

Role of Social Media and Online News in 2022 Sri Lankan Riots and Utilization of OODA Loop Based OSINT Framework

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Abstract

Prolonged riots which violates legal rights and peaceful limits and turns violent with having a potential toward to an anarchical social unrest are perceived as threats to national security, exacerbated in the digital age by the impact of online news and social media. Activists use platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Telegram for riot organization without traditional structures. This presents challenges for national security stakeholders, necessitating agile responses to the rapidly evolving online landscape. Open-source intelligence (OSINT) is valuable in understanding social media's role in riots. This paper presents a case study of Sri Lanka's 2022 riots, examining social media's role in propaganda, organizing and mobilizing. For that, temporal data on hashtags, online groups member growth, call-for-action posts, and YouTube Live streams were collected for analyses. Online news volume related to the riots was also analyzed using the Global Database for Events Language and Tone (GDELT) to assess riot intensity through media coverage. Based on these insights and analysis, an operational framework is recommended for responding to the use of online news and social media in riots, incorporating elements from the OODA loop and other existing models and frameworks. This framework emphasizes the importance of proactive analysis of online and social media activity related to riots, as well as the need for rapid and effective responses to emerging threats. This research explores the impact of social media on riots using Sri Lanka's 2022 unrest as a case study. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on the use of online news and social media in riots and highlights the critical role of OSINT techniques in understanding and responding to emerging threats

Keywords: *Social Media, Open Source Intelligence, Riot Mobilization*