

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN NEED OF VIGILANCE

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ABSTRACT

The social media plays a pivotal role in circulation of fake news in relation to current political and social conditions. These news deceive audiences, the idea behind which is usually to influence people's views and push a political agenda or cause confusion.

Keywords: Social Media, Events.

INTRODUCTION

There have been cases where such news are also produced by mistake. More than a billion people consume news from social media platforms and networks and it is hard to determine if stories are credible or not. The situation is such because of information overload and a lack of understanding of how the internet functions. Hence, both social media and users play a big part in enhancing the outburst of fake stories.

SOCIAL MEDIA IN NEED OF VIGILANCE

In the month of July 2018, India stood witness to serial events of mob lynching because of fake news spread through WhatsApp. In the same month 35 people were killed by mobs in different regions of the country on the basis of false news spreading in the region about the presence of child kidnappers, witches etc. It created a frenzy amidst the people and they start reacting in unpredictable ways by launching attacks on innocent people. There was a vicious agenda behind creating such a message, an agenda unknowingly spread later both by those who believe it ideologically as well as those who likely meant no harm but did not bother to check the authenticity of the message.[1]

The Bench comprising Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, Justice A.M. Khanwilkar and Justice D.Y. Chandrachud directed in the case of Tehseen S Poonawala v. Union of India and Ors33,

“Apart from the directions we have given hereinbefore and what we have expressed, we think it appropriate to recommend to the legislature, that is, the Parliament, to create a separate offence for lynching and provide adequate punishment for the same. We have said so as a special law in this field would instil a sense of fear for law amongst the people who involve themselves in such kinds of activities.”

According to Krzysztof Iwanek, only Whatsaap cannot be singled out from other means of communication out and blamed for the mob lynching because fake news, edited images and videos representing unrelated events were also shared on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and via other methods. Politicians, their spin doctors, and radical hatemonngers use all the tools they can. There are concrete people to blame for such violence-inciting fake news, and WhatsApp is just one of their many instruments. People have been peddling false accusations against others for ages, long before not only the Internet, but even before print media.[2]

In the month of August 2018, Kerela was hit by the biggest flood in over a century and it needed help desperately from other states of India to recover from the losses. To cope up with the situation. social media was used as a medium to request people to contribute in the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund, the money for which was used for in rescue operations and rehabilitation operations. The same was followed by fake photos and videos of people describing the flood affecting them in all possible ways. Later those were recognized as fake contents. Later on when the Indian government was dominant in its approach towards WhatsApp to curb the spread of fake news, it limited sharing a forwarded messages to only 20 chats. Facebook’s WhatsApp is working closely with Reliance Jio to spread awareness of false messages in India. Because of Jio’s cheap internet enabled phone the messaging service is available to more than 25 million people. All new users of the JioPhone get educational material that tells them about spotting a forwarded WhatsApp message and encourages them to share messages thoughtfully. WhatsApp has now made appointment of a grievance officer for India as a partial response to the demands of the Indian government. The officer shall be based in the United States.[3]

CONCLUSION

It can be conclude that the fake news over the social media can only be administer though the proper laws and regulation and those laws should be such nature that it helps in eradicating the

spread of fake news and make the social media worth enough to deal with the current happening of the world.

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