**Youth, abuse and deep fakes**

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We do not see nature, intelligence or ideology as it is; but only as our languages are. The content, quality and abusive language of public discourse on popular social media need attention before they entirely mutilate the ‘Lingua franca’ of the country. Vitriol, anger and hatred in public discourse on social media are fast decaying our political, religious, informational and commercial forms of conversation—and its surrounding landscape. Any late-night talk show, family gathering, or social fiesta having a couple of political enthusiasts will present itself engaged in irrelevant, impotent and incoherent conversations, shrouded in heated arguments, roars and claims of self-righteousness. Venom is widespread.
Many analysing the influx of social media campaigns focusing on youth are of the view that on such platforms the truth is drowned in the sea of irrelevance and the youth is the fodder to fuel the political agenda of various political parties; making abuse a trivial culture. On social media, everything seems to be everyone’s business. The abundant flow of information they have access to through the internet, mostly provided by their parents, has very little or nothing to do with their future nor is going to help them shape their careers in any substantial ways.
Discussions, comments, tweets and memes present a population too amused by distractions—entertainment, leisure, and laughter to effectively contribute to shaping the turbulent future of the country. Political conversations today adore the technologies that undo our capacities to think or entice us into a world of illusions and delusions. From covering events, journalists, especially on social media, have moved on to covering statements while the rest of the world has been grappling with multimedia platforms, different ways of telling stories and figuring out the balance between news and analysis. Out of an abundance of daily news on social media; it is as difficult to find matters related to policy, development, education, and business as finding a needle in a haystack. The discussions on social media are based merely on leaked conversations, WhatsApp messages, marriages, divorces, separations, affairs, doctored audio and tempered videos of public officeholders.
With every obscenity and profane video leaked emerging into social media; apparently, society lowers its moral values. This sometimes gives the perplexed thinkers, not many in the society now fortunately for them, a feeling of an auction notice stating ‘available as is! With the advent of ‘Deep fake’ the society has another source of dopamine and misinformation. While the politics will go further south, the moral standards will freeze in the North (pole). It is synthetic media in which a person in an existing image or video is replaced with someone else’s likeness. While the act of faking content is not new, deep fakes leverage powerful techniques from machine learning and artificial intelligence to manipulate or generate visual and audio content with a high potential to deceive. Hence carries a higher potential for political mud-slinging and false accusation; controlling the impressionable minds of the youth by inflicting them with unethical pleasure and astonishing those who are gullible enough not to differentiate if it’s real or fake—further polarising the society.
It’s time; the political discourse should shift from personal attributes and traits of the political leaders to their projects, political acumen and ability to initiate to provide basic necessities to the public, identification of the root cause of the problems and application of solutions. The political discourse led by desires, imagination and speculations hampers our abilities to effectively comprehend, analyse and respond to the gravity of the political situations.
In the present day, effective censoring does not involve a media blackout; rather it is done by bombarding the public with an influx of irrelevant information enabling the politicians to shy away from real issues concerning the masses. Politics, religion, news, athletics, education, and commerce have been transformed into adjuncts of show business. Intolerant, uncultured political discourse will further bruise the already limping moral standards and tolerance in society. Depression, anxiety, and mental health issues will be aggravated as a result. The youth must agree to disagree and let their profiles be impeccable enough to lead them into the world of opportunity.