

## **It's vengeance: Rights groups on Telangana killings**

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**Hyderabad, April 7 (IANS):** Terming the killing of five terror suspects by police in Telangana on Tuesday as "cold-blooded murders", human rights organisations said it was an act of "vengeance". Alleging that the shootout was "fake", they demanded that the policemen involved in the incident be booked for murder.

The rights groups also demanded a probe by a judge of the high court into Tuesday's incident in Warangal district.

Police said they shot dead five accused as they tried to snatch weapons from them and flee when they were being brought to Hyderabad from the Warangal Central Jail.

"It was an act of vengeance by police for what happened in Nalgonda district," Human Rights Forum president S. Jeevan Kumar told IANS.

He was referring to the gunning down of four policemen by terror operatives in two incidents in Nalgonda district last week.

Voicing concern over the killing of 25 people on a single day in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Kumar called for police reforms in both the states to ensure greater accountability.

M.A. Shakeel of the Human Rights Law Network said the incidents point towards a dangerous trend.

He said the killings in both the incidents were deliberate.

"How can five undertrials who were handcuffed try to flee when there were 17 armed policemen who were escorting them in the police vehicle?" asked Shakeel, referring to the Telangana incident.

He demanded that the policemen involved be booked for murder. "They should be suspended pending a probe," he said.

Lateef Mohammed Khan, general secretary of Civil Liberties, said: "It's not an encounter but a cold blooded murder of five undertrials. It was a pre-planned act to kill the five who were handcuffed."

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