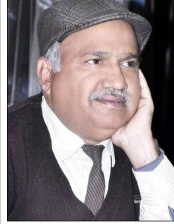


EDITORIAL

Propaganda changing in digital age

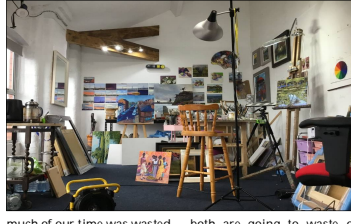
Political elections are propagandistic pageantry. Where else is the aim of the propagandist clearer than in a political campaign? Obviously, the intention of all election material is to convince a voter to cast a ballot one way. Campaign content is deliberately designed in such a way to sway the electorate to the outcome desired – in other words, to vote a candidate into office. As a result, elections create a highly manipulative environment whereby the widely unsuspecting public becomes increasingly prone to influence. The use of polls, fear, propaganda, and demagoguery are all methods of manipulation, to which we are all vulnerable. Propaganda is changing in a Digital Age. What once was a top-down effort to the masses has through the internet become a participatory affair. As people increasingly “plug-in” to online services, a wealth of personal data aggregated by internet giants facilitates the creation and distribution of tailored provocative messaging, which savvy propagandists then push through online communities to unsuspecting target audiences who help spread persuasive content further. In this dynamic information environment, audiences are no longer passive consumers of persuasive content. Instead, they are active agents who participate in its creation, spread and amplification, inadvertently furthering the agenda of propagandists whose messaging resonates with their world view. Propagandists achieve this through behavioural advertising, manipulating internet algorithms, targeting and provoking online echo chambers and communities, and winning traditional media coverage. These methods, alongside the pervasiveness of modern communications in our lives, create ample opportunities for skilled propagandists to set agendas for and influence national political dynamics or policy choices. India has an estimated 760 million ‘active’ internet users, accessing the internet more than once a month. 400 million of those are active on WhatsApp – the messaging platform’s largest user base. Several million others use alternative platforms like Facebook Messenger, Telegram and Signal. WhatsApp is the second largest, and Telegram is the fifth largest online platform for Indians to access news. Flying under the radar of election authorities, media regulators and policymakers, these messaging platforms have now become a core feature of electoral communications and media in India. Given its reach and popularity of use, it’s no surprise that political parties, candidates, campaign management firms and the plethora of other actors involved in understanding and winning over the Indian electorate have adapted their strategies to utilise WhatsApp’s potential for elections. All relevant stakeholders need to firmly commit to the right to privacy, including the right to private communications, and abstain from undermining encryption.



VIJAY GARG

The importance of time has been discussed in every era. The concern about this has always been deep and everyone understands it. But something else happens on the ground. Time is valuable, precious, priceless. It never comes back. Despite knowing everything, have we ever thought that there are time robbers around us, who steal our time and push us back in life. Do not allow us to reach success. Many times when we want to do some important work, we lack time. Those who have tasted failure in life know very well when, where, how and who has wasted their time. It is only after failure that we remember how

Snatching Moments



much of our time was wasted. Only he who does not waste time is successful.

Today’s young generation understands this better. But those who stole time have also corrupted many youth. The meaning is that in every one’s life sometimes we do things that steal time and sometimes we do things that save time. Time savers enhance lives. From my own experiences I can identify them, because there is no special difference between the two.

A very fine line divides these two. We have often seen that some people sometimes become so engrossed in conversation that they do not realize the time. Meanwhile, they are unable to do many of their important tasks. Here

both are going to waste or steal each other’s time. Both wasted each other’s time. On one hand meaningful conversation gives us some lessons, on the other hand senseless conversation also gives us the lesson that in this type of conversation Taking time is not a good thing. Where our time is of no use, neither for us nor for anyone else, then we should understand that time stealers are working there.

An example can be seen. A roadside pani-puri vendor serves pani-puri to many customers simultaneously, and simultaneously prepares the pani-puri as per the customers’ choice. Even after doing many tasks simultaneously, he keeps himself fit. During this time

he still has time left. He makes full use of his short time. This happens many times. If we are going somewhere, then someone tells us that the road ahead is bad... you will not be able to go. At that time he appears to us as a time waster. If we find the road really bad, then that person becomes a time saver for us.

There is only this much difference between the two. Sometimes some work takes more time than we need. This means that a time-wasting element is at work there. Sometimes a task gets done easily, then our time-saving aspect comes into play unknowingly.

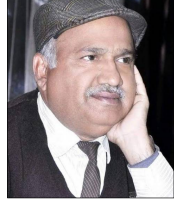
If we decide that we do not want to spend more time on this work, then we have become a time saver. People who work at computers often spend many hours checking and responding to emails. Whereas more important work is waiting for them. Stories criticizing someone, stories of jealousy etc. are the other hand, listening to good thoughts, playing like a child with children and doing work in which we are interested, all these are our time

savers. Nowadays, children spend a lot of time on mobile and social media. Goes to forums i.e. Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook etc. Will not be able to understand this right now. But later, when they are unable to complete many tasks, then they realize how much time they have wasted.

The thief of time is the biggest enemy of those who cannot keep their table clean. To understand this, it is enough to see the student’s books, notebooks, clothes, bag etc. Everything kept neatly shows that the time-saving mind is with them. The factors that waste time are scattered all around us. Just carefully if we see, we will understand who is helpful in improving our life.

There is a limit to everyone’s time. The element that steals time plays an important role in the lives of those who have failed. These teach us to waste time, while time savers teach us to save time. It is up to us as to whom we want to make as our friends. What is even more important is that we should also examine and identify whether we are the ones wasting time for someone else.

Self Defence - Education For Safety



VIJAY GARG

Self Defence is the act of defending oneself, one’s property or someone else from physical harm. Self Defence has an important role in the life of women. Self Defence is a skill which every woman should acquire to make their own and others live safer on a daily basis or whenever the situation requires. Women often become victims because of their physical ability. Self Defence techniques enable them to take control of situations in which they may end up being a victim of verbal abuse, physical attack etc. Such techniques also increase confidence in realising that if someone does not respect your boundaries, you should stop them.

Crime is on the rise, especially among women. And it doesn’t matter where you live or work, you are at risk of becoming a victim of a

violent or intrusive crime. There is only one perfect way to deal with it, is to defend your self with certain psychological, physical and Self Defence tools. Most likely, when a personal attack occurs it is very likely that the police won’t be standing nearby and also likely is the fact that the police can only get involved after the damage has been done. Everyone is entitled to feel safe and Self-Defence provides the tools. While so much attention is given to Academic Education, one should not consider Self-Defence as useless or redundant because just like academics is important for our future, self-defence is important for our safety.

Self Defence Education
Most people think of Self Defence as a kick to the groin or fist in the eyes of an attacker. But the actual meaning of Self Defence is doing everything possible to avoid fighting someone who threatens or attacks you. Self-Defence is all about using your head and not just your fists. This education requires no or very minimal requirements. It does not matter whether you have any previous experience or not. There are no uniforms, foreign terminology, traditional rituals or formalities to it. It is just Practical and Simple life-saving skill techniques which require minimal commitment.

Self Defence Education is not just for tough women it is for all women and of all ages. It does not need to be Formal. Anyone can have it from anywhere, be it from friends, relatives, family, literature etc. But it is better to have the proper knowledge and Hands-On Experience rather than counting on just silly tips.

Means of Self Defence Education
Workshops: Workshops on self-defence for women are held from time to time in order to prepare women against attacks on streets, trains or even in the confines of their homes. Such Workshops generally are held by NGOs and they teach you how to deal with a nuisance, protecting yourself from and coping with an attacker.

Special Programs: Special programs options are available for high schools, colleges, community centres, women’s shelters, businesses and other organizations. Self-defence programs are specially designed to serve to needs of women in a variety of different situations. Most of these are offered in schools or colleges as an after-school activity, or during class-time as a special curriculum component to physical education or sex education classes. These programs can also impart education to hospitals, businesses, community organizations and women’s centres. The Course comprises of lectures and

practical Self Defence Techniques

Personal Trainers: Certain Instructors give personal attention by coming to you and will adopt a program to meet your needs. They show you and teach you how to avoid an attack, or in the situation where you are attacked, how to fight back etc.

Martial Arts Schools: Various Martial Arts classes include a combination of Kickboxing, Tae-Kwon-do, Kung Fu, Karate, Krav Maga stretching, conditioning and effective techniques that will increase confidence, reduce stress, boost energy, fitness, health and teach you a very practical system of Self Protection. Such Arts not only improve both body and mind but it will also empower you with a life-saving skill.

Internet: Internet is a treasure of information on Self Defence. Various online courses and self-help guides provide the essentials for Self Defence. Some also provide shopping for Self Defence equipment and also raise awareness and prevention of crime on women. One of them is <http://www.selfdefence.in/>

Books, Magazines and other Literature: Various Types of publications provide detailed information on the Know-How of Self Protection.

Media Forms: Various T.V. channels and Radio Programmes

act as agents of education on this aspect. Certain DVD’s, CDs, CD-ROM’s etc also help in this objective.

Methods of Self Defence
Self Defence Tools: Various types of equipment are available in shops and Online which are very helpful. Women can carry defensive weapons like pungent sprays, keys, umbrellas etc. Such tools are primarily to defend and escape, and not to indulge in long fights. The positive step of buying a self-defence product such as a pepper spray or stun gun improves your awareness and adds to your image of confidence.

Weapons: In some countries, it is legal to carry weapons for purposes of self-defence. While in other countries one may require a license or some items may be legal to carry without a license. But there is a lot of controversies as these may be utilised for committing the violent crime.

Presence of Mind: One needs to have the Presence of Mind and not get caught up in panic. Some of the easiest strategies for this are - saying something, yelling, fighting and the important thing is you should appear confident even if you have no action plan and the right tools with which to carry it out. Being alert is the first step towards self-protection

What kind of laws will our new MPs enact? Take a look over last

AAKAR PATEL

The primary function of Parliament is to legislate. When we elect people to the Lok Sabha, we are choosing who will write and pass our laws. In India, laws are now passed without debate, both at the Union and the state levels. This means that parties which have a majority and an ideology can legislate what they want without pushback. As we elect MPs for the next five years, let us look at many of the laws and amendments that we have been given in the previous decade.

Right to Information (Amendment) Act, 2019 This amendment gives the Union the powers to set the salaries and service conditions of information commissioners at the Union as well as state levels. Instead of fixed terms, commissioners can be appointed on arbitrary conditions and salaries. India fell from second place in global RTI ratings in 2014 to ninth place.

Before this amendment, UAPA only allowed organisations to be categorised as “terror-

ist”. The State can now categorise any individual as a “terrorist”.

These individuals need not even have any affiliation with any of the 36 terrorist organisations mentioned in the law to be classified as terrorists and then jailed. “The Karnataka Education Act (1983) Order 2022 In 2022, Karnataka banned Muslim women and girls from covering their heads in schools and colleges that had uniforms. Even in colleges which did not have a prescribed uniform, the covering of heads by Muslims was prohibited because “clothes which disturb equality, integrity and public law and order should not be worn”. Sikhs were excluded from the order. Maharashtra Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act, 2015 After the Prime Minister’s speeches against what he called the “pink revolution”, states began to criminalise the possession of beef. This began a series of violent attacks the media called “beef lyn-chings”. Someone accused of having a beef sandwich can be jailed five years. This first law began a series of copycat

laws in other BJP-ruled states. The Haryana Gauvansh Sanrakshan and Gausamvardhan Act, 2015 Possession of beef is punishable by up to five years in jail. The burden of proof is on the accused. “The Gujarat Animal Preservation (Amendment) Act, 2017 This law extended the punishment for cow slaughter to life in prison. No other economic crime attracts life. Minister of state for home Pradipsinh Jadhav said the logic was to equal cow slaughter with murder. “Uttar Pradesh Recovery of Damage to Public and Private Property Act, 2020 Enacted after the UP Police shot dead 21 people protesting against the CAA, this law gives the government the power to set up tribunals to decide damage to any public or private property due to riots, hartals, bandhs, protests or public processions. All orders passed by the tribunals will be final and cannot be appealed before any court, under the law’s Section 22. “Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion Act, 2018 This is the first

of seven state laws introduced and legislated by the BJP after the conspiracy theory of “love jihad” began to be circulated.

It criminalises marriages between Hindus and Muslims if conversion is involved. However, “if any person comes back to his ancestral religion”, then this shall not be deemed conversion. Those who change their faith without applying to the government “in the prescribed pro-forma” and without the consent of the government after the police inquiry face jail. “Himachal Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2019 Similar to Uttarakhand’s law, under this law the punishment for propagation (a fundamental right under Article 25) is seven years in jail. “Uttar Pradesh Vidhi Viruddh Dharma Samparivartan Pratishedh Adhyadesh, 2020 Similar to the previous laws, this one prohibits conversion except with government permission and 60 days’ notice. Similar laws were passed by BJP governments in MP (Madhya Pradesh Freedom of Religion Act, 2021), Gujarat

(Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021), Karnataka (Karnataka Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Act, 2022) and Haryana (Haryana Prevention of Unlawful Conversion of Religious Act, 2022). “Temporary Suspension of Telecom Services (Public Emergency or Public Safety) Rules, 2017 This gives the Union and states governments the power to suspend, for any reason, mobile and Internet services. India is the world’s leader in Internet shutdowns.

Of 213 total global shutdowns in 2019, India accounted for 56 per cent (12 times more than the next nation, Venezuela). Of 155 global shutdowns in 2020, India accounted for 70 per cent. “Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in Disturbed Areas Act, 2019 Amendment This law bans Hindus and Muslims from buying or renting properties from each other without the government’s permission.

GOLDEN YUG

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