Fire Accident in Mumbai

Why in news?

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- A late night fire in a roof-top restaurant in Mumbai killed 14 people.
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- This calls for a thorough probe and stricter enforcement of safety regulations.
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How can such situations be dealt?

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- **Current Case -** Ensuring the accountability of owners, managers, and agencies concerned and punishing for those guilty should be a high priority.
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- It would be wrong to categorise deliberate acts as instances of mere negligence as there seems to be intentional safety violations.
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- Further, immediate monetary compensation and other forms of support is to be provided to the families of the dead and the injured.
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- **Holistic picture -** While the rooftop restaurant fire killed 14 people, a week earlier 12 people were killed in an industrial fire accident.
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- Increasing frequency of such incidences is proving to become a catastrophe and enhancing the safety of building is now a pressing compulsion.
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- A full-fledged crackdown is hence needed to determine all building safety violations in Mumbai and official connivances needs to be penalised.
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What are the expectations from the trial?

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- A professional analysis of fire tragedies involves assessing whether:
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- Possibility of igniting was actively reduced
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- Provision was made for controlling the spread of fire and smoke
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- Design was compatible for occupant escape and fire-fighter access
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- Structure was potent to avoid a collapse
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- Hence, the Maharashtra government must ensure that its inquiry captures all these parameters and that the subsequent judicial process is not prolonged.
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- Ensuring a robust prosecution and invoking stringent provisions against the guilty are important to win people’s trust in the state machinery.
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What are the troubling realities?

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- The absence of strong laws, accompanied by slow criminal justice processes has made a mockery of justice.
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- Rampant bureaucratic and political corruption has also contributed to the brazen violation of building norms.
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- Sadly, a system of special schemes to regularise buildings with such violations for a fee is also noticeable, which is tantamount to legalising death traps.
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- Also, many court orders issued to ensure public safety remain mostly on paper.
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- On the whole, these issues have to be dealt with in its entirety to ensure a safer nation with reduced risks from manmade tragedies.

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Source: The Hindu

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