

# SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE DOMAIN OF COMMUNAL VIOLENCE: A STUDY OF ASSAM RIOT 2012

Sayantani Roy<sup>1</sup>, Aditya K Shukla<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Madhya Pradesh, India

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Amity School of Communication, Amity University, Madhya Pradesh, India

## ABSTRACT

*The paper emphasizes on many attributes of violence that prevails in India and that provokes the aggression and crime. It additionally includes varied problems associated with faith and community violence, additionally this date rumor tools like social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, SMS etc.) that have emerged together of the sharpest weapons, complimenting politics and media that simply misguides the mob. The paper additionally explains the relation between intercommunity and interreligious violence and showcases the impact of such aggression and the way totally different religions and spiritual texts backed their views over crime. It additionally tries to require a broad however careful account of use – and misuse – of social media, print and electronic media in throughout riots. The need for “responsible” use of social networking sites like twitter, Facebook et al. throughout a communal riot are preoccupied for discussion within the context of hate information, instances of faux and deceptive videos or rumors being propagated. It additionally presents a case study on the role social media contends within the recent Assam riots in 2012.*

**Keyword:** - Social Media, Communal Violence, Assam Riot 2012.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

India is marked by variety of traditions and practices. It is the birth place of varied religions; particularly Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and other religious belief. Cultural diversity and tolerance area unit each led to within the country by law and custom that associates them to spiritual communities. The number of diversity within the belief systems in India these days has resulted in to sure social structures with spiritual ideas and expressions claiming sizable influences.

Human society is a group of quite a lot of organizations and contributors with unique identities which are divided on the foundation of class, religion, and tradition. Every society has its specific identification which differs from another and the struggles for restrained assets put these organizations or divided societies to a conflicting stage. These communal or social conflicts whether or not nonviolent or violent are in some way a form of human action. Communalism is a huge phenomenon in the social life of an Indian citizen and communal riots are the morally reprehensible manner of expressing it. Communal riots have grown to be an undiminished entirety part of communalism.

An event can be labeled as a communal rebellion on two grounds: firstly, if there may be violence and, secondly, if two or more communally identified organizations confront every different or the contributors of the opposite team, at some factor in the course of the violence. There had been a couple of horrific communal riots had been the 1984 Sikhriots and the 2002 Gujarat (Godhra) riots & the latest the Kokrajhar and Muzaffarnagar riots. Social media had a key position in the Kokrajhar and few other districts of Assam, Kishtwar (Jammu) and this time in the

Muzaffarnagar riots additionally, the posts by person over Facebook, Twitter, SMS, Whatsapp & protection by using the Indian media tend to affect the mold the opinions and moves of the opposite participants of the society.

The internet has turn out to be an essential part of modern dwelling. The unfold of social media and the use of platforms is changing the best way society operates. Social media has been playing a harmful role in inciting communal violence in India and time has come to check its misuse. Social networking sites are a threat to national protection as they are used as instruments for drug trafficking, money laundering and match-fixing, terrorism, and instigating violence and for rumor tools etc. Social media instruments like Blogs, Micro blogs, Dialogue Boards, SMS and probably the most burning difficulty, i.e. social networking web sites like the Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and so on. Social media may also be defined, among other matters, as tools, how they're used, by means of whom they are used and for what intent can characterize either a risk or an possibility for country wide protection, it's itself shouldn't be noticeable as a capabilities chance to national security however folks that use these tools may pose a expertise threat. It's now for the reason that social media environments are main sources of knowledge for working out the dynamics of the diffusion of know-how and human conduct.

Evidence means that social media had an effect on events equivalent to Assam Riot, Muzaffarnagar riots, Godhara Riots, Babri Masjid riots etc. Businesses representing a expertise risk to country wide safety like global terrorist organizations, Transnational Crime Orgs, Cracker organizations, devout sects, Hacker businesses, NGO's, global companies, Allied overseas states, terrorist companies and so forth.

## **2. SOCIAL MEDIA: A TOOL FOR GOSSIP AND RUMOR**

Social media have a deadly part in prompting shared savagery in India and time has come to have a keep an eye on its unsafe misuse with the goal that it doesn't again bring about disintegration in intercommunity relations. Above all else it is essential for everyone including police & other administering sources to see how the new media is utilized by rascallions. A successful instrument is expected to screen such abuse of online networking. The tragic part is uproar control plans that exist at present were made by the British rulers. It has not been modernized to suit present times.

By Uttar Pradesh Police, a questionable video cut that allegedly demonstrated the execution by swarm of two Hindu Jat young men that was coursed fuelled the mobs in Muzaffarnagar. Yet, the footage was later observed to be a video shot in Pakistan and its part in Muzaffarnagar uproars is still being referred to, the video turned out to be popular to the point that its previews were additionally distributed into the pages of some Hindi dailies. Certain political figures were likewise reserved under Sections 420 (forgery), 153A (promoting enmity on religious grounds) and 120B (conspiracy) of the IPC and Section 66 of the Information Technology Act for making this video open and affecting public savagery and inciting communal violence.

In July 2012, amid the violence between indigenous Bodos and Muslims in Assam, certain pictures were circled, filling alarm bringing about the mass migration of a great many northeastern to their local spots from various parts. Correspondingly, revolts that softened up Kishtwar in Jammu and Kashmir after Eid festivities were likewise irritated by specific postings on the social media. The circumstance was checked inside of the perfect time and the mobs were limited. In Kishtwar, the material on online networking were promptly followed and checked, generally the outcome mobs would have been distinctive.

The above perception hold true when the dailies of India uses various approaches of writing with provocative features likewise have a bigger part in the bending conclusions and activities of the regular individuals who don't take after Facebook or Twitter. 'MUSALMAANON DWAARAA HINDUON KAA KATLEAMJAARI' which means Muslims continues to slaught Hindus [Dainik Jahran, Sep.9, 2013, Muzaffarnagar edition].

It has ended up tough for government to check the activities on social networking sites. In August 2012, when converted photographs have been utilized by nuisance creators as part of the sort of MMS to fuel long-established stress by focusing on members from North East the government had then propped around banning mass SMS and MMS for a special period. The project was made extra troublesome with most photos converted and transferred on web sites in Pakistan and some one of a kind nation the place seeing them used to be easily possible. The government needs to rely on upon the micro blog and social networking sites whose servers are established in the U.S. To act towards the posts and transfers as these firms decipher man or woman's protection, it took days prior questionable substance was blocked. Long variety informal communication locations are becoming equipment to considerate any one's snapshot and, it is rather tough for us to make legit transfer towards owners of the locations which can be organized in the distinct international locations, as they are will definitely agree to our regulation.

### 3. NEWS MEDIA AMIDST NEW MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The substance of media is changing with new correspondences innovations, for example, camera empowered smart mobile telephones, spy cameras and voice recorders are giving writers an open door to accumulate and scatter data assembled effortlessly. Digitization of the news media has led to compression of time and distance but various hidden realities and factor still affect the reporting of conflicts. The images broadcast in our drawing rooms are not only informing the global audience of the horrific happenings but might also instigate further violence in an existing violent situation. Along these lines, the media's report of a conflict circumstance prompts the clearing up of the contention itself. The media encourages the supposition building also; affect the political choices and gathering of people's responses in the public eye. This in the long run shapes emergencies and clashes as in painstakingly chose news and tight control over the media. Since freedom until the intrusion of satellite TV in India, the electronic media had served as the mouthpiece of the legislature.

In the 1984 Operation Blue Star, the nearby media were not steady of the Sikh causes. Also, since the start of the issues in Punjab, the Government had strict control on the media and forced substantial restriction. There was a tight control over media so catch the horrendous occasions were not permitted in the nearby land. But during 2002 Gujarat riots the two English language national newspapers in India, The Times of India and the Indian Express were critical of the state government. The result of the multiple and complex interests of regions, groups within them leads to economic, social and political conflicts. Such conflicts are difficult to handle and requires negotiations between the parties involved.

### 4. IMPACT OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA ON ASSAM RIOT: A CASE STUDY

Social networking, with its quick and opened up scope, has changed the way individuals cooperate with one another. Its utilization in the Northeast/by those from the Northeast, nonetheless, became a force to be reckoned with in less than perfect circumstances.

In August 2012, there was a sudden departure of Northeast Indians from the urban areas of Mumbai, Pune and Bangalore, and to a lesser degree, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Mysore, back to their local states. This as a group development was activated in two stages. The first of these included mass instant messages (by means of telephones) that cautioned of looming shared conflicts in striking back to the Muslim-Bodo riots in Assam. The second stage was through the online networking stages of Facebook and Twitter – individuals quickly took to communicating their shock at the affirmed treachery against those from the Northeast; fanning the blazes of an emergency that was just undermining to develop. Government reactions were portrayed deferred activity, and late endeavors to cut down spontaneous substance on the web by serving notification to middle people, for example, sites, which are authentic business concerns. Both illustrations record bureaucratic laziness and a propensity for shallow band-help arrangements.

Two perceptions ought to be made first. In endeavoring territorial examinations of the compelling and/or destructive employments of online networking, it must be recognized that the base of the emergency specific toward the Northeast may not, truth be told, have begun in the Northeast i.e its root stays undetermined. While the source area hasn't been found, the causal connection between the utilization of online networking and the mass agitation it incited can be found in the locale - the former Bodo-Muslim riots in Assam. Entirely talking, an investigation of the utilization of online networking in the Northeast is not best served by the occasions of August 2012. This is for various reasons.

First, the source of trouble has not been confirmed or verified, meaning that it could have been an extra-regional incidence. Second, the whole event took on a highly political form, and this can of course be located in the Northeast. The BJP, Congress, regional parties, all took turns to take potshots at each other and make charges of stupidity. The bulk texts and contacts on Facebook and Twitter may have originated in the Northeast, but until this is proven, political bad-mouthing within the region can only be seen as having emerged from it. Holding a sinister political hand (of a regional nature) responsible for these provocations is only inference until it is recognized with conviction. Third, it is difficult to ascertain the degree of responsibility that should be assigned to the phone messages and social media platforms – the bulk messages came first, and it is possible that their effects were much more widespread. Finally, people from the Northeast are relatively removed, both physically and psychologically, from the rest of India, partly because it has long been of peripheral concern to the centre and partly because of the

region's own volition. It is likely therefore that the level of panic and fear of persecution that was displayed in response to the supposed violence had much to do also with the feeling of marginalization that is associated with the region.

## 5. ARRANGEMENTS OF GOVERNMENT TO CURB THE MISUSE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Setting up of a cyber surveillance office that can caution about any such malicious goal and convenient telling keeping in mind the end goal to make suitable move.
2. Outline rules for telecom administrators to anticipate alarm response and square destructive content on the web and social networking.
3. Set up a lawful power endorsed by the administration to fill the current holes in the Information Technology Act for managing such circumstance, including dissuading pernicious utilization of the web and online networking.
4. Social networking is only a body to telecast data rapidly – whether the data is great on the other hand awful depends at last on the individual, how he takes it. Whether he gets tricked instantly or sits tight for the dependable source and casings his activity which might be agreeable to entire society.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Through our examination, we have been to reason that responsibility of media increase while covering the collective mobs and conflicts. Media coverage and social networking helps people to get new information to the same issue, it is important to protect the freedom of the sentiment giving and perspectives by individuals in social networking groups to have better and upgrade information in regards to a scope of social, political, specialized issues. In any case, this is critical that we should not heretics and inconvenience creators to abuse social networks. There is earnestness in the part of the administration to introduce successful component and observation framework which check questionable substance and suspends its transmission through social networking. Telecom organizations ought to create viable strategies to follow the area of the transferring content. Few segments of the media and a few clients of person to person communication destinations offer to hurt the assessments of the religious gatherings through their feeling writes and posts, which have inclination to incite, corrupt the peaceful feeling and lead the collective agitation. Long range informal communication destinations ought to be supported to gadget more noteworthy self check that they contribute for fear that to extensive scale peace unsettling influence. The state ought to utilize all measures to reject those liable for powering the common brutality. It is likewise imperative that media ought to know that they can remember the circumstances and ought to respond proficiently. Bit alone media can never bring about a racial change overnight, support from the part of readers are also required, and try to maintain the harmony in the society and promote the essence of fraternity.

## 6. REFERENCES

- [1]. Ahmed, S. (2010). The Role of the Media during Communal Riots in India: A Study of the 1984 Sikh Riots and the 2002 Gujarat Riots. *Media Asia*, 37(2), 103112
- [2]. Ahmed, S (2008). "Pros and cons of conflicts sensitive reporting". Submitted for Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) and Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS), Srilanka.
- [3]. Ballantine, B. (2003). "Improving the quality of risk management in the European Union: Risk communication". EPC working paper (June), European policy Centre: Brussels
- [4]. Berry, L., Jones, A., Powers, T., & Sava, A. M. (1999). "Media interaction with the public in emergency situations: Four case studies". A report prepared under an Inter agency Agreement by the Federal Research Division, Library of Congress

[5]. Gupta, Pranav. (2014). Abuse of Social Media. <http://www.lawctopus.com/academike/abuseofsocialmedia/> Article retrieved on 3rd March 2016

[6]. Habibullah,Wajahat.(2014).“Social media fanning communal intolerance, misuse needs checking.” The Free Press, Janaury 13. <http://freepressjournal.in/socialmediafanning>

[7]. Montagnese A. (2011). ‘Impact of Social Media on National Security’, Research Paper. STEPI –AEU3, Centro Militare di Strategic, p 11.

[8]. Neog Ruhee. (2013). Social Media: A Study of the Northeast <http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/social-media-a-study-of-the-northeast-4180.html> Article retrieved on 7th March 2016.

[9]. Pathak, P.P. (2014). ‘Role of Social media in reference to North East Ethnic violence’. IOSR Journal of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS).Volume 19, Issue 4, Ver. V (Apr. 2014), PP 59-66

