

Important Vocab For the Editorial

1. **take on** (phrasal verb) – confront, face with, fight against.
2. **lynching** (noun) – an act of punishing/killing someone by hanging for claimed offence by the group of people without legal trail.
3. **honour killing** (noun) – the killing of a member of a family (particularly a girl or woman) due to the belief the victim has brought dishonour upon the family or community.
4. **inevitable** (adjective) – unavoidable/unpreventable; necessary/compulsory, required.
5. **hate crime** (noun) – any criminal offence that is carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on disability, race, religion, transgender identity or sexual orientation.
6. **imprisonment** (noun) – incarceration, confinement/captivity, detention.
7. **murderous** (adjective) – hard, laborious, rigorous.
8. **preponderant** (adjective) – predominant, more powerful, superior.
9. **come up with** (phrasal verb) – propose, put forward, suggest.
10. **grapple with** (phrasal verb) – tackle, deal, struggle.
11. **vigilante** (noun) – a member of the self-appointed group which unofficially punishing crimes.
12. **unleash** (verb) – let loose, release, set free.
13. **a wave of** (noun) – a sudden increase in a certain phenomenon/happening.
14. **sectarian** (adjective) – denoting a sect (a group of people); factional, partisan.
15. **phenomenon** (noun) – occurrence, event, happening.
16. **zero in** (phrasal verb) – focus on, concentrate on, emphasize.
17. **the nub** (noun) – central part, reality, essential part.
18. **intolerance** (noun) – prejudice, bias, bigotry/partisanship.
19. **polarisation** (noun) – separation of two contrasting groups (based on different opinions/beliefs).
20. **moot** (verb) – propose, suggest, introduce.
21. **criminalise** (verb) – make something (an activity) illegal.
22. **instil** (verb) – introduce, infuse, inspire.
23. **resemble** (verb) – look like, be similar to, be like.
24. **ground** (noun) – reason, factor, basis.
25. **ethnicity** (noun) – a category of people who identify with each other based on common language, ancestral, social, cultural, or national experiences.
26. **rehabilitation** (noun) – the action of bringing (someone or something) back to a normal.
27. **contend** (verb) – claim, argue, allege/insist.
28. **please** (verb) – satisfy, make happy, delight.
29. **lynch** (verb) – punish/kill by hanging someone for claimed offence without legal trail by the group of people.
30. **fulmination** (noun) – protest, objection, complaint.
31. **bereft of** (adjective) – deprived of/stripped of; lacking, deficient in.
32. **societal** (adjective) – related to society.
33. **norm** (noun) – standard, convention, regulation.
34. **Khap panchayats** (noun) – the self-appointed village courts.
35. **seek** (verb) – try, attempt, aim.
36. **interdict** (verb) – ban, block, stop.
37. **warrant** (verb) – justify, vindicate, validate.
38. **resort to** (verb) – use, utilize, turn to.

Taking on the mob: On Rajasthan law against mob lynching

Rajasthan's laws on lynching, 'honour killing' are inevitable responses to rising hate crimes

It is possible to argue that there is no need to create new criminal offences for 'lynching' and 'honour killing' because they remain plain murders. These are already punishable with death or life imprisonment. Yet, mob lynching and murderous attacks on young couples in the name of preserving family or community honour have emerged as preponderant social evils. It is but inevitable that societies come up with new ways of combating such **hate crimes**. Rajasthan has made bold to grapple with these two crimes by passing special penal laws. Vigilante mobs have unleashed a wave of crimes in the name of cow protection and preventing the sale of beef or transport of cattle; the spread of rumour and attempts to establish sectarian dominance have also contributed to this disturbing phenomenon. The Supreme Court zeroed in on the nub of the trend when it spoke of "rising intolerance and growing polarisation" in a judgment last year. It also mooted a special law to criminalise it and "instil a sense of fear" among those too quick to form a lynch mob. The passage of the Protection from Lynching Bill, 2019, makes Rajasthan the second State, after Manipur, to implement the suggestion. A positive feature is that it closely resembles the Manipur law in the way "lynching" is defined. It covers any act of violence, whether spontaneous or planned, by a mob on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, language, dietary practices, sexual orientation, political affiliation or ethnicity. And two persons are enough to constitute a 'mob'.

According to the State's Parliamentary Affairs Minister, 86% of mob lynching incidents reported in India after 2014 were in **Rajasthan**. The Bill says that when a mob attack ends in death, it is punishable with life imprisonment and a fine of up to ₹ 5 lakh. There are lesser terms for causing injuries. As directed by the Supreme Court, the Bill provides for appointment of a nodal officer to prevent lynching and for district police chiefs to act as coordinators. It ensures compensation to victims and rehabilitation measures for those displaced. The opposition BJP, on expected lines, contended that the Bill was being brought in a hurry to please a community. However, it is a fact that Muslims have been

prime targets of lynch mobs. The party's fulmination against the other Bill that prohibits interference in the "freedom of matrimonial alliances in the name of honour and tradition" was equally bereft of substance, as it cited societal norms and cultural practice to oppose the progressive law. In effect, it was batting for khap panchayats that seek to interdict inter-caste marriages. The Bill provides for both death and life imprisonment for killing in the name of honour, but it is doubtful if courts will look at all such murders as among the 'rarest of rare cases' that warrant the resort to the death penalty.