PROPAGATION OF FAKE NEWS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON NATIONAL SECURITY

SYNDICATE 13

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TITLE PAGE

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DECLARATION

6. We declare that this does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university and to the best of our knowledge and belief, it does not contain any material previously published and written by another person but by the members of the syndicate group, except where due reference is made in text. We also hereby give consent for our dissertation, if accepted, to be made available to any outside organization.

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ABSTRACT

7. We live in the so-called age of fake news in which this concept has been looked into and turned into a profitable industry by cyber criminals. To imitate real media, fake and invented media websites are built. Any criminals use techniques such as manipulating and distributing legitimate documents as part of deception schemes, for example. Propaganda is straightforwardly linked to, and is a detriment to, national security. Since fake news is a special environment where problems seem to be very complex, more and better use of national security communications can solve it. At present, the influence of fake news has taken hold of third world nations, including Sri Lanka, with its equal share of news dissemination on social media sites, not only limited to the western world. A section of media and cyber experts agree that the new millennium's evolving media cape has led readers to believe, comment, post and pursue content that matches their ideologies and expectations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

8. We owe a debt of gratitude to military DS Sqn Ldr KC Weerasekara and academic DS Miss MCP Wijesooriya for the guidance, encouragement and indispensable advice given to us over the courage of the case study. Much for the case study work would not have been complete without vision and foresight of those who inspired us. We are particularly thankful to the academic staff for taking the time to talk with us on many occasions. We take this opportunity to acknowledge the service of the IT laboratory and library that collaborated to produce this work. The assistance, cooperation and experience of our fellow undergraduates were essential for the completion of this case studies. Therefore, we would appreciate the support given by all cadets of intake 36.

Members of Syndicate 13
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PROPAGATION OF FAKE NEWS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND IT'S IMPACT ON NATIONAL SECURITY

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

9. Social media refers to websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently, and in real-time. While many people access social media through smartphone apps, this communication tool started with computers, and social media can refer to any internet communication tool that allows users to broadly share content and engage with the public.

10. The ability to share photos, opinions, and events in real-time has transformed the way we live and the way we interact each other. What makes social media unique is that it is both broad and relatively uncensored. While many social media companies impose some limitations, such as taking down images that display violence or nudity. There are much fewer limitations on what someone can share than there with other means of mass communication like newspapers, radio stations, and television channels.

11. Anyone with internet access can sign up for a social media account. They can use that account to share whatever content they choose to, and the content they share reaches anyone who visits their page or profile.

12. Fake news is untrue information presented as news. It often has the aim of damaging the reputation of a person, community or entity, or making money through advertising revenue. Fake news can reduce the impact of real news by competing with it. It also has the potential to undermine trust in serious media coverage. The term has at times been used to cast doubt upon legitimate news. The intent and purpose of fake news is important. In some cases, what appears to be fake news may be news satire, which uses exaggeration and introduces non-factual elements that are intended to amuse or make a point, rather than to deceive.

a. In relation to Social Media, once a profile has been created, users can create and share content. For instance, an Instagram user with a new account can take a picture

and share it on their profile with a caption. In addition to creating content for their profile, social media users can find other users whose content they want to follow or comment on. Depending on the type of social media, a user may "follow" another user, add them as a "friend," or they may "subscribe" to another user's page.

b. As for the above it is clear that social media creates a huge effect and impact in the society as people tend to gain their knowledge and information through social media. If any of fake news was initiated through social media it will redistribute in a very speed manner through sharing and reposting. Most researchers have been working on this issue for several years yet there have been no successive measures in completely preventing propagation of fake news.

c. The recent scenarios in Sri Lanka which caused during the Easter Sunday attacks and Covid 19 pandemic situation provides practical situations where fake news took the upper hand in creating various issues. This may affect the national security of the country as well as the sociological movements of the communities in the country. In the modern context Sri Lankans tend to use more social media coverage in following news and information. WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Viber and many more electronic media coverages are happening besides e mails, television and radio broadcastings.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND

SOCIAL MEDIA & FAKE NEWS

Social Media

What is Social Media?

13. Social media refers to websites and applications designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently and in real time. While many people access social media via smartphone apps, this communication tool started with computers, and social media can refer to any Internet communication tool that allows users to share content and interact with them. Public.

14. Social media is any digital tool that enables users to quickly create and share content with the public. Social media covers a wide range of websites and applications. Some, like Twitter, specialize in sharing links and short written messages. Others, like Instagram and TikTok, are designed to optimize photo and video sharing.

15. What makes social media unique is that it is vast and relatively uncensored. While many social media companies impose some limitations, such as removing images depicting violence or nudity, there are far fewer limitations on what someone can share than with other media such as newspapers, radio stations, and television channels.

16. Anyone with Internet access can sign up for a social media account. They can use that account to share whatever content they choose, and the content they share reaches anyone who visits their page or profile.

Types of social networks

17. There are many different types of social media, and many services can fall into various categories. Some of the main types have been shown below, along with some examples.

Social networks

18. Social media specializes in connecting and exchanging thoughts, ideas and content with other users, often with users who share likes and interests. Facebook and Twitter are examples of social networks. While more professional than others, LinkedIn can also be considered a social network.

Media networks

19. Unlike social networks, which specialize in allowing users to share and exchange raw thoughts and ideas, media networks specialize in distributing content such as photos and videos. Instagram and YouTube are examples of this.

Discussion networks

20. Discussion networks like Reddit are the ideal outlet for posts that can generate deep discussions among users. Users can leave detailed answers in the comments section, and other users can reply directly to those comments, allowing conversations to grow and develop organically.

Review networks

21. Review networks like Yelp and TripAdvisor add social media aspects to user reviews of products and services. Users can interact directly with those who leave reviews, as well as the companies they review.

Social Media & Sri Lankan Context

22. Over the past five years, the rapid growth of social media that has been observed is indicative of its importance and integration into the daily lives of many people in Sri Lanka. At the same time, there has also been a considerable growth in digital journalism through the online medium. But the accessibility of social media is very high compared to traditional online media. As a result, social networks become online media.

a. There were 10.10 million internet users in Sri Lanka in January 2020.

b. The number of internet users in Sri Lanka increased by 399 thousand (+4.1%) between 2019 and 2020.

c. Internet penetration in Sri Lanka stood at 47% in January 2020.

d. There were 6.40 million social media users in Sri Lanka in January 2020.

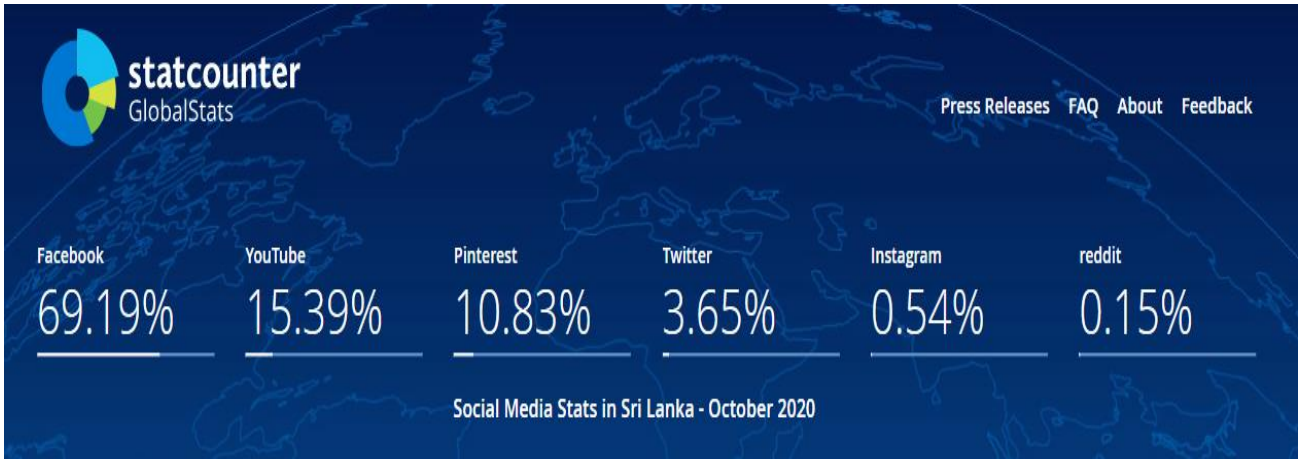
e. The number of social media users in Sri Lanka increased by 491 thousand (+8.3%) between April 2019 and January 2020.

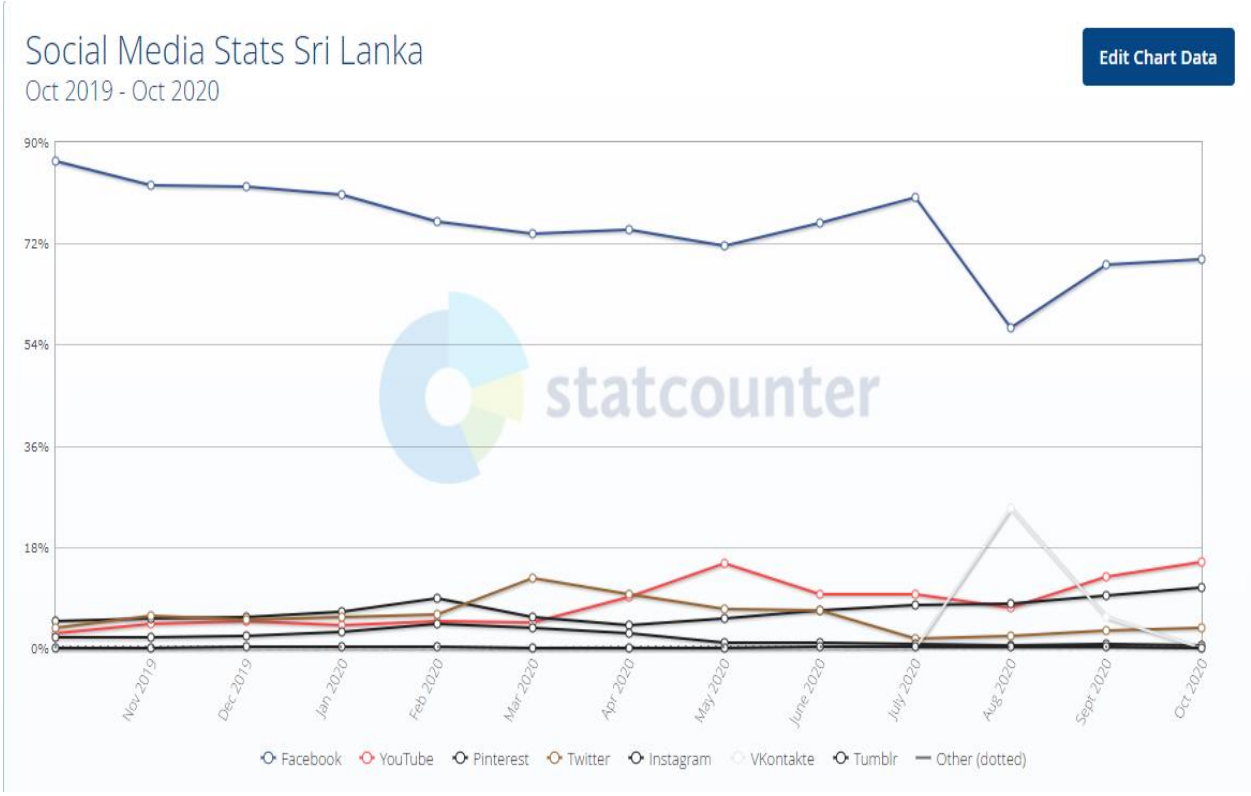
f. Social media penetration in Sri Lanka stood at 30% in January 2020.

g. There were 31.80 million mobile connections in Sri Lanka in January 2020.

h. The number of mobile connections in Sri Lanka increased by 2.2 million (+7.5%) between January 2019 and January 2020.

i. The number of mobile connections in Sri Lanka in January 2020 was equivalent to 149% of the total population.





Fake News

23. Fake news" is a term that has come to mean different things to different people. At its core, **we are defining "fake news" as those news stories that are false: the story itself is fabricated, with no verifiable facts, sources or quotes.** Sometimes these stories may be propaganda that is intentionally designed to mislead the reader, or may be designed as "clickbait" written for economic incentives (the writer profits on the number of people who click on the story). In recent years, fake news stories have proliferated via social media, in part because they are so easily and quickly shared online.

Where does it come from?

24. How misinformation and disinformation is produced is directly related to who the author(s) is and the different reasons why it is created.

Who are the authors? They may be:

a. Someone wanting to make money, regardless of the content of the article Satirists who want to either make a point or entertain you, or both

b. Poor or untrained journalists - the pressure of the 24 hour news cycle as well as the explosion of news sites may contribute to shoddy writing that doesn't follow professional journalistic standards or ethics

c. Partisans who want to influence political beliefs and policy makers

25. The technological ease of copying, pasting, clicking and sharing content online has helped these types of articles to proliferate. In some cases, the articles are designed to provoke an emotional response and placed on certain sites ("seeded") in order to entice readers into sharing them widely. In other cases, "fake news" articles may be generated and disseminated by "bots" - computer algorithms that are designed to act like people sharing information, but can do so quickly and automatically.

26. Fake news and its viral circulation have become a grave concern in the era of social media, where anonymity, user-generated content and geographical distance may encourage fake-news sharing behaviour.

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS
CONSIDER THE SOURCE
Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.
READ BEYOND
Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?
CHECK THE AUTHOR
Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?
SUPPORTING SOURCES?
Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.
CHECK THE DATE
Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.
IS IT A JOKE?
If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.
CHECK YOUR BIASES
Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.
ASK THE EXPERTS
Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

SOCIAL MEDIA
FAKE NEWS

try
to
Stop:
the
SPREAD
of
FALSE
information

Fake news

スリランカ大使館
〒108-0074
東京都港区高輪 2-1-54

Embassy of Sri Lanka
2-1-54 Takanawa
Minato - ku
Tokyo 108 - 0074
Tel: (03) – 3440 – 6911/6912
Fax: (03) – 3440 –6914
E-mail: slemb.tokyo@mfa.gov.lk
http://www.slembassyjapan.org

05/08/2020

විශේෂ නිවේදනයයි

නිදහස් පදනම මත ජපානයට පැමිණීම සඳහා රැකියා වීසා බලපත්‍ර ලබාදෙන බවට මෙම තානාපති කාර්යාලයේ ලිපි ශීර්ෂ සහ නිල මුද්‍රා ව්‍යාජ ලෙස සකසා නිවේදන නිකුත්කර ඇති බව වාර්තා වී ඇත.

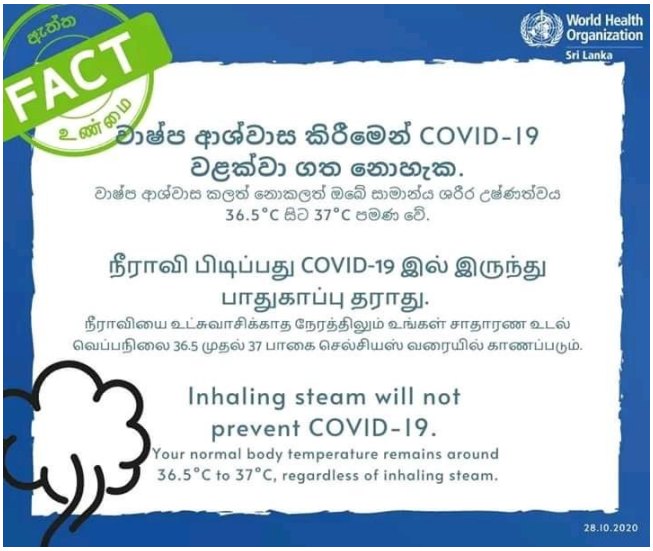
ජපානයට පැමිණීම සඳහා වීසා ලබාදීම සම්බන්ධයෙන් මෙම තානාපති කාර්යාලය කිසිදු නිවේදනයක් හෝ මැදිහත්වීමක් සිදුකර නොමැති බව සියළු දෙනාට මෙයින් දැනුම් දෙමි.

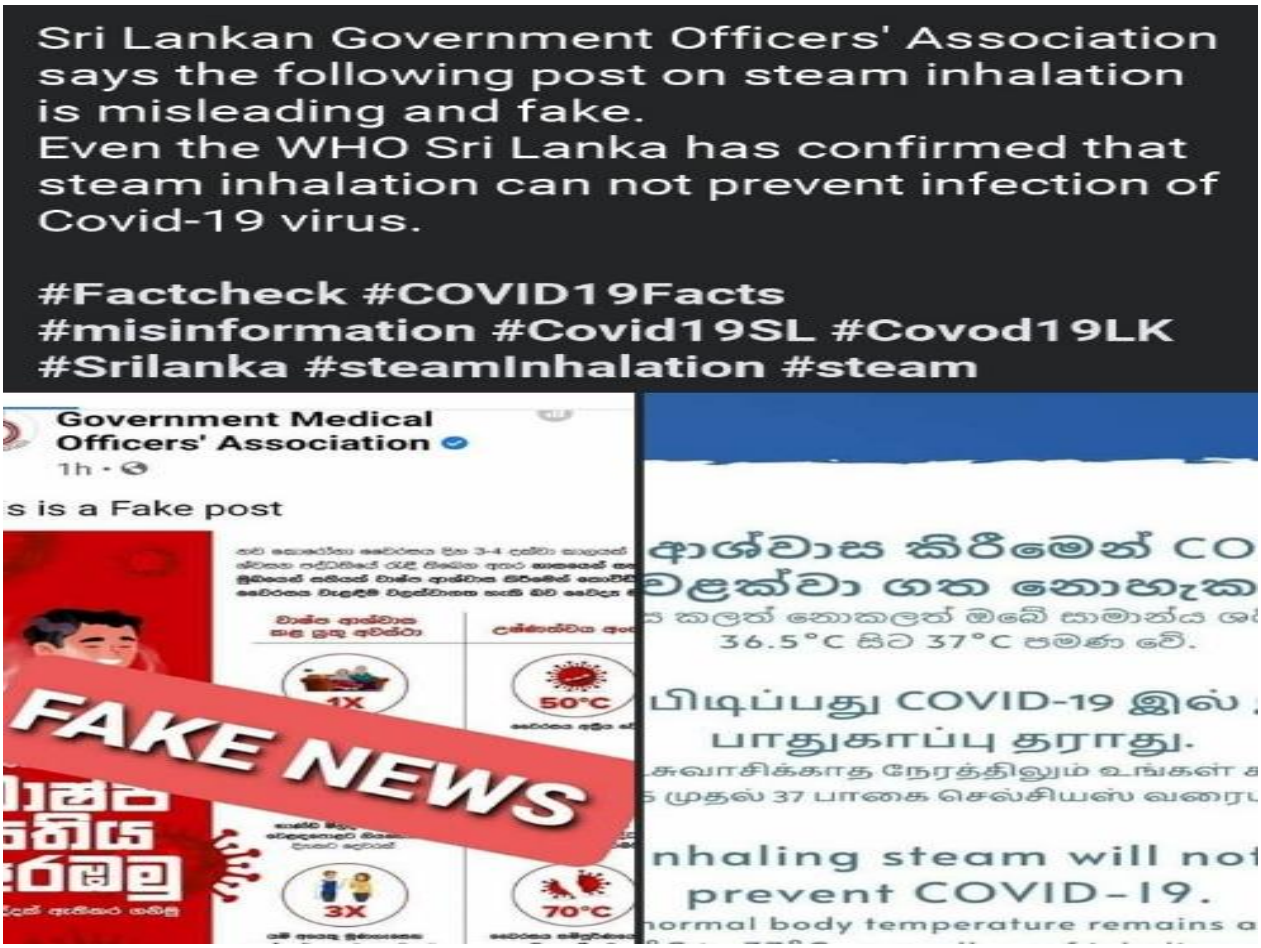
Special Notice

It has been reported that forged notices have been issued stating that "On arrival Job visas will be issued to visit Japan on a gratis basis" using this Embassy letterhead with the official stamp. We hereby inform everyone that this Embassy has not made any announcement or intervention regarding the issuance of visa to visit Japan.

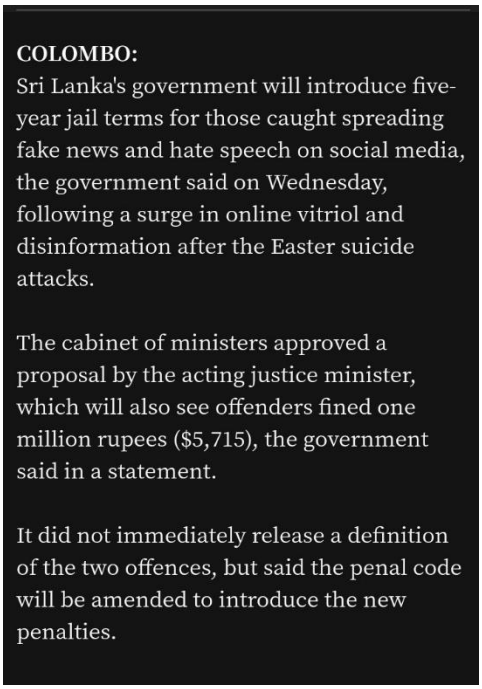
27. Using the embassy letterhead there is a fake news published about the issuing of the job visa.

28. There is a fake news published in the social media about the imposing island wide curfew on 2020.10.05





29. There is a fake post created and published by someone using the name of government medical organization about the steam inhalation can use for protect from the corona virus.



COLOMBO:
Sri Lanka's government will introduce five-year jail terms for those caught spreading fake news and hate speech on social media, the government said on Wednesday, following a surge in online vitriol and disinformation after the Easter suicide attacks.

The cabinet of ministers approved a proposal by the acting justice minister, which will also see offenders fined one million rupees ($5,715), the government said in a statement.

It did not immediately release a definition of the two offences, but said the penal code will be amended to introduce the new penalties.

of the two offences, but said the penal code will be amended to introduce the new penalties.

The move follows repeated government allegations that platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp have been used to spread online hate, in a country where ethnic divisions still linger after decades of war.

Sri Lanka shut down internet access in March last year to prevent further violence when anti-Muslim mobs went on the rampage in the island nation's central region, killing three people and destroying hundreds of homes, shops, vehicles and mosques.

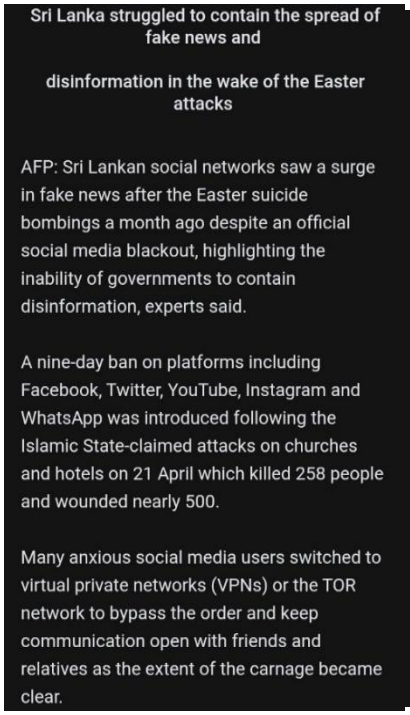
30. In 2019 there are fake news published from the social media about Easter Sunday attack because of this fake news government introduce new jail terms.

Sri Lanka proposes new law on fake news after Easter attacks

Colombo shut down internet access in March last year to prevent anti-Muslim violence

Afp | June 05, 2019

PHOTO: FILE/REUTERS



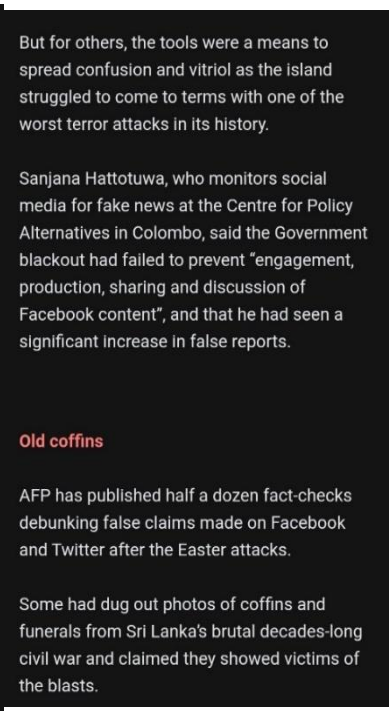
Sri Lanka struggled to contain the spread of fake news and

disinformation in the wake of the Easter attacks

AFP: Sri Lankan social networks saw a surge in fake news after the Easter suicide bombings a month ago despite an official social media blackout, highlighting the inability of governments to contain disinformation, experts said.

A nine-day ban on platforms including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp was introduced following the Islamic State-claimed attacks on churches and hotels on 21 April which killed 258 people and wounded nearly 500.

Many anxious social media users switched to virtual private networks (VPNs) or the TOR network to bypass the order and keep communication open with friends and relatives as the extent of the carnage became clear.



But for others, the tools were a means to spread confusion and vitriol as the island struggled to come to terms with one of the worst terror attacks in its history.

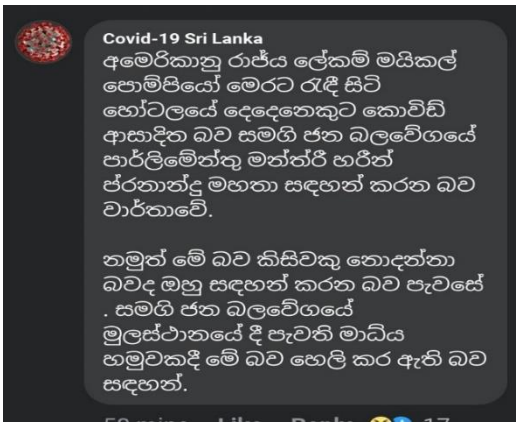
Sanjana Hattotuwa, who monitors social media for fake news at the Centre for Policy Alternatives in Colombo, said the Government blackout had failed to prevent "engagement, production, sharing and discussion of Facebook content", and that he had seen a significant increase in false reports.

Old coffins

AFP has published half a dozen fact-checks debunking false claims made on Facebook and Twitter after the Easter attacks.

Some had dug out photos of coffins and funerals from Sri Lanka's brutal decades-long civil war and claimed they showed victims of the blasts.

31. About the Easter attack some fake news are created from the using the fake photographs. Because of that Sri Lanka proposed new laws.



32. There is a fake news going through the Facebook about U.S. Secretary of State.

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33. 60 year old man arrested for spreading fake news about the island wide curfew on the prevailing COVID-19 situation

34. 18 years old person arrested on suspicion for publishing false news regarding curfew on Facebook.

35. A news reported by Channel 4 News

a. Updated on 26 August 2009

b. Sri Lanka's military says a video clip allegedly showing its soldiers executing prisoners during the battle against Tamil Tigers rebels is a fake.

c. Sri Lankan army spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said the footage – broadcast by Channel 4 News last night – was a fabrication designed to discredit security forces.

d. He said: "This video has been made to discredit the armed forces. This was said to have been filmed at a time when the Tigers too were operating dressed in Sri Lankan military uniforms."

e. The video was passed to Channel 4 News by a group called Journalists for Democracy in Sri Lanka. It campaigns for press freedom in the Asian country. .

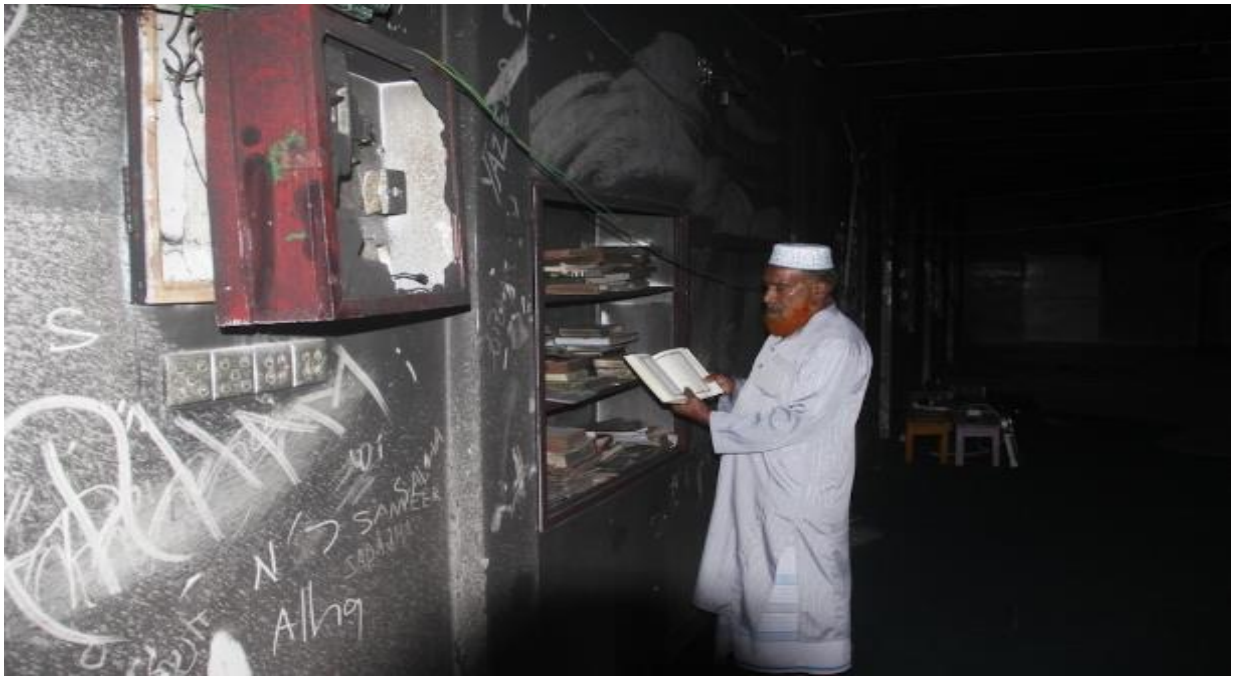
f. The group said the video was taken in January by a soldier using a mobile phone, when government forces overwhelmed the stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at Kilinochchi.

g. The capture of Kilinochchi was a milestone in the army's final push against the Tamil Tigers, which triumphantly concluded a 27-year war in May.

h. By January, when the video was allegedly filmed, foreign and most local journalists had been banned from the conflict zone.

i. Despite previous claims that the Sri Lankan army had committed war crimes during the conflict, it has so far staved off a UN investigation.

j. The Sri Lankan High Commission told Channel 4 News: "The High Commission has noted that in many instances in the past, various media institutions used doctored videos, photographs and documents to defame the Sri Lankan Government and armed forces.



36. A Muslim man inspects Pallekelle's damaged mosque in Kandy on April 6, 2018. The government imposed a curfew in Kandy following a series of anti-Muslim attacks targeting mosques, shops and houses. (Photo: UCA News)

37. Facebook has apologized for its role in deadly anti-Muslim violence in Sri Lanka two years ago after an investigation found that hate speech and rumors spread on the social media platform might have led to some attacks.

38. At least three people were killed and many were injured during the unrest. Muslim-owned businesses, homes and vehicles were set on fire. Mosques were attacked and thousands were displaced in Kandy in the central hills.

39. The role of Facebook was widely criticized after the anti-Muslim riots.

40. A false video was posted purporting to show Muslim restaurant owners mixing sterilization pills into the food of Sinhala-Buddhist customers.

41. Some Sinhala posts said, “Kill all Muslims,” “They are dogs” and “Do not spare even an infant.” False reports that a monk had been murdered stirred up anger among Buddhist people.

Related News

42. These posts made the government block access to Facebook in March 2018.

43. Facebook has revealed the findings of an investigation it commissioned into the part it might have played in the unrest.

44. "We deplore this misuse of our platform. We recognize and apologize for the very real human rights impacts that resulted," the tech giant said in a statement.

45. Facebook proposes solutions such as hiring local language-based moderators and using technology that automatically detects signs of hate speech or obscene content. It will try to strengthen relationships with civil society groups and improve reporting mechanisms and response opportunities.

46. The investigation report contains information on the inability of Facebook to respond to instances of abuse of its social network for nearly a decade. It was also accused of helping to incite violence in Myanmar in 2018.

47. Arul Nandana, an activist for interfaith harmony, said that hate mongering exchanged through Facebook contributed to the violence against Muslims in 2018.

48. He pointed out that Facebook had failed to remove posts that continued to spread hate speech and other forms of harassment for the past 10-20 years.

49. "It fuels impunity and anti-Muslim violence," said Nandana from Kandy. "Although some [attackers] were arrested by authorities, political figures were later released."

50. A social media activist who wanted to remain anonymous said that Facebook is big business in the world.

51. “There is no control but they should be controlled. Measures should be taken to safeguard peace in the country," she said.

52. She said all governments want to control social media and their intention is to suppress anti-government views.

53. Sri Lanka's 22 million people are about 70 percent Buddhist, 13 percent Hindu, 10 percent Muslim and 7 percent Christian.

CHAPTER THREE

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FAKE NEWS

What is National security?

54. National security or national defence is that the security and defence of a nation state, together with its citizens, economy, and institutions, which is thought to be a requirement of government.

55. Originally formed as protection against military attack, national security is currently wide understood to incorporate additionally non-military dimensions, together with the safety from terrorism, diminution of crime, economic security, energy security, environmental security, food security, cyber-security and so on Similarly, national security risks include, additionally to the actions of different nation states, action by violent non-state actors, by narcotic cartels, and by international corporations and also the consequences of natural disasters.

56. Governments trust a spread of measures, together with political, economic, and military power, furthermore as diplomacy, to safeguard the safety of a nation-state. they will also act to make the conditions of security regionally and internationally by reducing multinational causes of insecurity, like climate change, economic inequality, political exclusion, and nuclear proliferation.

Measurements of national security

57. Potential causes of national insecurity embrace actions by alternative states (e.g. military or cyber-attack), violent non-state actors (e.g. terrorist attack), unionized criminal teams adore narcotic cartels, and conjointly the consequences of natural disasters (e.g. flooding, earthquakes) general drivers of insecurity, which can be transnational, include climate change, economic difference and marginalization, political exclusion, and militarization.

58. In view of the wide selection of risks, the safety of a nation state has many dimensions, together with economic security, energy security, physical security, environmental security, food security, border security, and cyber security. These dimensions correlate closely with components of national power.

59. Although states dissent in their approach, with some starting to range non-military action to tackle general drivers of insecurity, varied types of powerful power predominate, notably military capabilities. The scope of those capabilities has developed. Traditionally, military capabilities were primarily land- or sea-based, and in smaller countries they still are. Elsewhere, the domains of potential warfare currently embrace the air, space, cyberspace, and physiological operations. Military capabilities designed for these domains could also be used for national security, or equally for offensive purposes, to Illustrate to overcome and annex territory and resources.

Dimensions of national security

Political security.

60. Barry Buzan, Ole Waver, Jalap de Wilde and others have contended that public security relies upon political security: the soundness of the social order. Others, for example, Paul Rogers, have added that the fairness of the worldwide request is similarly vital. Hence, political security relies upon the standard of global law (counting the laws of war), the viability of worldwide political establishments, just as tact and exchange among countries and other security actors. It likewise relies upon, among different variables, compelling political consideration of alienated gatherings and the human security of the citizenry.

Monetary security.

61. Monetary security, with regards to worldwide relations, is the capacity of a country state to keep up and build up the public economy, without which different elements of public security can't be overseen. The Economic capacity to a great extent decides the guard ability of a country and in this way a sound monetary security legitimately impacts the public security of a country. That is the reason we see nations with sound economy, end up having sound security arrangement as well, for example, The United States, China, India among others. In bigger nations, methodologies for financial security hope to get to assets and markets in different nations, and to ensure their own business sectors at home. Non-industrial nations might be less secure than financially progressed states because of high paces of joblessness and came up short on work

Natural security.

62. Natural security, otherwise called ecological security, alludes to the respectability of environments and the biosphere, especially according to their ability to continue a variety of living things (counting human life). The security of biological systems has pulled in more prominent consideration as the effect of environmental harm by people has grown. The corruption of environments, including dirt disintegration, deforestation, biodiversity misfortune, and environmental change, influence monetary security and can accelerate mass relocation, prompting expanded tension on assets somewhere else. Biological security is likewise significant since the vast majority of the nations on the planet are creating and subject to agribusiness and horticulture gets influenced generally because of the environmental change, and this impact influences the economy of the country which thus influences public security.

Security of energy and normal resources.

63. Assets incorporate water, wellsprings of energy, land and minerals. Accessibility of satisfactory normal assets is significant for a country to build up its industry and financial force. For instance, in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, Iraq caught Kuwait halfway so as to tie down admittance to its oil wells, and one purpose behind the US counter-attack was the estimation of similar wells to its own economy. Water assets are liable to questions between numerous countries, including India and Pakistan, and in the Middle East.

64. The interrelations between security, energy, regular assets, and their manageability is progressively recognized in public security methodologies and asset security is presently included among the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In the US, for instance, the military has introduced sun oriented photovoltaic micro grids on their bases if there should arise an occurrence of intensity outage.

Computer security.

65. PC security, otherwise called online protection or IT security, alludes to the security of registering gadgets, for example, PCs and cell phones, just as PC organizations, for example, private and public organizations, and the Internet. It concerns the insurance of equipment, programming, information, individuals, and furthermore the methodology by which frameworks are gotten to, and the field has developing significance because of the expanding dependence on PC frameworks in most societies. Since unapproved admittance to basic common and military foundation is currently viewed as a significant danger, the internet is presently perceived as a space of fighting. One such model being the utilization of Stunt by the USA and Israel against the Iranian atomic programmer.

Foundation security.

66. Foundation security is the security given to ensure framework, particularly basic foundation, for example, air terminals, thruways [28] rail transport, clinics, spans, transport centres, network interchanges, media, the power matrix, dams, power plants, seaports, petroleum treatment facilities, and water frameworks. Framework security looks to restrict weakness of these structures and frameworks to harm, illegal intimidation, and contamination.

How fake news from media can affect National security

67. We are living in the so-called era of fake news in which cybercriminals have been delving into this phenomenon and turning it into a lucrative business. Fake and invented media websites are created to resemble legitimate media. Some criminals use methods such as modifying legitimate documents and distribute them as part of, for instance, disinformation campaigns. Propaganda is unequivocally bound to national security and it is a risk to it. Since fake news is a unique area where challenges appear to be very complicated, it should be dealt with via more and better usage of national security communications. It is, therefore, no coincidence that the Collins Dictionary has announced "fake news" as a word of 2017. Furthermore, the European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Mariyah Gabriel considers that fake news is suppressing the media and society as a whole, calling for an EU-level analysis in order to assess the amount to which fake news menaces the EU and pinpoint whether it is likely to find a common solution regarding this issue.

68. There are so many problems can be started and it also impact for the national security in the country. Sri Lanka is no stranger to arbitrary laws that are prone to misuse. For the past 40 years, it has had the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act on the statute books, which has been used to target minorities and is one of the main drivers of human rights violations – including the suppression of dissent. Now, the government is seeking to criminalize "false news." In a country where journalists have been killed and critical voices stifled, what could possibly go wrong?

69. The "false news" bill is being proposed against the backdrop of the Easter Sunday massacre, where an armed group bombed three Catholic churches and three hotels, claiming the lives of more than 250 people. Following the bombings, there was an eruption of anti-Muslim violence on May 13, with mobs targeting Muslim-owned homes, businesses, vehicles and mosques. Several social media networks were blocked for nine days in the latest round of increasingly frequent social media blackouts.

70. There are so many fake news published and some of them are,

a. Using the embassy letterhead there is a fake news published about the issuing of the job visa.

b. There is a fake news published in the social media about the imposing island wide curfew on 2020.10.05

c. There is a fake post created and published by someone using the name of government medical organization about the steam inhalation can use for protect from the corona virus.

d. In 2019 there are fake news published from the social media about Easter Sunday attack because of this fake news government introduce new jail terms.

e. About the Easter attack some fake news are created from the using the fake photographs. Because of that Sri Lanka proposed new laws.

f. There is a fake news going through the Facebook about U.S. Secretary of State.

71. In addition, Sri Lankan government take some decisions to stop that fake news and legal decisions to persons who are doing that things.

72. At the end of May, the Sri Lankan cabinet approved amendments to the penal and criminal procedure codes to criminalize the dissemination of "false news" where it is deemed to affect "communal harmony" or "state security." Under broad and vaguely worded amendments, an offence can be punished by a hefty fine of more than a million Sri Lankan rupees and/or a maximum prison sentence of five years.

73. The government has legitimate concerns when it comes to the incitement of violence. Last year, Facebook was used a platform to circulate inflammatory claims about Muslims and to incite violence against Muslims in Kandy district, where 465 homes, businesses and vehicles were destroyed. But these concerns can be addressed through existing legislation, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) Act 2007, which brings domestic law into conformity with Sri Lanka's international human rights obligations with regards civil and political rights. Under the ICCPR Act, there is a clear prohibition on the advocacy of "national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence." However, the Act is not consistently applied. The ICCPR Act has become an instrument for abuse when it is supposed to serve as a safeguard to protect and promote human rights.

74. In April this year, the novelist Shakhtika Sathkumara was arrested and charged under the ICCPR Act for "inciting religious hatred" because of a short story he published on Facebook about same-sex sexual activity between Buddhist monks and child abuse taking place at a Buddhist temple. Simply for writing a piece of fiction, Sathkumara could be imprisoned for up to 10 years.

75. On the 14th of June 2018, The Institute of National Security Studies in Sri Lanka (INSSSL) organized a symposium on 'Media and Democracy: Misinformation, Fake News and its Impact on National Security'. This was held at the Ministry of Defence with most stakeholders present. INSSSL has so far developed 13 policy recommendations and briefs. We look at the long term and gather public opinion and expert thinking from discussions to develop policy briefs for the Government. The objective of this forum was to make an independent observation by gathering perspectives from government, private sector, media, and plural sector on reforms to current media practices. Summarized in this press release are the salient points of the discussion. After that they talk about the spread of these misinformation.

76. The points of discussion were:

a. Discerning truth from fact in fake news ('Attention Economics' and 'Information Overload')

b. Developments in technology to create fake news such as video and audio synthesizing

c. Wide circulation of poor versions of political engagements of citizens.

d. Declining trust in social media as a source of news.

e. Dangers of weaponized narratives leading to political polarization and highly partisan news sites

77. The Second Session on 'managing misinformation' was moderated by Mr. Yasas Abeywickrema from the Computer Society of Sri Lanka. Speakers included: Professor Rohan Samarajiva of ICTA, Group Captain MDAG Seneviratne, and Mr. Roshan Chandragupta of CERT.

78. “There are 6 million Facebook users in Sri Lanka and Facebook doesn’t pay taxes here. Also lack of country specific data makes it difficult to analyse and get a comprehensive picture into Sri Lanka’s Facebook activity. Among the corpus of Facebook users Sinhala language is a minority community which makes content moderation an issue against Facebook community standards” – Harindra Dassanayake

79. Regulation can happen several ways:

a. Looking into international law, standards and best practices.

b. Domestic laws of countries.

c. Social norms to fight fake news which can be more resilient in the long term than just laws.

d. Administrative remedies such as ‘Norms of journalistic Conduct and Code of Ethics’ and ‘Broadcasting Standards’.

80. International regulatory efforts to draw lessons from:

a. Germany’s ‘Facebook law’.

b. Estonian Defence League’s Cyber Unit.

c. Chinese approach of governing its social media space.

d. Malaysian Anti-Fake News Act.

81. These are people arbiters of the truth,

a. Government - The possibilities of co-regulation of social media by an independent commission such as the constitutional council.

b. Self-regulation.

c. Fact checking mechanism on fake news is neither a difficulty nor time consuming. Fact checking can be done fast if a proper mechanism is set up.

82. Group Captain MDAG Seneviratne brought in the *Military Perspective*: "misinformation directed at the military is a national security concern… Regulation is needed on misinformation in the public domain. There has to be a long term solution to censorship. Inter-agency groups, Defence Ministry's Cyber Security Unit, Filtering mechanisms on harmful content are options that should be explored" Mr. Roshan Chandragupta from CERT brought in the Technical Perspective*:* "It is difficult to identify individuals behind certain accounts on social media, track IP addresses and obtain court orders to do so. We need to balance data privacy and privacy of users against the need for regulation"

83. Most of the discussion revolved around politicization of narratives on media; some narratives on ethnic, racial and religious frontlines can be dangerous to democracy. While accessibility and speed of information has increased, accuracy and objectivity has declined. In the event of unrest, there was a general agreement by participants that temporary social media blocks are not a permanent solution. It was concluded, long-term resilient solutions must be in place that balances regulation with the right to free speech and privacy of users.

84. These are the special things to learn about the how to protect the national security from the fake news.

What is the cyber security?

85. Cybersecurity is the protection of internet-connected systems such as hardware, software and data from cyber-threats. The practice is used by individuals and enterprises to protect against unauthorized access to data centres and other computerized systems.

86. And also, Cyber security is the practice of defending computers, servers, mobile devices, electronic systems, networks, and data from malicious attacks. It's also known as information technology security or electronic information security.

87. The term applies in a variety of contexts, from business to mobile computing, and can be divided into a few common categories.

a. Network security
b. Application security
c. Information security
d. Operational security
e. Disaster recovery and business continuity
f. End-user education

Cyber security and social media

88. Social media connects you with friends, family, business associates, and even total strangers. What you put out on social media may end up being circulated around the World Wide Web before you know it. While there are security settings for some social media accounts such as Facebook and the ability to set an account to "Private" on others like Twitter and Instagram, people who want to gain access to this blocked information can often find a way.

89. Initially, you may not think of social media hacks as that big of a deal as far as a cyber hack goes. After all, it's not your bank account or Social Security number. However, there is very important information you can lose that may end up proving just as damaging. That is why you need to fully understand cyber security for social media and what information is at stake.

Fake News vs. Cyber security

90. There are a few things to understand about propaganda that makes combating its spread very difficult. The biggest problem involves the discernment of real news versus fake news stories, leaving room for misleading or accidentally incorrect stories. Without a trustworthy source to provide irrefutable proof, this task is difficult. Propaganda feeds on fear and public belief. If a news story sounds believable, then the public will question it less.

Educating the public on legitimate sourcing will help combat this type of propaganda. Most fake news spreads by using misleading headlines or click-bait articles. More often than not, the article will refute the headline itself or show enough errors to indicate a faulty source. This isn't always the case, but reading an article and cross-referencing information can go a long way.

How Propaganda Impacts Cyber security

91. Difficult situations occur when information comes across as truthful yet misleading. Certain phrasing can leave information up for interpretation. This occurs using data from surveys and public polls, a context that does carry proof. No matter the statistic, most parties involved can spin the information in favor of themselves. This leads to truthful information with deceptive intent, giving true meaning to the term "alternative facts."

Because of these situations, cyber security can't do much to attack propaganda at its source, not without readers looking up the information on spaces dedicated to the truth. Cyber security has the power to get rid of false sites and stories that have known connections to criminals or political enemies of the state. Information can be harmful, such as hoaxes used to cause mass grief or panic. These and similar actors are the ones cyber security seeks to eliminate.

How Cyber security Impacts Propaganda

92. At this point, many people realize fake news and propaganda are a problem in the modern world. Services exist to debunk false stories and seek to punish sites that publish them, such as social media. No social media site wants to face legal trouble, so most take steps to regulate themselves, such as disposing of bots and handling reports from suspicious accounts. Twitter and Reedit, for example, have done this a few times in recent years, always leading to more awareness about the issue.

93. Cyber security professionals have also taken steps the better inform the public. The Cyber Future Foundation was built with the idea of keeping the internet's information pathways as clean as possible while also doubling down on identity fraud. Led by a council of representatives, the CFF tries to provide spaces where people can collaborate with truthful information as well as providing education for research skills.

Going Forward

94. Everyone has read and believed propaganda at some point; no doubt there are some people who still believe already debunked stories. This type of fake news goes beyond the political landscape, invading popular culture in the hopes of getting attention and clicks and swaying the demographic to believe an untruth or support a particular cause.

95. Sometimes, fake news may start as a lie and later become true. Propaganda won't stop just because we realize it exists.

96. As long as some people believe a fake source, the lies will continue being distributed. For every problem, though, people and agencies recognize and work more diligently to identify and root out the perpetrators. This step in the right direction helps regulate the truth without infringing on free speech.

.97. We don't know what the next United States election cycle will bring, but we're more prepared than before

Rules and regulations currently prevailing;

98. According to COMPUTER CRIMES ACT no 24 of 2007, Section 6 - Offences committed against national security & country;

99. Sec 6 (1) Any person who intentionally causes a computer to perform any function, knowing or having reason to believe that such function will result in danger or imminent danger to National security, **shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding five years.**

100. Sec 6 (2) In a prosecution for this offence, a Certificate under the hand of the Secretary to the Ministry of the Minister in charge of the subject of Defence. That the situation envisaged in subsection (1) did in fact exist in relation to national security or public order, or the national economy, as the case may be, shall be admissible in evidence and shall be prima facie evidence of the facts stated therein.

101. In addition of these statutory provisions immediate internet shutdowns and social media blockages have been created during several emergency situations.

eg; Internet shut downs during Easter bomb attack situation.

Steps taken forward in preventing propagation of Fake news through Social Media.

102. The MEDIANAMA website reports “Sri Lanka to amend laws to tackle fake news, hate speech on social media: 5-year jail, fine up to Rs 10 lakh” on 6 June 2019.

103. The Sri Lankan Cabinet on Wednesday approved a proposal to amend to the country’s Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code to take action against people spreading fake news, including statements that impact national security and incite violence between communities, Sri Lankan newspaper Daily FT reported. Under the proposal, those caught spreading fake news and hate speech on social media could face a five-year jail term and a fine of up to Sri Lankan Rs 10 lakh (about 4 lakh Indian rupees). The amendment to the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code was proposed by the acting Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms Ranjith Madduma Bandara.

104. The news revealed that following measures as key points brought in action;

a. Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code to be amended

b. Proposal to introduce fine up to Rs. 1 m and jail term up to 5 years

105. The World Socialist Web Site (WSWS.ORG) reports “Sri Lankan government moves to criminalise “fake news” on 19 June 2019.

106. The Sri Lankan cabinet recently approved two proposals to amend the country’s Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code in order to criminalise “false news” and “hatred statements.”

107. Tabled by the acting Minister of Justice and Prison Reforms Ranjith Maddumabandara, one of the proposals calls for fines of up to 1 million rupees ($US5,715) or a five-year prison sentence, or both, for anyone found guilty of “false news distribution.” The other change would impose as yet unspecified fines or imprisonment for “hatred statements.”

108. As for the last MEDIANAMA reports on 10 October 2019; “Sri Lanka introduces final draft of Personal Data Protection Bill”

109. The Sri Lankan Ministry of Digital Infrastructure and Information Technology (MDIIT) introduced the final draft of Personal Data Protection Bill on September 24. According to the official press release, the previously released Data Protection Framework (on June 12), has been modified after consultations with stakeholders.

110. The Bill will come into operation within 3 years from the date of certification of the Bill by the speaker. The Bill, when ratified into Act, will be implemented in stages so that the Government and private sector have enough time to implement it efficiently.

111. Objectives Specified by the introduced final draft of Data Protection Bill

a. Provide for the regulation of the processing of personal data;

b. Identify and strengthen the rights of data subjects;

c. Provide for the designation of the Data Protection Authority;

d. Regulate the dissemination of unsolicited messages using personal data; and

e. Provide legislation for matters incidental to the processing of personal data.

112. The authorities where powers are designated, powers of such authority, duties and functions of the appointed authorities are subjected to be revealed within this draft of the new bill.

113. The penal code of Sri Lanka had section 118 where any hate speech or insulting against the queen was punishable, where it supported preventing promulgation of fake news on the head of the country at that era. However this provision was repealed by the Act No.12 of 2002.

114. **Institutes, Authorities and Organizations act upon propagation of Fake news through Social Media**.

a. Police of Sri Lanka

b. National Centre for Cyber Security (CERT)

c. Telecommunication Regulatory Commission- Sri Lanka (TRCSL)

d. Sri Lanka Army – Intelligence Corps (SLAIC)

115. (National Child Protection Authority with Ministry of Women and Child Affairs work together against abuse and violation of rights to women and children by such Fake news)

116. In any case of Fake news created, distributed or circulated where it may cause harm to anyone or the national security, the public has given access to directly inform the above authorities or contact the authorities via telephone or through their websites.

CHAPTER FOUR

CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTIONS

117. In the Sri Lankan context it shows that most of the public are tempted to use social media beyond their necessities. This has been the main reason why fake news promulgaters target the platform of social media in Sri Lanka. The habit of accepting everything, which is good or bad have been exhibited as mankind even through the Social Media. If people can be more cautious and selective on the needs they really want to achieve through the use of social media, the risk will automatically decline.

118. In the concept of national security the fake news may cause cultural and ethnic conflicts, which we have clearly experienced recently. In addition issues such as civil riots and public nuisance may arise due to Fake news.

119. Management and taking immediate action against propagation of fake news will be healthier on public as well as national security.

Suggestions

120. As for the study the following procedures and methods are suggested in preventing propagation of fake news through Social Media.

a. Identify the platform relevant to where the fake news is circulated.

b. Know which fake news to focus on and which to neglect.

c. Analyse the type and amount of damage can occur through such fake news.

d. Correct the wrongly published news in order to minimise damage.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

121. Social Media being a wide spread communication and informative system is able to quickly produce or share any content just in few seconds. As the social media holds popularity in sharing content among the world community the shared content may cause to have a speed spread. The fact is that any fake or false information or news will gain vast popularity due to the spreading of it through social media. The fake news may confuse any knowledge gained by the community which may affect the daily routine or disturb the state in interests of national security. Any content of news which is false and in contrary to the interests of national security may cause serious damages. It is a clear fact that necessary preventive measures should be made against propagation of fake news through social media, as it may make impacts on national security in Sri Lanka.

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