposed demolitions, particularly in neighborhoods.
 - **Engagement and Planning:** Engage affected individuals in discussions about alternative housing and compensation, addressing the needs of vulnerable groups. Allow a minimum of one month between notice and demolition.
 - **During Demolition:**
 - **Minimization of Force:** Avoid the use of physical force and heavy machinery such as bulldozers.
 - **Official Presence:** Ensure the presence of government officials not involved in the demolition to oversee the process.
 - **Scheduled Timing:** Demolition times should be pre-decided to prevent surprise actions.
 - **Post-Demolition (Rehabilitation):**
 - **Rehabilitation:** Provide adequate temporary or permanent housing solutions to ensure no one is left homeless.
 - **Grievance Redressal:** Establish a speedy grievance redress mechanism for affected individuals to challenge demolition decisions.
 - **Remedies:** Ensure remedies such as compensation, restitution, and possible return

to original homes.

Government's Crackdown on Alleged Love Jihad and Land Jihad | Uttarakhand | 14 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Uttarakhand government has initiated action against [Love Jihad](#), [Land Jihad](#), and [forced conversions](#), amid rising concerns over [demographic changes](#) in the state.

Key Points

- Concerns over demographic changes were highlighted, especially in regions such as **Purula, Dharchula, and Nandnagar**.
- **Uttarakhand's Population:** Approximately 11.1 million, with [Hinduism](#) being the dominant religion (82.97%), followed by Islam (13.95%) and Christianity (0.37%) according to [Census 2011](#) and 2023 projection estimates.
 - While the state is experiencing urban migration and growth, concerns over demographic changes have heightened tensions, particularly in religiously sensitive areas.
- **The Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act, 2018:**
 - This law requires people who convert religions to declare that the conversion was not done through force, coercion, or other fraudulent means.
 - It also allows the authorities to declare marriages null and void if they were performed solely to convert a girl from one religion to another.
 - **Stringent Provisions:** The Act makes unlawful religious conversion a cognizable and non-bailable offense, criminalizing conversion through force, greed, or fraud.
 - **Greater Punishment:** Offenders can face a jail term ranging from a minimum of 3 years to a maximum of 10 years for illegal religious conversion.
 - **Higher Fines:** A mandatory fine of Rs.50,000 is imposed, with offenders potentially paying up to Rs.5 lakhs as compensation to the victim

Journey of Sanchi Stupa to Europe | Madhya Pradesh | 14 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, India's External Affairs Minister visited the **replica** of the [East Gate of Sanchi Stupa](#) standing in front of [Humboldt Forum museum](#) in Berlin, Germany.

Key Points

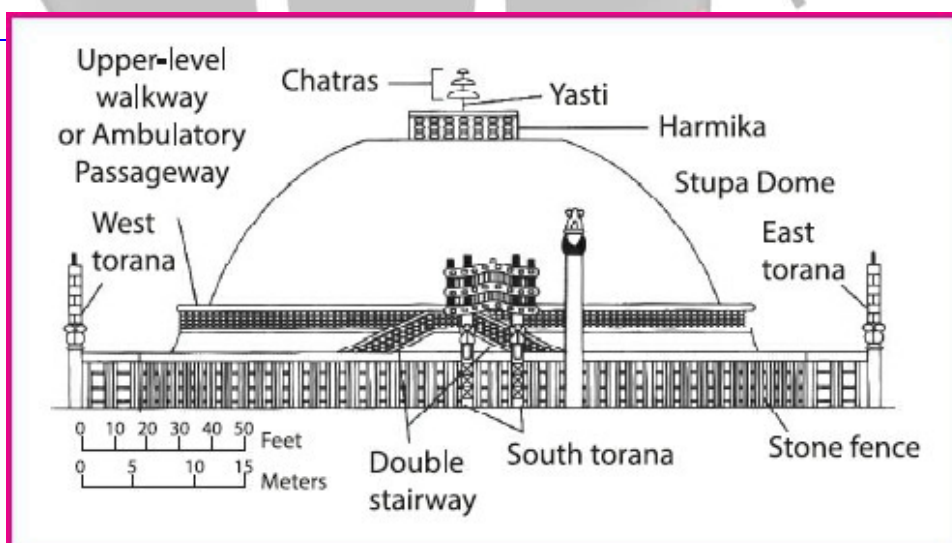
- **Construction of Sanchi Stupa:** It was built by [Ashoka](#) in the **third century BC**.
 - Its construction was overseen by **Ashoka's wife Devi**, who hailed from the nearby trading town of **Vidisha**.
 - The development of the Sanchi complex was supported by patronage from

Vidisha's **mercantile community**.

- **Expansion:** During the **2nd century BC** ([Shunga period](#)), the stupa was enlarged with sandstone slabs, a **circumambulatory walkway**, and a **harmika** with a **chattra** (umbrella).
 - From the **1st century BC to the 2nd century AD**, four stone gateways or **toranas** were added, adorned with detailed carvings depicting Buddhist iconography and stories.
- **Rediscovery of Sanchi Stupa:** It was in abject ruins when it was **discovered** by British officer **Henry Taylor in 1818**.
 - [Alexander Cunningham](#) led the **first formal survey** and excavations at Sanchi in **1851**.
- **Preservation Efforts:** In **1853**, **Sikander Begum of Bhopal** offered to send Sanchi gateways to **Queen Victoria**, but the removal plans were delayed due to the [1857 revolt](#) and transportation issues.
 - In 1868, the Begum renewed the offer, but the colonial authorities declined it, opting for **in-situ preservation**. A **plaster cast** of the eastern gateway was created instead.
 - The site was restored to its present condition by [Archaeological Survey of India \(ASI\)](#) director-general **John Marshall in the 1910s** with funding from the begums of nearby Bhopal.
 - Marshall's efforts led to the creation of a **museum in 1919** at the site to preserve artefacts and manage conservation.

- **Architecture of Sanchi Stupa:**

- **Anda:** It is a **hemispherical mound** built on earth.
- **Harmika:** **Square railing** on top of the mound. It is believed to be the living place of god.
- **Chattra:** It is the **umbrella** built on the top of the dome.
- **Yashti:** It is the **central pillar** supports a triple umbrella structure called chattra.
- **Railing:** It **surrounds the stupa**, demarcating the sacred area and providing a physical boundary between the holy space and the external environment.
- **Pradakshinapatha (Circumambulatory Path):** It is a **walkway around the stupa** that allows devotees to walk in a clockwise direction as a form of worship.
- **Torana:** Torana is a monumental **gateway or entrance** structure in Buddhist stupa architecture.
- **Medhi:** It refers to the **base** which forms a platform on which the main structure of the stupa stands.



- **UNESCO Recognition:** Sanchi Stupa was inscribed as a [UNESCO World Heritage site](#) in 1989.

