

Freedom of Expression vs national Security concerns on social media platforms

Outline

1) Introduction:-

Thesis Statement:

While freedom of expression is often posed as a fundamental human right and a boon for democracy, it is also dubbed as a concern for national security. In the era of hybrid warfare, unchecked freedom of expression through social media can be leveraged as a tool to spread chaos, political divide and violence. The problem, thus calls for regulation, supervision and public awareness to ensure safe social media use.

2) Freedom of Expression and Its Link to National Security.

3) Achievements of Freedom of Expression

a) Gives voice to the voiceless
Case in point:- Bringing attention to issues faced by Hispanic and black people in America

b) Can rally for positive change

Case in point: #BlackLivesMatter movement

c) Holding governments accountable

Case in point: Stopping government of Pakistan from passing punitive social media laws

d) Pressurizing authoritarian governments

Case in point: Global support through #HajrIsPolitical trend for hijab controversy in Iran.

4) But Freedom of Expression on Social Media Platforms Can Be a Liability for National Security.

a) Can erode national culture

Case in point: Iranian government blames West for interfering with its cultural norms

b) Can result in propaganda against national governments

Case in point: FBR, 2021 Pishing alert spreading fake news about government policies

c) Can lead to social fragmentation during emergency situations

Case in point: Spread of fake news during Pakistan-India conflict

d) Can impact political outcomes

Case in point: Use of social media propaganda during 2018 US elections

e) Can malign national institutions and fracture trust between government and the public

Case in point: Indian chronicles and their effort to spread fake news

f) Can lead to social fragmentation in multi-ethnic societies.

Case in point: Use of social media by ethnically-motivated groups in Pakistan.

5) Freedom of Expression needs to be exercised with awareness

6) Government should formulate rules/laws to take down sensitive content

Case in point: well organized and quite relevant Amend PECA 2016

7) Government and Social Media Platforms to Work Cooperatively to Prevent Excessive Regulation

8) Public needs to be educated on safe use of their right of expression

9) Conclusion