Need for a legislation on lynching

What is the issue?

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- The recent central government's ban on cattle slaughter has given way to lynching and cow vigilantism *(law enforcement undertaken without legal authority by a self-appointed group of people).*
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- This has lead to the opposition accusing the government of not taking any concrete counter measures.
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- Opposition has also raised the need for a law to address the issues of lynching and atrocities against minorities and Dalits.
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What is Manav Suraksha Kanoon?

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- Manav Suraksha Kanoon (Masuka) is the new law proposed by the National Campaign Against Mob Lynching to protect people.
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- The proposed law aims to provide effective protection to vulnerable persons, punish acts of lynching, and provide rehabilitation and compensation for victims and their families.
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- The aim of the law is to curb and punish mob lynching, whether provoked in the name of the cow protection or any other reason.
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What are the highlights of the draft law?

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- Clearly **defining** the **terms** "lynching", "mob", "offensive material".

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- Lynching to be made a **non-bailable offence** with graded levels of punishment depending on injury caused to the victim.
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- **Investigations** to be handled by senior police officers and provisions for designated judges for trial and appeal at High courts.
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- Special **rights** for victims and witnesses including mandatory state government **compensation** to the victims within 30 days of the incident.
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- Dissemination of **offensive material** to be made a separate offence.
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- The provisions will only complement the constitutional rights such Right to life and Equal Protection of Law.
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What is the government's stand on this?

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- The government said law and order was a State subject and that the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) does not keep a separate record of “cow vigilantism”.
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- However, it had issued an advisory to the State governments for necessary legal action under general law and order maintenance.
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- Government has also clarified that it was ready to approve investigations by central agencies if there was any such recommendation from the State governments concerned.
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- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), that analyses crime data is planning to now collect detailed data on lynchings as well.
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What is the way forward?

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- A demand for a law of this nature is embarrassing for any government.
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- Right intervention from the government at the right time will speak for its

commitment to democratic principles and sensitivity towards the minorities, the marginalised and the vulnerable.
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Source: The Hindu

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