



Escalate

Social Media War during
the India-Pakistan
Conflict, April-May
2025

Brief Report by
Foundation the London Story



Foundation The London Story (TLS) is an Indian diaspora-led non-profit organisation with an ANBI status in the Netherlands. TLS' overall mandate is to document, inform and advocate against hate speech and associated human rights violations.

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Introduction

The 2025 India-Pakistan conflict, ignited by a deadly terrorist attack in Indian-administered Kashmir, rapidly escalated into a near-nuclear confrontation before a brokered ceasefire temporarily halted hostilities.**[1]** This episode not only underscored the enduring volatility of the Kashmir dispute but also highlighted the transformative role of social media in modern warfare.**[2]** Platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook became arenas for discursive escalation, political missteps, and the propagation of war hysteria, reflecting a broader global trend where social media gamifies conflict and diminishes collective empathy.**[3]**

In the lead-up to the ceasefire, both India and Pakistan engaged in aggressive military actions, including drone strikes**[4]** and missile attacks**[5]**, with each side claiming victories and accusing the other of ceasefire violations**[6]**. The conflict's intensity was exacerbated by the rapid dissemination of hate speech and war frenzy on social media, where nationalistic fervour and inflammatory rhetoric spread unchecked.

This phenomenon is not isolated. Globally, social media has become a conduit for the gamification of war, where complex geopolitical conflicts are reduced to simplistic narratives and competitive scorekeeping**[7]**. The "online disinhibition effect" explains how anonymity and lack of face-to-face interaction online can lead individuals to express themselves more aggressively, contributing to the spread of anger and hostility**[8]**. Moreover, the pervasive exposure to conflict-related content on social media platforms potentially contributes to "compassion fade," a phenomenon where individuals' empathy diminishes as the number of victims increases.

Research indicates that as people are bombarded with images and stories of mass suffering, their ability to empathise wanes, leading to apathy and inaction**[9]**. Empathy studies further reveal that the digital environment fosters a decline in empathetic engagement.

In this context, the 2025 India-Pakistan conflict serves as a demonstration of how social media platforms can amplify tensions while simultaneously hindering diplomatic efforts **[10]**. Social media channels became battlegrounds for misinformation and propaganda, with both sides leveraging these platforms to rally support for the war and demonise the other.

This digital warfare enabled by unregulated platforms not only inflamed public sentiment but also made it increasingly difficult to engage in constructive dialogue against war.

Conflict Overview



Pahalgam and Launch of Operation Sindoor

On April 22, 2025, five armed militants attacked tourists in Baisaran Valley near Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, killing 26 civilians and injuring over 20 people. The Resistance Front (TRF), which is linked to the Pakistan-based militant organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba, initially claimed responsibility, citing opposition to non-local settlements in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370, later retracting the claim^[11]. The attack, the deadliest assault on Indian civilians since 2008, primarily targeted Hindu tourists, with victims from various Indian states and one Nepali national.^[12]

In response, India launched "Operation Sindoor" on May 6/7, conducting airstrikes on sites in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK), allegedly linked to the terror attack^[13]. Indian forces conducted airstrikes on nine sites, including Bahawalpur, Muridke, Sialkot, Bhimber, Kotli,, and Muzaffarabad.^[14]

In a statement released by the *Press Information Bureau of India*, India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh asserted that the operation was launched to destroy terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and innocent civilians were not targeted, Conversely, the Pakistani Army targeted civilian areas in India, including attempts to attack temples, gurudwaras, and churches. Mr Singh stated, *"Our Armed Forces displayed valour & restraint and gave a befitting reply by attacking many military bases of Pakistan. Not only did we take action against military bases adjacent to the border, but the indignation of our Armed Forces reached even Rawalpindi, where the Pakistani military headquarters are located."* ^[15]

Surge in Hate Speech

03

Following the Pahalgam attack and during Operation Sindoor, India experienced a significant surge in Islamophobic hate speech on social media platforms, leading to real-world harms. This escalation was marked by inflammatory posts, arrests, and public controversies.**[16]**

As reported by *Maktoob Media*, *India Hate Lab (IHL)* documented 64 in-person hate speech events across India between April 22 and May 2. They noted that far-right individuals and groups were exploiting the attack to stoke communal tensions, inciting calls for violence against Muslims and mobilising social exclusion and economic boycotts against the Muslim community.**[17]** India-based independent news organisations have also reported a surge in hate speech and hate crimes against Muslims, reporting harassment, violent attacks, the desecration of mosques and Islamic religious sites and calls for economic boycotts of Muslims, particularly Kashmiris**[18]**.

The Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA) issued advisories urging Kashmiri students across India to avoid political discussions and sensitive social media content, fearing backlash. **[19]**

The escalation of hate speech and hate crimes needs to be evaluated against the backdrop of the existing ecosystem of Islamophobia in India. At Foundation The London Story, our team has been documenting hate speech against Muslims in India, which is propagated by political leaders, social media influencers, media personalities, and religious figures. The complicity and complacency of social media platforms in disseminating hate remain alarming.

Our previous research has demonstrated that Muslims are dehumanised and demonised during moments of crisis through narratives of “Jihad” - “Love Jihad,” “Land Jihad”, “Vote Jihad”, to name a few**[20]**. Far from fostering informed dialogue during moments of crisis, these platforms have helped ignite a dangerous narrative whereby extremist actors continue to portray Indian Muslims as an ‘internal enemy’ and incite violence against them.

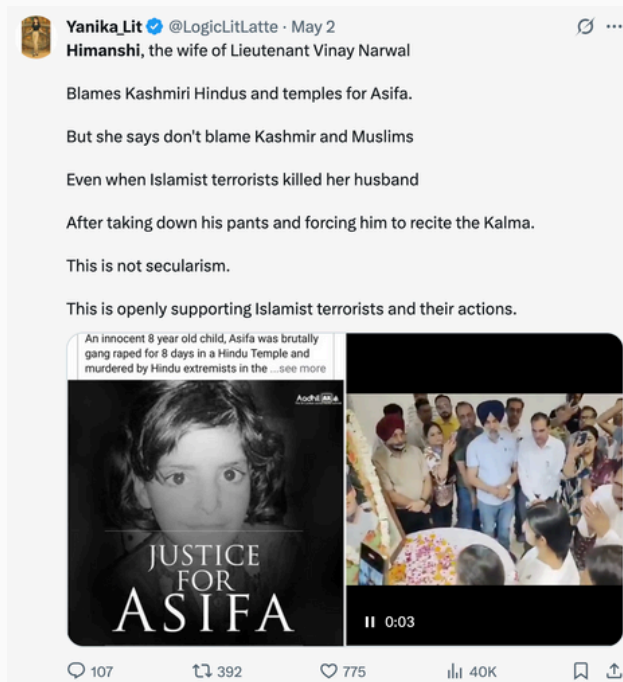
In this report, we are documenting instances of hate speech and incitement of war by known offenders, which include both influencers and content creators. We highlight that their rhetoric not only created a war frenzy, but also continues to include explicit and active calls for the elimination of Pakistan, a foreign state, as well as Muslims within India - Indian nationals. On social media, their content was widely shared, allowing them to also perhaps profit from the war.

Polarisation

The aftermath of Pahalgam in India saw a rise in posts asking for revenge, dehumanising Indian Muslims, and bullying pacifists, labelling them “anti-national.” Content that vilified pacifists, Muslims and Pakistanis was generated using caricatures, imagery, text, songs, and Artificial Intelligence (AI), and was distributed through both influencer networks and general accounts, which several Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have previously labelled ‘troll networks’. Below, we provide several examples of both influencer and troll network accounts that were used to troll pacifists, call for revenge against Pakistan, and take action against Indian Muslims.

The following posts were the top X (formerly Twitter) posts relating to Himanshi Swami, who lost her husband, a 26-year-old naval officer, in the Pahalgam attack. After the attack, Mrs. Swami urged people not to target Muslims in retaliation and called for peace. Mrs. Swami’s insistence on peace and deliberative dialogue and steadfast advocacy for maintaining communal harmony in India left her in the middle of a hate campaign, with some social media users accusing her of being a ‘Pakistan supporter’, ‘adopted by Leftists’ and ‘woke’.

Screenshots of some of the posts on X [21]



Shefali Vaidya is a prominent Hindu nationalist columnist, author, and social media influencer in India who uses her platform to spread Islamophobic hate speech, conspiracy theories and disinformation. She has almost 800,000 followers on X. Through regular contributions to news outlets such as *OpIndia* and *Swarajya*, both known for promoting Hindu nationalist misinformation and serving as unofficial mouthpieces for the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Vaidya plays an active role in dehumanising Indian Muslims, polarising Indian society, and ultimately undermining democratic pluralism in India [22]. In the past, Vaidya has propagated the anti-Muslim “Love Jihad” conspiracy theory, which falsely claims that Muslim men pose as Hindus to marry and forcibly convert Hindu women to Islam, arguing that the Muslim men are inherently barbaric and violent [23]. She regularly uses anti-Muslim slurs across her social media platforms and openly argues that Islam is one of the biggest threats to India [24]. Investigative reporting by *The Wire* has revealed that, like other Hindu nationalist influencers, Vaidya circumvents content moderation by deliberately misspelling anti-Muslim slurs and using dog whistles, tactics that enable her to evade AI filters meant to curb hateful conduct on platforms[25].



Shefali Vaidya. 🇮🇳
@ShefVaidya



From Bangladesh to West Bengal to Kashmir, the killer is always the 'same DNA' quom, and the victims are always Hindu! But yeah, as per our seculars, and Supreme Court, THEY are the 'insecure minority' who need protection! #Pahalgam



2:43 PM · Apr 22, 2025 · 1M Views

In the post, Vaidya remarks that the 'same DNA' Quom (same DNA clan - referring to Muslims, explicitly by using the Urdu term Quom) is at the centre of all terror attacks, while Hindus are always the victims. The post had over 1 million views and feeds into the existing discourse through which the Indian right-wing seeks to erode the status of Muslims as 'minorities' in India, thus facilitating the diminishment of their existing minority rights.

Post Link: <https://x.com/ShefVaidya/status/1914661223938904275>



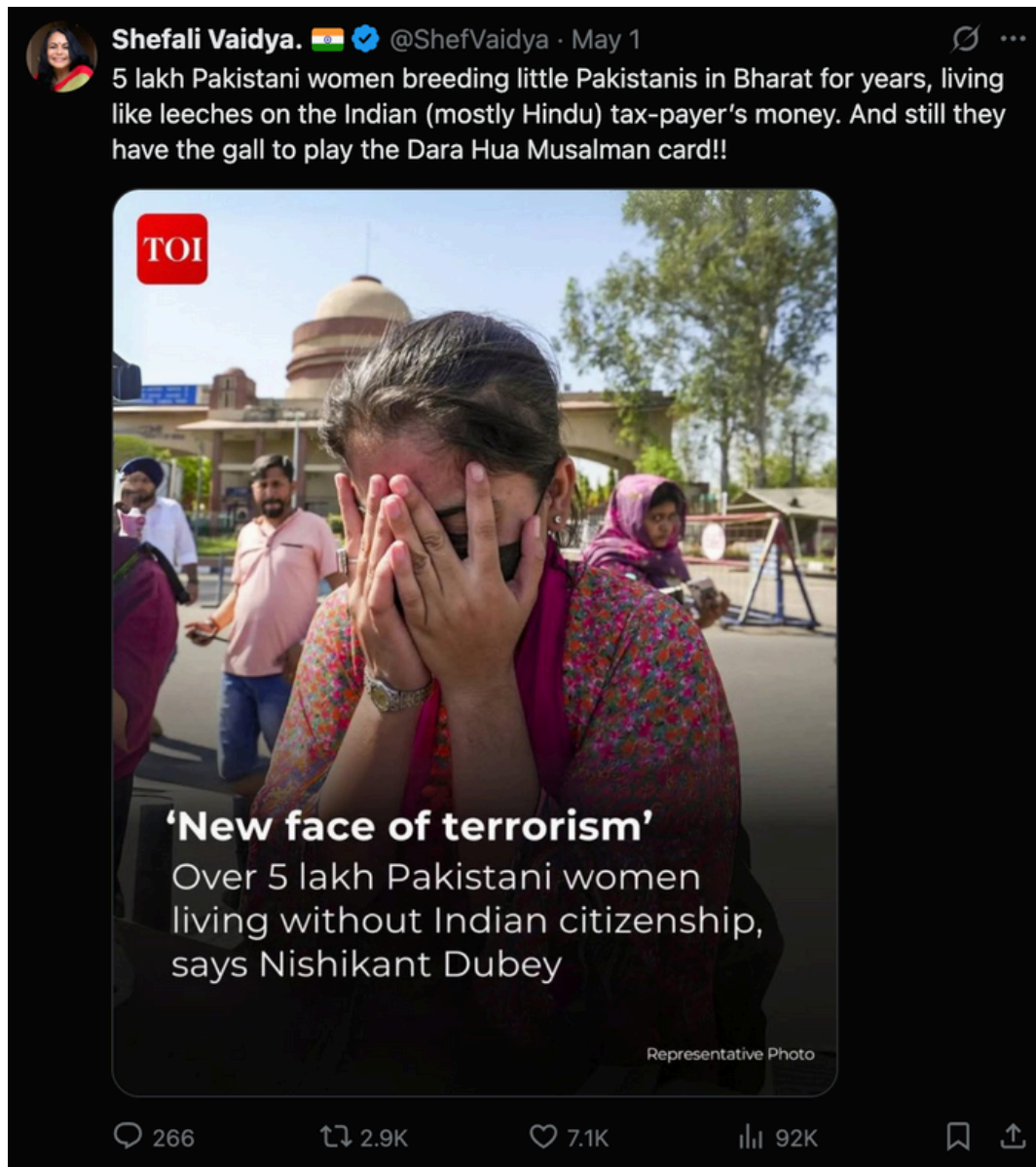
In the post above, Shefali Vaidya attacks the Supreme Court of India for its measured stance against ‘Bulldozer Justice.’ On April 25, 2025, it was reported that the house of an alleged terrorist who was involved in the Pahalgam Terror Attack was demolished by the administration in Anantnag, Kashmir. In November 2024, the Supreme Court of India banned unauthorised demolitions using bulldozers, which were allegedly carried out to punish people accused of a crime [26].

Post Link: <https://x.com/ShefVaidya/status/1915674038308872356>



In the post above, Vaidya states that she is disgusted by the way “jihadis” [implying Muslims] are ‘proliferating’ in Maharashtra. Accusing them of taking over Shivaji Maharaj’s forts with “illegal nazare”, the post taps into Hindu nationalist narratives that frame Muslims as invaders defiling Hindu heritage. She goes on to use the debunked “Love Jihad” conspiracy theory (referring to Muslim men seducing Hindu women), while alleging that [Muslims] are engaging in temple desecration, riots, and attacks on Hindu women. She makes an open political call for the return of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Maharashtra with Devendra Fadnavis as the leader, who will take care of everything.

Post Link: <https://x.com/ShefVaidya/status/1919065236222484922>



In the post above, which has over 92K views, Vaidya dehumanises Pakistani women living in India, calling them “leeches” and accusing them of “breeding little Pakistanis,”. The post uses biological and parasitic metaphors to suggest that Muslims are a demographic threat and economic burden. The phrase “Bharat” is often used in Hindu nationalist discourse to invoke a culturally and religiously majoritarian conception of the Indian nation. Vaidya’s use of “mostly Hindu tax-payer’s money” frames Muslims as outsiders and undeserving of public resources. Her mocking reference to “the Dara Hua Musalman card” (translated as “the frightened Muslim card”) portrays Indian Muslims as manipulative and ungrateful.

Post Link: <https://x.com/ShefVaidya/status/1917763866139976185>

Nupur J Sharma is the Editor in Chief of OplIndia - a far-right news media outlet, which is known for creating Islamophobic controversies. Our report on OplIndia - *Atmosphere of hate* - published in 2021, was one of the first reports which analysed the discourse of OplIndia. Using an automated sentiment analysis technique, we found an escalation of negative sentiment against Indian Muslims over the years, especially since the change of leadership at the organisation, and the greater involvement of Ms. Sharma[27]. Ms. Sharma's influence and impunity come from both her and OplIndia's social media following, which enables her to monetise the content that she posts. In the past, Ms. Sharma has ruefully spoken about campaigns like *Stop Funding Hate*, which successfully led a demonetisation campaign against OplIndia, with advertisers withdrawing their adverts from the site, owing to hate speech.[28]



In this particular post, Ms. Sharma delivers a veiled threat against Indian Muslims. The phrase “when the fat lady has sung” is an idiom implying that a situation is nearing its end, in this case, likely referring to the conclusion of the conflict with Pakistan. The real threat, the post suggests, lies not outside India's borders but within. “The enemies within” is a thinly veiled reference to Indian Muslims, a trope frequently used in Hindu nationalist rhetoric to portray Muslims as internal traitors. The call to “teach them a lesson they won't forget” is a euphemism for punitive, violent action. In the past, Ms. Sharma has similarly called for violence against Indian Muslims, desecration of Muslim places of worship, and for Hindus to boycott Muslim businesses - all within public and administrative knowledge.

POST LINK - <https://x.com/UnSubtleDesi/status/1920887109688209732> -



Nupur J Sharma ✓
@UnSubtleDesi

Subscribe



These Indian Muslims are not loyal to Hindus and by extension, they aren't loyal to India since they view India as a Hindu collectivity. They're loyal to Ummah and in the sub continent, Pakistan is its representative. The sooner Hindus realise that the better



Lala ✓ @FabulasGuy · Apr 25

Love for Pakistan whyyyy



5:20 AM · Apr 26, 2025 · 69.7K Views



99



2.6K



6.6K



175



In yet another post, Ms. Sharma shared a video published by the X account *Lala*, featuring an interview with people on the street. The interviewees, Indian Muslims, are described by Ms. Sharma as 'not loyal to Hindus' and by extension to India, and she calls on Hindus to realise that soon. The video itself shows a reporter aggressively questioning Muslims about whether India should attack Pakistan, to which the interviewees respond that India should not attack Pakistan, but should instead focus on finding the terrorists responsible for the Pahalgam attack.

Post Link: <https://x.com/UnSubtleDesi/status/1915969321693565011>



In another post from a verified, paid handle, the user employs a hateful and dehumanising narrative against Muslims in a post that was viewed over 3.1 million times. **The post is not visible in the European Union (EU), due to the EU Digital Services Act (DSA), which mandates companies to take down hateful content.** But the post is visible in India and elsewhere, where it gathered 3.1 million views.

The text of the post reads 'Terrorism has only one religion that is Islam'. The follow-up response to the post states 'Please like and repost and follow me if you agree that Islam is just an EVIL cult'. It is followed by derogatory comments about Islam, as can be seen in the image below.

Similar posts insinuating that Islam is the religion of terrorism are widely circulated on X.

Post link:

https://x.com/_precious_bean_/status/1914695438793335147

On Facebook, we saw a similar trend of polarisation and preparation led by both influencers and content creators. Below are some of the posts highlighting this trend.

Manoj Kureel Cartoons is a page that publishes political cartoons that are divisive and inflammatory in nature. The content employs communal tropes and the dehumanisation, caricaturing, and demonisation of Muslims in India to polarise Indian society. The page participates in Meta's monetisation program and has a subscriber hub.

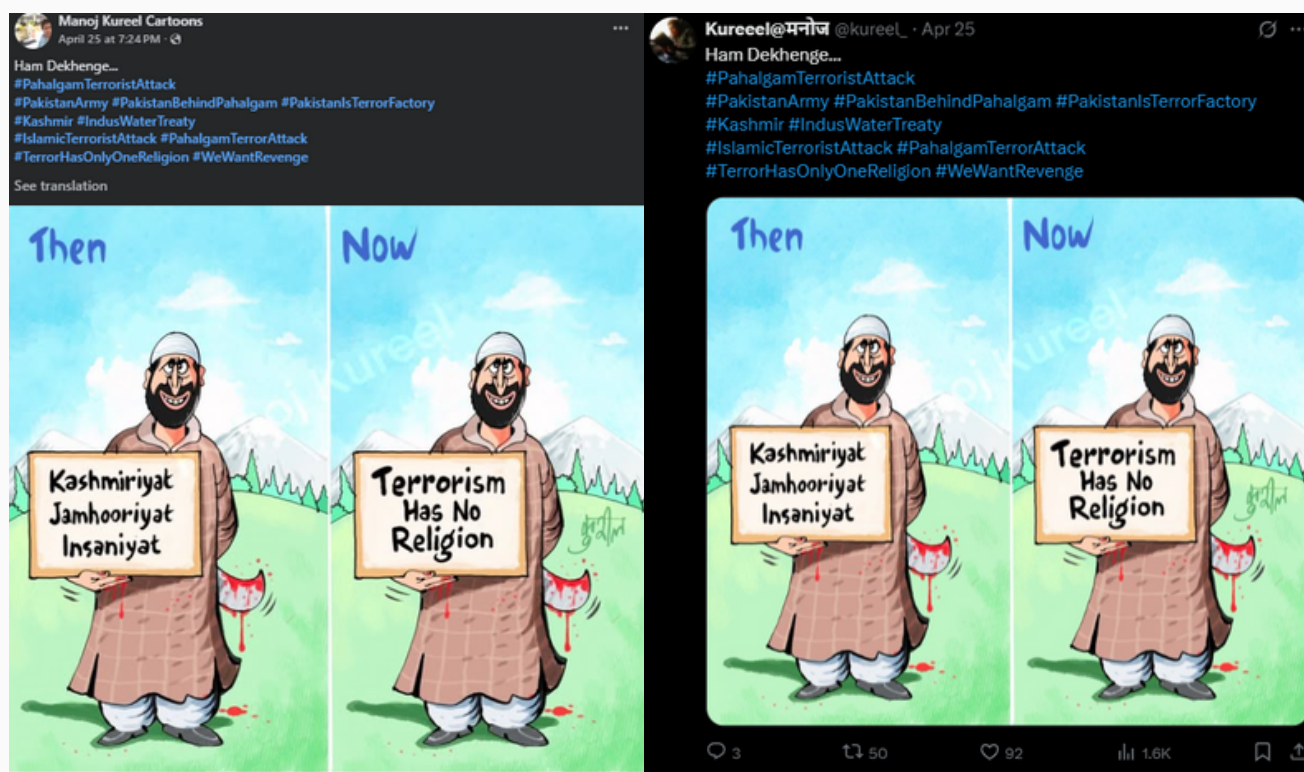


The post above depicts people from the Muslim faith, and those with allegedly liberal values holding signs that (allegedly) excuse the perpetrators of the Pahalgam attack in front of the media, while victims of the attack lie dead in the backdrop. The hashtag #TerrorismHasOnlyOneReligion targets Islam. This post was reposted by other accounts on X (see following page).

Post Link: [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid08oFmSXgudFXVyRhhs1D9PYZDfoEXJSYUMg9h5wBJN5uFW9FECrJwTPBzKmPfYzQtI&id=100067426781714)

[story_fbid=pfbid08oFmSXgudFXVyRhhs1D9PYZDfoEXJSYUMg9h5wBJN5uFW9FECrJwTPBzKmPfYzQtI&id=100067426781714](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid08oFmSXgudFXVyRhhs1D9PYZDfoEXJSYUMg9h5wBJN5uFW9FECrJwTPBzKmPfYzQtI&id=100067426781714)

Manoj Kureel Cartoons has been regularly posting inflammatory political cartoons on Facebook since May 19, 2020. These cartoons caricature Muslims and opposition leaders of India, drawing them in dehumanising ways, often depicting them as snakes and monsters. Below are some of the cartoons created by the page in the aftermath of the Pahalgam Terrorist Attack. These were circulated on Facebook and X.



Facebook post link: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0YZpE23M8Gqpj6P1FhasJSapgYHav9Jrr3eDFcY6oWMDVCUzbiqj8Wwo9n3qDShAkI&id=100067426781714

Twitter link: https://x.com/kureel_/status/1915818603359637986

The post depicts a Muslim man in two time periods. In the period marked 'Then', he is holding a placard which reads '*Kashmiri Jamhooriyat Insaniyat*' (translation: Kashmiri Democracy Humanity). In the period marked 'Now', he is holding a placard with the message 'Terrorism Has No Religion'. In both the 'Then' and 'Now' images, the Muslim man is holding a bloodied knife behind his back with a welcoming smile on his face. The hashtag #TerrorHasOnlyOneReligion, stresses that one religion (READ: Islam) is inherently linked to terrorism.

The post on the left caricatures opposition leaders and places them with a terrorist in the same frame. (TL) Rahul Gandhi is asking, “What is your caste?” referring to his demand for a caste census. He is drawn with exaggerated nostrils resembling a pig snout. (TR) Akhilesh Yadav is shown asking, “What is your party?” and caricatured with a hooked nose. Uddhav Thackeray (BL), is asking, “What is your language?” referencing his party’s history of linguistic nationalism in Maharashtra; he is also depicted wielding a bludgeon, suggesting primitive aggression. MK Stalin (BM), the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, is shown asking, “What is your state?”—a jab at his strong federalist stance. The final panel features a caricatured terrorist from Pahalgam asking, “What is your religion?”



Post Link:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02xyBCGAB2fmXYBq5kwQFf65adEkqLr5uoeWnCBPjEmT7jV9P2ERcy33yXu1XKFUVtl&id=100067426781714



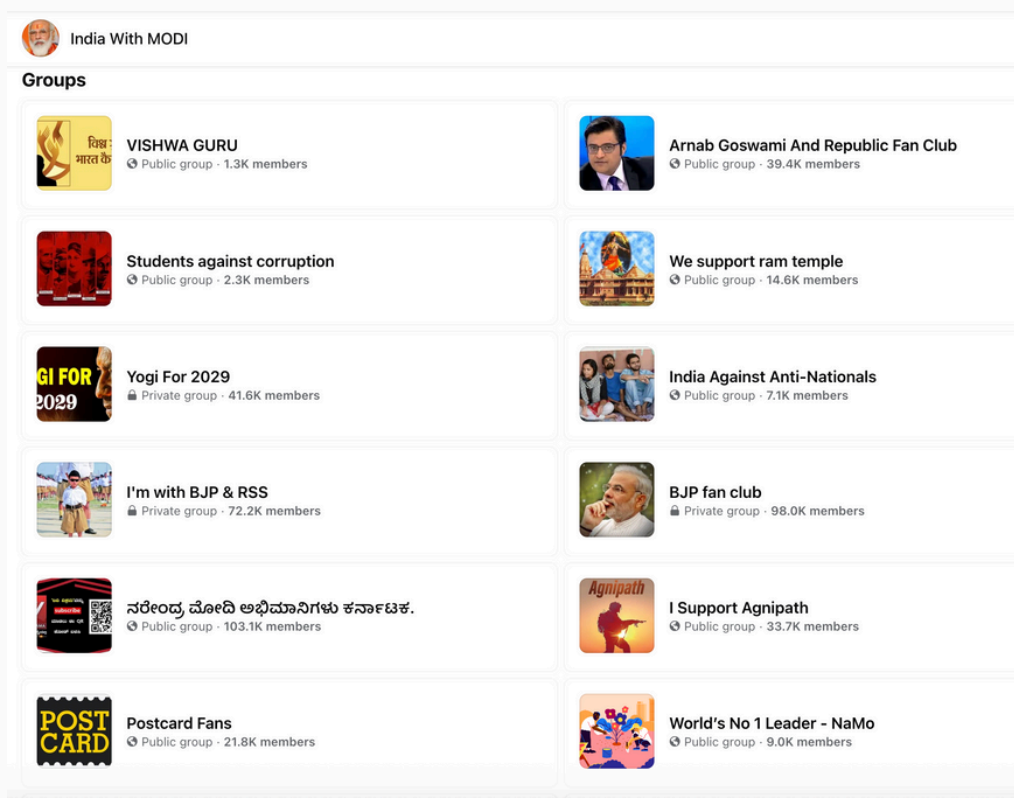
The post to the left depicts a cartoon of the Pahalgam attack with an automatic rifle pointed at a baby, with the caption ‘Religion?’ in the speech bubble. In the background are bloodied limbs with the symbol of Hinduism on someone’s arm. The cartoonist uses the tags and text to suggest that Hindus are under attack across the country and that the killer always has the same DNA, from Bangladesh to Bengal to Kashmir (a narrative also shared by Shefali Vaidya).

Post Link:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02vxeeF9WbwS4AmkoP4FVDA MwvtLybg9wTRRiyJbksBQd2hGrbbemCDRP67KmLaCml&id=100067426781714

Arnab Goswami and Republic Fan Club is a page created by the I Support Indian Army group, which is a group created by Yogi ROCKS, yet another public group, created by the India with MODI page. The page India with MODI runs a whole network of nested groups and pages, and has been identified in several previous reports by various CSOs as a breeding ground for polarised messaging, disinformation and hate speech (examples can be seen below). The network has multiple pages and groups named after right-wing journalists, BJP politicians, and right-wing narratives, like the anti-national narrative. The network operates continuously, producing huge amounts of polarising content with a 'PostCard' stamp on it. The posting frequency on these pages is sometimes close to 200 posts per day. The network is seemingly operated by Postcard co-founder, Mahesh Vikram Hegde, who was arrested by the Karnataka Police (in India) in 2019, 2021, and 2023 for spreading disinformation.^[29] Despite his several arrests, Mahesh Vikram Hegde runs a rather successful social media empire. He is listed as one of the directors of Wise Index Media Pvt. Ltd. in the company register^[30]. The Wise Index Media website boasts of having a social media reach of 220 million on Facebook, over 25 million on X, and more than 50 million in website traffic across a networked presence ^[31].

The network operates in three discernible patterns: in the first pattern, they share vitriol against Indian Muslims. These pages share caricatures, dehumanise, and demonise Muslims, portraying them as invaders, womanisers, and enemies of the nation. In the second pattern, they share content that aggrandises state-level BJP political leaders who are portrayed as the saviours of Hindus against Muslims. In the third pattern of content, they share and aggrandise Prime Minister Narendra Modi.





Arnab Goswami and Republic Fan Club

Groups



VISHWA GURU

Public group · 1.3K members



Arnab Goswami And Republic Fan Club

Public group · 39.4K members



Students against corruption

Public group · 2.3K members



India Against Anti-Nationals

Public group · 7.1K members



ನರೇಂದ್ರ ಮೋದಿ ಅಭಿಮಾನಿಗಳು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ.

Public group · 103.1K members



Postcard Fans

Public group · 21.8K members



World's No 1 Leader - NaMo

Public group · 9.0K members



We Support Amit Shah

Public group · 46.2K members



ಯೋಗೀಶ್ವರ ಫ್ಯಾನ್ಸ್ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

Public group · 36.4K members



NaMo - True Indian

Public group · 3.7K members



Yogi ROCKS

Public group · 24.3K members



ಮಹೇಶ್ ವಿಕ್ರಮ್ ಹೆಗ್ಡೆ ಅಭಿಮಾನಿ ಬಳಗ

Private group · 13.4K members



Mahesh Vikram Hegde

Groups



ವಿಶ್ವಗುರು ಭಾರತದತ್ತ ನಮೋ - ಯೋಗಿ

Private group · 24.7K members



ಅಮಿತ್ ಶಾ ಅಭಿಮಾನಿ ಬಳಗ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ

Public group · 577 members



Arnab Goswami And Republic Fan Club

Public group · 39.4K members



Modi Yuga

Public group · 1.4K members



ನಮೋ ಭಕ್ತರು

Private group · 6.0K members



BJP fan club

Private group · 98.0K members



Narendra Modi Fans From Karunadu

Private group

2.7K members



Join group



ಧರ್ಮ ಯುದ್ಧ

Private group · 5.7K members



POST CARD



World's No 1 Leader - NaMo

Public group · 9.0K members



Narendra Modi Fans From Karunadu

Private group · 2.7K members



We Support Amit Shah

Public group · 46.2K members

The post on the right refers to how victims of the Pahalgam attack were asked their religion before being shot, to ensure that Hindus were targeted. The post responds by buttressing increasing calls for an economic boycott of Muslim-owned businesses, asking the question, "Why should Hindus hesitate to ask someone's name?" (e.g. to shed light on their religious identity) in order to decide whether or not to do business with them.



The same post is re-shared by multiple pages from the same network including the Yogi ROCKS page (see above post), the I support Indian Army page (see following page), and the India Against Anti-Nationals page.

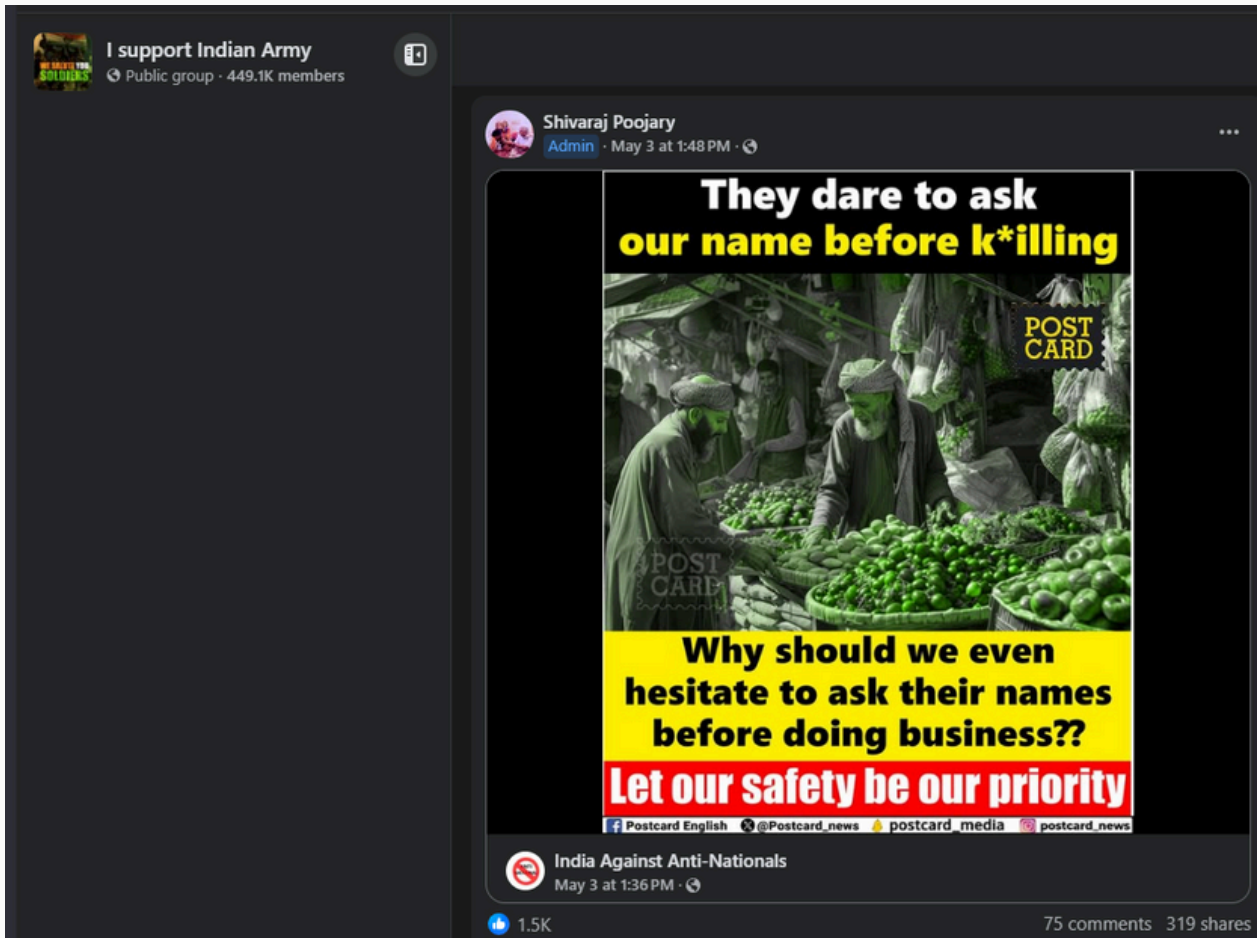
Post Link:

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739

CAPTION OF THE POST: They dare to ask our name before killing. Why should we even hesitate to ask their names before doing business?? Let our safety be our priority.

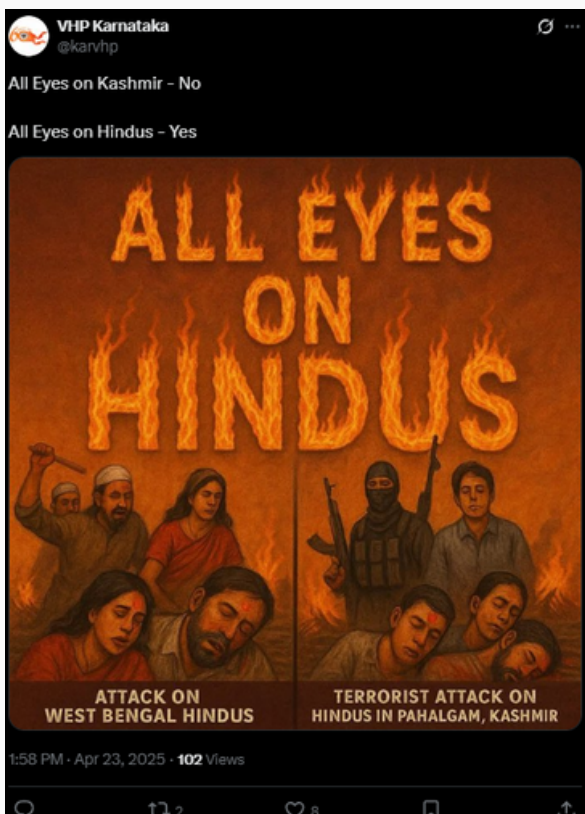
Post Link- https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739



Post Link: [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739)

[story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02Z5QgRGhgkUoceZGFpVbCC29DqtBitujjdLiGz7W2uDoQU9FAgD5dLPS4ekrmTpoyl&id=100044336868739)



A binary narrative is visible where several posts depicting Muslims have a green tint (as visible in the post above), and Muslims are portrayed as devilish. In contrast, the post (adjacent) with Hindus (in orange tint) depicts Hindus as victims of Muslim men and terrorism.

The AI-generated image shows the text “All Eyes on Hindus” emblazoned in fire, with two frames. On the left, men with skull caps are seen raising a baton against Hindu men and women - the frame reads ‘Attack on West Bengal Hindus’. The frame on the right shows a terrorist and its victims - the frame caption reads ‘Terrorist attack on Hindus in Pahalgam, Kashmir’.

Post Link

<https://x.com/karvhp/status/1915012499080122491>



Text from the Post (translated to English): Press Statement:

The work of the citizenship register should start soon, and Pakistani citizens and their sleeper cells should be driven out: VHP

New Delhi. May 2, 2025. Vishwa Hindu Parishad today demanded that the process of making a citizenship register in India should be started immediately, and **Pakistani citizens, along with their sleeper cells(sleeper cells are a reference here to inter-country couples who have married across borders, mostly Muslims), should be driven across the border.** VHP's Central Joint General Secretary Dr. Surendra Jain said today that due to the strict steps taken by the Central Government after the brutal massacre of Hindus by Jihadi terrorists in Pahalgam, many anti-national conspiracies are also being exposed, which were hollowing out the roots of the country for decades.

The post is published from the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's official account. VHP (transl. World Council of Hindus) is an Indian right-wing Hindu organisation based on Hindu nationalism. The VHP was founded in 1964 with the objective "to organise, consolidate the Hindu society and to serve and protect the Hindu Dharma". It is a trans-national network operating as a 'cultural organisation', and a member of Sangh Pariwar - an umbrella term used to refer to Hindu nationalist organisations- led by RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh). The BJP is the political wing of the RSS.

The adjoining post is a press statement from the VHP's official Facebook page, written in text and spoken by Dr. Surendra Jain in a video format.

Post Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/16gcoHf4iz/>

(con't): He said that lakhs of such women have come forward whose husbands are Pakistani Muslims and also hold passports of that country. But those women and their children are citizens of India. **There are thousands of such cases in which an Indian Muslim woman married a Pakistani and herself also took Pakistani citizenship, but got Indian citizenship for her children. All these people are not only taking advantage of the facilities available in India, but they are also harming the roots of India by living on India's money. They sympathise with Pakistan and become violent on slogans like 'Down with Pakistan'. These are Pakistani sleeper cells which need to be driven across the border immediately.**

The VHP demands that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) be prepared soon. Those who are not authorised citizens of India, their ration cards, Aadhaar cards or voter cards should be thoroughly investigated, and these people should be expelled from India by cancelling them. He said that it is necessary that the NRC should also be prepared along with the upcoming census, and the enemies of India and their sleeper cells should be expelled from India with immediate effect. Now, the time has come for those who are involved in anti-India activities to be allowed to stay in India.

Dr Jain also said that, unfortunately, some people are trying to create sympathy for such conspirators by showing them crying. They should keep in mind that these conspiracies of these anti-nationals have been going on for many decades, and lakhs of women are also involved in it. The unholy nexus of Jihadi-secular forces has also been helping them. Now that they have been exposed, they do not deserve sympathy but expulsion from India.

Not only are these narratives polarising against Indian Muslims, but they are also highly misogynistic, with a clear call to erase the citizenship status of Indian children of Indian Muslim mothers married to Pakistani fathers. Similar ethno-national calls and dog whistling against the Bengali-speaking Muslim community in the state of Assam led to 1.9 million people being omitted from the National Citizenship Register in 2019. The Government of India has still not communicated any systematic plan to provide papers, identity cards, asylum, or deportation (to somewhere) for these people. Ground reports, including our own ground investigations in the state of Assam, have shown the presence of camps, arbitrary holding centres, and denial of welfare to whole villages believed to be occupied by 'alleged non-citizens' of the country. The majority of these 1.9 million people are women of low socio-economic status who are unable to procure their citizenship registration documents.

Suresh Chavhanke, the chairman, managing director and editor-in-chief of *Sudarshan News*, is known for his use of social media platforms to target Muslim communities. We and several other CSOs have written about him and discussed him in meetings with Meta's Policy and Human Rights team. We have all spoken about his role in using Jihad narratives during COVID to create existential risks for Indian Muslims and Muslim minorities elsewhere through narrative seepage. Mr. Chavhanke uses his accounts along with *Sudharshan Media's* wide social media network to disseminate dehumanising and polarising content. On X, Mr. Chavhanke has a following of more than 800k, and on Facebook, even after several CSO complaints, his following is around 550k [32]. **In our previous report, *Preachers of Hate*, we have demonstrated how incendiary content led to the rise of Mr. Chavhanke.** Below are some examples of polarising content that he posted in the aftermath of the Pahalgam Terrorist Attack, targeting the Indian Muslim community.

Post Content: Bindas Bol: Economically Boycott Terrorist Supporters - the image shows the same content with a backdrop of terrorists juxtaposed alongside ordinary Muslim fruit sellers. The image also shows Mr. Chavhanke with his raised fist on the bottom left.

The post leads to Mr. Chavhanke's YouTube channel, which is monetised.

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/SureshChavhankeOfficial/posts/pfbid0NRAxhfKtMmXAwc8xVnKxqNPq9FtvZjPNu2Jy7LDjmbetuHgm8YtFZWvasw5EQUtHI>



Mr. Chavhanke started the call to economically boycott Muslim fruit sellers and small businesses during the COVID-19 lockdown period via his popularly viewed content on 'Thook Jihad' (spit jihad) wherein he claimed that Muslim fruit sellers, vegetable sellers, and hotel owners are spitting on fruits, vegetable, and other food that they are offering to Hindus. These allegations created hysteria in Indian society and led to several cases of Muslim small businesses being targeted by mobs of Hindus. The real-world consequences of Mr. Chavhanke's online polarising speech are well known and well documented.

Writing for Quint - an independent news media - Raqeeb Razza stated that communal blame (has) escalated after the Pahalgam tragedy. Muslims face boycott and violence across Indian states.

- 'Surge in Hate and Hostility After Pahalgam Attack
The Quint News, 03 May 2025



Post Content: translated from Hindi:

They ask name before shoot, you can't ask names before buying goods.

The post which has Mr Chavhanke in the background is widely shared, liked and commented upon.

Post Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/SureshChavhankeOfficial/posts/pfbid08KWueHdFf6SxJZZPtEm3RDmmkJvkgBMz9TMTU3GsUDqUEKsLHhSVAwWnCZkDiZh9I>

The comment section itself is filled with hateful comments against Indian Muslims.

In this post, again, Mr Chavhanke calls for an economic boycott of Indian Muslims; he has organised in person large-scale rallies, asking people to gather and take an oath to stop buying goods and services from Indian Muslims.

This polarised narrative needs to be understood in the backdrop of a communally charged society, wherein ghettoisation, economic deprivation, and discrimination against Muslims have been duly recorded in the Indian government's own reports, and spoken about by both Indian and International media consistently.

Mobilisation

On 5th May, 2025, the Indian Ministry of Defence announced a mock drill across Indian states to test the war-readiness of Indian citizens. The limited information about a potential escalation meant that the country and the media were already playing a frenzied guessing game. As Operation Sindoor was launched in the night between 6/7th May 2025, much of Indian mainstream media went into information hysteria. Far-right columnists, reporters and journalists, in the quest for television ratings, passed on all kinds of dis and mis-information without confirmation.

However, the process of the (most recent) mobilisation against Pakistan and Indian Muslims is ongoing since the Pahalgam Terrorist Attacks. For this report, we classify the stage of mobilisation as the discursive narrative aimed at mobilising the Indian citizenry in support of a potential war against Pakistan and revenge against Indian Muslims.

Whilst at the time of writing, no major communal riot has been reported in India, there is a discourse that targets Pakistan and Indian Muslims simultaneously.



Facebook verified user Girish Bharadwaj, who identifies himself as a 'Dharmic Warrior A relentless crusader of Hindutva, Nationalism I Advocate I Vishwa Hindu Parishad', shares an image of his X post where he is re-tweeting a news item from journalist Aditya Raj Kaul regarding the Pahalgam Terrorist Attack. In the quoted re-tweet (image) he calls for the erasure of 'bloody Pakistan' from the world map. The Facebook post hashtags include #wewantrevenge. The page has 110k followers

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/Girishbdwj/posts/pfbid023yMAQdmGwVodqJvDrtykF33zongb12i toSBUZnnKmRbAtcxmVxJikaZ1bv2rscQfl>



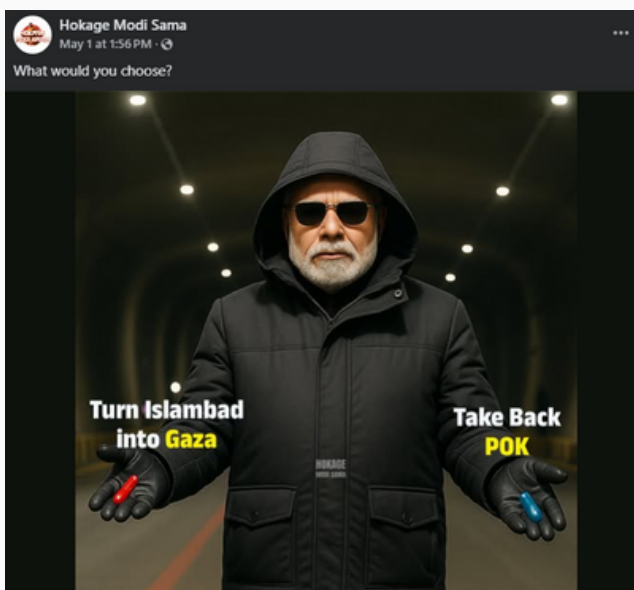
Post Link-

<https://www.facebook.com/SureshChavhankeOfficial/post/s/pfbid0269GXenFd2jMg7JxooWxqBKzMowMWgPNGR Xq4QaZ1HCcFpD9KrdVXQwdaBS24fC7UI>

Haariz Simha Singh, who identifies himself as 'Founder & Chief Thinker @ HAASAN Technologies&Groups STATE SOCIAL MEDIA Incharge, @OBC Morcha,TNBJP' uses hashtag, #WeWantRevenge followed by emoji of the Indian flag.

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/Haarizsingh/posts/pfbid02kkqfPexoGQomjkthDy4BAQCrmSw63 QpKLa12syTWgGJHyU6sHgeJf1mgJTWU2f15l>



In this post, Suresh Chavhanke, a known preacher of hate on social media platforms, masquerading as a journalist, holds public debates. The post caption reads (translated to English): "There is anger in the country after the terrorist attack in *Pahalgam* of *Jammu and Kashmir*..Now the time has come Modi ji - to behead or cross the border, teach a lesson to the jihadis!

Watch [*#PublicDialogue*](#)

The image on the post says, behead or cross the borders, teach the Jihadis a lesson Modi ji.



In an AI-generated image of Indian Prime Minister Modi, he is seen posing in the Matrix, with a red pill and a blue pill in either hand and the options to "Turn Islamabad (Pakistan's capital) into Gaza" (red pill) or "Take back PoK" (blue pill).

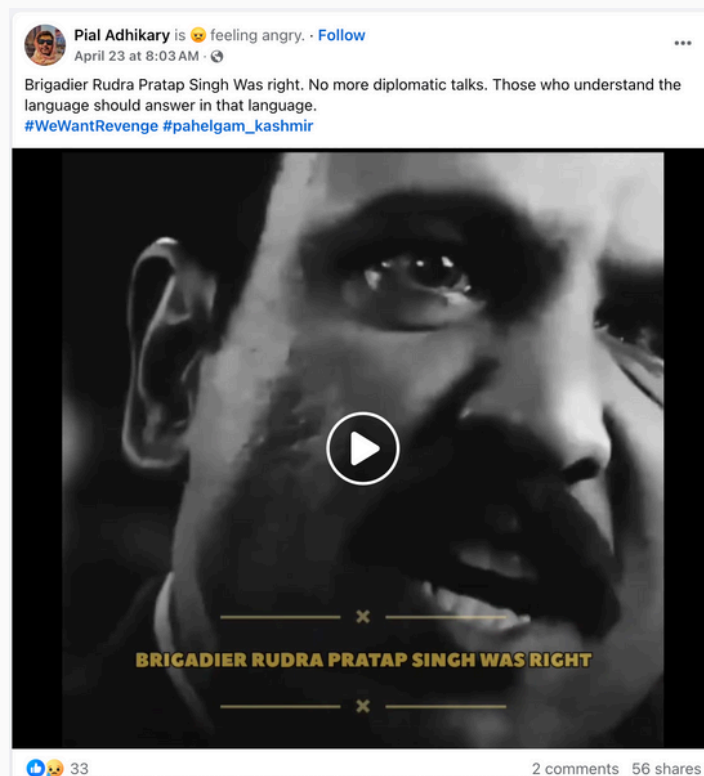
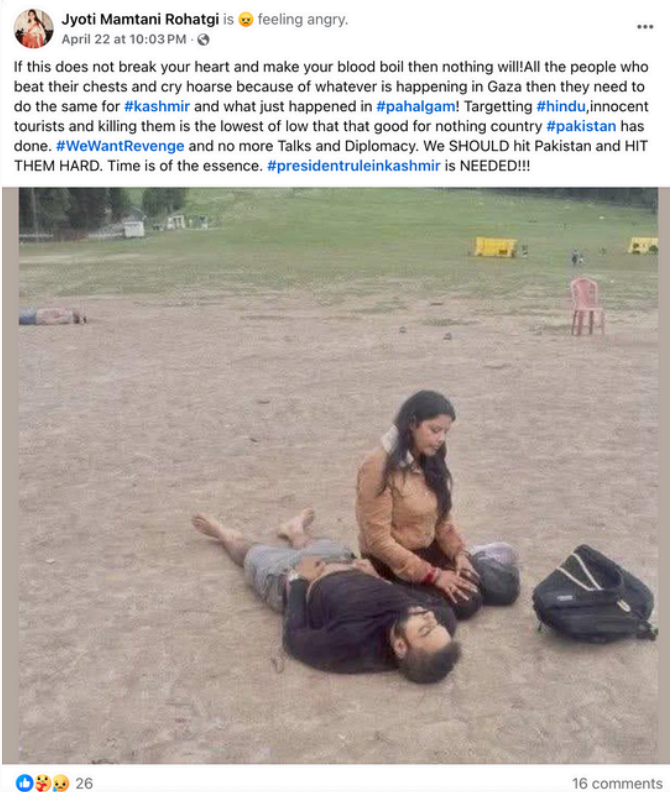
Post Link-

<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=642417255454769&set=a.145938125102687>

Facebook user Jyoti Mamtani Rohatgi, who resides in North Carolina, writes: *'If this does not break your heart and make your blood boil then nothing will! All the people who beat their chests and cry hoarse because of whatever is happening in Gaza then they need to do the same for #kashmir and what just happened in #pahalgam! Targetting #hindu, innocent tourists and killing them is the lowest of low that that good for nothing country #pakistan has done. #WeWantRevenge and no more Talks and Diplomacy. We SHOULD hit Pakistan and HIT THEM HARD. Time is of the essence. #presidentruleinkashmir is NEEDED!!!'*

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/jyoti.mamtani.rohatgi/posts/pfbid0yrwgcgTTzFos7t72cmSce3FECRr3Pqaf4Quzti4tbQqVY2JYTjQTTn54PxntcBrml>



Digital content creator Pinal Adhikary writes: *'Brigadier Rudra Pratap Singh Was right. No more diplomatic talks. Those who understand the language should answer in that language.'*

#WeWantRevenge
#pahalgam_kashmir'

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/100002630917413/videos/2168373456975666>

Several clips of 'Brigadier Rudra Pratap Singh', a fictional character from a 2008 Bollywood Shuurya - were shared to rationalise anti-Muslim sentiments. In the movie Shuurya, Brigadier Rudra Pratap Singh (played by Kay Kay Menon) is a high-ranking army official who embodies a hyper-nationalist, Islamophobic worldview. His character is eventually revealed to be prejudiced against Muslims. The clips from his monologues are used with statements, 'Brigadier Rudra Pratap Singh was right', as also seen in the post above.



Post Link: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=636577142533594>

Chanakya Forum, which identifies itself as a digital creator in the news/media section, is an enterprise of AGA Media Ventures Pvt. Ltd. This company is registered in India's company register, with Gaurav Arya working as one of the two directors.

The video shared on the Forum shows Mr. Arya urging the Modi government to take revenge against Pakistan. He is specifically asking the Modi government to bomb Pakistan by repeatedly alluding to the Festival of Diwali, which is celebrated with fireworks.

Post title: 'Pahalgam Attack: Major Gaurav Arya's Special Appeal to PM Modi. New video out.'

Speaker says: "**There should be no diplomatic relationship with Islamic Republic of Pakistan.** The diplomatic relations should be shut down between the two countries. **We have to do Happy Diwali on the Line of control and we have to set fire to the line of control.** We will destroy Pakistan so thoroughly at the line of control that they will not be able to understand where the missile came from. Pakistan should be punished in such a way that they would think 10 times before attacking India.The whole nation is mourning, but I am not, because this is not a time to mourn. 26 people were killed and 26 families were torn apart. Will it keep happening that Pakistan comes into India, kills innocent people, goes back and we do absolutely nothing? People have been asking me since yesterday if I even understand the consequences of asking for a war against Pakistan. Mr. Prime Minister, while we have spent time thinking about the consequences, thousands have lost their lives, and I don't know when that number will turn to lakhs. What is clear is that Pakistan has asked us one question. Is India alive and if it is alive, then what is the proof of it being alive? This is the proof about which I want to speak to you today. Since yesterday, the media has been reporting that general Asim Munir has given a speech and should we become cautious after that. [a news article is displayed in which Pakistani General Asim Munir backed the "two-nation theory" which led to the creation of Pakistan, citing differences between Hindus and Muslims in "every possible aspect of life."] Should we have resumed that Pakistan will carry out another terrorist activity? But Mr. Prime Minister, what did Asim Munir say that was wrong? Pakistan has been birthed in hatred and we should expect that whatever activity Pakistan carries out, will be to hurt India. It is not important what Pakistan thinks or does, what's important is what India does in response".

[The full video linked in the post continues for 18 minutes more, urging the Prime Minister to take military action against Pakistan]

Operation Sindoor

The launch of Operation Sindoor—a counter-terrorism military initiative in Jammu and Kashmir—was swiftly followed by an orchestrated digital campaign by far-right Hindutva groups on social media. These groups circulated AI-generated and digitally altered images framing the operation not only as a state-led military effort against terrorism, but rather as part of a larger civilizational struggle—a Hindu awakening against perceived enemies of the faith. This visual discourse has since portrayed the conflict in binary moral terms of good versus evil. In doing so, it is implicitly redefining the enemy and war, as not merely an anti-terrorism campaign but a battle between Hindus and Muslims. **This form of symbolic mobilisation through religious iconography aligns with broader patterns of majoritarian nationalism in India, where the line between religion, state, and security is increasingly blurred.**



In this AI-generated post, from the official X handle of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) Karnataka, two scenes are depicted. In the first scene, a Hindu woman cries over the body of a dead Hindu man, while an armed Muslim man holding a rifle and pointing a finger at her says, “Go tell Modi.”(translated).

In the second panel, the same woman is now standing upright and no longer crying as missiles soar in the background. The dead lie at her feet, and the previously armed man sits unarmed and in tears. The Hindu woman says “I told Modi.” (translated)

Post Link-

<https://x.com/karvhp/status/1920136566338474154>



The Bharat Todo Gang (which has 98k followers on Facebook) posts an image that shows an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer applying vermilion in the colours of the Indian flag to the forehead of a hijabi Muslim woman symbolising “Pakistan”. The backdrop of the image reads Operation Sindoor.

Bharat Togo Gand captions the image **“You erased vermillion by teaching Kalma, our warbankure will bury you by teaching Fatiya!”** (to be read as: **You widowed our women, now our warriors will teach you a lesson**)

Post Link:

<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=674862208636135&set=a.128955466560148>

A post from the *Arnab Goswami and Republic Fan Club* - yet another nested page- shows an AI-generated image of an Indian soldier shooting in the distance, amongst the backdrop of the Indian flag and alongside the title ‘Operation Sindoor.’

Sindoor is the red vermilion used by married Hindu women to colour the middle part of their hairline, symbolising marital bliss. This post, like the one above, is aggrandising the potentiality of war.

Post Link-

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02q9xKd62KwE48xyq6B8iw74qQ4N4Bfq6uQoRsWgDgNTjA3MCnkhAC9rxAezGoxiqtI&id=100044336868739



Bharat Todo Gang - भारत तोड़ो गंग
May 7 at 4:21AM · 🌐

This is the call of Krishna, this is the essence of Bhagwat
That war is the proof of heroic
Whether it is a crowd of Kauravas or the sleep of Pandavas
The one who can fight is great.
The beginning is enormous...
Jai Hind

🔗 See original · 🗲 Rate this translation

भारत का ऑपरेशन सिंदूर

पहलगाम का बदला : आधी रात को एयर स्ट्राइक पाकिस्तान के नौ आतंकी ठिकाने किए तबाह

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। पहलगाम आतंकी हमले के 15वें दिन बड़ी कार्रवाई करते हुए भारत ने पाकिस्तान के नौ आतंकी ठिकाने तबाह कर दिए।

पाकिस्तान को सबक सिखाने और आतंकी ठिकानों को नष्ट करने के लिए भारतीय सेना ने पाकिस्तान और उसके कब्जे वाले जम्मू-कश्मीर में ऑपरेशन सिंदूर चलाया। हमले में तीन आतंकी समूहों के ठिकानों को निशान बमबारी में तबाह कर दिया गया। पाकिस्तान के नौ आतंकी ठिकानों को नष्ट करने के लिए भारतीय सेना ने पाकिस्तान और उसके कब्जे वाले जम्मू-कश्मीर में ऑपरेशन सिंदूर चलाया। हमले में तीन आतंकी समूहों के ठिकानों को निशान बमबारी में तबाह कर दिया गया। पाकिस्तान के नौ आतंकी ठिकानों को नष्ट करने के लिए भारतीय सेना ने पाकिस्तान और उसके कब्जे वाले जम्मू-कश्मीर में ऑपरेशन सिंदूर चलाया। हमले में तीन आतंकी समूहों के ठिकानों को निशान बमबारी में तबाह कर दिया गया।

रात 2:45 : रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने लिखा-भारत माता की जय।

आधे घंटे तक लड़ाकू विमानों की गर्जना

हमले से पहले कश्मीर के आसमान में लड़ाकू विमानों ने उड़ने शुरू कर दी। चार लड़ाकू विमानों ने पाकिस्तान के आसमान में हमला किया। अब भी लड़ाकू विमानों की गर्जना जारी है।

बहावलपुर पर एयर स्ट्राइक

सेना ने ललकार कर बोला हमला

सेना ने हमले से पहले सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म पर लिखा-रेड्डी टू स्ट्राइक... टूट टू विन। साथ ही लिखा-प्रहाराय सन्निहित, जवाय प्रसन्नित। कुछ ही देर में आतंकी कैप्शन पर एयर स्ट्राइक की खबरें आ गई।

न्याय हुआ... जय हिंद : भारतीय सेना ने सोशल मीडिया लिखा-न्याय हुआ... जय हिंद।

हमले के बाद पाकिस्तान सेना ने शुरू की गोलाबारी

12 रातों से निरंतर रक्षा पर किया जा रहा है। पाकिस्तानी सेना ने आतंकी कैप्शन पर सेना के साहस सेक्टर, मेजर के मनकोट और कृष्ण चट्टी सेक्टर में भारी गोलाबारी शुरू कर दी। भारतीय सेना दुपन के मोर्चे का मुहल्लेज जवाब दे रही है। लोचों ने बंदूकों में शरणा ले ली है।

कोटली, बहावलपुर व मुजफ्फराबाद पर मिसाइल हमला

पाकिस्तान की सेना की मीडिया इकाई इंटर-सर्विसेज पब्लिक रिलेशन के इन्फोक्वटर जनरल लीजनेट जनरल अहमद इरीक चौधरी ने दावा किया, भारत ने कोटली, बहावलपुर और मुजफ्फराबाद पर मिसाइल हमले किए हैं।

पाकिस्तान के अखबार डॉन की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक, जलाल खैरी ने कहा, पाकिस्तान हमले का जवाब देगा। हालांकि, हमले में हुए नुकसान को जनकारी स्पष्ट नहीं है।

271 24 comments 37 shares

In another Facebook post, *Bharat Todo Gang* shares a Hindi-language newspaper clipping announcing Operation Sindoor and its modus.

The caption is lyrics from a popular song: 'कृष्ण की पुकार है, ये भागवत का सार है(1)

कि युद्ध ही तो वीर का प्रमाण है(2)

कौरवों की भीड़ हो या पांडवों का नीड हो(3)

जो लड़ सका है वो ही तो महान है।।(4)

आरंभ है प्रचंड...(5)

जय हिन्द' (6)

Translation of lyrics:

This is Krishna's call, this is the essence of Bhagwat (1)

That war is the proof of a brave man (2)

Whether it is a crowd of Kauravas or a nest of Pandavas(3)

Only he who can fight is great!!(4)

The beginning is powerful...(5)

Hail Hind [India] (6)

Post Link-

<https://www.facebook.com/BharatTodoGang/posts/pfbid02jWm6jtqYYTZudnSNefxETRmRQGxjh4bvxoKyNMAz0j68iM92ISVvd5TxhQaUG8uVI>

Following the launch of Operation Sindoor, Indian social media also witnessed a surge in the circulation of AI-generated imagery that drew heavily on Hindu mythological motifs. These visual representations depicted war-deities such as Krishna, Hanuman, and Durga intertwined with modern military aesthetics—wielding firearms, juxtaposed with imagery of battlegrounds, or placed with contemporary war arsenals. This blending of mythological symbolism with modern warfare serves the narrative function of recasting the current military action in the idiom of the **Mahabharata**, whereby the conflict is framed as a cosmic battle between dharma (righteousness) and adharma (unrighteousness). In this context, the mobilisation of religious iconography invokes deep cultural and affective resonances and contributes to a **moral legitimization of state violence by situating it within a sacralised, mytho-historical continuum**. It is well known that Hindutva politics frequently deploy religious symbols to conflate national and religious identities, thereby sacralising political violence as a necessity.



This post, which is from a paid/verified commentary account, depicts a war scene, where the Hindu deity Krishna, with his symbolic weapon 'Sudarshan chakkara' (Solar disk), is seen emerging from a smoke cloud, while a modern missile vehicle beneath launches missiles into the sky. The depiction is emotive and uses the 'sacredness' and 'War of Dharma' (Hindu holy war) tropes to depict India's missile strike against Pakistan. The text reads, (translated) "*Can you say with me Hail Lord Ram, Hail Hind [India].*"

Post Link:

<https://x.com/WCVyomikaStan/status/1922126994969371047>

The image shows an AI-generated Hindu God Hanuman - God of valour and strength - holding the Indian flag, and leading the Indian army behind him in a war frenzy. Lord Hanuman is seen standing on a war tank. The caption of the post reads 'Yudh Abhi Khatam Nahi Hua Hai! Yudh tho abh shuru hua hai!' (translated) "The war is not over! The war has just begun #OperationSindoor."

Post Link:

https://x.com/IndianSainik_/status/1920682481981723042





In this post by X user *Dr. Jasraj Prajapati*, who has 18.8k followers, an AI-generated image of the Hindu God Hanuman is depicted standing atop an Indian army fighter jet, with an Indian flag behind him. In the background are several fighter jets and missiles. Fire, smoke, and smouldering areas can be seen below. The image also depicts a charred Pakistani flag on the ground beneath. The caption reads: जब भारत ने चलाया ऑपरेशन सिंधु, तब सिर्फ सेना नहीं... सनातन की शक्ति भी रणभूमि में उतरी ! एयर फोर्स ने आसमान फाड़ा, नेवी ने समंदर काँपाया, आर्मी ने धरती को गरजाया - और इन सबके साथ खड़े थे भगवान हनुमान, भारत माता की रक्षा के लिए! "ये सिर्फ ऑपरेशन नहीं था, ये था सनातन का प्रहार... आतंक पर अंतिम प्रहार!"

Translation: "When India launched Operation Sindhur, not just the army... but the power of Sanatan also entered the battlefield! The Air Force tore the skies, the Navy shook the seas, the Army roared the earth - and with all of them stood Lord Hanuman, to protect Mother India!" "This was not just an operation, this was Sanatan's attack... the final attack on terror!"

Post Link-

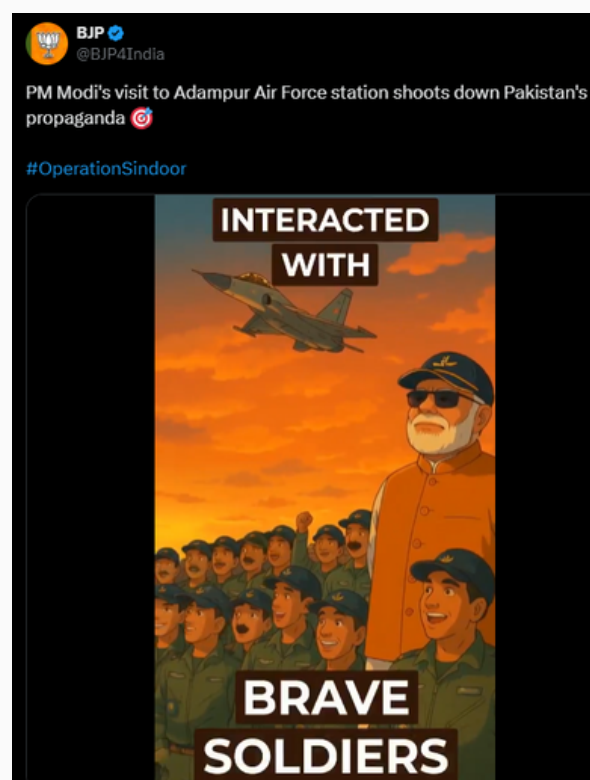
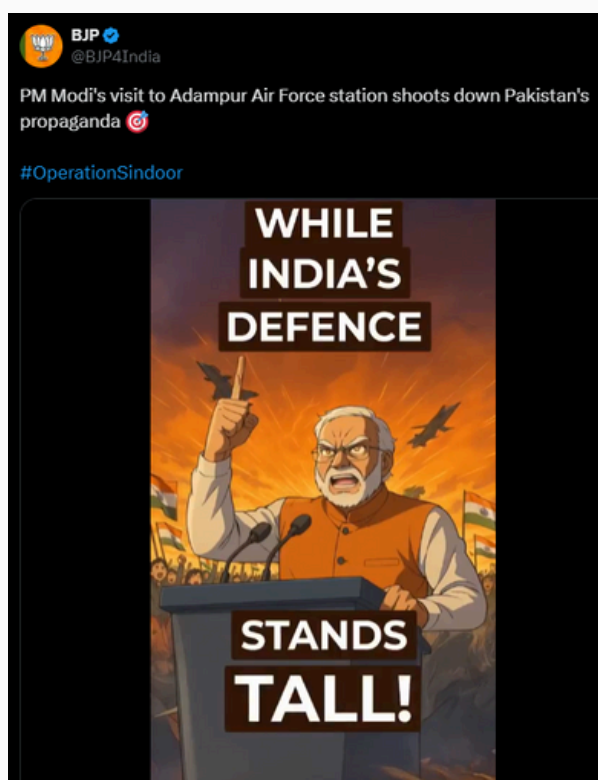
https://x.com/Its_Me_Jasraj/status/1920569201066192940

The AI-generated image shows Goddess Durga, a Hindu Goddess of strength and victory, mounted on a Lion. She is seated amongst Indian soldiers, all of whom have their fists raised in a war cry. The sky is filled with smoke, and a fighter jet can be seen in the background. Indian Prime Minister Modi is seen kneeling in a prayer pose. The text on the image reads, "O Akhileshwari, like how you cleared all obstacles in the three worlds, bless us to succeed and defeat our enemies." The post caption translates to "Hail Mother Bhawan!"

Post Link-

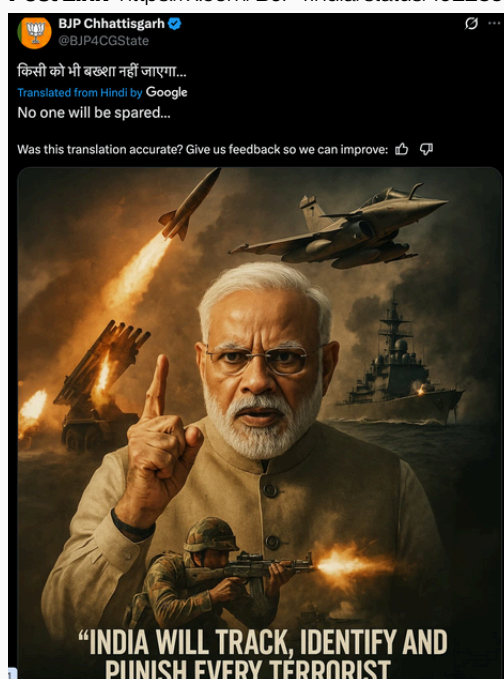
<https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=647708448258983&set=a.107302085632958ext>





Social media also saw a rise in the latest trend of Ghibli-style photographs and videos depicting war scenes. The AI-generated videos posted on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s official X page show a video montage of PM Modi visiting soldiers and an air base, which Pakistan claimed to have destroyed. The text of the video reads *"Propaganda vs Power. India stands tall. When facts clash with propaganda...only one stands tall. CLAIMED They hit Adampur Runway, CLAIMED they destroyed Adampur's S-400, CLAIMED drones struck Adampur radar, CLAIMED missiles destroyed fighter jets, CLAIMED 60 Indian soldiers killed, USED morphed satellite imagery, EVEN claimed Adampur was already defunct. While in India...PM Modi visited Adampur air force station, Interacted with brave soldiers, and reviewed defence readiness first-hand. Pakistan propaganda collapses with Indian defence stands tall."*

Post Link- <https://x.com/BJP4India/status/1922354907941671307>



In this (now deleted) post from the official X page of the BJP in Chhattisgarh, PM Modi is seen with a backdrop of the Indian military arsenal, including the BrahMos missile system (army artillery), the Rafale fighter aircraft (air defence), and a military ship (naval defence). A soldier is seen in the foreground firing a rifle. The text on the image reads: *"India will track, identify and punish every terrorist"*. The post caption reads (translated to English) *"No one will be spared"*.

Post Link-

<https://x.com/BJP4CGState/status/1915380908439588889>

Escalation

In this section of the report, we discuss how war hysteria on social media, which social media influencers and content creators contributed to, led to severe escalations and diplomatic issues during a critical crisis that could have potentially turned into a nuclear war and a nuclear winter for the world.



Post link:
<https://x.com/majorgauravarya/status/1921236822698439050>

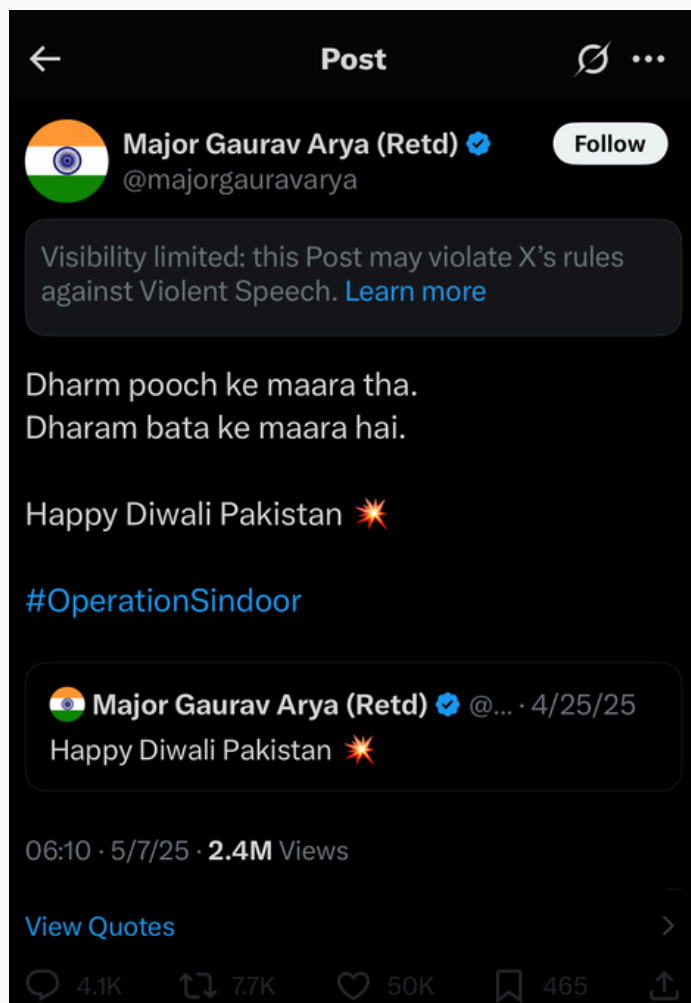
The BBC uses a 2019 article published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, by a group of distinguished professors from across the world, to demonstrate that a nuclear escalation between the two countries is not only possible, but may lead to a catastrophic unfolding of climatic disasters for the rest of the world. [33]

Despite these severe concerns, social media allowed an unchecked flurry of posts contributing to and seeking the escalation of the war.

On May 10th, amidst the call for de-escalation and a cease-fire from governments worldwide, X user Major Gaurav Arya called for the Indian government to ESCALATE the conflict. The post was seen by 7.1 million people.

Major Gaurav Arya is a retired BJP mayor, an Indian Army veteran, and a public speaker. He is the founder of *Chanakya Forum*, which appears several times in this report, and host of the *Chanakya Dialogues*. He is active on social media, with over 100k followers on *Instagram*, 1.8 million followers on *X*, and 141k followers on *Facebook*; he is also followed by PM Modi's official handle on *X*.





On May 7th, 2025, after Operation Sindoor was launched by the Indian Army, Major Arya tweeted “*Dharm pooch ke maara tha. Dharam bata ke maara hai, Hppy Diwali Pakistan*” (translation: “[They] asked for religion before killing [terror victims]. [We] told the religion before hitting. Happy Diwali Pakistan”). The post was viewed 2.4 million times and liked 49k times. While on the face of it, the English translation of the post is banal with no word falling under X’s obscure ‘Violent Speech’ category, it was a welcome surprise when X limited the visibility of this post.

POST LINK-

<https://x.com/majorgauravarya/status/1919968179268338033>

We are assuming that the visibility of Major Arya’s post was limited due to the fact that the X team was able to decipher the real nature of the post, as it does indeed use violent speech against Pakistan with vile threats of bombing.

However, it remains to be seen why X has continued to provide a blue tick-mark to Major Gaurav Arya (Retd). We are also unable to understand X’s obscure Violent Speech policy, given Major Arya’s post where he uses a single word **ESCALATE** - war mongering between two nuclear nations.

This post did not have reduced visibility and was not removed from the platform.

At the same time, calls from war pacifists and others in Indian society to de-escalate and engage in dialogue were ridiculed by proponents of Hindutva. The counter-messaging against de-escalation once again used popular trends, mythological imagery, and clippings from famous movies and TV series to portray those wanting de-escalation as either 'cowards', the 'enemy', or 'muslims + leftist'.



For example, in this post on the verified page of The Jaipur Dialogues, which describes itself as a platform for 'The Right Thinking People', we can see an AI-generated image where Pakistani men (both Army and alleged terrorists) are standing behind a line of hijab-clad Muslim women holding a banner 'De-escalate'. The image also shows a flurry of bullets and missiles flying past the line.

Post Link-

<https://x.com/JaipurDialogues/status/1920888185334157613>

The Jaipur Dialogue, founded by a former civil servant, Snjay Dixit, is a well-known network of hate-speech and disinformation spreading pages, groups, websites, YouTube channels, and X accounts. All of them are monetised through incendiary and dog-whistling content.



The video on the left was posted by Paltu Paltan in response to decries to de-escalate on social media. It uses a scene from one of the most highly viewed 'Mahabharat' (great war) mythological TV series of the 1990s. In the clip, the Hindu god 'Krishna' is seen speaking to Arjuna, at a time when Arjuna found himself shrouded in despair at the thought of waging war against his cousins. In the clip, Krishna says: "Before calling my name, please tell me Parth (Arjuna), at this time when your whole nation is surrounded by troubles, in the midst of this crisis, how could you allow these feelings of cowardice to enter your heart? Do not become impotent in this battle between good and evil."

In our previous reports, we have identified Paltu Paltan as a disinformation spreading page, which has bought advertisements during the election cycle in favour of the BJP.

Post link:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1410455236622039>



While the ceasefire between India and Pakistan came into effect on the 10th May 2025, the Hindutva right-wing media renewed its attention towards the Indian muslim community in their perpetual quest to deny them legitimacy within India. In the above two screenshots of videos published by Pradosh Chavhanke, the son of Suresh Chavanke (discussed earlier), raises incendiary remarks against Indian Muslims. In these posts, Chavhanke invites PM Modi to attack 'the Pakistani inside India,' saying "Now hit/kill the Pakistani inside India, Modi Ji!". The caption of the first post reads (translated to English): "The first stamp on the dates of terror is yours, I say it with conviction, there is treachery in their [Indian muslims] veins!" Now the enemies are not across the border but are hiding inside the house. Those who lick the spit of Pakistan, and is counted among the friends of Ajmal Kasab. This poem is not merely a warning - This is the proclamation of Sanatan's anger!"

The caption of the second post reads (translated to English): "Now hit the Pakistan inside India Modiji! How long will Hindustan fight on two and a half fronts? They [Indian Muslim] eat India's salt, but support Pakistan's intentions? No more tolerance!"

Post Link:

- <https://x.com/pchavhanke/status/1922310210988732700>
- <https://x.com/pchavhanke/status/1922326838765863107>

Injuring the Integrity of the nation

The unbridled hate speech, warmongering, and disinformation that was seen during the India-Pakistan conflict led not only to the collapse of the information space but also sought to disturb the integrity of the nation. Below are some examples of social media influencers using platforms to defame the country, harm friendly relations with foreign states, engage in warmongering to disturb public order, and project targeted, outright insults against individuals. While we note that X's policies are limited, it does have a policy against targeting individuals.

Article 19(1)(a) Constitution of India: All citizens shall have the right to (a) freedom of speech and expression

19(2): [Nothing in sub-clause (a) of clause (1) shall affect the operation of any existing law, or prevent the State from making any law, in so far as such law imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred by the said sub-clause in the interests of 4 [the sovereignty and integrity of India], the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.]



In the post, Major Gaurav Arya (Retd.) laughs at the business today.in news article 'China will always come to Pak's help'. He points out the conflicts between India and Pakistan in 1965, 1971, and 1999, where China was not a party to the conflict. He uses the racialised slur '*Ching chong ping pong ding dong*' (which is used to dehumanise the Chinese race and mock the language).

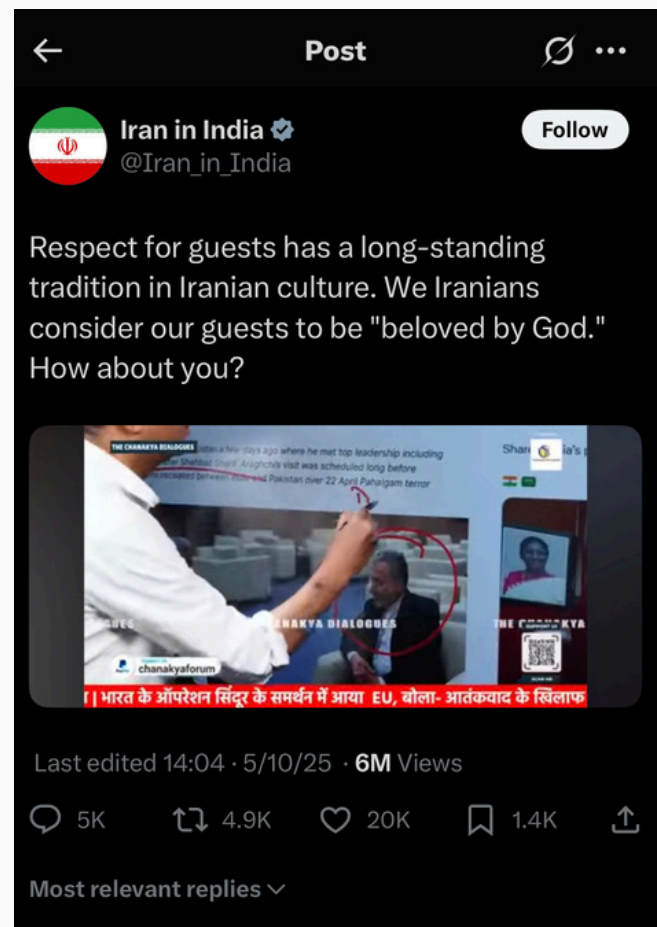
He then says - "Translated from Mandarin, this means '*Yeh Goli Kisi aur ko dena*' " (translate: '*Give this placebo to someone else*').

The mocking of Chinese people and language in the tweet is a clear indication of the ways in which he is acting against the interest and integrity of India, at a time when the nation is in fact in a crisis situation.

Post link:

<https://x.com/majorgauravarya/status/1918929925056442848>

In yet another post shared by Iran Observer (image on left), a video of Major Gaurav Arya (Retd.) is circulated in which he is seen calling Iran's foreign minister a 'son of a pig'. Iran Observer reports that the video is going viral on social media in Iran. The tweet of Iran Observer with the embedded video itself has 5.2 million views. Following the post by Iran Observer, the official X page of Iran's Embassy in India shared a still from the video (image on right), impliedly calling out India for its lack of respect towards its guests. The Indian Embassy in Iran had to step in to clarify that Major Gaurav Arya (Retd.) is a private individual and not a serving member of the Indian Army, and his views do not reflect those of the country.



Post Links:

1. <https://x.com/IranObserver0/status/1921154462086815989>
2. https://x.com/Iran_in_India/status/1921174571861877125

These tweets especially demonstrate the salient features of the platform where unchecked and unregulated free speech by rogue citizens who are gaming the platforms for self-enrichment, fan-following, and eventual monetisation is rewarded for bad behaviour, jeopardising the integrity of their nation states. Such unregulated speech can lead to foreign policy debacles and thrust the global world into an era of distrust and disrespect for each other.



Despite the Indian Government's stance on Major Gaurav Arya's tweet, Major Gaurav Arya himself doubles down in his dialogue with Iran Observer and re-shares their tweet with incendiary remarks and the hashtag #Porkys (a slur for Pig).

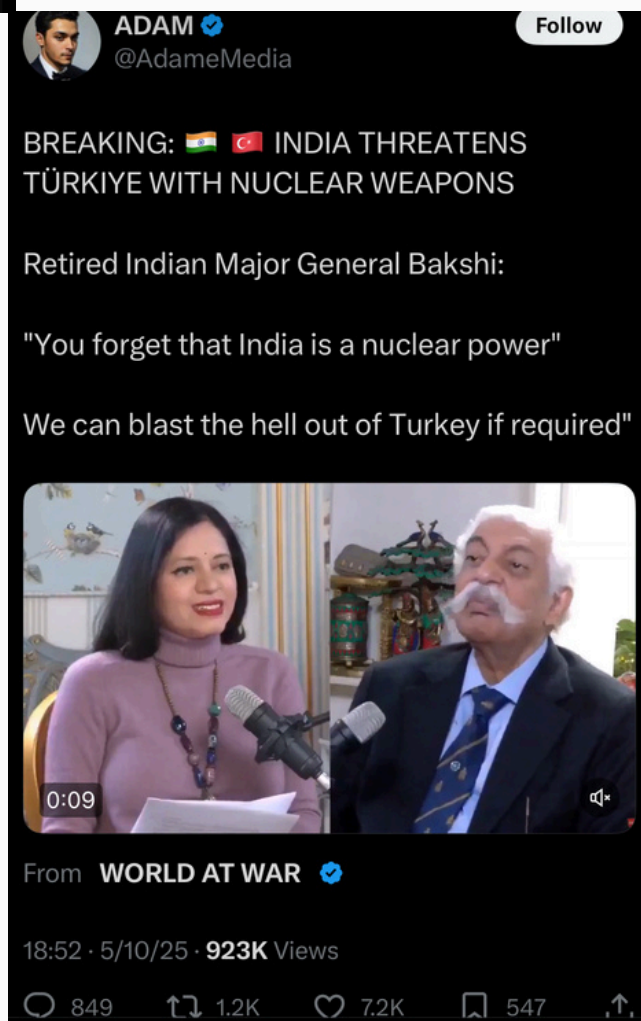
Post link:

<https://x.com/majorgauravarya/status/1921184881830162757>

Similarly, yet another keyboard warrior and minor influencer - former Major General GD Bakshi- from India is seen saying in a video widely circulated on X - "We can blast the hell out of Turkey if required"

Post Link:

<https://x.com/AdameMedia/status/1921246971567735068>



Conclusion

Engagement-based algorithms prioritise virality over truth or safety, consistently amplifying inflammatory content. *Meta* and *X* have underinvested in human content moderation in regional languages, and AI tools continue to fail to detect hateful Islamophobic content, lacking the linguistic, cultural and contextual knowledge to remove content which violates both platform standards and Indian domestic law. This is not new. For over a decade, these platforms have been complicit in the systematic targeting of marginalised communities in India, including the Muslim community, with little resistance **[34]**.

Both the incumbent Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have used social media as a tool to disseminate anti-Muslim rhetoric, misinformation, and communal propaganda **[35]**. Despite repeated warnings from whistle blowers, civil society, and journalists, including before and during the 2024 Indian General Election, tech companies, including *Meta* and *X*, have allowed their platforms to be weaponised, failing to enforce even their most basic content moderation rules and becoming complicit in the real-world harms perpetrated against marginalised groups **[36]**.

Furthermore, under Elon Musk's leadership, *X* has now positioned itself as a global news source, with Musk proclaiming that the goal of the platform is to become "the most accurate source of information on Earth." **[37]** However, by failing to remove extremist, Islamophobic hate speech, disinformation, and content consistent with an incitement to violence, and actively promoting such content to drive user engagement, *X* is gamifying the India-Pakistan war and eroding empathy. Engagement-based revenue models allow accounts to profit from inflammatory content, turning communal violence into viral content and war into entertainment.

Compounding the harm is India's lack of a rights-based regulatory framework to confront this avalanche of digital hate, disinformation, and incitement **[38]**. In this regulatory vacuum, tech companies are not required to provide any transparency into if or how they are moderating Indian-language content or mitigating the risks of engagement-based algorithms.

Furthermore, the Indian government is engaging in digital censorship, having issued executive orders restricting online content and blocking accounts [39]. Many of these accounts belong to journalists, human rights organisations, and independent media outlets that are attempting to combat the widespread disinformation and hate speech through fact-checking and accurate reporting [40].

The result is an unchecked ecosystem of online hate, where algorithmic design choices and policy inaction are directly contributing to violence on the ground. What's more, these companies have failed to make a statement on whether they are even responding to this surge in misinformation and hate speech. This silence is not neutrality, but complicity. Their inaction in the face of mass Islamophobic incitement is a violation of their stated community standards and their human rights obligations under frameworks such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights [41].

This report demonstrates that social media platforms are not merely reflecting societal tensions; they are actively shaping them. Since both India's and Pakistan's foreign policies are an extension of their internal politics, the discursive discourse of internal politics on social media requires deeper consideration. In a moment of heightened military conflict between two nuclear-armed states, the choices these countries make carry profound and potentially irreversible consequences.

It remains unclear why both *X* and *Meta* continue to provide platforms to the huge surge in Islamophobic hate speech, disinformation and incitements to violence, despite being fully aware of their role in creating the atmosphere of hate within the Indian and global context.

At the same time, it has become vital for countries to adopt legislation to regulate the conduct of social media companies, and specifically define reservations on the right to freedom of speech. While freedom of speech is not an absolute right, its limitations also need to be circumscribed by a legal apparatus to avoid the arbitrary removal of content, banning of accounts, or internet shutdowns, which governments have otherwise been resorting to.

Recommendations

Strengthen Enforcement of Platform Content Regulations Amidst Conflict

In the context of escalated tensions such as the India-Pakistan conflict, social media platforms must rigorously enforce their content moderation policies on hateful conduct, dangerous speech, and Designated Dangerous Organisations and Individuals (DOI). Conflict periods tend to amplify online hate speech, often targeting religious and ethnic groups, as evidenced by our research on digital incitement during armed conflict.

Designate Islamophobic Networks as Dangerous Organisations and Individuals (DOIs)

Social media companies should make full use of their DOI policies to blacklist users and networks that persistently spread Islamophobic content—especially those that demonise Muslims through caricatures, dehumanisation, and false association with terrorism. Our research has consistently documented how platform affordances and networked virality can normalise hate and lay the groundwork for real-world violence. Repeat offenders and affiliated fan pages known to have previously violated Meta and X's community standards, several of which are once again discussed in this report, should be permanently removed.

Enhance Transparency in Hate Speech Moderation During Crises

To ensure accountability and due diligence, platforms should publish India-specific transparency reports during periods of heightened political and military tensions. These reports must:

- Specify the number of user-flagged content items,
- Detail removal rates and appeal outcomes,
- Clarify the thresholds and typologies used in content decisions (e.g., targeting based on religion, nationality, or ethnicity), and
- Share metadata of networks that spread hate narratives to aid independent human rights assessments.

Develop Risk Assessment Frameworks During Conflicts

Social media platforms should develop and disclose clear risk assessment protocols for moderating borderline or inflammatory content during crises such as wars. The goal is to preempt the normalisation of hate speech, disinformation, and digital vigilantism. Reports should also document how algorithms amplify or suppress specific narratives in real time.

Policy Recommendation to the Government of India: Reservation under Article 19(2)

Democratic governments should firmly commit to freedom of speech and protect criticism, dissent, and satire from being conflated with anti-national speech and completely reserve from overbroad censorship and arbitrary content takedowns. To regulate free speech in national interest during crisis times, the Government must introduce a statutory reservation to Article 19(2) of the Constitution, that:

- Is specific, narrow, necessary, and proportionate to the objectives of 19(2).
- Has due process safeguards, including notice, reasoned decisions, and the right to appeal.

PLATFORM CONTENT POLICIES

X claims to prohibit hateful conduct, including attacks on “other people on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, age, disability, or serious disease” [\[42\]](#). The platform also bans ‘hateful entities’; “ those that have systematically and intentionally promoted, supported and/or advocated for hateful conduct, which includes promoting violence or engaging in targeted harassment towards a protected category.” [\[43\]](#) Incitement to violence and economic boycotts, dehumanising language, and hateful imagery are also prohibited [\[44\]](#). **The platform uses Community Notes, a crowd-sourced annotation tool, in place of professional fact-checking [\[45\]](#)**. However, these mechanisms have failed to prevent the platform from becoming a hub for dangerous hate speech.

Since Elon Musk’s takeover, platform transparency has further declined. X now provides even less insight into its moderation practices through transparency reports and has continued to fail to provide transparency into whether it has Indian language content moderators and how Indian-origin content is moderated [\[46\]](#). While the platform claims to use ‘a combination of machine learning and human review’, the fact that much of the Islamophobic content remains live on the platform and the hashtags continue to trend, demonstrates that like *Meta*, X is failing to enforce its own policies and adapt content moderation mechanisms to the Indian context [\[47\]](#).

Meta's Community Standards define hateful conduct as “a direct attack against people — rather than concepts or institutions — on the basis of what we call protected characteristics (PCs): race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religious affiliation, caste, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity and serious disease.” **[48]**

Meta has two tiers of prohibited content.

Tier 1

“Content targeting a person or group of people (except groups described as having carried out violent or sexual crimes or representing less than half of a group) on the basis of their aforementioned protected characteristic(s) or immigration status in written or visual form with:

- Dehumanising speech in the form of comparisons to or generalisations about animals, pathogens or other sub-human life forms, including:
- Insects (including, but not limited to, cockroaches, locusts)
- Animals in general or specific types of animals that are culturally perceived as inferior (including, but not limited to, Black people and apes or ape-like creatures; Jewish people and rats; Muslim people and pigs; Mexican people and worms)
- Bacteria, viruses or microbes
- Sub-humanity (including, but not limited to: savages, devils, monsters)
- Allegations of serious immorality and criminality:
- Sexual predators and pedophiles (including, but not limited to: Muslim people having sex with goats or pigs)
- Violent criminals (including but not limited to: terrorists, murderers)
- Calls and hopes for the following harms (serious or specific threats and calls for violence are addressed under our Violence and Incitement policy):
- Contracting a disease
- Experiencing a natural disaster
- Self-injury or suicide
- Death without a perpetrator or method
- Accidents and other physical harms caused either by no perpetrator or by a deity
- Harmful stereotypes historically linked to intimidation or violence, such as Blackface; Holocaust denial; claims that Jewish people control financial, political or media institutions; references to Dalits as menial laborers; and comparing Black people to farm equipment.
- Mocking the concept, events or victims of hate crimes even if no real person is depicted in an image.
- Mocking people for having or experiencing a disease.
- Content that describes or negatively targets people with slurs. Slurs are defined as words that inherently create an atmosphere of exclusion and intimidation against people on the basis of a protected characteristic, often because these words are tied to historical discrimination, oppression and violence.” **[49]**

Tier 2

“Content targeting a person or group of people on the basis of their protected characteristic(s) (in written or visual form) with:

- Calls or support for exclusion or segregation or statements of intent to exclude or segregate, defined as:
- General exclusion, which means calling for general exclusion or segregation, such as "No X allowed!"
- Political exclusion, which means denying the right to political participation or arguing for incarceration or denial of political rights.
- Economic exclusion, which means denying access to economic entitlements and limiting participation in the labour market. We do allow content arguing for gender-based limitations of military, law enforcement and teaching jobs. We also allow the same content based on sexual orientation, when the content is based on religious beliefs.
- Social exclusion, which means things like denying access to spaces (physical and online) and social services, except for sex or gender-based exclusion from spaces commonly limited by sex or gender, such as bathrooms, sports and sports leagues, health and support groups, and specific schools.
- Insults, including those about:
- Character, including but not limited to allegations of cowardice, dishonesty, basic criminality and sexual promiscuity or other sexual immorality.
- Mental characteristics, including, but not limited to, allegations of stupidity, intellectual capacity and mental illness, and unsupported comparisons between PC groups on the basis of inherent intellectual capacity. We do allow allegations of mental illness or abnormality when based on gender or sexual orientation, given political and religious discourse about transgenderism and homosexuality and common non-serious usage of words such as "weird".
- Other areas, including, but not limited to, allegations of worthlessness, uselessness, ugliness, dirtiness.
- Expressions that suggest the target causes sickness, including, but not limited to, "make me vomit".
- Targeted cursing, except certain gender-based cursing in a romantic break-up context, defined as:
- Targeted use of "fuck" or variations of "fuck" with intent to insult, such as "Fuck the [Protected Characteristic]!"
- Terms or phrases calling for engagement in sexual activity, or contact with genitalia, anus, faeces or urine, including, but not limited to, suck my dick, kiss my ass, eat shit." **[50]**

Meta also prohibits “Dangerous Organisations and Individuals (DOIs)” from using its platforms, as part of “an effort to prevent and disrupt real-world harm.”

***Meta* has two tiers for designating individuals, organisations and networks of people as DOIs:**

“**Tier 1** focuses on entities that engage in serious offline harm – including organising or advocating for violence against civilians, repeatedly dehumanising or advocating for harm against people based on protected characteristics, or engaging in systematic criminal operations. Tier 1 includes hate organisations, criminal organisations, including those designated by the United States government as specially designated narcotics trafficking kingpins (SDNTKs), and terrorist organisations, including entities and individuals designated by the United States government as foreign terrorist organisations (FTOs) or specially designated global terrorists (SDGTs). We remove Glorification, Support and Representation of Tier 1 entities, their leaders, founders or prominent members, as well as unclear references to them.

In addition, we do not allow content that glorifies, supports or represents events that *Meta* designates as violating violent events – including terrorist attacks, hate events, multiple-victim violence or attempted multiple-victim violence, serial murders or hate crimes. Nor do we allow (1) Glorification, Support or Representation of the perpetrator(s) of such attacks; (2) perpetrator-generated content relating to such attacks; or (3) third-party imagery depicting the moment of such attacks on visible victims. We also remove content that Glorifies, Supports or Represents ideologies that promote hate, such as nazism and white supremacy. We remove unclear references to these designated events or ideologies.

Tier 2 includes Violent Non-State Actors that engage in violence against state or military actors in an armed conflict but do not intentionally target civilians. It also includes Violence-Inducing Entities that are engaged in preparing or advocating for future violence but have not necessarily engaged in violence to date. These are also entities that may repeatedly engage in violations of our Hate Speech or Dangerous Organisations and Individuals policies on or off the platform. We remove glorification, material support and representation of these entities or of their leaders, founders or prominent members.”[\[51\]](#)

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