

## UP's New Levy for Cow Protection

### What is the issue?

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The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to impose a 2% gau Raksha (cow welfare) cess on excise items.

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### What are the recent decisions?

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- Apart from the cow cess, the government will also levy a 0.5% cess on state-operated tolls.

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- It has also increased the levy on the tax revenue of the UP Agricultural Marketing Board, or Mandi Parishad, from 1% to 2%.

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- The money will be used to set up and run “gauvansh ashray asthals” (cattle shelters).

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- These shelters are to be made functional in all villages, panchayats, municipalities and municipal corporations.

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- These will be run by urban and rural civic bodies and are aimed at tackling the growing menace of stray cattle in the state.

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- Additionally, money from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme will be used to fund these cowsheds.

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- Also, 8 profit-making public sector undertakings have to contribute 0.5% of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) kitty towards the cow shelter scheme.

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- The aim is to put in place a cowshed with a capacity of accommodating a minimum 1,000 animals in every district.

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any real benefits to show for it.

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- Passing the burden on people for cow protection, a policy responsibility of the government, seems unfair.

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- A cultural affection for cows has happily coexisted with trade in cattle for ages.

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- So restrictions on the cattle trade do not make any commercial sense.

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- Thus, instead of imposing a cess, the government should reconsider its trade policy.

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**Source: Business Standard**

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