

Citizen Journalism In India: A Qualitative Research On The Possibilities and Limitations Of The Emerging Fifth Estate

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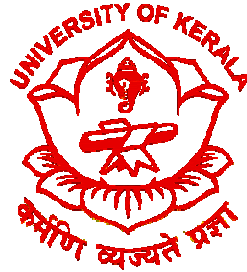
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**DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS
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**Citizen Journalism In India: A Qualitative Research
On The Possibilities and Limitations Of The Emerging
Fifth Estate**

**Career Related First Degree Programme in
Mass Communication and Journalism**

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled '**Citizen Journalism in India: A qualitative research on the possibilities and limitations of the emerging fifth estate**' is a record of research work carried out by us at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, Sree Narayana College, Kollam, under the guidance of Sri.Vaishnav Vijayakumar and submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, First Degree Programme in Mass Communication, Journalism and Video Production under CBCSS system.

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|-----------------------|-------------|
| 1.Kavitha S Babu | 12818132012 |
| 2.K R Aswathy Raj | 12818132011 |
| 3.Selena Susan Thomas | 12818132057 |
| 4.Sooraj S | 12818132014 |
| 5.Shihab Shajahan | 12818132042 |
| 6.Shuhaib Axser K K | 12818132043 |

Place : Kollam

Department Of Mass Communication,

Date :

Sree Narayana College, Kollam

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation '**Citizen Journalism in India: A qualitative research on the possibilities and limitations of the emerging fifth estate**' is a record of studies carried out by Kavitha S Babu, K R Aswathy Raj, Selena Susan Thomas, Sooraj S, Shihab Shajahan and Shuhaib Axser K K at Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, under my guidance and submitted to the University of Kerala in the partial fulfillment of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts. First Degree Programme in Mass Communication, Journalism and Video Production under CBCSS system.

Smt Radhika.B

Assistant Professor and Head

Of Dept of English and Mass

Communication

SN College, Kollam

Sri. Vaishnav Vijayakumar

Guest Faculty

Dept of Mass communication

SN College, Kollam

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1. Kavitha S Babu 12818132012
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5. Shihab Shajahan 12818132042
6. Shuhaib Axser K K 12818132043

ABSTRACT

India, the largest democratic country in the world is now witnessing the emergence of a new pillar of democracy, Citizen Journalism, which is based upon the public citizen playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information. Digital platforms enable the public sphere for easy dissemination of information and whatever they want to exclude, without any professional background through social media.

Other than Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, YouTube and Blogging made a digital change in the way of presentation of topics and enabled a worldwide reach and acceptance to amateur journalists. Although they aim at excluding information which are ignored by traditional media, and problems from marginalized communities of the country, there are many challenges along with possibilities in the evolving fifth estate of democracy.

This study aims at revealing the importance of Citizen Journalism in Indian democracy as it is evident for democratising media as well as to sound for rural India and triggering massive protests against injustice with a great support of common people thus cross-checking the pillars of democracy, especially the fourth pillar, the media, whether it stand for the sake of the citizens or not.

Keywords : Citizen Journalism, New media, Mainstream media, Dissemination of information, Massive protests, Rural India, Digital era, Fifth pillar

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Media and Indian Democracy

Media has played a significant role in establishing democracy throughout the world. Since the 18th century, the media has been instrumental in reaching the masses and equipping them with knowledge, especially during the American Independence movement and French Revolution.

The Government of India often abbreviated as GoI, modelled after the Westminster system for governing the state, is the union government mainly composed of the three estates, the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary, in which all powers are vested by the constitution in the prime minister, parliament and the supreme court. Media is the “fourth estate” of democracy and it plays a pivotal role in ensuring justice and benefits of the government policies reach the interior sections of the society. The role of media is to make the society aware of their democratic rights and fight the three institutions of democracy.

During the framing of the constitution, there was a confusion regarding the status of media in India, whether there was a need to frame an article under the Fundamental Right of ‘Right to Freedom of Speech and Expression’ or to have a separate provision for ‘freedom of the press’ as was the case in US Constitution. Dr Ambedkar, Chairman of the Drafting Committee felt, there was no need to have separate provision for the free press, instead he argued that “the press is merely another way of stating an individual or a citizen”, thus, Right to Press became a part of Right to freedom of speech and expression under article 19(1)a of Indian Constitution. It became a source of information for the citizens of colonial India, as they became aware of the arbitrariness of the British colonial rule. Thus, gave a newfound force to India’s Independence movement, as millions of Indians joined the leaders in their fight against the British imperialism.

The role of media in Indian democracy has undergone massive changes, from the days of press censorship during Emergency in 1975 to being influential in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. They act as a chain between the government and the citizens of the country, people have faith in media as it has an impact on the audience.

1990s saw an influx of investment in the media houses, as large corporate houses, business

tycoons, political elites, and industrialists saw this as an opportunity to improve their brandimage. This led to objectionable change in the benevolence of medias. News that was seen as a medium to educate the people on issues that were of utmost importance for the society, became a source of biased viewpoints. It acts as the voice of millions of citizens, when government institutions become corrupt and authoritarian or when they turn a blind-eye towards the issues concerning the society. In contemporary India, media, which is responsible to represent the voice of millions of citizens, when government institutions become corrupt and authoritarian or when they turn a blind-eye towards the issues concerning the society, has become a mouthpiece for various political organizations and business groups, they act as amanuensis for such influential figures, as their business relies on support from such organizations. The news channels were now involved in the showbiz industry, as TRPs became a cause of rivalry amongst news houses.

1.2 Citizen Journalism in India

In a democratic country where unfortunately the powerful Fourth Pillar became a mouthpiece to political parties and authorities and focus to deliver biased news to force the public to accept what they broadcast, there emerges a strong medium of common citizen focused on news for the people and to question injustice, under a common tag, citizen journalists. Citizen journalism, also known as collaborative media, participatory journalism, democratic journalism, guerrilla journalism or street journalism, is based upon public citizens “playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news and information.”

Courtney C. Radsch defines citizen journalism “as an alternative and activist form of news gathering and reporting that functions outside mainstream media institutions, often as a response to shortcomings in the professional journalistic field, that uses similar journalistic practices but is driven by different objectives and ideals and relies on alternative sources of legitimacy than traditional or mainstream journalism”. Jay Rosen offers a simpler definition: “When the people formerly known as the audience employ the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another.

The underlying principle of citizen journalism is that ordinary people, not professional journalists, can be the main creators and distributors of news. Citizen journalism should not be confused with community journalism or civic journalism, both of which are practiced by professional journalists; collaborative journalism, which is the practice of professional and non-professional journalists working together and social journalism, which denotes a digital publication with a hybrid of professional and non-professional journalism. From capturing a crisis on tape to sharing a personal essay on a major news outlet, Citizen Journalism can assume a variety of forms. It can be in the form of text, pictures, audios and videos. It is basically all about communicating information of some kind.

Steve Outing of poynter.org and others have outlined many different types of Citizen Journalism. Below is a condensed version of Outing's layers of Citizen Journalism placed into two main categories:

1. Semi Independent citizen journalism, which involves citizens conducting, in one form or another, to existing professional news sites. Readers are actively working with professional reporters in putting together a story, readers are adding their information to articles written by professional journalists all come under this section.

2. Fully Independent citizen journalism, that involves journalism working in ways that are fully independent of traditional and professional news outlets. These can be blogs in which individuals can report on events in their communities or offer commentary on the issues of the day, websites run by individual or a group of people that report on news events in the local community etc.

One of the most seriously debated concerns associated with citizen journalism is its ethics followed as the term is understood as a mode of public communication that fulfils the same tasks as professional journalism, but is performed by non-professional actors – usually by ordinary digital media users. Codes offered by press councils also often only refer to their own members; this effectively dismisses citizen journalists who are not members of these councils. This way of journalism is not necessarily being mentioned explicitly; largely, these codes only address user-generated content in a more generic way.

Citizen journalists themselves take a number of stances: they may abide by the professional code of ethics; they may have established their own codes of ethics (especially at the level of specific citizen journalism platforms); they may selectively adopt elements of conventional codes of ethics (such as transparency); they may take their audiences' reactions as indicators of whether they are acting ethically (thereby outsourcing ethics appraisals to their audiences); or they may treat journalistic ethics as a non-issue. These different approaches are also distributed differently across platforms and countries. Transparency, accuracy, impartiality, and fact orientation are by far mentioned most often, but objectivity is especially strong in India. This may be indicative of different underlying journalistic cultures.

Press councils' codes of ethics do not specifically address citizen journalism, then, even though some of them have acknowledged the need to do so in future. Many interviews identified ethical considerations as important, but continue to take a very selective approach to ethics. Some outsource the issue to their audiences, or simply do not care about ethical considerations; and overall there is therefore no coherent ethics of citizen journalism.

1.3 History of citizen journalism in India

The early roots of participatory journalism is embedded in 1990s. The first websites devoted to news in India, Samachar.com and Rediff.com were set up in the mid-1990s by Entrepreneurs Rajesh Jain and Ajit Balakrishnan. Traditional English and Indian language newspapers soon went online, and several other news websites unrelated to media groups were set up. Hundreds and thousands of Indians have since then created their own personal blogs to debate a range of topics. Blogging has yet to reach Western levels, but there are indications that it is rapidly gaining popularity.

Citizen journalism has Influenced the reporting of crises, intervened in social and human rights Issues, exposed political corruption (e.g. Tehelka.com), highlighted malpractices in mainstream media (e.g. thePen Pricks blog), and voiced Issues of concern to women in a male-dominated society. The internet has enabled civic society groups to enhance awareness of events and Issues, evoke reactions and coordinate protests in different parts of India.

The reporting of the Mumbai rains in July 2005 was high-water mark, as commentators remarked that it signaled the beginning of Internet-based citizen journalism in the country. Several websites published the Eyewitness accounts of the incessant rains, updating them regularly with information and advice for help. The news portal Rediff.com, which registers a large number of hits from within India as well as outside, also became a crucial link for rescue acts. The key source of breaking the news on the rains was no longer the radio, television, or the press, but a news portal (Sonwalkar, 2009).

Many observers have argued that citizen journalism on social media came into its own in 2008 following 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, when Twitter (an online social networking and microblogging service) became an important source of news on the crisis. Blogs too have become important tools for citizen journalists to write on the issues they want to highlight.

In India, there are a number of citizen journalism blog sites highlight that include Newmeback.com, Citizenjournalistofindia.blogspot.com, Instablogs.com, Citizensreport.in and so on.

News portals have further widened the parameters of public participation. At present various citizen journalism websites are operating In India. Prominent among them are MeriNews, MyNews, Cplash, WorldSnap News, The Viewspaper, Purdafash and Inewss, scroll.in ,thewire.in,citizenjournalistsofindia.com etc. MeriNews is the first Indian news portal wholly devoted to citizen journalism. The term MeriNews means ‘my news’ in Hindi. It was set up by its founder and editor Upadhyay in 2006 with the motto: “Power to People.” He called his website a ‘product with a mission; a people’s news Platform of the people, by the people, for the people, providing power to The people and empowering democracy (Sonwalkar, 2009). On the other hand, citizen journalism is yet to take off fully in Indian Newspapers. The reason for this can be that writing to newspapers has its limitations, such as circumscribed space and a newspaper’s inability to reproduce more than a small fraction of the mail it receives.

Apart from this, there also works certain independent online media companies nationally and internationally to focus on matters that are ignored by traditional medias. ‘Scoop Whoop Media’

is one of such Indian digital media company based in New Delhi operates various online content verticals and serves as a news organisation featuring web series, documentaries and current affairs reporting with a focus on video production and primarily catering to adolescents and young adults. It also features other infotainment and entertainment content. Global Voices(globalvoices.org), another community of writers, bloggers and digital activists that aim to translate and report on what is being said in citizen media worldwide sign the participation internationally.

1.4 Role of New Media in strengthening citizen journalism

One of the main feature of Citizen Journalism is that it is usually found online. In fact the emergence of the internet with blogs, podcast, streaming video and other web related innovations is what made Citizen Journalism possible. The internet gave non- journalists the ability to transmit information globally which was a power that once was reserved for only largest media corporations and new media agencies. When the term media refers to the predominant means of communication (such as television and newspapers), particularly of mass communication (mass media), the new media are those types of media that use digital technology (e.g. social media and the use of the internet). This is as opposed to “old media”, which refers to traditional forms of media, such as print media (e.g. newspapers and magazines), television and radio.

The term new media particularly relates to digital media: media encoded into a machine-readable format, such as an MP3 files, for example. However, while a CD, DVD or CD-ROM contains digital data, these are now old-fashioned, arguably redundant technology. What might reasonably be considered “new” is always changing. For our purposes, new media is best understood as media that uses digital technology and the internet. This includes (but is not restricted to) social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. The streaming of video and audio files, including both commercial film and music and user-generated media content (such as the videos

on YouTube), Digital/satellite and smart television (especially those that facilitate some interactivity), computer games and particularly online gaming, apps for mobile telephones and tablets.

New media includes social networks: forms of software that allow people, groups and companies to connect and share information such as photographs and text. Companies such as Facebook, WhatsApp, SnapChat and Instagram are all forms of social networks. There are also virtual communities. These networks of individuals who share information across an online community. The individuals in the community may share similar interests or goals, such as an online gaming community or followers of a particular blog. Some old media today exists in new media formats (for example newspaper's websites often involve multimedia approaches to the news, not just an online version of the printed articles); televisions have become "smart"; digital radio provides further opportunities to interact and to see as well as hear; e-books might have web-links or other features that make them more than just a screen version of the printed page.

Since its launch, social media platform YouTube has also changed the way we watch videos and consume content. Besides being a video-sharing platform, it is providing quality entertainment and education to its users at no cost. From music videos and movies to education videos and news, the content available on the platform is endless. A few individuals have banked on this opportunity to inspire others with their initiatives, and are making citizens more socially and politically aware.

- Dhruv Rathee a popular YouTuber from Haryana. His videos on YouTube involve controversial topics, with a strong focus on societal, political, and environmental issues. Some of his popular videos include 'The JNU incident, explained, 'Privatization of Air India, BPCL analysis by Dhruv Rathee', and the 'Ground reality of Delhi's government schools'.
- Prajakta Koli, a YouTube personality who makes videos based on her daily observations of the society, people's behaviours, and everyday life situations.
- Anisha Dikshit's YouTube handle is called Rickshawali, which is an attempt to showcase a day in the life of the average Indian woman looking to raise awareness and talks about subjects such as sex education, cultural differences, and women and their role in society.

1.5 Features of new media

The new media made communication easy with some of its features distinct from traditional medias. Digitalization resulted in ‘technological convergence’ that allows so much information to be stored in compact hard disks or micro memory cards and it is also what allows for the near instantaneous transmission of information. The easy accessibility and interactivity of the media made the journalistic activities user-friendly to common people. New media is hypertextual .Hypertext or links are a common feature of new media, which allows users more freedom of choice over how they navigate the different sources of information available to them.

Digital Media has also facilitated cultural globalization – we now interact much more globally and via virtual networks of people rather than locally. It presents to us a very different reality from face to face to ‘lived reality’, for most of us this means a very fast paced flow of information with numerous products and people screaming for our attention. These networks allow for ‘collective intelligence’ that allow us to pool our resources much more easily and to draw on a wider range of talents and sources of information (depending on our needs) than ever before. Simulation is relevant quality of digital media in this highly digitalized era. It goes a step beyond the ‘virtual’ nature of New Media as usual. Simulation is most obviously experienced computer games which provide an immersive experience for users into a “virtual life” that is simulated through digital technology. These virtual worlds are synthetic creations that ultimately rely on algorithms which set the parameters through which events in the gaming environment unfold.

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of Literature

Citizen journalism term has emerged in the recent years with the spread of the internet. Citizen journalism grew in tandem with the growth of the interactive functions on the Internet.

Elsbeth Tilley and Cokley (2008) mention that the terms citizen journalist and citizen journalism arose when individuals or groups who were not aligned with publishers as “professional journalists” began to collect, edit and provide publishers with (or publish directly) news material that was out of the publishers’ reach. Typically, this material reported sudden events, such as fires, crashes, floods and other disasters, which desk-bound reporters could not attend due to time constraints, or odd on-the-spot items.

Stuart Allan and Einer Thorsen in 'Citizen Journalism: Global perspectives' examines the spontaneous actions of ordinary people, caught up in extraordinary events, who felt compelled to adopt the role of news reporter. When the people formerly known as the audience employ the press tools they now have in their possession to inform one another that's citizen journalism.

Melissa Wall (2012), describes using digital tools ranging from you tube to twitter, ordinary people are collecting and sharing news that might otherwise never get reported. She further questioned and answered what does citizen journalism mean for professional journalism and ultimately for democracy? How does incorporating citizen journalism content into mainstream news media content enhance or threaten professional journalism?

Rabia Noor (2017), in her research paper Citizen Journalism vs. Mainstream Journalism: A study on challenges posed by amateurs has conducted the study on the people of Kashmir and concluded that citizen journalism in the coming days, is believed to become more accessible to people worldwide, since more and more people are becoming techno savvy. Besides, some established news organizations, like CNN-IBN and others give a good space to citizen journalism content and seek citizen inputs (text/photos) about public issues.

Noor also gives note on the limitations of citizen journalism in India through her paper 'Online

citizen journalism in India: A study of Mynews.in'. She denotes the lack of quality of news, gatekeeping controversies and ethical issues of participatory journalism. She also wish that, newspapers should also take step to strengthen citizen journalists activities in India.

Adhiti Pareek, in her research paper 'Citizen Journalism, a threat to traditional journalism' concludes that, participatory journalism adds value to the mainstream news coverage by bringing to light the issues at the grassroots level that are otherwise overlooked by big media outlets. She also notes that, Journalists believe that implementation of gatekeeping to citizen journalism content is a must to ensure its credibility. They stress upon having a proper mechanism to filter the news content, be it in the form of text or images, posted by citizen journalists.

Erkan Saka, in his study 'The role of social media-based citizen journalism practices in the formation of contemporary protest movements' gives evidences of citizen journalism through social media plays an important role in triggering massive protests and fight for injustice with common people against governing system.

'The potential and limitations of Citizen Journalism initiatives examines the challenges faced by rural communities in India in both access to mainstream media and coverage by it have major implications for democracy and civic participation. This article by Kalyani Chanda and Linda Steiner focuses on CGNet Swara, a citizen journalism initiative, attempts to address this problem by enabling rural or tribal communities to obtain and report news, and, to facilitate coverage of their concerns, by acting as "a bridge" between those communities and authorities. This research on project's relationship with mainstream news outlets in central India finds that, while at least some professional journalists endorse the ideals of citizen journalism, they reject the idea that CGNet Swara can assist them. These findings lead the to re-evaluate the potential of citizen journalism as a transformative and democratizing force.

This works deals with the role of citizen journalism in India in democratising media, to fight against injustice, to trigger massive protests virtually, to sound the weaker sections in rural India and also gives notes on certain limitations of the field which helped in further research and findings.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research

Research is a process of systematic inquiry that entails collection of data; documentation of critical information; and analysis and interpretation of that data/information, in accordance with suitable methodologies set by specific professional fields and academic disciplines.

There are two different approach to research Viz quantitative approach and qualitative approach.

Quantitative research is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. It is the generation of data in quantitative form. This method emphasizes objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires and surveys.

Qualitative research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitude, opinion and behaviour. Generally the techniques focus on interviews projective techniques and case studies.

3.2 General Objective

Analysing the possibilities and limitations of Citizen Journalism as an evolving fifth estate in India

3.3 Specific Objective

- To examine the vibrant role of Citizen Journalism in democratising media.
- To know the importance of Citizen Journalism in triggering massive protests in present digital era.
- To examine whether citizen journalism effectively portray the voice of marginalized sections of Indian society.
- To study the possibilities and challenges of Citizen Journalism as an evolving fifth estate in India.

3.4 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy utilized to carry out research that defines a succinct and logical plan to tackle established research question through the collection, interpretation, analysis, and discussion of data.

Data can be interviews, articles, news stories and other case studies.

3.5 Method of Study

Content analysis was chosen as the method of study. We referred case studies of news stories reported by citizen journalists in India along with the new media and followed their effects in the society .

We also followed the books, articles, news, feedbacks and websites of citizen journalists and those related to participatory journalism. Our main analysis is the news stories and reports given by citizen journalists in socially relevant issues that enlightened the authorities in considering the seriousness of the problem and influence of the same in the Indian society.

3.6 Field of Study

The study is conducted on the basis of the news stories and other socially relevant issues reported by citizen journalists in India .

The study goes through the role of New Media and possibilities and challenges of participatory journalism as an evolving fifth estate.

3.7 Period of Study

The study was conducted from 2020 December to 2021 April. The span of time was mainly focused for collecting evident news stories (case studies), analysing books and articles on citizen journalism, studying the status of citizen journalism as an evolving fifth estate in India.

3.8 Selection of Sample Studying

This study was conducted on the basis of news stories reported by citizen journalists in India , discussing the effects of such reported news in the society.

3.9 Hypothesis

Hypothesis is a principle instrument in research. Simply speaking hypothesis is an assumption or some supposition to be proved or disproved. But for a researcher, it is formal question that the researcher intends to resolve.

3.10 Specific Hypothesis

- Citizen journalism plays a major role in democratising media.
- Participatory journalism is effective in triggering massive protests digitally.
- Citizen journalism portray the voice of marginalized sections of Indian society.
- There are many challenges along with possibilities, faced by Citizen Journalism in India.
- Citizen journalism is evolving as a strong fifth estate of democracy in India.

CHAPTER 4
CONTENT ANALYSIS

CASE STUDIES

4.1 Indian Farmer's Massive Protest 2020-21

The power of social media as well as the citizens reporting in India is very effectively portrayed in ongoing farmer's protest in India. The mass protest was breakout following the 'Three Farm Laws' passed by Indian parliament in September 2020. The farmers from Haryana Punjab states under the banner of Samyukth Kisan Morcha of India initially started Dharna in sitting at Singhu and Tikri at the Delhi border. Government of India and authorities completely ignored the farmers ,paved way for explosive massive protest allover India. About 40000 protestors with their family camped at Delhi boarder demanding the revocation of all the three Farm Bills and Legally ensure minimum support price.

Not only farmer's association and physical supports, the farmers' strike escalated into a full-blown war on social media cutting across international borders .

The farmers themselves used to take the help of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to stay abreast of the various developments of the protest through their page 'Kisan Ekta Morcha'.

“Social Media plays an important role in our movement. While all kinds of media are writing about us, social media helps us tell our truth in our own words. The godi' media will never show the reality, but on social media, we can share what is actually happening”

- Himmat Singh, a farmer camping at Singhu border.

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram ,YouTube and almost all platforms helped the citizens to gather themselves,stay solidarity with the farmers, update on the protest and take part in dissemination of opinions . Many Youtubers and bloggers has set out to the spot in Delhi and broadcasted the live situations clearly than mainstream medias.

Eg. A documentary on the protest was taken by *The LallantopChannel* on YouTube which gained a widespread reach of 1.8 M views.

This protest gave one of the mass opinions expressed digitally in Indian history.

4.2 EIA Draft ,2020

Three consecutive years of climate calamities in the State seems to have created an awareness among the youth regarding environmental issues, going by the number of youngsters who became part of a social media campaign calling for the rejection of the draft Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 2020, the proposal to weaken policies for environmental protection.

After a delayed publication of the draft in the gazette by the Centre, the Delhi High Court had extended the deadline further to August 11 to register public opinion on the draft. With the deadline approaching, Malayalam social media has witnessed a sustained campaign from meme page creators, video bloggers and instagram influencers, all of whom veered away from their usual light-hearted content to speak about weighty environmental issues.

To make matters easy for their followers, a link to a sample e-mail to be sent to the Environment Ministry, requesting for rollback of the new notification, was also provided by most of them.

Some of the objections to the notification include allowing projects to go ahead without securing environmental clearance, which can be applied later, exempting a large category of projects from public consultation, reduction in notice period of public hearing from 30 days to 20 days and option of holding public hearing through digital medium which will limit the power of people in remote tribal areas to put in their opinions.

Even after the first deadline for public comments, which was later extended, there was hardly any noise in the public sphere regarding the EIA notification. In mid-July, pages like 'Resist EIA 2020' began to appear on instagram and facebook, with eye-catching posters on the damage that the new notification could cause.

Soon, YouTube celebrities and instagram influencers, including Prapti Elizabeth, came out with explainer videos in their respective trademark styles. Prapti makes the issue relatable to the layman by comparing the EIA draft to removal of the courtship period in arranged marriages.

The film-related meme contents include everything from the usual 1990s Malayalam movies-inspired memes to Kung Fu Panda.

Celebrities, including actor Parvathy, were active in the campaigning. A part of the anger of the memes were directed against the Opposition parties and the mainstream media for not raising enough voice against the notification.

4.3 Aarey Forest Conservation, Mumbai

Aarey colony, located to the south of Mumbai's Sanjay Gandhi National Park, is a 1,300-hectare forested expanse widely described as the city's last remaining "green lung". It is home to 27 Adivasi villages, at least nine leopards and nearly five lakh trees.

In 2015, city authorities and the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation announced a plan to clear 30 hectares of Aarey colony to build a car shed for the Mumbai Metro 3 line that is currently under construction. Four years and multiple legal challenges later, the municipal corporation's Tree Authority committee on August 30 approved a proposal to cut down 2,702 trees in Aarey colony to make way for the metro car shed.

This led to citizen's protest in Mumbai with hashtag of 'Save Aarey'.

On social media, the Save Aarey Conservation Group which is an informal citizen's collective was represented by college students and fresh graduates with aggressive handles, buzzing 24x7. The Save Aarey movement used all possible mediums to spread their message and concerns effectively. They also successfully linked the larger topic of need to protect the environment against the rampant concretisation of urban areas.

Support has surprised activists.

“Protest groups come up spontaneously; sometimes we don’t even know who is protesting where,” “We are common citizens and have no network with celebrities. They have responded on their own to our social media attempts,”

- Amrita Bhattacharjee, a representative of the Aarey conservation group.(thewire.in)

Save Aarey also succeeded in connecting multiple environment activists and organizations. A group of environment enthusiasts from Palghar and Thane districts also joined the protest at Aarey. Thousands of people took to Twitter and Facebook to express their support for the movement. It is this support which widened the scope of protest and could sustain the movement even on days when the legal battle was not yielding much success.

4.4 Adivasi Tribal Issue Report Through CGNet Swara’

Over the years, the rural and tribal India has been benefited by citizen journalism. While the mainstream media chooses to report many issues being diplomatic, to save themselves from the clutches of the government, citizen journalists report the actual issue- fearlessly.

CGnet Swara is an Indian voice-based online portal that allows people in the forests of Chhattisgarh to report local news in Gondi by making a phone call. The portal is freely accessible via mobile phone or online. It allows anyone to report stories and listen to them by giving a missed call.

Going back to 2013, in a remote area of Chhattisgarh, a local farmer made a phone call that made a huge change. Naresh Bunkar, who is a citizen journalist for a rural community news portal CGNet Swara, reported an issue of a forestry officer who had extorted a bribe of Rs 99,000 from the Adivasi tribal community. Soon after the news was reported, an official enquiry was instigated by the authorities. Within a month the official was found guilty and the bribe money was returned.

CGNet Swara’ shows the exact evidence of giving Voice to Voiceless. There are many cases this portal spoke for tribal societies of Chhattisgarh.

4.5 The Wire Report lead to Jai Amit Shah's Defamation Case

The Wire is an Indian news and opinion website, founded in 2015 by Siddharth Varadarajan, Siddharth Bhatia, and M. K. Venu. The publication's reporters have won several national and international awards, including three Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards and the CPJ International Press Freedom Award. The website has been subject to several defamation suits by businessmen and politicians, some of which have been described as Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP).

One of the major investigation done by the portal, was the report entitled 'Golden Touch Of Jai Amit Shah' which investigated BJP president Amit Shah's son, Jay Shah, had seen a dramatic increase in some of his businesses since Narendra Modi became prime minister.

The report given by Rohini Singh in October 2017, clearly shows the turnover of a company owned by Jay Amitbhai Shah, increased 16,000 times over in the year following the election of Narendra Modi as prime minister and the elevation of his father to the post of BJP president, filings with the Registrar of Companies (RoC) show. RoC reveal that in the financial years ending March 2013 and 2014, Shah's Temple Enterprise Private Ltd. engaged in negligible activity and recorded losses of Rs 6,230 and Rs 1,724 respectively. In 2014-15, it showed a profit of Rs 18,728 on revenues of only Rs 50,000 before jumping to a turnover of Rs 80.5 crore in 2015-16.

This report lead Jai Shah to file a defamation case against The Wire Portal demanding 100 core of compensation, stayed with an appeal which was later withdrawn by Wire. Even this case proceedings are slowed down now, it was a milestone and brave report indeed.

This was a proof of participatory medias bravely report news which mainstream medias are not dare to report.

4.6 Alappad Coastal Mining, Kerala

The coastline between Chavara and Alappad in Kollam district of Kerala has a decades-long story of people's battle for survival against mining companies.

It is estimated that, more than 6,000 fishermen families have vacated over the years due to beach erosion, drinking water scarcity and lack of fish availability. The remaining families in this 23 km stretch of coastal region (Kollam Neendakara to Kayamkulam) are under the threat of eviction; for the last few years, they have been expecting a massive coastal erosion that can engulf their villages. Most of the people have been forced to leave their houses, even without any compensation from the authorities or the mining companies.

#SaveAlappad and #StopMiningtook Kerala’s social media by storming in late 2018. The origin of the social media campaign remained largely unknown. Many of the posts blamed the traditional TV and print media for ignoring the plight of Alappad and urged the common populace to rise up and raise their voice against this “agenda-driven snub”.

“We had been trying to get people’s attention for some time. It was then that Troll Quilon agreed to support us. And then the 14 district troll groups also extended support. It was later that groups like Troll Malayalam took up the issue,”

-Rahul, a native of Alappad (scroll.in)

Facebook and Instagram became awash with people appealing to save the island where villagers had been on a hunger protest for over two months. At a time when the state was inundated with TV debates over the entry of women in Sabarimala temple, Alappad and its people became a fixation for many on social media.

Meanwhile, a video appeal by Kavya, a 17 year old girl from Alappad which was taken in tiktok app got viral in social media. People responded – with videos and emotional speeches, individuals from all walks of life contributed in their own ways to fuel the protests on social media. With a like here, a share there and a post or comment from the truly motivated, the movement to “Save Alappad” started picking up momentum.

4.7 Meenachil Flood, Kerala

On 2020 August 5, evening, as the water running down the Wagamon hills turned brown, Jisoy Thomas, a panchayat member from Adivaram in the valley, relayed an alert message on his smart phone. “It’s raining heavily in the high ranges,” the message read.

The warning, posted in the chat group 'Save Meenachilar' at 4.15 p.m, quickly drew some reactions. The group was soon buzzing with updates, photos and videos of the Meenachil coming in from different locations.

At one point, the run-off water breached the previous peak, recorded during the mega floods in 2018. The impact, however, was much lesser as those along the river banks had already been served the warning.

The alert group of 'river-reporters', who alongside the district administration, gave the public continuous updates on the height of the floodwater in Meenachil, the location-wise problems, and the risk elements.

The network, which functions as a support system to the Meenachil River Protection Council, comprise people from all walks of life including environmentalists, local body representatives, government officials, and even scientists which was formed to highlight issues like sand mining and encroachments on the Meenachil's banks. It gave the updates from the high-lands that is so crucial in planning the rescue operations down stream. The flood reporting by the group facilitated the evacuation of several families from Kottayam to Thiruvārppu.

"Based on their predictions, we could alert the Fire and Rescue Department about the impending flood situation at the Koshamattom colony, leading to evacuation of 190 families,"

-Gopu Nattassery, a group member (wire.in, YouTube))

Reporting exclusively on the Meenachil for the last four years, the group seeks to formalize the collaboration with government support at different levels.

4.8 Kerala Flood,2018

The Kerala Flood of 2018 which was a disappointed one in history proved the efficiency of social media in disaster management.

The August 2018 deluge, the worst floods in Kerala in nearly a century, isolated many people residing in the rain-lashed regions of the state. As landline and mobile networks faltered, conventional modes of communication proved inadequate in broadcasting requests for help.

Even as state machinery was gearing up for large-scale disaster management, volunteers across the world started harnessing social media platforms for spontaneous rescue and relief operations. 'Project LifeBoat' was one such initiative by a team made up of HR managers, IT professionals and rescue management experts, who lent their expertise to monitor and execute rescue requests.

A Facebook page, KeralaFloods2018, attempted to bring all such posts on to a single platform—a one-stop source for all relevant information on the floods. Through social media, youth from different districts of the state and also outside were gathered as volunteers. WhatsApp groups, Twitter and Facebook pages were evident in dissemination of information, setting up rehabilitation centres and providing basic facilities for them. Personal social media accounts also were used for flood updates and helps. Even after the flood, for the rehabilitation of Kerala, young volunteers were gathered through social media and collectively participated in cleaning purposes.

4.9 Puttingal Temple Accident, Kerala

On 10th April 2016, at approximately 3:30 am, the Puttingal in Paravoor, Kollam experienced an explosion and fire after firework celebrations went away. As a result, 111 people were killed and more than 350 were injured, including some with severe burns. The temple and about 200 houses at the premises of the temple were destroyed in the blast.

No journalist were present in the spot, but almost all news organizations managed to broadcast visuals of the accident in no time. This was made possible by the actions of citizens present at the spot whom we call accidental journalists or citizen journalists. They are the people who caught unexpectedly in the middle of an event and cover videos and photographs and share it with different medias or any social media websites. They start filming the fireworks out of curiosity without a slice of warning of the accident and later this footages were the main source of information for the medias as well as the public. Also it was the primary evidence to the police regarding the source of explosion.

In most cases, Citizen Journalism is either pushing Journalism forward or is unaccountable vigilantism. Either way it is shaping the path we consume news or information.

4.10 Delhi Gang Rape Case

Citizen journalists raise their voice to bring in change in the law and perception of the people. India in general and Delhi specially has recorded many incidents of crimes, atrocities and violence against women. It was during Delhi Gang Rape that the power of citizen through social media created a tremendous impact. Following the rape and murder of 23 year-old female physiotherapy intern who was beaten and raped in public bus in which she was travelling with her male friend on December 16 2012 , lighted a huge flame in social media demanding Justice for the victim.

Media named the victim 'Nirbhaya' . The case was heartbroken to common people and made them step out in the streets in anger. If not for collective effort of the people, Nirbhaya incident would have been one of the many rape cases in the city. All the mainstream medias covered the updates of the news, but it witnessed another kind of protest in social media, the power of participatory journalism. People all over the country, protested via social platforms, sharing post, tweets, commenting, making videos mainly focused on criticizing Judicial System of India with the hashtag of 'Justice for Nirbhaya'.

Even the mainstream media made use of user generated content to broadcast the emotion of common people. The young technology savvy Indians spread its national outrage across the country and United together to voice their opinions against the weak law and flaws in our legal system, within days it became a place for Social change in India.

There was also a plethora of citizens on ground reporting the developments as it happened and reported through social media which lead the mainstream medias to add a section in their news bulletin as 'Citizen's News and Views'. Delhi Gang Rape demonstrated how participatory journalism has really come to the fore.

CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Case Studies

This study deals with Qualitative method of analysis. Each case study used , give evidence for possibilities of participatory journalism as an evolving fifth estate in India.

Citizen journalism is ensuring a great digital change in collecting and reporting news in India with the advancement of technology. It promises evident demanding news by the people, for the people. The case studies reveals the importance of Citizen Journalism in democracy. It enables the common man to take part in protests and report their opinions among the public, to fight against injustice and to make a change.

The ongoing massive farmer's protest shows the capability of participatory journalism and the citizens in virtual participation to strengthen the voice of a mass community through social media. The protesters as well as citizen has the opportunity to communicate fact with the outer world through live broadcasting when many of the mainstream medias alter the news in favour of the government.

EIA draft 2020 depicts the responsibility and power of youth in dissemination of information through social platforms within no time and their collective effort to oppose the same with almost participation. When mainstream medias ignored the news, it was reported through social media and citizen journalists, through videos explaining what EIA draft is and the need for conservation of the same for future generations.

Aarey Forest Issue, Mumbai evidently says that citizens reporting can make drastic changes through social platforms in critical situations. Thereach got for Aarey Conservation Pages and the support helped to take another version of fight against Maharashtra authorities.

Citizen journalists are important to report the news from weaker sections and rural tribal areas of India where mainstream medias are not accessible to or even consciously ignoring them. CGNet Swara' of Chhattisgarh and the reports through it is an example for participatory journalism giving 'Voice to Voiceless'.

The report of Wire on illegal funding of The Temple Enterprise Private Limited company headed by Jai Amit Shah is milestone in history of participatory reporting. It gave another strong base to participatory journalism which dare to report exclusives that mainstream medias fear to exposé. It also shows the caliber of citizen journalists to fight with credible investigations for justice.

#Save Alappad is another mass protest arose through social media to fight against social issues. The protests began with a single video clip of a 17 year old native girl from Alappad, explaining the pathetic situation of the villagers through Tiktok entertainment app got viral with in hours. The protests developed in social platforms mainly criticising the biased attitude of renowned medias that ignored such a big problem affecting the life of a mass society.

Meenachil Flood, Kerala Flood, Puttingal Temple Accident etc.showed the vibrancy of new media in disaster management and rescue services. It was through social media, most of the rescue service was planned and updated during the mega flood. Most of the information passed at right time through different pages and groups helped to save a majority of people from flood. It is the easy mobility of the medium that helped the rescue as well as rehabilitation services effectively.

Almost all footages and messages broadcasted by mainstream medias were those collected by citizens themselves from the spot. Almost all the people's social media accounts were transformed into helplines at the period. It concludes citizen journalism through new media as an emergency medium.

Delhi Gang Rape Case was one of the major virtual protests that demanded justice for the victim and big outbreak of criticism regarding the weak protection for women in the legal framework of India. This, being the beginning of collective hashtag protests through social media, shows that citizen journalism can trigger massive protest in no time with a huge support unlike mainstream medias with collective effort for justice and to make changes in society.

5.2 Citizen Journalism as the 'Voice of Voiceless'

With the advent of social media and blogging, the role of citizen journalists has become more valuable than ever. While many refer to it as public, participatory or guerrilla journalism, many call it democratic.

Over 100 million people across India are tribal who live in impoverished conditions. Their voice is unheard and their issues unaddressed. That's when many rural journalists are giving voice to these voiceless by making direct link with the mainstream media or using the internet. Believe it or not, citizen journalists can democratize media and nations- it is instant news for the people, by the people.

Apart from CGNet Swara' the online portal for local coverage of the Gondi forest areas of Chhattisgarh, several other portals and websites work actively for the rural communities of India.

- Lokal, an Indian hyperlocal news and content app catering to India's non-English speakers.

The app started by Jani Pasha and Vipul Chaudhary in June 2018, aims at covering news from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

Lokal provides district and constituency-level local news, jobs, classifieds and local information like weather, vegetable prices and contact information of doctors and police stations in Telugu and Tamil languages. It also provides awareness of content as videos and make shows to flag fake news.

- Circle, the local network app for hyperlocal news focused on Madura , Vrindavan, Agra etc.
- Many famous Youtubers including Amit Sengupta and Druv Rathee and channels such as 'The Lallantop ' which has above 17.5M subscribers, covered Farmers Protest unbiasedly by taking part in the protest, seeking fact information from the protesters and broadcasted what they have to say to the public and authorities.
- Recently, ScoopWhoop media through their YouTube channel, covered a documentary on the pathetic situation of rural areas of West Bengal which gained millions of views within hours. Media focused at revealing the nude reality of villages which are even devoid of basic sanitary facilities.

Handwritten mode of Citizen journalism in Remote areas

Citizen journalism take another version in remote areas of Uttar Pradesh.

A few months back, the story of a 51-year-old journalist Dinesh Kumar was doing rounds

on social media. The man, who hails from Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, hand-writes a newspaper called Vidya Darshan and then distributes it in the villages on a bicycle. Dinesh not just reports the news but also voices his opinion on the subject and the advises measure to curb the issue.

There are so many people like him who are taking news to far flung areas in India where mainstream media fails to enter, and reports grass-root realities and issues.

5.3 Limitations of citizen journalism

Citizen Journalism takes a brave step to cover the valuable contents that are usually ignored by authorities. But along with possibilities, there are many limitations and challenges in this field of journalism. Citizen journalist mostly opt social media, the free medium for dissemination of information. Any one can post anything in social platforms leading to a garbage of unreliable and unhealthy news, poses difficulty to the audience about what to believe and what to not. Some of the citizen journalists take the sites for commercial than professional purposes which leads to lack quality and content in stories on most occasions. The language of the stories is usually poor and they lack even the basic grammar. This indicates that the content goes unedited before the public, even though news portals like MyNews claim to have hired a team of editors. Besides, the citizen journalism stories are usually devoid of normative qualities of news that are a must for and basic to journalistic writings. Most of the citizens' stories that demand more than one version to be taken into consideration are usually lop-sided. This is something that goes against the journalistic ethics prescribed by the Press Council of India. The stories also lack on clarity of expression and brevity that are necessary to put the ideas. Most of the news stories comprise of long and over-crowded paragraphs that only confuse and irritate the readers. Usually numerous details are provided in a single sentence, which ought to be explained in separate paragraphs. Objectivity is usually missing in citizens' stories and thus credibility of the citizen journalists. Moreover they do not follow the inverted pyramid style of news writing in their stories.

The citizen journalism sites need to implement gate-keeping for the citizen journalism content. This will help ensure the news updates by citizen journalists are in conformity with journalistic

ethics as well as to cease the spread of untimely news which are commonly seen during disasters that make the public more panic. A lot of junk videos and photographs were misused at the time of Kerala Flood.

The stories, infact, reflect the citizen journalist's personal interest. Besides, the source of information in most of the users' stories is not properly identified, which raises a question on the authenticity of the stories and thus credibility. Lack of Fact Checking is another major limitation of participatory journalism that result in Overflow of fake news.

Citizen journalism is said to be unbiased. But in some cases the news covered without proper study and reference lead to misinterpretation of information that is mainly seen in news connected with politics. Citizen journalists can also use their platform freely to express their biased opinions. This could be through informative, yet exaggerated posts that can misrepresent the truth, opening the news agenda to the possibility of abuse.

Professional journalists must abide by a set of strict laws when reporting as to be careful not to write false news and expose anybody in a damaging way. Sometimes, a story generated by an ordinary member of the public can be difficult to consider professional or validated. When posting content, having no boundaries can prove to be unfair and dangerous especially in today's news cycle where anything can make front page news within seconds. Fake news gathered by someone who hasn't thought about what their reporting and its consequences can quickly become mainstream news. Despite, majority of citizen journalists are not forced to obey any set of norms and 'Code of Ethics rather than their personal interests, as they are not supposed to work for any organization and rules normally leads to defamation and libel, the issue that occurs when someone publishes a piece of news at the expense of somebody else, i.e. by speaking of them in a way that could affect their reputation. Journalists are trained to understand this libel law and know what they can or can't say rather than citizen journalists.

There exist a lot of examples for defamation via social media. Recently, there was a controversy spread in social media.

The famous malayalee cine-serial and dubbing artist Mrs.Bhagyalakshmi was defamed by

Vijay P Nair, a you tuber through his channel. He also made crucial defamatory statements on other feminists. Bhagyalakshmi, with her two friends responded to the same, by brutally assaulting the you tuber and she was arrested for manhandling as non-bailable offense. The chance for this kind of legal controversies are no ignorable.

Controversies and highlights of Indian media

The credibility of Indian traditional media is fast eroding, as the country's media has been criticized time and again by the world audience for its sensationalism that tends the public to accept citizen journalism. The way Indian media manipulates the news and portrays the information in a twisted manner has seen the country drop three places in the recent World Press Freedom Index.

There have been instances such as Sridevi's death recently, where journalist became a judge by laying false accusations and created a controversy surrounding the late actor's death. On the hand, the Indian media has played a courageous role in the coverage of Kargil War(1999), and 26/11 Bombay Terror Attacks that rocked the whole nation as the city was rocked by multiple terror attacks. Certainly, due to growing influence of political parties, there has been decrease in the quality of news reaching the audience, as media had served as a platform for parties to promote their government's work.

5.4 Citizen Journalism as an evolving fifth estate in India

Citizen Journalism, the process of citizens themselves involve in dissemination of information for them and to make a change in society is a strongly evolving pillar in India. It mainly focus on issues ignored by mainstream medias either consciously or unconsciously.

The New Media gave a fresh form for dissemination of news rapidly and thus this free medium ensures participation of all citizen without any discrimination. This made drastic change in society by democratising media. When mainstream medias altered the news stories, social platforms reported the truth leading the common people to believe in them. This is now becoming a threat to mainstream medias. Citizen Journalism give voice to the marginalized sections of country, who lead vulnerable lives and are not accessible to medias.

Citizen journalism marks a watershed in Indian journalism. When natural calamity hits and people can't find access to newspaper and television their only source of information is Twitter, mobile phones, and Facebook pages.

From the Kerala Flood 2018 to Chennai rains back in 2015, citizens have played a very crucial role in reporting the on-ground reality when the mainstream media focused just on mere numbers and assumptions.

In 2015, the students of the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, turned into reporters overnight. They covered the relief operations conducted by the Indian navy and recorded footage which were then used by the mainstream media.

In the case of Citizen Amendment Act, enacted by the Government of India on 12 December 2019, that sparked a widespread national and overseas ongoing protests against the act and its associated proposals of the National Register of Citizens (NRC), when most of the broadcasting and print medias refused to cover and altered the protests at Jamia Milia Islamia campus ,the students themselves posted the trustworthy reports which gave another massive turn to the protest nationwide.

The reason why citizen journalists are now taken seriously by both the audience and the mainstream media is because the mainstream reporters cannot make it accessible to all the places. That's when these citizens report, tweet, send videos and give us a true sense of what had happened in a particular situation.

Today, citizens reporting are emerging as a challenge to mainstream medias. If a news is altered by traditional medias, it will breakout for serious criticisms in social media by these amateur journalists.

Now, people are interested in investing time for citizen reporting. Many mainstream media houses are giving a platform to citizen journalists to bridge the gap and report the grass-root issues of rural India. Times of India has an online platform known as 'Citizen Reporter' where we can find posts and articles from citizens and they have also featured states so if we click Kochi, we can find content related in that area only.

Manorama News has an online platform known as 'chodikanum parayanum' where citizens can submit their content. Highly reputed national newspaper 'The Hindu' has also given a platform dedicated to Citizen Journalism.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Citizen Journalism, the concept of 'networked individuals' enabled by the Internet, that can hold the other estates accountable. It always acts as a bridge media between the common public and authorities. New media adorns the most relevant role in democratising media as it promises the easily accessible platform for all citizen to report on their neighborhood or community. This study gives the evidence of 'importance of public journalism in democracy as an evolving fifth estate'.

Citizen journalism gives Voice to marginalized sections of society as it is the only medium accessible to tribal communities of India, to report on-ground realities of rural India, where mainstream medias are unknown. New media platforms enables the mass public to virtually protest against injustice and also to take part in it. This anytime medium can also be called as an 'emergency medium' as it can be effectively utilized in disaster management and rehabilitation purposes at any time.

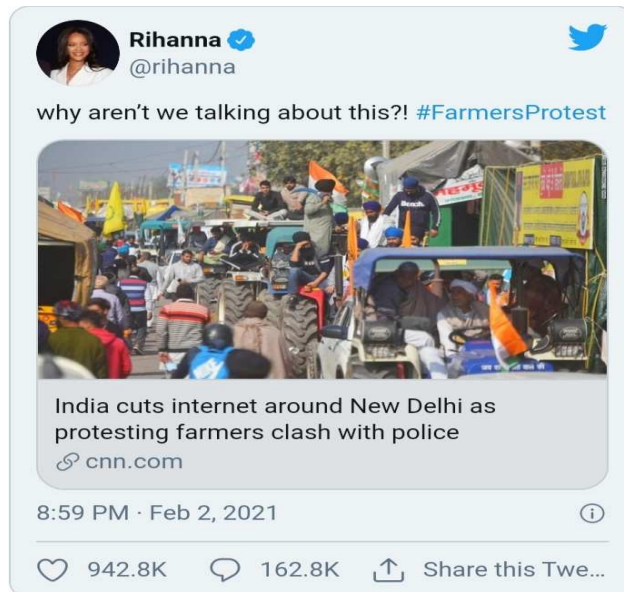
Mainstream media biasing is another reason for participatory journalism to get its reach. It gives evident reports on what people want to know, when mainstream medias alter them for political favours. Even though it has some limitations of gate keeping and fact checking, it is accepted as a crucial part of democracy as it also ensures the participation of common public to criticize and raise a mass opinion in matters regarding public administration.

However, mainstream medias are giving platforms for citizen journalists now, as they are aware of the strong emergence and wide acceptance of this new pillar of democracy.

Through our study, we conclude that, Citizen Journalism plays an important role in India, as he 1 it is evolving as a strong fifth estate of democracy.

CHAPTER 7

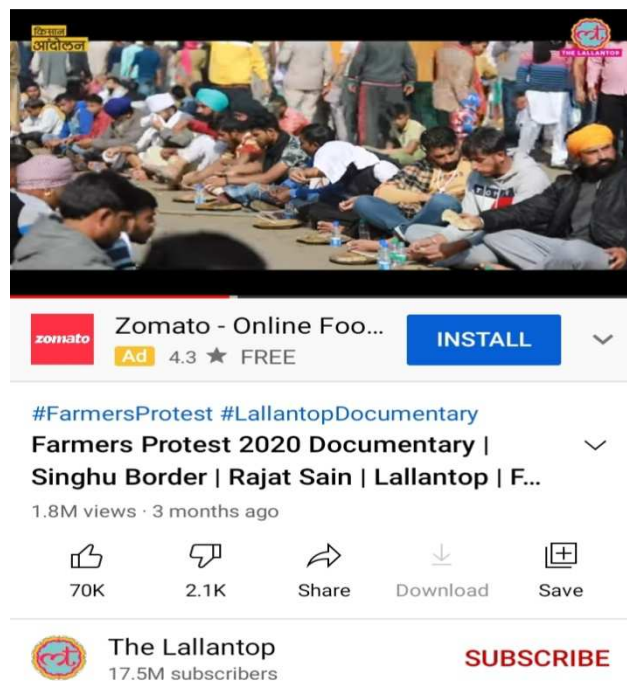
APPENDIX



Hashtag farmers protest 2020 through twitter



On November 30, farmers at Singhu border held up placards criticising the Indian media for its portrayal of the protests against the farm laws. | Vijayta Lalwani



Documentary on farmers protest by The Lallantop in YouTube

Nithin M Jibu
7 Aug 2020 · Change.org · 🌐

Sign this people.... It's the least we can do. This is our nature, our environment. Stop making nature suffer. It's us who are dependent on nature. "Earth doesn't need people". But we really do need this planet.
#resisteia2020



CHANGE.ORG
Can you spare a minute to help Nithin Jibu?

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Eco Alarmist
14 Aug 2020 · 🌐

Source : Down to Earth

#ResistEIA2020 #withdraweia2020
#indiangovernment #narendramodi #amitshah
#prakashjavadekar #environment
#environmentalism #athirapalli #dehingpatkai
#oilwellblowout #coal #coalmining #pollution
#industrialism #climatechange #climateaction
#oilindia #athirapally
#indiaagainstclimatechange #ecoalarmist



1. The draft EIA notification 2020 weakens the basic vision of EIA: proposed changes grant post facto clearance without from the concerned bodies in the matter.
2. The NE region of India is a hub of diverse flora, fauna and resources and as such exists as one of the hotspots of the extractive regime by the Indian State.
3. Majority of the proposed projects in this region are cleared with little to no understanding of the socio-ecological impacts of the same.
4. Recent incidents pertaining to the implementation and practice of some of these affairs like the Baghjan Incident has already created a hazardous impact.
5. These show the massive effect of extractive mentality towards such matters. All attempts and projects are implemented in violation against all environmental related acts and rules of the country.
6. Draft EIA 2020 aims at legalising such violations without punitive actions.
7. It also subverts the constitution by limiting the inclusion of local decision making, roles and public participation.
8. The aim of setting up of industries within 50km of the international borders would affect large sections of the NE States.

📷 Write a comment... 🎬 GIF 💬 😊

People educating and informing to resist EIA draft 2020 via Facebook





Save Aarey protesters at a human chain on September 8. Photo courtesy: Sagar Singh



Protestors want the metro car shed to be relocated. | Save Aarey via Facebook.

A video player showing a woman speaking. The video has a play button overlay and a title bar with the text "#Save alapad #Stop mining".

#Save alapad #Stop mining

Seventeen-year-old Kavya from Kerala's Alappad's used the help of technology and social media to raise awareness about the sand mining in her village – an effort that has now paid off with the National Green Tribunal cracking down on the activity.



Photo Source: [Kollam SFC/Twitter](#)

Save Alappad campaign through Twitter



CAA NRC protest through Twitter

CHAPTER 8
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