Society & Social Justice · GS - I

Is caste disappearing in urban India? Illustrate your answer with examples.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2026	GS - I	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Urbanisation, occupational mobility, inter-caste interaction, education, nuclear families, anonymity, caste networks, marriage, housing, politics, employment, discrimination, digital communities

Model Answer

Urbanisation has weakened some traditional manifestations of caste, but it has not resulted in its disappearance from Indian cities. Instead, caste is increasingly adapting to changing social and economic conditions.

Urban life promotes occupational mobility, education, individual aspirations and interaction among people from diverse backgrounds. The decline of traditional hereditary occupations and the anonymity of cities can reduce the visibility of caste in everyday interactions. Nuclear families and modern workplaces may also weaken certain traditional social controls.

However, caste continues to influence important areas of urban life. Marriage remains strongly shaped by caste preferences, including through matrimonial platforms and social networks. Residential segregation can persist through informal preferences, housing discrimination and community-based neighbourhoods. Caste associations also provide social support, employment networks and political mobilisation. Access to education, employment and social opportunities can remain unequal across caste groups.

Reservation policies in education and public employment demonstrate the continuing relevance of historical social inequalities. Urban political mobilisation also frequently involves caste-based identities and alliances.

At the same time, inter-caste friendships, professional relationships and marriages have increased in sections of urban society, particularly among educated and younger populations.

Therefore, caste is not disappearing but undergoing transformation. Urbanisation has reduced some traditional practices while creating new institutional and social forms through which caste identities continue to operate.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP