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Q7(c)

Are the contemporary farmers' movements in India changing their course? Discuss.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Social Movements in Modern India

Social Movements in Modern India: Peasants and farmers movements; Women's movement; Backward classes and Dalit movement; Environmental movements; Ethnicity and Identity movements.

Core demand of the question

- Are the contemporary farmers' movements in India changing their course? Discuss

Revision summary

Older farmers' movements centred regional price and surplus growers.

Contemporary protests are longer, more national and media-scaled.

MSP and farm-law politics recast the demand public.

Some inclusion of women and ecology appears in slogans.

Dalit labour still sits at the edge of the kisan course.

Introduction

Yes, contemporary farmers' movements have changed course in organisation, demand, and public, while still speaking an older kisan language of land, price, and honour.

Body

Older course

- Kisan Sabha, Tebhaga, and later new farmers' movements around the 1980s stressed prices, subsidies, and a Bharat versus India frame, often led by surplus-caste commercial growers.
- Class of labour was thinner in that course than Desai would want.

What is changing

- MSP, repeal of farm laws, and federal bargaining made a national simultaneous public through media, an opportunity structure, not the root cause.
- Alliances across Punjab, Haryana, and western UP showed unions that can sit months at a border, a new duration and logistics.
- Some platforms now name labour, women farmers, and ecological water, a wider course than tractor-only prosperity.
- **Caste tensions remain:** dominant-caste leadership versus Dalit farm labour, so the course is not a simple class unification.

What persists

- Landed kisan identity, procurement politics, and suspicion of corporate contract farming.
- Village factions can split a 'kisan' public locally.

Discussion

- The course is more national, more mediated, and somewhat more inclusive in slogan.
- The agrarian class map still decides who can stay at the protest and who must return to wage work.

Flow diagram

Price kisan unions -> National MSP media sit-ins

National MSP media sit-ins -> Wider slogans

Landless labour -> Incomplete class course

Conclusion

Contemporary farmers' movements are changing course toward longer, national, media-visible campaigns around MSP and corporate farming. They have not become a mazdoor movement. Change is real in method and scale, incomplete in class.

Facts & figures

New farmers' movements

1980s-onwards commercial kisan politics of prices and subsidies.

Farm law protests

Illustration of a nationalised, long-duration contemporary course.

MSP as citizenship

Price floor treated as a right of the agrarian producer.

Dominant-caste unions

Continuity beneath the new national stage.

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