

# Digital deception

**T**HE world is hurtling towards an era where artificial intelligence is reshaping our reality. In democracies worldwide, a new age of political propaganda has been ushered in with the proliferation of AI-driven tools. In Pakistan, where the electoral battle looms, the potential misuse of AI in elections is not just a concern but a palpable threat. The recent use of an AI voice clone by former premier Imran Khan to address an online rally — a first of its kind event that drew millions of views — underscores the power and reach of such technology. While this event may not constitute misinformation, it opens the door to more nefarious uses of AI, such as the creation and spread of deepfakes that could deceive voters and skew public perceptions. The insidious nature of deepfakes lies in their ability to create hyper-realistic, yet entirely fabricated, audio and visual content. In the context of elections, this means the potential to fabricate statements, manipulate speeches, or even create entirely false narratives about candidates and parties. Such content could easily sway public opinion in Pakistan where digital literacy is not uniformly high, and social media is arguably the predominant source of information.

Regrettably, regulation surrounding the use of AI in political campaigns remains nascent. Pakistan has drafted an AI law for the responsible use of the technology, but it falls short of providing robust guardrails against disinformation and protection of vulnerable groups. It is in this legal vacuum that the unregulated use of AI will continue to flourish. It has become imperative for authorities, together with tech companies and civil society, to collaborate and develop a comprehensive strategy to combat AI-driven disinformation. This includes enhancing digital literacy, implementing stringent content moderation policies, and fostering an informed electorate that can sift fact from fiction. The actions taken today will determine whether AI becomes a tool for democratic engagement or a weapon against it.

## AI Driven Dis-information and Democracies

The reality is being redefined with the advent of Artificial Intelligence. Its use is becoming a feasible tool for propaganda circulating in democracies. As elections are coming in Pakistan, the wicked use of AI can impact the results. AI has capacity to develop a forged yet hyper-realistic content, spread false statements and tamper with speeches of parties and workers. Hence, it has the tendency to mold public in favor of or against a political party. Though, Pakistan has passed a legislation on responsible use of AI but it lacks anything on prevention from disinformation. Therefore, a comprehensive plan based on steps like educating people about digital <sup>and</sup> applying strict regulation ~~strategies~~ controls on its use can disintegrate the disinformation spread.

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by AI.

Total Words: 319

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