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Q5(d)

Analyse the sociological interconnections between Social Media and Mass Mobilization in India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2023 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Industrialization and Urbanisation in India

Industrialization and Urbanisation in India: Evolution of modern industry in India; Growth of urban settlements in India; Working class: structure, growth, class mobilization; Informal sector, child labour; Slums and deprivation in urban areas.

Core demand of the question

- Analyse the sociological interconnections between social media and mass mobilization in India
- Cover speed, networks, rumour, and both democratic and violent uses
- Keep a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Social media lowers the cost of assembling a public in India.

Feeds still follow kin, caste, faith and party networks.

Protests have used platforms to scale and to document force.

Rumour and hate also travel in the same pipes.

Lasting mobilisation still needs organisation beyond the forward.

Introduction

Social media connects strangers into a public that can assemble faster than party offices or village factions once did. Mass mobilisation in India now travels through phones as well as through caste, union, and shrine networks. The interconnection is organisational, not only technological.

Body

How the link works

- Platforms lower the cost of calling a crowd, sharing a frame of injustice, and streaming police action, which is why farmers' protests, student protests, and city solidarity campaigns could scale quickly.
- **Existing social structure still routes the feed:** WhatsApp groups follow kin, jati, mosque, church, and workplace, so the Rudolfs' traditional associations now have digital rooms.
- Hashtags and forwards create a felt majority that may be a bubble, which can embolden street action.

Democratic and dark sides

- Mobilisation for rights, disaster help, and evidence against abuse can deepen the public sphere
- Beteille ties to citizenship.

- The same pipes carry rumour, targeted hate, and coordinated harassment; lynchings and riot moods have been linked in court and inquiry discourse to forwards, not only to old rumours in the bazaar.
- Algorithmic speed outruns Dumont's slow ritual public and also outruns local verification.

Sociological caution

- A. R. Desai would ask which class owns the platforms and which labourers still lack data or time.
- Online crowd is not automatically a lasting movement; Chipko's staying power came from organisation, not only from a message.

Flow diagram

Phones platforms -> Kin caste party networks
Kin caste party networks -> Mass mobilisation
Mass mobilisation -> Rights protest
Mass mobilisation -> Rumour hate crowd

Conclusion

Social media and mass mobilisation interconnect because platforms amplify already structured Indian networks. They can widen democratic assembly and they can industrialise rumour. The sociology is of organisation and inequality, not of gadgets alone.

Facts & figures

WhatsApp groups

Kin and caste rooms that turned into political and rumour channels.

Farmers' protests 2020-21

Physical blockade plus intensive digital publicity and internal coordination.

Student and city campaigns

Hashtag publics that could convert into street assembly.

Rumour violence

Court and police records in several states linking forwards to mob attack moods.

Digital divide

Class and region still decide who speaks and who is only a target of the feed.