SC’s condemn on cow vigilantism

Why in news?

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Recently Supreme Court raised its concern to stop the attacks on innocents in the name of cow vigilantism.

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What is cow vigilantism?

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- In India, cows are venerated by a large segment of the population.
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- Cow vigilante violence involves mob attacks in the name of "cow protection," targeting mostly Muslims.
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- It has swelled since 2014.
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- Recently emerged cow vigilante groups have accused some Indian Muslims and Dalits of cattle theft or slaughter.
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- They violence lead to number of deaths.
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What are the reported incidences of cow vigilantism?

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- **Rajasthan-**A dairy farmer from Haryana was beaten to death by a mob of alleged cow vigilantes.
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- Cow vigilantes stopped and assaulted Tamil Nadu animal husbandry officials transporting Rajasthan’s native Tharparkar breed.
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- **Haryana-** 15 year old Muslim boy was stabbed on board train, who allegedly for a beef-eating.

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- **Gujarat-**Cow vigilantes publicly flogged a Dalit family for skinning a dead cow.
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- A Muslim man died after being assaulted by alleged cow vigilantes for transporting two animals.
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- **Maharashtra -** Series of cases has been reported from various parts of the state, the state was silent in taking actions against the wrong doers.
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What is the significance of SC's move?

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- It ordered the States and the Union Territories to appoint nodal police officers in every district to crack down on such groups
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- It has also asked states to file status reports on what they are doing to prevent vigilantism.
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- The court exhorted the Centre to uphold its constitutional mandate under Article 256 of co-operative federalism and direct the States to act against the groups.
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- It said the Centre could not remain silent, leaving everything to the States.
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- The court also directed the Chief Secretaries and Directors General of Police to take steps to protect the highways from vigilante mobs.
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- Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat accepted the apex court's suggestion to appoint dedicated officers in the rank ofDeputy Superintendent of Police to prevent 'gau rakshaks'.
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What is a need for such direction from SC?

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- Cow-protection groups see themselves as preventing theft, protecting the cow or upholding the law in an Indian state which bans cow slaughter.
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- So far no PIL had been filed against the carcasses of slaughtered animals found strewn on roads and public places but minorities are attacked in the name of cow protection.
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- Dalits and Muslims have reportedly been at the receiving end of violence unleashed by lynch mobs, especially in the four northern States.
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- The Centre has maintained that violence by ‘gau rakshaks’ was a ‘State subject’ and it had no role to play, though it condemned all forms of violence.
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Source: The Hindu, Indian Express

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