News Item

How to Fight India's Fake-News Epidemic | The New York Times

By Samir Patil

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> Disinformation can be defeated by treating the crisis as we responded to infectious diseases in the past.
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> This contagion of a staggering amount of morphed images, doctored videos and text messages is spreading largely through messaging services and influencing what India's voters watch and read on their smartphones. A recent [study by Microsoft](#) found that over 64 percent Indians encountered fake news online, the highest reported among the 22 countries surveyed.
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> India has the most social media users, with 300 million users on Facebook, 200 million on WhatsApp and 250 million using YouTube. TikTok, the video messaging service owned by a Chinese company, has [more than 88 million users](#) in India. And there are Indian messaging applications such as ShareChat, which claims to have 40 million users and allows them to communicate in 14 Indian languages.
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> These platforms are filled with fake news and disinformation aimed at influencing political choices during the Indian elections. Some of the egregious instances are [a made-up BBC survey](#) predicting victory for the governing Bharatiya Janata Party and a fake video of the opposition Congress Party president, Rahul Gandhi, saying a machine can convert [potatoes into gold](#).
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Source: [Opinion | How to Fight India's Fake-News Epidemic – The New York Times](#)