Concerns with Thoothukudi Firing

What is the issue?

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Thoothukudi firing incident has to be treated as an early warning system for the emerging threats to Indian democracy.

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How did the Sterlite struggle evolve?

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- Sterlite stakes claim to be India’s largest copper producer and is a major presence in Tamil Nadu’s industrial mix.
- But the industry has been under the scanner for environmental violations since its inception in the 1990s.
- Significantly, the Supreme Court in 2013 had imposed an Rs.100-crore fine on Sterlite for pollution.
- As the nearby residencies started to face health and environmental issues, they had been protesting sporadically for many years now.
- But the proposal for the plant’s expansion plan intensified protests about a couple of months ago and the situation has remained heated since then.
- TN government has claimed that the plant is currently not operational and that expansion has been stalled.
- But there was complete official apathy to convey this message unambiguously to the protesting masses, thereby attracting suspensions.

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What are the concerns arising in this issue?

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- One of the mains concerns in this issue is people look for democracy, while the state and Sterlite seek to subvert it.
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- Thoothukudi has demonstrated this through the resilience of the bar and traders' associations which worked day and night to get arrested people released.
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Source: The Hindu

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