

# **EMW Event Labeling Annotation Manual**

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# **1 Identifying Protest Events**

The protest events as we define them are those events that are comprised within the scope of contentious politics. The term contentious politics is rather broad as to cover a large variety of collective action repertoires all of which are considered within the EMW project as crucial in understanding the changing historical trends in welfare policies. Contentious politics as such, can be said to comprise three broad categories of collective action events: political mobilizations, social protests in the narrow sense, and conflicts between social groups.

## **1.1 Types of Collective Action**

### **1.1.1 Political mobilizations**

Political mobilizations refer to instances of collective action where political parties, organizations or individual representatives of these entities mobilize any group of participants for political goals, demands or grievances. Such political organizers might be in power or in opposition in their respective political contexts.

### **1.1.2 Social Protests**

The second class of collective action we concentrate on, comprises social protests in the narrow sense where social groups or organizations target state institutions, or any governing body, to press for certain demands or voice their grievances. There might be times such protest events are initiated by single individuals, as in writ petitions or litigation cases bearing a public character. Such cases fall within our scope if they have overt political motivations and get the support of multiple people.

### **1.1.3 Group Confrontations**

The final broad category of collective action we consider within the scope of contentious politics is incidents of social confrontation where two or more social groups engage in political action against each other. Various sources of conflict might exist between social groups, such as conflicting economic interests, ethnic, religious or gender-based identity differences or ideological disagreements. Any instance of confrontation between groups based on such grounds is in scope of our understanding of contentious politics. Such confrontations might or might not involve state and/or political institutions.

## **1.2 Types of Events**

These broad categories of contentious politics manifest themselves in different types of events. Again, with the aim of simplification, four broad event type categories can be identified: Street demonstrations, industrial actions, group clashes and politically motivated violent actions targeting officials (including security personnel) or civilians.

### **1.2.1 Demonstrations**

A demonstration is defined as a form of political action in which a demand and/or grievance is raised outside the given institutionalised forms of political participation in a country. The aim of the event is to draw attention of politicians and/or general public to said goal by making it visible in public sphere which implies any space which is open to members of the public. Violent or peaceful forms of social protest that take place in open or closed public spaces such as streets, plazas, vicinities of prominent buildings fall in the category of demonstrations. Notable examples of demonstrations are as follows: Protest marches, silent marches, rallies, demonstrations, outdoor press declarations, gatherings, sit-ins, acts of civil disobedience, dharnas, bandhs, demonstrators clashes with security forces, commemorations and religious rituals (when they become means of protest, e.g. akhand paths), collective petitions (collecting signatures), self-immolation (and threats of self-immolation), hunger strikes, fasts, barricading, picketing (road blocks), burning of vehicles, occupations of public buildings that are not included in the industrial action category and the like.

### **1.2.2 Industrial Actions**

Industrial actions are types of protest events that take place within workplaces and/or involve the production process in the protest. Notable examples include any kind of strike (comprising slowdown strikes, wildcat strikes, sympathy strikes and green bans), workplace occupations, boycotts, picket lines and gheraos. Note that actions which take place in public streets, roads which are otherwise become scenes of demonstrations, the previous category defined above, might become industrial actions when these spaces are actual workplaces of certain groups of workers which carry out the protest. An example to this would be public transportation workers carrying out a protest by blocking roads.

### **1.2.3 Group clashes**

Group clash events are instances of confrontation that stems from politicized conflicts (e.g. identity or economic interest based or ideological conflicts) between social groups such as fighting, lynching, ransacking, arson, any armed or unarmed clash between civilians of a political nature. Actions that target religious, ethnic or similar minorities fall within this category. Said actions can be unidirectional, that is, the target of the event might or might not retaliate during the event.

### **1.2.4 Political violence and militancy**

Finally, politically motivated violent events fall within our event definition. These actions are usually carried out by political and/or militant organizations which resort to violence, and target officials or civilians. Notable examples of this type of events are kidnapping, assassination, bombing, suicide bombing, hijacking and the like. Even though such actions are generally carried by organizations, there might be cases in which such acts are carried by individuals not necessarily affiliated to organizations or groups. Hence, if the act which

intentionally resorts to violence carrying political goals, they are included in our definition even when they are carried out by a proverbial “lone wolf”.

## **1.3 Necessary characteristics of events to be annotated**

Having already identified the kinds of contentious politics and associated event types, it is timely to lay out the necessary characteristics the protest events must have in order to be annotated in this research.

### **1.3.1 Necessity of civilian actors**

Firstly, the participants or organizers of protest events must include at least one non-state actor. Non-state actors might be political or non-political organizations such as parties, associations or trade unions, or they might simply be individuals or a group of citizens such as residents of a locality or employees of a certain workplace.

### **1.3.2 Time and place necessities**

The most important characteristics of an event are its time and place. We expect events to have concrete times and places as these are among the most important pieces of information we aim to collect when we analyze the selected event related articles in the information extraction phase. Below you will find an abstract definition of these necessities. In order to better come to grips with these principles, you can refer to section 1.5.2. below, where they are elaborated on more concrete terms.

#### **1.3.2.1 *Temporal necessities***

Most essentially, the event to be labeled must certainly have taken place. This means that only the past or ongoing events are to be included. The most certain indicator of this is the tense the article uses in narrating the story. The events that are in scope are most commonly narrated in past tense. For ongoing events the narrator might prefer to use simple present or continuous tenses which also indicates certainty of the events occurrence.

Secondly, we expect events to be current affairs and event articles to provide a relatively specific time information. Definite time indicators such as complete dates, days, hours, or time expressions such as yesterday, last week etc. would certainly qualify as time indicators. We also allow vague time indicators which inform us that the event is a current affair as in “Last month’s Naxal violence in the region” or “recent riots in Gujarat”.

#### **1.3.2.2 *Spatial necessities***

We expect concrete information about the location of the event to be present in the article. The location information might be the place of an event, that is, a geographical location

more specific than the country where the event took place such as state, city, town, district, village etc. If such a place is not explicitly mentioned, the facility information, that is, information regarding the type of space where the event takes place (such as a building, street, plaza, stadium etc.) will also be sufficient. However, some protest actions such as those that take place in cyberspace do not have physical locations. Likewise, certain other events do not take place in specific locations, such as product boycotts. These and similar events which, by their nature, do not take place in specific physical locations must be annotated as protest events despite lacking specific locations.

## **1.4 Some event cases that are included**

In this section, a number of specific protest event cases that are in our scope will be enumerated and examples will be provided. Note that the cases below are far from exhaustive in terms of our event definition. They will merely provide a number of instances where the inclusion of the event in the article is not immediately obvious. You might think of them as corner cases of sorts.

i. Sometimes protest events exist in the news articles even though they are not mentioned in the title or are not the main topic of the article. Put differently, we are not primarily concerned with the title or main topic of the articles that we analyze, but rather whether they contain a protest event or not.

ii. Political parties or their leaders mobilizing groups of people are manifestly included in our scope. This might look less obvious when said politicians or parties are in the government and therefore the whole affair might look official or less of a civilian character. We include these and all cases where the event is actively participated by members of the public. An example would be the political party mobilizing its supporters for an election rally or during an official ceremony celebrating a national day. Similarly, political party activities which aim at mass participation such as mass feedings or youth festivals are venues for mass mobilizations and thus are included in our event definition.

iii. Protest actions by members of political parties, including members of parliament are included if these actions take place publicly, and outside the state institutions and normal procedures of government. The actions that take place without public participation within the confines of state institutions, such as legislative bodies, that are unusual and/or not associated with the normal operation of government are included as protest events. Events like hunger strikes or armed violence that are manifestly unusual in terms of the normal functioning of state institutions are accepted as protest events.

iv. Events that are part of armed conflicts between states and (non-state) organizations are included regardless of the scale of the conflict, provided that they are initiated by non-state actors. Clashes between state and non-state actors which are initiated by state actors are included if it is actively responded to by the non-state actor.

v. Though rare, there are instances of state officials acting outside their official capacity and protesting. Public employees striking or engaging in work related protests are usual and easy to recognize but more subtle cases might involve them appear as carrying out their duties. Be on the lookout for acts of insubordination or misconduct that is carried out as advancing an explicitly stated political agenda that is specific to those who carry out the action. Cases in which security personnel attack civilians or refuse to prevent acts of violence among civilians might be difficult to identify as protest events as they might be associated with official policies of state repression.

vi. Sometimes it might not be immediately obvious that an act of violence, such as a case of murder or clash between groups have a political character which would make the case a protest event in our understanding. Assassinations of or attacks against prominent public figures be it political figures or professionals of public stature (high level bureaucrats, lawyers, writers etc.) are very likely to be protest events. They should be treated as protest events unless it is certain that they happen to be caused by personal or non-political reasons.

vii. Group clashes based on economic interests might not have an obvious political angle and look like instances of petty turf war. Exemplary cases include fights between Uber and taxi drivers or clashes between different fishermen communities. These and similar clashes are very much included in our scope.

viii. We expect the included events to have definitely taken place or be ongoing events as mentioned above. But in certain instances, the threat or attempt of certain actions have protest effect in and of themselves despite not being carried out for one reason or another. Threats of violent actions such as assassination, bombing, attack and self-immolation are such cases which have significant effects that make them eligible for inclusion in our event definition, even if they are not carried out or somehow obstructed from being fulfilled.

ix. Non-political contexts can well become scenes of political protests. Sports events, concerts, even religious rituals might become scenes or media of protest actions. Keep in mind that the protest events that take place in such non-political settings are also in our scope.

x. The events that are alleged by civilian or official actors to have taken place in the news reports are included even when the said claims are not verified. E.g. “the police have reportedly rounded up 11 members of the BKU for allegedly attacking one kishan singh”

xi. There are certain protest events that are not space-bound, that is to say they do not take place on a specific physical space by definition. These are regarded as an exception to the location necessity rule. Protest actions that take place on world wide web that are sometimes referred to under the name of “hacktivism” such as instances of cyber-attacks of a political nature are among these and will be labeled as events. Also, events like product

boycotts, sometimes referred to as consumer activism, do not take place on specific locations and must be labeled as protest events despite not meeting the location requirement.

xii. Collective petitions and declarations that are open to members of the public for participation as signatories are included as events.

xiii. Sometimes, riot events might be reported without explicit place or location mentions, except in the names of the participants or the residents of the area, e.g. “Tibetan protesters involved in rioting last year”. Since riot is associated by localities by definition, the participant mentions that contain place names will be regarded as location information in and of themselves. That is, these events will be labeled as protest events despite the location of the event is not explicitly mentioned.

## **1.5 Some event cases that are not included**

In order to draw a more complete picture, this section will provide a number of illustrative cases which are not included in our event definition. Note, again, that this is not an exhaustive list but a collection of cases where it is apt to mention specifically that the events we encounter in the news articles are outside our scope.

An event is excluded from annotation either if it is outside the scope of our understanding of contentious politics or its reporting in the news article lacks the necessary event characteristics that are defined above.

### **1.5.1 Event types that fall outside our definition**

i. Events that cannot be considered as political protest or mobilization are obviously not included. Petty crimes, fights or clashes between civilians that lack political, economic or identity-based motivations, or actions targeting officials or political figures simply for personal reasons are thus outside our scope.

ii. We do not consider individual public actions such as petitions or litigations of public character that lack collective support and remain on the individual level as protest events.

iii. Events which are initiated by state or government actors that are not actively participated by civilians are outside our scope. These might be military operations on non-state organizations or other states, acts of repression on members of the public (note that the latter’s active resistance would count as an event), official ceremonies, celebrations, commemorations organized by state/government authorities, events that take place within the auspices of the parliament and would be part of common government procedures (e.g. politicians leaving the parliament, having heated arguments, obstructing decision making etc.).



iv. Protest actions by members of legislatures during meeting sessions are mostly habitual events and are associated with the routine functioning of these bodies. Acts such as disrupting speeches or groups of members disrupting sessions, verbal protests, banging on desks, rushing towards speakers, walking out of meetings, even fistfights etc. are all usual events in parliaments which have little to no consequence outside the legislatures. Such events are not included in our protest event definition.

v. Events that are parts of election campaigns and, unlike election rallies, do not mobilize civilians are not considered protest events. Examples would be canvassing, distribution of election brochures, leaflets etc. which are not actively participated by members of the public.

vi. Simply declaring certain demands and grievances, as in submitting memorandums, giving declarations to press, without the said act of declaration itself becoming a public spectacle is not considered an event. However, a press declaration outdoors is a public spectacle and a prominent way to protest in certain countries and as such is included in our event definition.

vii. Sometimes the news stories are about general contexts or situations of conflict between a set of actors that are very prone to cause or likely to contain protest events **but are not** events themselves. Discerning events from situations might be trickier than it seems at first sight as the latter might be so concrete and specific as to be given concrete times and places. Annotators must be careful with expressions such as tension, conflict, disagreement, enmity etc. as these do not denote actions (events) but rather situations. If the article does not include a concrete confrontation event (a clash for instance) which such conflicts give rise to, it should not be annotated. Examples of conflictual situations which do not count as events in and of themselves include: the tense atmosphere of prolonged conflict between a state and a militant organization which is strained in summer months when the state engages in military operations, the conflict between the managers and workers of a subcontracting firm over unpaid wages, the distress created among the workers of a shipyard by recurrent job related accidents, the tension between two religious communities living in the same town before a prominent religious holiday etc. The **protest events** we would observe in such situations, and thus label as such, would rather look like: militants' retaliation attack on military outposts, workers beating up their bosses, the shipyard workers occupying and stopping the work in the workplace, the mobs belonging to each community ransacking each others' small businesses etc.

viii. Similar to the previous case, some news stories contain statements which give information about the background or the context of one or more of the story elements. Such statements might contain general allusions to, or summaries of multiple events. Such events might be very likely to be contained in our event definition. In such cases generally speaking the annotator must be careful to mark events that might elude a superficial reading. However, we are after concrete events that we can identify rather than summaries

of event rich contexts. Extra care should be taken to mark **only** the events which are specific, concrete and can be singled out. Distinguishing concrete events from eventful contexts can be tricky as the difference is hard to define comprehensively and the clues in the text can be subtle. Consider the difference between the following statements:

- “The organization has been known to have involved in the bombings that took place in Mumbai last year.”
- “The organization has been known to have involved in bombings in Mumbai last year.”

The first sentence contains event information that makes the article in which it occurs a protest event article as “the bombings that took place in Mumbai last year” are mentioned as concrete events. On the contrary, the phrase “bombings in Mumbai last year” of the second sentence is not enough on its own to make its article a protest event article as it doesn’t refer to some specific, concrete bombing events in Mumbai, but to a general concept of bombings that took place in Mumbai the previous year.

ix. Events that are initiated by foreign governments, armies or any institution of a foreign state are outside our scope.

### **1.5.2 Events that are included in the event type definition but lack necessary characteristics**

i. As stated above, the event described in the article must have taken place or be an ongoing event to be annotated. There are a number of cases in which the event in question is/was expected to take place but did not. These cases are outside our scope and will not be annotated.

a) The announcement or mention of events that are to take place in the future and hence reported in the future or conditional tenses are not to be included.

b) Sometimes the articles may mention events that are supposed to take place the same day the article is published, and hence report them with a different, stronger sense of certainty compared to what would characterize the news about future events. In these cases also, the norm in the news reports is to use future or conditional tenses, i.e. whether and how the events “will” or “would” take place. That is to say, the clue would again be in the tense used in the narrative.

c) Instances of vowing (an earnest promise to perform a specified act or behave in a certain manner) or threatening to carry out certain actions that are not carried out. The exception here is the situation mentioned in the 8. case in “Some event cases that are included” section whereby the threat of the action itself has the considerable effect of a protest, i.e. bomb threats,

death threats and self-immolation or other suicide threats which also frequently become spectacles themselves.

d) Planned, threatened or intended actions that are thwarted or disrupted before happening such as a strike or demonstration that is disallowed by authorities, or apprehension of militants that are planning to carry out an action are not considered as events. Although in some cases, such as a planted bomb being diffused before going off, the protest action, i.e. the act of gruesome violence in the bomb case, which is not carried out fully has already achieved its protest aim and thus is included as an event.

ii. The second necessary aspect of the events to be annotated concerns their spatial characteristics.

a) As it was mentioned in the necessary characteristics section, vague time expressions which nevertheless inform us that an event is a current affair are acceptable, but event location info is crucial to make the event mention sufficiently concrete. The events that do not get a specific location information attached are outside our scope. In cases where event place information (i.e. a specific geographical location more specific than the country) does not exist, a facility (building, campus, factory, etc.) provides the necessary concrete spatial dimension. Event mentions or summaries which do not come with any location information in terms either of geographical place or facility within the article are not to be annotated.

b) Events which gained historical significance and/or have become so iconic that they are mentioned with their specific name are a frequently encountered case of lack of location info. Gezi Events, 9/11 Attacks, Phoolan Devi Assassination are prominent examples. When these and similar events are not current and mentioned only by virtue of their historical significance, it is usually straightforward to exclude them. But when they are relatively recent, it would be harder to decide whether to include them or not. The location rule is a more certain guide in deciding in such cases.

c) Another case which might be difficult to discern whether to include or not is when the news article contains a story about the survivors, victims or people affected by a certain event. In these cases, too, the articles are not annotated if the location information of the event whose victims are the focus of the story is not provided.