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Essay

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The Biggest Threat of the Current Age is Fake News and Propa- ganda

Outline

A- Introduction:

Thesis Statement: Fake news and propaganda pose a biggest threat to humanity due to its multifaceted dangers including threats to collective and individual lives.

B- Dissecting the words 'fake news & Propaganda'

C- Reason behind the spread of fake news and propaganda;

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- (i) - Lack of check and balances
- (ii) - Weak law enforcement
- (iii) - Individual lack of regard

D- How fake news and propaganda pose a biggest threat to humanity;

- (i) Fake news and propaganda presents a false image of a nation.
- (ii) It has a potential to distort people's perception.
- (iii) A barrier in a way to identify and acquire truth.
- (iv) It is a tool towards fascism and dictatorship
- (v) It is a pillar of colonialism
- (vi) Moral degradation of nations

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- (vii) It is used by western media to cover Israel's atrocities.

E- Way Forward

- (i) Strengthen law enforcement
- (ii) To regulate mainstream and social media websites
- (iii) Assistance from AI
- (iv) Awareness campaign to educate masses.

F- Conclusion

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The flow of information in the current times is as smooth as never before. Today, the fast-paced world is moving towards greater connectivity and engagement. However, this pace of connectivity is threatened by the increasing rate of fake news and propagandas. The digital world, along with its vast benefits, brings these ills ~~also~~ as well. Fake news and propaganda can be considered as biggest threat to the current age due to its potential to harm country's image, to distort people's perception about certain events, to pose a threat to nation's developments, to jeopardize the acquisition of truth, to lead a nation to fascism and dictatorial regime, and to degrade and morally corrupt a society. Among several other threats to humanity such as conventional wars, climate change, domestic chaos and global conflicts, fake news and propaganda can be considered as the biggest threat due to its long-term implications and systematic process to misguide humans. In order to tackle

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the menace of fake news and propaganda campaigns, the world needs to adopt viable measures. Some of these measures could be to strongly enforce laws, to regulate social media and other sources of these ills, aware masses about how to identify fake news and propaganda and to benefit from Artificial Intelligence in this process to mitigate and counter them. Fake news and propagandas do pose a biggest threat but it can be handled effectively if serious measures are taken.

To dissect the words fake news and propaganda, it is important to understand their true meaning and uses. Fake news are such news or information that is not based on truth. It can also be categorized as misinformation and disinformation as they are also aimed to distort the real and true information. Similarly, Propaganda is often used to achieve a certain purpose. It is usually deployed by the politicians who want to prevail their agenda. However, propaganda is not limited to politicians. It can be used by

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any authoritative figure to boost their interests.

In order to analyze why false information and propaganda techniques are deployed in this current era, It is vital to understand its causes. Firstly, there is these unregulated social media websites which are used by millions of people. Without any checks and balances over the flow of information and news, there is widespread unauthentic news that people think of it as true. Secondly, the weak law enforcement is another prevailing cause. There is dearth of such frameworks or laws that regulate the sources which generate information. Even the presence of such laws has no or limited power to enforce themselves. Finally, there is the lack of regard and interest among people to differentiate between truth and false. Due to the people's inactive attitude, they consume whatever information and propaganda they come across. All these causes are paving the way for false information and propaganda to grow and prevail.

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There are multiple instances which shows how fake news is a and propaganda is a biggest threat to the current age. Some of them are as follows;

First of all, fake news and propaganda techniques are used to pose a false image of a country in certain events. This technique is applied in times when the country has no other means to position itself as a stronger and dominant force in the conflict or other such events. An example can be borrowed from the Indian use of false information and propagandas in its conflict with Pakistan in May, 2025. India was clearly dominated by Pakistan and in order to cover this humiliation, Indian media resorted to false news and propagandas. Their techniques played a vital role in shaping the country's image among its masses. However, their image and false sense of superiority was banished by the international media. The fake image was proved short-lived.

Another way false news and propaganda pose a threat is its potential to distort people's perception about certain occurrences. Whether they are deployed by an authoritative figure or the people themselves, are countered by them, fake news and propaganda shape their views and opinion that is not based on realism. It can be observed in the right-wing Hindu ideologists and its followers. Due to the widespread propagandas of Hindutwa extremists, the Hindus believe that they are the superior and chosen nation of God on earth. This distorted perception can be viably proved by the Doctrine of Choseness - Myth Syndrome. According to this doctrine, due to the persistent myths and false narratives, a nation at a point comes to believe that they are the chosen ones and they must prevail at any cost. Hence, the Hindutwa's false propagandas led to the distorted perception of its followers.

Moreover, fake news and propagandas have the potential to cause barriers in a way of

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acquiring truth. Truth, an already lonely phenomenon, is becoming more difficult to reach to due to the rampant fake informations. To back this argument, social media example would be a better instance to talk about. Due to a large number of social media users, it is very hard for people to separate truth from falseness and to differentiate between authentic and unauthentic informations. In recent times, for instance, a Punjab Collage Rape case was widely shared over social media websites. As it was shared and backed by thousands of people users, people started believing in it. However, in reality that case was fake and investigation report did not proved any such event took place. Thus, the distorted reality and the difficulty to see truth among the sea of fake news and propagandas is becoming hard with every passing day.

Additionally, the prevalence of fake news and propaganda can also lead nations to fascism and dictatorial regimes. History

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bear testimony to the fact that how fascist leaders and dictators around the world use the weapon of fake news and propagandas to spread their specific agendas.

Adolf Hitler used the narrative of atrocities German faced in WWI and exploited people's sentiment to acquire absolute powers. He used different propagandas against jews and other non-German factions to instict hatred and violence among his people. Similarly, dictators around the world use these tools to strengthen and legitimize their rule.

Zia-ul-Haq, for instance, used the Jihad propaganda to strengthen his rule by gaining legitimacy from the US. He ironically was successful to greater extent in his propaganda campaign that end-up most of the country's youth in jihad against Soviet Union. Hence, fake news and propagandas are usually the tools of fascist and dictators.

Furthermore, colonialism is another instance that grow and spread on the shoulders of fake news and propaganda. Colonialism work in different step-by-step process.

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Among these step-by-step approach, is one step is of spreading false narratives among people. To acquire their agendas, colonial masters apply propagandas in their colonies to win people's support. In South Africa, for example, when the English arrived ~~to~~ with the intention to colonize them, they used the propaganda of civilizing the Blacks and providing them with basic facilities such as education and health. This set propaganda helped them exploit South Africa's natural resources and human capital. Hence, it is evident from the annals of history that among several other pillars of colonialism, fake news and propaganda is one of them.

Next way fake news and propaganda pose threats to humanity is visible from the fact that nations that ~~who~~ survive on the pretext of fake news and propagandas ultimately end-up in the losing everything. Fake news and propagandas are not just tools to distort people's perception but also to morally corrupt them. People who are used

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to falseness and are increasingly confronted by propagandas are people who most of the time lack resistance to falsehood. Their lightened exposure to such experiences lead them to be themselves involved in such events. They then acquire falseness and propagandas in their own individual lives. And people who are individually corrupt and dishonest can never be a nation of truth and integrity.

In addition to that, the atrocities committed by Israel in Gaza Strip and the cover provided by the Western media is another unfortunate instance of how dangerous fake news are. Israel break every record of barbarities and violence that ~~occure~~ have taken place on the face of earth. However, the world is silent. This silence can be attributed to the fake cover the international media provides to Israel's genocide and starvation in Gaza. Israel use the narrative that they are targetting Hamas is a form of propaganda that is widely used in order to back its violent activities. Thus,

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the world is amply filled with such unfortunate events that are prevailing only because they are supported by fake news and propaganda campaigns.

Nevertheless, there is still time and energy that needs to be invested upon the ways which can be adopted to save humanity from these threats. One such step that needs to be considered is the strengthening of law enforcement. Until there is no integrated laws, the world cannot be break free from fake news and propagandas. Efficient laws and their effective enforcement can curb the menace of fake news and propagandas. The laws should be made and applied on everyone regardless of status and class. This way, fake news and propagandas can be targeted.

Another major way that can be used is to regulate the sources of information generation, such as mainstream media and social media websites. Social media websites are usually left unchecked

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due to which they are exploited for greater level. These websites needs to be regulated so that the production of fake news can be curbed.

Moreover, use of Artificial Intelligence can also prove to be effective. AI can be integrated into social media and mainstream media channels for the purpose of identifying fake news and limit its reach. AI can also be used to design different apps and softwares that would help in recognizing fake news.

Lastly, awareness campaign can play a pivotal role in this regard. Those who have lack of exposure and understanding in identifying fake news and propagandas should be pr trained and provided digital awareness. Most of the people lack digital awareness due to which they hardly identify any fake news and usually believe everything they come across to. For such people, awareness campaign would make a lot of difference.

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The current time is the age of advancement, of development and growth. However, there are still some unfortunate tools and things that could potentially jeopardize the advancement of current times. Fake news and propaganda campaign are few of such threats. These two menace are widely spread. They are practiced due to lack of checks and balances, weak law enforcement and other such reasons. Similarly, fake news and propaganda pose a threat to human beings as it exaggerate a false image of a country, it leads to distorted perception about an events, it pose a barriers to see truth, it leads a nation to downfall, it is a tool for fascist and dictators, it is ~~used~~ as pillar of colonialism and finally a weapon used by Israel to cover its true barbaric face. Fake news and propaganda can be tackled if key steps are taken by the authorities. It is indeed a greater threat to humanity if unchecked and avoided.