



Don't blame it on WhatsApp on rumours and lynch mobs

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Highlights:

Who is responsible?

- A 'serial killer' painted in a luminescent green is on the loose and travels in the pockets of more than 200 million people in India. As per public commentary, it is WhatsApp that has caused the loss of more than 20 lives in the past two months alone in the country.
- Rumours on WhatsApp that there are child kidnappers and cattle traders roaming around have led to mob lynching's. Such rumours are posited as incontrovertible facts.
- Consequently, a debate has been framed around the growing use of technology by the "ignorant" masses and the responsibilities of a technology platform.
- This is a shallow understanding that distracts us from the harder, vexing questions on the sectarian discourse set by our political leadership, a deepening divide that is damaging fraternity within society, and the structural reforms necessary to restore law and order.

Article deals with fixing responsibility for lynch mobs actions and the holding to account the inaction of administration to avert these incidents

Way forward

- What is needed is an administration that reaches out to local communities to keep them in the loop in order to check trouble-makers — and that conveys sufficient good faith so individuals will trust it to keep the peace and sift real threats from mischievous rumours
- Rumour has historically found its way around communication walls, and it can only be effectively blocked through old-fashioned information campaigns and administrative alertness.
- District administrations and gram panchayats should be asked to reach out to locals to persuade them against falling for rumours, and to come to the authorities if they have any fears.

Source: [The Hindu](#)