

# **Bulldozer Justice**

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# Ending Bulldozer Justice: Supreme Court's Landmark Ruling

### **Context** :

- The Supreme Court has issued **guidelines to counter arbitrary demolitions** to protect citizens from unjust actions by state authorities.
- This ruling states that **demolitions without due process violate the rule of law** and criticizes the use of "**bulldozer justice**" in society.

## What is Bulldozer Justice?

• Bulldozer justice refers to the **instant punishment** method used by some state governments to penalize alleged rioters and protestors by demolishing their homes, stalls, or other constructions.

### **Case Background**

- In 2019, journalist Manoj Tibrewal Akash's ancestral property in Uttar Pradesh was demolished, allegedly for National Highway expansion.
- The Supreme Court found violations in the demolition, including lack of notice and exceeding the encroachment area.
- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) deemed the demolition unjustified, revealing that only 3.7 metres of land was encroached, but 5-8 metres were demolished.

### Key Highlights of the Ruling

- The Supreme Court emphasized that arbitrary demolitions threaten the constitutional right to property.
- Six mandatory steps were outlined for demolitions:
  - Verification of land records.
  - Proper surveys.
  - Issuing of written notices.
  - Consideration of objections.
  - Allowing time for voluntary removal.
  - Legal acquisition of additional land if necessary.

### Wider Impact of the Ruling

- **Disciplinary and criminal action** will be taken against officials who conduct demolitions without following legal procedures.
- The Uttar Pradesh Chief Secretary is to finalize disciplinary actions within four months.
- The court ordered **₹25 lakh compensation** for the petitioner and a review of similar cases

in the area.

#### **Implications of the Ruling**

- Addresses concerns over the **use of bulldozers to target specific groups** like minorities, protesters, and government critics.
- Mandates that **all states and Union Territories** implement these guidelines for uniform enforcement.

#### Conclusion

- The Supreme Court's guidelines emphasize the **rule of law** and ensure that demolitions are not used for **intimidation or selective punishment**.
- This landmark decision **upholds citizens' property rights** under Article 300A and promotes a fair, transparent approach to dealing with encroachments.

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