

SC's condemn on cow vigilantism - II

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What is the issue?

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Union government cannot remain silent over the violent activities in the name of cow protection, they should respond meaningfully.

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Why is the issue stressed?

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- Instances of groups beating up and even killing persons allegedly suspected of transporting cattle or bovine meat have become commonplace.

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- The court had issued notices to the Centre and some states in April on a writ petition that demanded action against such cow protection groups.

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- In the few months since then, more incidents of lynching have taken place.

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- Villagers killed two persons transporting cattle in West Bengal less than two weeks ago.

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- Three persons were killed in the same State in June after they were accused of cattle theft, and so on.

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What are the conduct of state over this issue?

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- In more than one State, cow 'protectors' have legal recognition as local laws provide immunity to them if they were acting in good faith.

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- The validity of such provisions in laws aimed at banning or regulating slaughter of animals and protecting the cow may be decided in the course of these proceedings.

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- In most cases, police register cases against the victims for slaughter or theft of cattle.

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- Typically, the administration seems eager to determine if they were engaged in cow slaughter or transportation of bovine meat than in arresting the culprits involved in murder and violence.

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- It is dubious that whether the Centre ought to take recourse to Article 256, which empowers it to issue directions to the States, to put an end to the activities of vigilantes.

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- Instead of shirking its responsibility on the ground that this is essentially a law and order issue to be addressed by the States.

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Source: The Hindu

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