

■ SATIRE ■

Bangali parent chooses to believe in random YouTuber over 100-year-old news channel

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As the internet has reached nearly every household over the past decade, so has another commodity that is part and parcel of the World Wide Web—misinformation. And in a world where the youth struggle to verify the authenticity of news amid a web of misinformation, it seems that our parents have already found the answer. They have decided to place their indisputable trust in a random person with a pin mic in front of a green screen on YouTube rather than in international news portals.

"It's really easy to filter out which news is true and which isn't," explained Mr Gullib-al Hasan. "Whatever aligns with my political ideology and supports what I believe to be correct is true, and everything else is fabricated. Sure, I have no knowledge of the technologies involved in digital media fabrication whatsoever. I'm someone who unapologetically and unironically shared the picture of a woman building a house out of brinjals—only for my son to explain to me that it was an AI-generated image. But now that I know AI exists, I'm on a path of denying all forms of audio and visual evidence that disprove my ideology and blaming it all on AI without even knowing how it works. A leaked audio call proving my political leader was involved in a genocide? Fabricated! Video footage showing proof of a massacre? Edited! Hundreds of

injured people carrying wounds from the shooting? The opposition did it! Filtering out the 'truth' from the internet is really easy when you're already blinded by an ideology."

"The secret lies in absolute stubbornness," continued Mr Gullib-al. "Deny everything that goes against your argument. Put your trust in fabricated screenshots and random claims without proof, and if you keep lying to yourself long enough, hopefully, you'll start believing them. When the man in front of the green screen on YouTube spills out random information without any valid source or feeling the need to justify his claims, a part of me knows that it's all propaganda. But I've survived 16 years keeping that part of me suppressed. I couldn't have survived if I had allowed my conscience to ask these questions!"

"Here on Facebook, anyone can just log in and post whatever they want, so you know you're getting the news from the best sources out there," explained Mr Gullib-al.

However, experts suggest that Mr Gullib-al's tendency to believe misinformation has less to do with his age and more to do with his roots. According to Tarsara-verified psychologist Sigmund Fraud, "People here tend to believe in misinformation a lot. They're living proof that Bangladeshis' tendency to believe everything on the internet is connected to their nationality rather than their age."

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HOW TO CHECK FOR MISINFORMATION/ DISINFORMATION ONLINE

Verify the source

Check if the website or publication is reputable, transparent about ownership, and has a history of factual reporting.

Cross-check with trusted outlets

Look for the same story on multiple credible news platforms. If it's only on one site, be cautious.

Analyse the language and tone

Sensationalist or emotionally charged language is often a red flag for misinformation or disinformation.

Inspect the date and context:

Ensure the information isn't outdated or taken out of context to mislead.

Use fact-checking tools

Certain websites or fact-checking tools can help confirm or debunk claims quickly.

Look into the author or organisation

Research their background to see if they are experts in the subject or have a potential bias.



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TO BUILD TOMORROW'S BANGLADESH**

