

## FAKE NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA & INTERNET LITERACY

Sayed Amir Mustafa Hashmi

Film Producer & Director

### ABSTRACT

Internet is a global network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols to link devices worldwide. The population of India in 2017, is approximately 125 cr., where less than 8-10% of the population are having internet access. After 20 years from now, in 2038, when India's population will be around 160 million, it will be the Internet Era; the internet access will be 60-70%. So, it becomes necessary to have the literacy of internet to make internet a helping hand not the wand of unsocial activities. The early year of the 21st century have witnessed an explosion in the internet usage, at this situation, by the fake news it is possible to influence the election procedure and results as well, at a very high level, which may be a big threat to democracy. To get rid of this situation the vast literacy of Internet is required. By Asia Today reporter Kim Eun-young - The Internet has created a new landscape of social change as an outlet for open communication. However, it also threatens Millennials with false information and censorship. As a majority of millennial rely on the Internet to get information and their consumption of information is quick that they might be caught in a trap of those who get benefits with false information. China was the world's worst abuser of Internet for a second year. China added a new law that allows for seven-year prison terms for spreading rumors on social media, a charge often used to imprison political activities. Turkish authorities are shutting down online media, blocking social media, requesting to remove 'illegal' content, and indicting with the suspicion of defamation to prevent anti-government protests. Earlier this month, Turkey also blocked access to some mobile apps including WhatsApp and Skype.

### INTRODUCTION

Fake news is a type of yellow journalism or propaganda that consists of deliberate misinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional print and broadcast news media or online social media. Fake news today is the unseparated part of the social media in 21st century. Fake news is a neologism often used to refer to fabricated news. This type of news, found in traditional news, social media or fake news websites, has no basis in fact, but is presented as being factually accurate. In the worldwide scenario fake news is actually the term under **Hoax News** which means the false or fraud news. Fake news is written and published with the intent to mislead in order to damage an agency, entity, or person, and/or gain financially or politically, often using sensationalist, dishonest, or outright fabricated

headlines to increase readership, online sharing, and Internet click revenue. In the latter case, it is similar to sensational online "**CLICKBAIT**" headlines and relies on advertising revenue generated from this activity, regardless of the veracity of the published stories. Intentionally misleading and deceptive fake news is different from obvious satire or parody, which is intended to amuse rather than mislead its audience.

Fake news is used as the tool for modern propaganda technique in today's political scenario, and the percentage of fake news in social media is getting high rise. In some cases, what appears to be fake news may in fact be news satire, which uses exaggeration and introduces non-factual elements that are intended to amuse or make a point, rather than to deceive. Propaganda can also be fake news.

This study is conducted to find out the possibilities of coverage area of fake news and its effect in the modern society as the government of India has also started the of **National Digital Literacy Mission (NMDL)** The "Fake News" order was issued by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, headed by Smriti Irani but the prime minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi overruled the order. (Times of India Report) For the further elaboration and explanation of the project "**Social Media and Internet Literacy**" it's important to get familiar with the "**CLICK-BAIT CULTURE**". Click-bait is a pejorative term for web content whose main goal is to entice users to click on a link to go to a certain webpage or video. Click-bait headlines typically aim to exploit the "curiosity gap", providing just enough information to make readers curious, but not enough to satisfy their curiosity without clicking through to the linked content. Click-bait has also been used to political ends, and in this respect has been blamed for the rise of post-truth politics. It was a time of USA presidential election in 2016, where in the Macedonia city few Pro-Turmp campaigns have been started online in various fake news sites. Both Google and Face book announced on Nov. 15 that they will ban fake news sites from using their ad networks to prevent the spread of false information, AFP reported. The shift comes as they face a backlash over the role they played in the U.S. presidential election by allowing the spread of false information supporting a particular candidate that might have contributed to the outcome of the election. Buzz Feed News on Nov. 4 reported several cases of spreading fake news about certain candidates during the U.S. election as a means of making money. For example, a website claimed Hillary Clinton will be indicted in 2017 for crimes related to her email scandal, citing unnamed FBI sources. The baseless story generated over 140,000 shares, reactions, and comments on Face book while the website owner earned revenue from Google Ad-Sense. Fake news also undermines serious media coverage and makes it more difficult for journalists to cover significant news stories and gives revenue to the fake news originator by giving rise to the click-bait culture. In such situation where India is the no. 1 mobile data consuming country, the fake news has become a strong medium of communication. It is not

only influencing the electoral vote, but also it is allowing the click bait culture to trend. Due to the click-bait culture the fake news has become a trendy business among the youth. A great example of Jharkhand where it was a rumor of child abduction which was spread through Whatsapp, because of the fear psychosis the tribes of Jharkhand killed 7 peoples, it was an incident of 19 may 2017. China added a new law that allows for seven-year prison terms for spreading rumors on social media, a charge often used to imprison political activities. The report said some users in China belonging to minority religious groups were imprisoned for watching religious videos on mobile phones. Crackdown of governments around the world comes as digital platforms are being used in new and creative ways to advocate for change. It is clear that the Internet is playing a positive role in creating democratic societies by demanding political responsibility, promoting women's rights, and supporting victims of unwarranted accusations. But what millennial should remember is that it is necessary to check whether the information on the Internet is manipulated by someone's interests and power. The relevance of fake news has increased in post-truth politics. For media outlets, the ability to attract viewers to their websites is necessary to general online advertising revenue. If publishing a story with false content attracts users, it may be worthy of producing in order to benefit advertisers and ratings. Easy access to online advertisement revenue, increased political polarization, and the popularity of social media, primarily the Face book News Feed, have all been implicated in the spread of fake news, which has come to provide competition for legitimate news stories. Hostile government actors have also been implicated in generating and propagating fake news, particularly during elections.

### **Analytical Study**

This study is to find out the possibilities of stability of the ethics and values in society in 2038 when the mobile user rate will be increased to 80 to 90% from 10% of the present scenario so at that time can we protect our ethics and values in society. It is stated since ancient times that massive wars are won by these fake news and even governments are preceded with these. There are much more chances in future

also to face such conditions, where fake news could play vital role in government preceding. That time we will be having such huge amount of digitized population in 2039 will we be ready to handle such situations? Are we ready to maintain and tackle our ethical issues in our society arouse by fake news in media which could be destructive for future society. Fake news is a neologism often used to refer to fabricated news. This type of news, found in traditional news, social media or fake news websites, has no basis in fact, but is presented as being factually accurate comes under yellow journalism. The yellow press, is American terms for journalism and associated newspapers that present little or no legitimate well-researched news while instead using eye-catching headlines for increased sales. Techniques may include exaggerations of news events, scandal-mongering or sensationalism. By extension, the term yellow journalism is used today as a pejorative to decry any journalism that treats news in an unprofessional or unethical fashion.

Claire Wardle of First Draft News identifies seven types of fake news:

1. Satire or parody ("no intention to cause harm but has potential to fool")
2. False connection ("when headlines, visuals or captions don't support the content")
3. Misleading content ("misleading use of information to frame an issue or an individual")
4. False context ("when genuine content is shared with false contextual information")
5. Imposter content ("when genuine sources are impersonated" with false, made-up sources)
6. Manipulated content ("when genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive", as with a "doctored" photo)
7. Fabricated content ("new content is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm")

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) published a summary in diagram form (pictured at right) to assist people in recognizing fake news. These points have been corroborated by experts in the cognitive science of information processing.

Its main points are:

1. Consider the source (to understand its mission and purpose,
2. Read beyond the headline (to understand the whole story
3. Check the authors (to see if they are real and credible
4. Assess the supporting sources (to ensure they support the claims)
5. Check the date of publication (to see if the story is relevant and up to date)

Study Highlights

- *Fake News*
- *Prevent Fear Psychosis*
- *Alternative Truth*
- *Critical eye awareness*
- *Game of ours vs. them*
- *Internet Literacy*

6. Ask if it is a joke (to determine if it is meant to be satire)
7. Review your own biases (to see if they are affecting your judgement)
8. Ask experts (to get confirmation from independent people with knowledge).

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), launched in 2015 supports international collaborative efforts in fact-checking, provides training and has published a code of principles. In 2017 it introduced an application and vetting process for journalistic organizations. One of IFCN's verified signatories, the independent, not-for-profit media journal The Conversation, created a short animation explaining its fact checking process, which involves "Extra checks and balances, including blind peer review by a second academic expert, additional scrutiny and editorial oversight". Beginning in the 2017 school year, children in Taiwan study a new curriculum designed to teach critical reading of propaganda and the evaluation of sources. Called "media literacy", the course provides training in journalism in the new information society. The fake news culture is in trend from the ancient time 13<sup>th</sup> century till now, as by the socialization, improvisation and media has grown the fake news, censorship and click bate culture has also

grown up. Fake news is not a small problem it's a worldwide problem a no. of countries are struggling from the problem of fake news, as the fake news is one of the reason for riots, debates, decoy etc. In the 21st century, the impact of fake news became widespread, as well as the usage of the term. Besides referring to made-up stories designed to deceive readers into clicking on links, maximizing traffic and profit, the term has also referred to satirical news, whose purpose is not to mislead but rather to inform viewers and share humorous commentary about real news and the mainstream media.

## STATEMENTS

### Amitabh Kant (C.E.O. Niti Aayog)

"India has become World's no. 1 mobile data consuming country" In another said that "India's mobile data consumption is higher than that of USA & China put together."

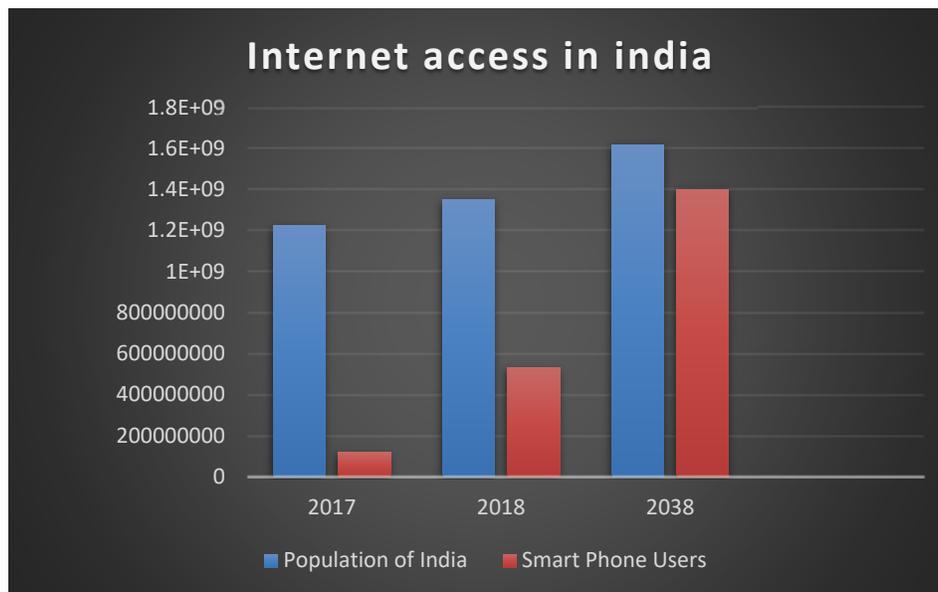
### NBC News

"It feels like there's a connection between having an active portion of a party that's prone to seeking false stories and conspiracies and a president who has famously spread conspiracies and false claims. In many ways, demographically and ideologically, the president fits the profile of the fake news users that you're describing."

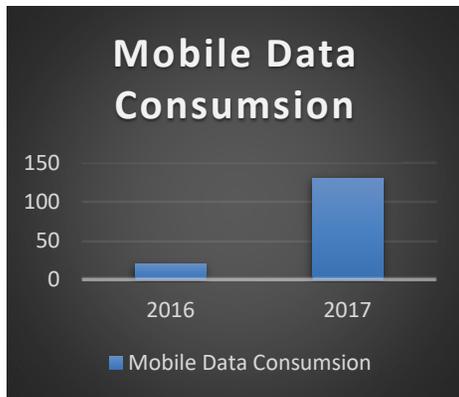
### NYHAN

"It's worrisome if fake news websites further weaken the norm against false and misleading information in our politics, which unfortunately has eroded. But it's also important to put the content provided by fake news websites in perspective. People got vastly more misinformation from Donald Trump than they did from fake news websites -- full stop."

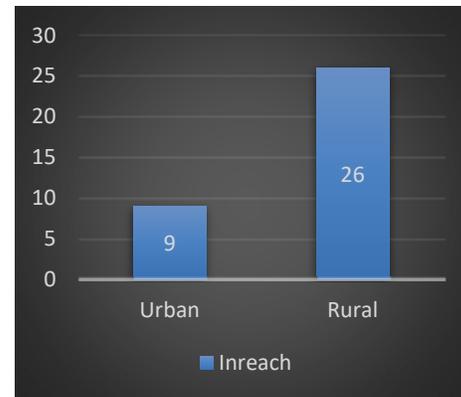
## GRAPHICAL PRESENTATION OF THE INTERNET ACCESS IN INDIA, MOBILE DATA CONSUMPTION AND INREACH



## Internet access in India (Data in Crores)



(In Crore GBPS)



(Inreach Percentage)

### Govt. Of India Initiative on “Fake News”

GLOBAL CYBER CHALLENGE - PEACE-A-THON, FAKE NEWS also referred to hoax news occupies large sphere of cyber space today world-wide. Cyber technology’s wide reach and fast spread contributes to its menace. Publicity through such fake news on cyber space today has been adopted by States, institutions as well as individuals for various reasons and varied forms. Often sensational news are created and spread through social media to achieve intended end. On the other hand, it may also involve narration of a true fact however being deliberately exaggerated. This may also include titling the webpages with misleading title or tag-lines in order to seize attention of readers. Such misinformation may lead in committing offences, social unrest, financial frauds upon such misrepresentation, political gain, to increase number of readers, gain revenue associated with click, etc. This may also affect the affect the importance of serious news media. Further danger lies in other electronic media using this as a source for their news thereby carrying forward further spread of such news. The problem is to identify the authenticity of the news and online content. Equally important problem is to identify the bots involved in spreading false news.

**TIM COOK**  
(C.E.O. Apple)

*“Fake news is killing people’s minds.”*

### About Gccs & Global Cyber Challenge

Global Cyber Challenge is an important part of Global Conference on Cyber Space (GCCS), 2017 being inaugurated by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of India. The Grand Finale will be organized at GCCS, New Delhi on 20th & 21st November 2017.

### Grand Finale

Top shortlisted teams from India and abroad had competed in the grand finale which was hosted in Room No: 3A, Marriott, Aerocity New Delhi on 20-21st November, 2017.

### Awards

- Goodies, awards and certificates from **Hon. Prime Minister of India.**
- Opportunity to attend Global Conference on Cyber Space- 2017 in New Delhi to meet the International and National personalities active in the Cyber world.
- Travel and stay to the finalists.

- An Internship opportunity with Government of India.
- Chance to deploy the solutions at Government of India, State Governments, Civil Society Organizations working to address the social problems.
- Your Story will do a story on the winners and the winning teams.
- Internet and Mobile Association of India will mentor the winning teams

## Case Study

1. In the 13th century BC, Rameses the Great spread lies and propaganda portraying the Battle of Kadesh as a stunning victory for the Egyptians; he depicted scenes of himself smiting his foes during the battle on the walls of nearly all his temples. The treaty between the Egyptians and the Hittites, however, reveals that the battle was actually a stalemate.
2. During the first century BC, Octavian ran a campaign of misinformation against his rival Mark Antony, portraying him as a drunkard, a womanizer, and a mere puppet of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra VII. Marc Antony ultimately killed himself after his defeat in the Battle of Actium upon hearing false rumors propagated by Cleopatra herself claiming that she had committed suicide.
3. During the 18th century publishers of fake news were fined and banned in the Netherlands; one man, Gerard Lodewijk van der Macht, was banned four times by Dutch authorities—and four times he moved and restarted his press. In the American colonies, Benjamin Franklin wrote fake news about murderous “scalping” Indians working with King George III in an effort to sway public opinion in favor of the American Revolution.
4. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has published that The New York Times printed fake news “depicting Russia as a socialist paradise.” During 1932–1933, The New York Times published numerous articles by its Moscow bureau chief, Walter Duranty, who won a Pulitzer Prize for a series of reports about the Soviet Union.
5. In 2014, the Russian Government used disinformation via networks such as RT to create a counter-narrative after Russian-backed Ukrainian rebels shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight.
6. In 2016, NATO claimed it had seen a significant rise in Russian propaganda and fake news stories since the invasion of Crimea in 2014. Fake news stories originated from the Russian government officials were also circulated internationally by Reuters news agency and published in the most popular news websites in the United States.
7. In a November 2016 interview with The Washington Post, Horner expressed regret for the role his fake news stories played in the election and surprise at how gullible people were in treating his stories as news.
8. In December 2016, while speaking on Anderson Cooper 360, Horner said that all news is fake news and said CNN “spread misinformation”, which was one month before Trump leveled the same criticism at that network.
9. In a study by a researchers from Princeton University, Dartmouth College in 2018, and the University of Exeter has examined the consumption of fake news during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. The findings showed that Trump supporters and older Americans (over 60) were far more likely to consume fake news than Clinton supporters. Those most likely to visit fake news websites were the 10% of Americans who consumed the most conservative information. There was a very large difference (800%) in the consumption of fake news stories as related to total news consumption between Trump supporters (6.2%) and Clinton supporters (0.8%).

**RAJNATH SINGH**  
Union Home Minister  
Govt. of India

*"Don't believe or forward  
WhatsApp messages  
without verification."*

10. Fake news in India has led to episodes of violence between castes and religions and interfered with public policies. It often spreads through the smartphone instant messenger Whatsapp, which had 200 million monthly active users in the country as of February 2017.
11. On November 8, 2016, India established a 2,000-rupee currency bill on the same day as the Indian 500 and 1,000 rupee note demonetization. Fake news went viral over Whatsapp that the note came equipped with spying technology that tracked bills 120 meters below the earth. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley refuted the falsities, but not before they had spread to the country's mainstream news outlets. Later, in May 2017, seven people were lynched as rumor of child abductions spread through WhatsApp in a village.
12. Prabhakar Kumar of the Indian media research agency CMS, told The Guardian India was harder hit by fake news because the country lacked media policy for verification. Law enforcement officers in India arrested individuals with charges of creating fictitious articles, predominantly if there was likelihood the articles inflamed societal conflict.
13. In July 2017, News18 India published a photograph of a flag alleged to be the Pakistani flag being raised over Uttar Pradesh. The story caused widespread outrage in India, but the flag in question was revealed to actually be a green Islamic flag, not the Pakistani flag.

## Conclusion

We cannot prevent the Whatsapp for now due to encryption on the group messages, but we can prevent soon the Whatsapp, by de-encrypt the group messages specifically. My strong opinion is to take private the personal messages in WhatsApp but the group activities should be de-encrypt. We need to create check-back tools in priority for statements, tools that would help to stop fake news, without impinging on freedom of speech. A situation study by The New York Times shows how a tweet by a person with no more than 40 followers went viral and was shared 16,000 times on Twitter. The tweet concluded that protesters were paid to be bussed to Trump demonstrations and protest. A Twitter user then

posted a photograph of two buses outside a building, claiming that those were the Anti-Trump protesters. The tweet immediately went viral on both Twitter and Face book. Fake news can easily spread due to the speed and accessibility of modern communications technology. A CNN investigation examined exactly how fake news can start to trend. There are "bots" used by fake news publishers that make their articles appear more popular than they are. This makes it more likely for people to discover them.

"Bots are fake social media accounts that are programmed to automatically 'like' or retweet a particular message."

## References

Population:

<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/india-population/>

India had 1,183 million active mobile connections in September 2017: TRAI

<https://www.medianama.com/2017/07/223-india-active-mobile-connections-may-2017/>

India to have 530mn smartphone users in 2018: Economic Times

## INDIA TODAY

Sanjay Singh  
(Reporter)  
April 7, 2012

*No secrets on BlackBerry: Govt. gets its way on tapping popular messenger service.*

*The government took a call in the matter more than 18 months ago. Now, it has deciphered the mechanics of enabling security agencies to police the one million-strong exclusive preserve of BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) users in India.*

<https://telecom.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india-to-have-530mn-smartphone-users-in-2018-study/61097817>

Jharkhand: Tribals lynch seven in a day over child abduction rumours.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/jharkhand-tribals-lynch-seven-in-a-day-over-child-abduction-rumours/story-m32UPMYIAMI5x1BbvHEZGI.html>

The number of internet users in India is expected to reach 500 million by June 2018, said a report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/internet/internet-users-in-india-expected-to-reach-500-million-by-june-iamai/articleshow/63000198.cms>

IAMAI-IMRB report says Urban India has close to 60% Internet penetration, reflecting a level of saturation, but there are a potential 750 million users in Rural India

<http://www.livemint.com/Industry/QWzIOYEsfQJknXhC3HiuVI/Number-of-Internet-users-in-India-could-cross-450-million-by.html>

US Based fact checking websites

<http://www.politifact.com>

Global Cyber Challenge - Peace-a-thon

[https://innovate.mygov.in/ncc\\_category/fake-news/](https://innovate.mygov.in/ncc_category/fake-news/)

PM Modi Overrules Smriti Irani, Cancels "Fake News" Order

<https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/pm-modi-orders-controversial-fake-news-rules-to-be-withdrawn-amid-outrage-1832141>