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Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics

AI KNOWLEDGE CONSORTIUM

# TECHNOLOGY AND DEMOCRACY

## DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 2025 AND USE OF AI

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# Acknowledgement

We, at the Institute for Governance, Policies & Politics, New Delhi, would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to the creation of this report, **'Technology and Democracy: AI and Delhi Assembly Election, 2025.'**

We would also like to acknowledge the guidance and support of our advisory board. Your strategic direction and thoughtful feedback have greatly enhanced the quality and relevance of this report.

We are grateful for the support of AIKC, whose assistance and support were crucial for the successful completion of the study. Additionally, we acknowledge the contribution of our team of researchers, analysts, and writers whose dedication, expertise, and hard work made this report possible. Your commitment to excellence and rigorous analysis has ensured that this report is both comprehensive and insightful.

Lastly, we extend our gratitude to the survey respondents and experts who participated in the workshop to explore the role of AI in election campaigns. We also appreciate the valuable contributions of Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Assistant Professor at the University of Delhi, for assisting in identifying relevant AI use cases in elections and providing insightful guidance for the study.

We hope this report serves as a valuable resource for understanding the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in electoral process in India and contribute to the body of knowledge and literature of the role of technology in democracy.

# Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

The year 2024 has been a remarkable year globally, with elections taking center stage in numerous countries and India, the world's most populous democracy is one of them. India witnessed the emergence of a noteworthy new entrant in its political sphere - Artificial Intelligence (AI). Perspectives on this new entrant range from concerns about an 'information apocalypse' to views dismissing it as an 'overblown fear.' Apprehensions have been raised in its regard by various stakeholders ranging from voters, contestants, academicians, experts to the Elections Commission of India (ECI).

This report highlights the gap between AI's perceived potential and its real-world implications in electoral politics. It is part of a series of initiatives undertaken by IGPP, including the **'Workshop for Policymakers**,' the report on **'What Indian Parliamentarians Think of AI?'** and the flagship program **'AI and Your Electoral Fortune,'** where the IGPP team engaged with Lok Sabha candidates in 2024 to understand the ground realities of AI use in elections and campaigns.

The next in this series is the report - **'Technology and Democracy: Delhi Assembly Election, 2025 and the Use of AI.'** This report aims to analyse the actual impact of AI in elections in Delhi—one of India's most digitally literate regions with one of the highest internet penetration rates. The Delhi Assembly Election 2025 provided a unique opportunity to study AI's role in election campaigns and AI-generated content's influence on voters. With conflicting observations being made worldwide on AI's role in elections and its role in redefining the political space and democracy, this report is an attempt to identify its role in Indian political discourse.

**To conduct this study, a multi-pronged approach was employed. This included:**

- Monitoring various media platforms to collect AI use cases,
- Organizing workshops to gather insights from individuals working on the ground, including campaign managers, journalists, researchers, and voters who are closely analysing or implementing AI in elections, and
- Conducting a survey on AI and the Delhi Assembly Election to gauge public perception of AI-generated and manipulated content on social media and its influence on voter decision-making.

Additionally, this report critically assesses the stance of the Election Commission of India (ECI) on AI's use in elections and campaigns.

## Key Findings

- **AI's Role Was Limited to Content Creation, Not Decision-Making:** AI's presence in the Delhi elections was largely confined to AI-generated memes, edited videos, isolated deepfake incidents and unsophisticated AI-manipulated videos, primarily in the form of spoofs and parody content. These parodies mostly repurposed clips from popular movies, altering them to create multimedia content for narrative building. Such content did not have significant influence on voting patterns. AI-driven personalized voter outreach was constrained due to regional diversity, linguistic complexity, and limited access to high-quality data.

- **Deepfake & Misinformation Risks Exist, but Their Impact Is Limited:** Some AI-generated misinformation (e.g., the deepfake video of Waris Pathan in Maharashtra, 2024) spread rapidly but did not fundamentally change electoral outcomes. Last-minute AI-driven misinformation is a risk since it leaves little time for fact-checking or countermeasures.

- **Voter Behavior Is Driven by Socio-Cultural Factors, Not AI Messaging:** India's complex socio-political landscape, where personal connections and community-driven engagement play a crucial role, further limited AI's effectiveness in swaying voters. AI struggles with ambiguity, uncertainty, and socio-political complexity, which are central to democracy. Electoral decisions are shaped by identity, values, age, caste, regional factors, and historical context, rather than AI-generated persuasion campaigns.

- **Voters Become Resilient to AI-generated Deceptive Content:** Voters are resilient to AI-generated deceptive content due to the overwhelming volume of political content they receive and also if it does not align with their existing belief or political alignment.

- **AI Deployment Has Not Reached the Predicted Scale:** AI-based electioneering is resource-intensive in India, making it accessible mainly to larger, well-funded political parties while smaller parties rely on conventional strategies.

- **AI Amplifies Existing Political Narratives Rather Than Creating New Ones:** AI-generated content reinforces pre-existing political ideologies rather than shaping new voter perspectives. AI-driven narratives gained traction primarily on platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and Facebook, but at the same time narrative spread through private messaging platforms such as WhatsApp what is not known and explored.

- **AI's Future Role in Elections Remains Uncertain:** AI could play a bigger role in narrative-building as social media evolves. However, as of now, AI is more of a supporting tool rather than a transformative force in electoral politics.

- **AI's Use in Democracy Needs Ethical Oversight:** The evolution of AI in elections mirrors past mass media developments (e.g., printing press, radio, television, and the internet). Moving forward, regulation and ethical frameworks and proactive role of ECI is essential to ensure that AI strengthens democracy and electoral process rather than undermines it.

Despite its current limitations, AI still holds long-term potential in shaping political discourse, particularly through social media-driven narrative building. History shows that mass media—from the printing press to television and the internet—has continuously reshaped political communication. As AI continues to evolve, its regulation and ethical use will be critical in ensuring that it serves democracy rather than undermines it. The challenge ahead is not just technological but also political ensuring that AI remains a tool for human agency rather than a force controlling it. The study findings suggest and point toward adopting a mixed approach to using AI for positive outcomes, strengthening democracy rather than undermining its integrity. This approach is needed at multiple levels—technological, regulatory, and policy—while also focusing on raising voter awareness and empowering them to recognize and identify deceptive content.

# Introduction

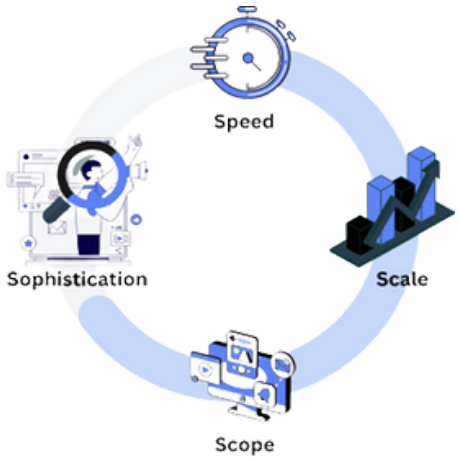
# Introduction

Elections and campaigns have always been experimental spaces for different actors and integration of technologies at various levels of elections across different countries. Election campaigning in India has evolved from traditional approaches like door-to-door campaigning and rallies, pamphlets, radios, newspapers to modern approaches like TV, the use of social media and now the new entrant AI. The integration of digital technology in political campaigns in India began during the 2004 elections, driven by the IT boom in the early 2000s. BJP pioneered its online campaigning with the 'India Shining' campaign, using internet-based advertisements, SMS outreach, and digital posters alongside traditional billboards (Gowda & Gupta, 2010). The 2009 General elections saw Indian political parties draw inspiration from 2008 US Presidential candidate Barack Obama's successful digital campaign, expanding outreach through platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Yahoo, MSN, Orkut, and MySpace. Early 2000s saw online movements gaining momentum such as 'Lok Paritran' in Tamil Nadu and 'Bengaluru Unites' mobilised youth, proving digital platforms' effectiveness in political activism (Gowda & Gupta, 2010). By then, parties were beginning to realize the importance of digital campaigns, particularly in engaging with first-time voters (Mehra, 2009). Social media penetration grew from 9% in 2014 to nearly 33% in 2019, making platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube critical for voter outreach. Hence, social media emerged as the powerful tool in building, shaping and disseminating narratives among masses. The impact of social media on narrative-building efforts can be understood through two key theories: Mobilization and Reinforcement (Bestvater & Loyle, 2023; Makatlal & Kumar, 2022; Renner, 2016). Social media has played a crucial role in both aspects. Mobilization suggests that the internet can reshape political discourse within existing systems by influencing public opinion and voter behaviour. On the other hand, the Reinforcement theory suggests that social media strengthens pre-existing beliefs by exposing users primarily to content that aligns with their ideological preferences. This has been further amplified with the coming of AI.

## AI – The New Entrant to Elections and Campaigns

The recent elections were characterised by the unprecedented integration of AI into various facets of elections and campaigns. These elections witnessed political entities investing approximately 50 million dollars in AI-generated content (Shah, 2024), utilizing tools for generating deepfakes, AI manipulations, micro-targeting AI-driven translations, and personalized messaging to connect with voters across linguistic and regional divides. It was assumed that AI in campaigning will make elections cost-effective, with low-budget campaigns making headways toward a larger audience. For example, AI-generated phone calls that have flooded the campaign space and are expected to save up to fifty times as much money. The same is true for AI-generated videos. This media can also be tailored by region and language, allowing for more effective communication with prospective voters.

AI also allows political parties to transition seamlessly from traditional methods to digital narratives with enhanced quality, quantity, speed and personalisation of such content. AI integration into campaign strategy has been lauded to have considerable influence over voters' mind and preferences because of several reasons. Some of the reasons are speed, scale, scope and sophistication as explained by Bruce Schneier, AI works to improve campaigning through attributes of speed, scale, scope and sophistication.




Source: Schneier B, 2024

The aspects of hyper-personalisation using AI and data analytics to deliver highly tailored content based on individual preferences and behaviours is one of the concerns. The selective targeting of voters makes them vulnerable to external manipulations (Özdamar & Yanik, 2024). Flooding of narratives due to the scale of production of fake contents is another serious concern. This information flooding causes viewers to lose trust as they may not be able to differentiate between real and fake information, these are the few concerns highlighted by many experts.



# AI in the Year of Elections-2024

Year 2024 marked a transformative period in elections and witnessed political entities investing heavily at infusing tech into their campaigning strategies. While AI based technologies are being employed by political parties across the globe but due to the lack of any standard estimation metric its effectiveness is not very well understood. The need for narrative building during elections is imperative, but the narratives- 'message' and 'mode' can be relied upon only if it actually leads to translation in terms of votes polled. This is what this report aims to understand. Amidst all the noise that exists surrounding AI use during elections, it tries to critically analyse how AI has impacted digital narrative building and if it has been successful in translating to votes on ground. To understand this, the study explores the narrative building measures adopted by political parties while focusing prominently on the recently concluded Delhi Assembly Election. However, it must be noted that use cases in Delhi Assembly Election follow a pattern of AI usages in elections across the globe.

## Global AI Use Cases in Elections

The 2024 US Presidential Elections saw a highly polarised campaign this year with far-right Donald Trump contesting for the Presidential post opposite Democrat candidate Kamala Harris. Elon Musk, who openly supported Donald Trump, shared a defaming video of Kamala Harris despite knowing it was fake. Acting as an amplification node, his sharing of the content exemplifies how misinformation can circulate regardless of authenticity. While its actual effect remains uncertain, the source of such content plays a key role in its reach and reception. Public figures with large followings can amplify narratives more effectively than lesser-known individuals. Though political endorsements and opinion pieces are not new, the use of AI-driven audio-visual content adds a technological layer to how narratives are shaped and disseminated. It is worth noting that a follower may follow a personality like Elon Musk for his role as a tech revolutionist rather than for his political ideology. As a result, content shared by such figures with an underlying political message may not necessarily resonate with all their followers, highlighting the complexity of influence and audience reception in the digital space.

Additionally, there were instances of AI being used to reach out to voters by using digital avatars as seen in Japan during its mayoral elections and in Pakistan when Imran Khan who was incarcerated addressed his voters through an AI generated video. Elsewhere in South Africa, the internet was flooded with AI generated images underscoring the lack of resources and mismanagement by the ruling party. The image aimed to get across a message of resource deficiency and neglect, but it did include misinformation along with it. The images were also identifiably AI generated, and the viewers were able to identify it, as was evident from the comments posted. This again was not a case that could match up to the hype of blurring realities purportedly attached with the usage of AI based technologies. The role of AI was limited to just superficial narrative building which could have been done even without the use of AI. There have been instances of AI-generated depictions showing U.S. presidential candidate Trump engaging with Black voters, trying to create a narrative of him being supported by them, but given the anti-immigrant image that is already associated with him, it was hard to believe. The comment section of such posts were filled with comments identifying the image as fake and the images too didn't seem very natural and had identifiable visual defects.

There were also certain instances of the good use cases of AI in the elections through the use of bots for facilitating voters and keeping them informed. A few AI-generated videos were also shared by political leaders sensitizing the public on the probable use of deep fake videos trying to mislead them. These examples are further suggestive of the fact that such fake content shared do not stand up to the hype created regarding the use of AI. It cannot be definitely said to have a decisive impact on the viewers' political preferences. The contents presented may selectively resonate with biases of the viewers and acting on those biases the viewer may interact with them.

## AI Use Cases in India's 2024 Lok Sabha and State Elections

Initially, digital platforms were used primarily for distributing campaign materials and increasing visibility among tech-savvy voters. Over time, parties realized their potential for large-scale narrative building in India, enabling outreach beyond regional and linguistic limitations. Digital platforms have now become battlegrounds for influencing public opinion, making online dominance imperative for electoral success.

Majorly the use of AI during the General Election was aimed at overloading the digital space with lots of misinformation. Additionally, the use of cheap fakes found much more prominence as it was used to make parody videos of leaders to take potshots at the opposite candidate or the party. The use of AI based technologies seems to be very primitive in its application during 2024 election. The parody videos generated and circulated were mainly using face masking software's which necessarily does not need the application of AI, but simple editing skills can be utilised for synthesising such videos. The elections also saw dead leaders being resurrected by parties using AI, as they endorsed their party or some specific leader. Though it was a great way to campaign using the dead politicians' popularity among the masses but since the public already knows that the leader is dead the impact of such videos on voters is debatable.

Though the use of AI did find its use by leaders in reaching out to voters in a personalised manner, this too was limited as only a few big parties could afford it. This highlights that AI based technology has not reached the maturation enough to bring down its associated costs and have a long way to go before they find wide scale adoption as of now.

# The Role of AI in Delhi Assembly Election, 2025: A Case Study

Delhi concluded Legislative Assembly Election on the 5th of February 2025, which saw over 60 percent of the 1.56 crore eligible voters exercising their right to choose their representatives (Mishra, 2025). In the aftermath of the recently concluded General Elections in 2024 we have been studying the impact of AI in the elections. For this we have been tracking through the various instances to analyse and understand the use cases of AI and its adoption in the political landscape.

In this respect, the Delhi Assembly election is of significant importance. The Internet penetration in Delhi stood at 68% (as of 2022) well above the national average of nearly 52.4% (as of 2024) (Kemp, 2024; Statista, 2022). This implies that there is a substantially larger population of voters having access to the internet than any other part of the country. This makes the use of digital means in a bid to reach out to voters even more lucrative for the political parties. Social media allows excellent opportunities for parties and their campaigners to exploit in terms of framing their narratives. Hence if the role of AI and its implementation is to be analysed this election is a perfect case study.

# Literature Review

# Literature Review

The role of AI in elections is complex and contested. While its proponents highlight benefits such as enhanced voter outreach and efficient electoral management, concerns persist over its potential to amplify biases, spread misinformation, and generate deepfakes. The World Economic Forum's **Global Risks Report, 2025,** identified misinformation and disinformation as the biggest risk in the short term, even ahead of climate change, conflict and societal polarization, which might undermine the legitimacy of the elected government (Mark Elsner et al., 2025). The ambiguities surrounding AI's influence in democratic processes necessitate a closer examination. This literature review delves into the evolving role of AI in elections, analysing debates on its actual impact. Does AI truly shape voter preferences and election outcomes, or is its influence overstated? By reviewing existing research, we seek to distinguish reality from speculation and assess AI's genuine impact on democracy.


In its report titled **'AI and Elections: Are We Ready to Save Democracy?,'** experts from the University of Surrey's Institute for People-Centred AI argued that the issue of disinformation is an age-old challenge existing in human societies. However, GenAI has acted as a catalyst to intensify this long-standing problem, allowing for widespread creation of disinformation on an unprecedented scale. They opined that this surge particularly impacts those with low digital literacy, exacerbating societal divisions and widening disparities. Consequently, undermines the trust in the democratic processes (Institute for People-Centred AI, 2024). In a study conducted by AI Democracy Projects on top 5 leading AI models including Google's Gemini, OpenAI's ChatGPT it was reported that more than a third of the AI models generated responses related to information on elections were harmful or incomplete or the responses were biased in one way or another. Additionally, instances of inaccurate information provided about voter eligibility, polling locations and identification requirements was also reported (Angwin et al., 2024). The study suggested that when AI presents hundreds of small mistakes, falsehoods, and misconceptions as genuine facts, their cumulative effect can overwhelm voters, making everything seem excessively complex and contradictory. This, in turn, could lead to voter fatigue and disillusionment, ultimately contributing to a steady erosion of truth through misinformation.

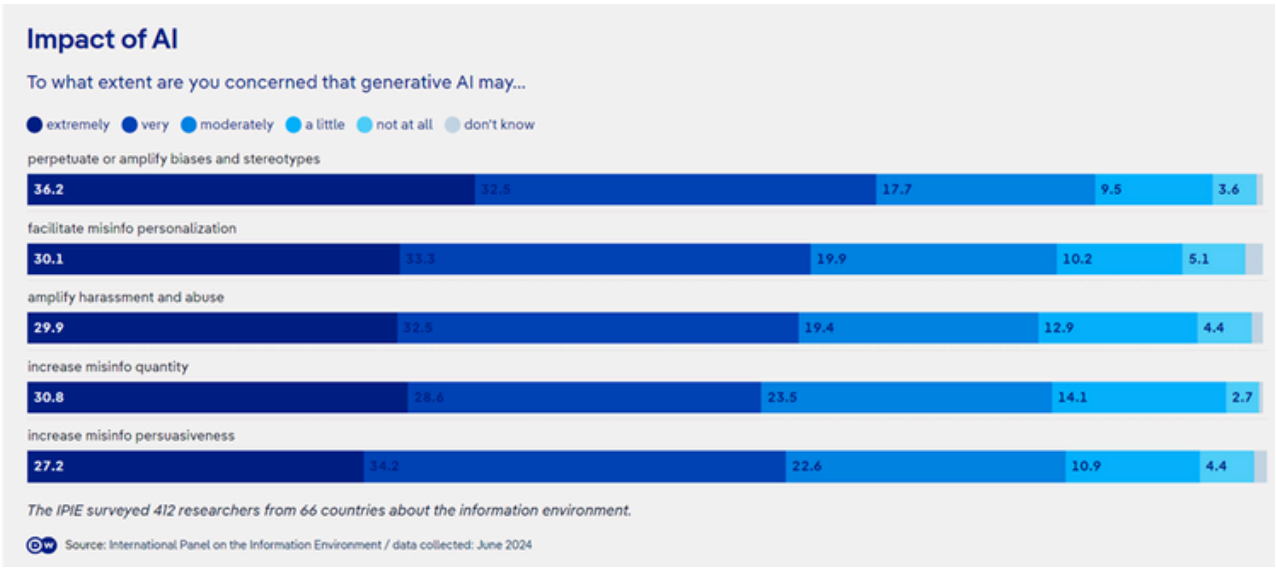
A study published in European Political Science titled **'On the Way to Deep Fake Democracy? Deepfakes in Election Campaigns in 2023,** Łabuz & Nehring (2024b) suggested that while deepfake videos may often be perceived as satirical, these are not insignificant, as they may influence voter behaviour and reinforce cognitive biases. However, the study also reported that the widely used term "information apocalypse" associated with AI in elections has not materialized, with most AI-generated content having minimal impact on final election outcomes. This conclusion contrasts with earlier studies, which warned that AI's role in elections could lead to an "epistemic and information apocalypse," portraying AI as a weapon of mass disruption (Yadlin-Segal & Oppenheim, 2021). The concept of an "epistemic apocalypse" refers to the blurring of boundaries between real and fake, raising concerns about the erosion of trust in information. This divergence in findings highlights the ongoing debate over AI's true influence on electoral processes.

In its recent research on the persuasive nature of AI generated propaganda, researchers from the Stanford University Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence observed that human-machine teaming strategies, involving editing prompts and curating outputs, produced articles that were equally or more persuasive than the original propaganda (Goldstein et al., 2024). This report supported the view that AI based technologies have the capability to generate highly persuasive content when used along with human intervention.

The role of AI in election campaigns remains a subject of debate, with scholars presenting differing perspectives on its influence. Some argue that AI significantly enhances persuasion through personalized targeting. Viner (2016) suggests that technological advancements like deepfakes and microtargeting have simplified mass persuasion, while Dhanuraj et al. (2024) note that although AI-generated misinformation currently has a limited impact, it is likely to intensify existing threats rather than introduce entirely new ones. Empirical studies further highlight AI's potential influence on voter behaviour. In The Persuasive Effects of Political Microtargeting in the Age of Generative Artificial Intelligence, Almog Simchon et al. (2024) found that AI-driven political messaging, even with small individual effect sizes, can have a substantial impact when scaled. In a simulated scenario with 100,000 respondents, AI-generated personalized political messaging persuaded between 2,490 and 11,405 individuals—enough to potentially sway election outcomes.

However, others challenge these concerns, arguing that the impact of AI-driven influence operations is overstated. Walter J. Scheirer, a computer scientist with expertise in media forensics, contends that while AI-generated content, such as doctored videos, can entertain, provoke, or intimidate, they rarely deceive audiences on a meaningful scale. His view suggests that the fears surrounding AI's ability to create a widespread epistemic crisis may be exaggerated. This divergence in perspectives highlights the ongoing debate in the literature regarding AI's true impact on democracy, whether it is a transformative force in electioneering or an overstated concern with limited real-world consequences. This debate over AI's influence on elections extends beyond its technical capabilities to the psychological and social reactions it triggers. Łabuz and Nehring (2024) argue that the real impact of deepfakes and AI-driven misinformation stems less from improvements in quality or quantity and more from how audiences psychologically and socially respond to manipulated content. This perspective suggests that AI's role in shaping public perception is not solely a function of technological sophistication but also of human cognitive biases and societal dynamics.

Broader studies reinforce concerns about AI's disruptive potential. The International Panel on the Information Environment (IPIE, 2024) conducted research involving over 400 scholars from more than 60 countries, revealing that more than two-thirds of participants perceive AI-generated contents including videos, voices, images, and text as harmful to the global information landscape. Additionally, over half of the experts expect these technologies to have a worsening impact over the next five years. These findings underscore the complexities surrounding AI's role in elections and democracy. While some emphasize its potential to enhance political engagement, others warn of its ability to erode trust in information and institutions.




(Source: Rayna Breuer, 2024)

In the briefing paper AI-Enabled Influence Operations: Threat Analysis of the 2024 UK and European Elections, Sam Stockwell of CETaS examined the nuances and concerning role of AI in electoral processes. The study analyzed hostile influence operations during the 2024 UK, European Union (EU), and French elections. The study concluded that there is no substantial evidence to suggest AI-generated content significantly influenced election outcomes. Most exposure remained confined to audiences already aligned with the disseminated narratives. Furthermore, the findings suggested that generative AI was primarily used to rewrite news articles with embedded strategic narratives and to amplify disinformation efforts at scale (Stockwell, 2024). AI-driven deepfakes were found to incite online hate against political figures, damage trust in online information, and encourage unethical campaign behaviour through the use of AI-generated political ads without disclosure. The report also highlighted new threats such as realistic deepfakes masquerading as satire, misleading voters; falsely labelling real media content as AI-generated, further eroding trust; and deepfake pornographic attacks targeting politicians, harming their personal and professional reputations. These developments pose unique regulatory challenges in countering misinformation while safeguarding free speech (Sam Stockwell, 2024). Despite these risks, AI was also found to have beneficial applications in the electoral process. In the UK election, generative AI was used to amplify key campaign issues, strengthen engagement between voters and candidates through AI-generated personas, and assist fact-checkers in identifying and prioritizing misleading claims. Given these mixed effects, the report underscored the need for clearer regulatory guidance on addressing AI-generated content, particularly deceptive parody, to strike a balance between combating disinformation and preserving free speech in democratic discourse (Sam Stockwell, 2024).

The existing literature presents a divided perspective on AI's role in elections, necessitating continued scrutiny to distinguish perceived risks from actual threats. Many studies and reports predicted that misinformation and deepfakes would be major challenges in the 2024 elections, with the potential to manipulate voters and destabilize democracies worldwide. However, as numerous countries have now concluded their elections, it is crucial to assess the broader impact of AI-generated content—beyond just deepfakes—on electoral outcomes.

The debate remains polarized between various perspectives: one warns of an impending "information apocalypse," while the other argues that concerns over AI's influence in elections, particularly through deepfakes, have been exaggerated. AI's integration into election campaigns has sparked divided opinions on its real-world impact. While researchers acknowledge AI as a cause of concern, very few have systematically studied its actual effects on the ground. The limited studies that have conducted real-world case analyses recognize AI's potential risks but also suggest that its role has not yet reached the level of public fear. Much of the anxiety surrounding AI in elections stems not from its actual deployment but from the broader public perception that AI-generated content is inherently deceptive and difficult to distinguish from reality (Yan et al., 2025).

This report seeks to critically examine these contrasting views by analysing real-world AI use cases in elections and their tangible effects on voter behaviour and electoral results focusing on the Indian context. Given Delhi's high internet penetration and digital literacy, understanding AI's role in its Assembly Elections is a necessity. With pre-election anxieties surrounding AI's potential to reshape the political landscape, the key question now is whether these fears were justified or merely overstated. There is limited literature on this important issue and given the fear surrounding AI's potential to decisively influence electoral outcomes, it becomes imperative to explore and understand its real-world implications in Delhi, India, considering its unique socio-cultural context.

# Research Objectives and Questions

# Research Objectives

- To assess the scope and extent of AI use cases in the Delhi Assembly Election 2025.
- To analyse the impact of AI-generated content on voters' vulnerability and resilience.
- To examine the effectiveness of existing regulatory frameworks and recommend technical and policy interventions.

# Research Questions

- How can we assess the impact of AI use in elections?
- What factors contribute to voters' vulnerability or resilience to AI-generated content?
- How effective are current policies in regulating AI's role in elections?

# Theoretical Framework

# Theoretical Framework

Under the theoretical framework, we have used theory to understand the motive of use of AI in elections and campaigns:

**Self-Presentation Theory (SPT)** describes the increasing utilisation of AI and technologies by candidates and political parties to shape public perception and manage their image. Just like the theory suggests, candidates engage in strategic self-presentation by projecting a curated persona to the public, especially through digital platforms. AI tools, such as chatbots, deepfakes, and automated content generation, help in creating polished, idealized versions of candidates' speeches, social media posts, and video content. This creates an 'ideal' image of the candidate that aligns with the public's expectations and needs, enhancing their appeal. Candidates use AI to craft messages and visuals that highlight their strengths, expertise, and accomplishments, a process known as self-promotion in SPT. These AI-generated ads can be highly tailored to resonate with specific demographics, ensuring a more personalised and impactful self-presentation.

**Managing Negative Perceptions (Restorative Actions):** Just as in the theory where individuals address failures in their self-presentation, candidates use AI tools to respond to crises and manage any negative impressions. For example, AI-powered social listening tools allow campaigns to monitor public sentiment and quickly produce content to mitigate damage after a scandal or negative event. This could include using AI to generate press releases, video apologies, or explanations to restore credibility.

**Mystification and Aura Creation:** The concept of mystification, where individuals limit accessibility to increase their social distance and create awe, is also applied in campaigns. AI is often used to create visually impressive and awe-inspiring content, such as grandiose campaign ads, augmented reality experiences, or deepfake videos that give a candidate a larger-than-life persona. These tools help to craft an aura of power and influence, portraying the candidate as someone extraordinary and beyond the reach of ordinary criticism. This has also been seen in the case of Lok Sabha elections when AI made deceased public figures alive again.

## The Assessment of Risk

The assessment of risk for AI use cases raises questions of trustworthiness and the acceptability of AI-generated content and uses in elections and campaigns. To understand the risk associated with such content a proportional risk-based approach to classify the cases on the potential risk emanating from the various use cases of AI during elections and campaigns. The 3-tier risk approach is adopted to categorise these use cases. This categorisation is based on the perceptible risk associated with the contents capability to influence voters' perception towards electoral process and influencing their voting preferences, which could risk undermining the democratic process.

In addition, to understand the risk associated with the manipulated content based on the contextual differences, we ascertained the underlying theme of the AI use case in each case, involving: dangerous, violent, or hateful content, harmful bias or homogenization, Human-AI interaction (e.g., chatbots), Information integrity (e.g., transparency, mis-information, misinformation, disinformation), Intellectual property violation, obscene, degrading, and/or abusive content relying on the suggested themes in the 'Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework: Generative Artificial' by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) (NIST, 2024).

The three levels of risk categories adopted in this report are:

1. **Minimal or No Risk:** These are use cases of AI that do not pose risk to the people presented in the content. They are not aimed at targeting other individuals but are a means to market their own ideology, garner voter interest and aid to improve accessibility to the voters. This included utilizing AI-generated avatars and videos used by parties for self-promotion, in line with self-presentation theory.

2. **Limited Risk:** Relying on the social influence theory and the cognitive dissonance theory. This includes cases which are synthetically generated content aimed to target political rivals. These videos are aimed at criticizing the other individual or showing the rivals in a bad light. Utilizing AI, visual stimulation of potential voters was possible which these contents aimed to exploit and sway voter opinion. Deepfakes contents must have been labelled to make the viewers aware of its interaction with manipulated media. AI-generated content with mild alterations but no significant impact on voter behaviour can be attributed to this category.

3. **High Risk:** This includes content generated using AI technologies which essentially tried to spread malice and misinformation against a party or an individual. It shall involve deliberate attempts to deceive and harm individuals or parties, hateful content, which can potentially lead to communal violence or prevent voters from exercising their political right of voting while also compromising on the aspects of transparency and information integrity. Such contents use AI based technologies to create realistic-looking content and which carries the highest potential to convince voters to believe in fake news, mis- and dis-information. Contents under this category are sensitive in nature and involve deep ethical concerns. This also includes such content which violates law of the land and Model Code of Conduct operational during elections and campaigns. AI-generated misinformation that influences voter perception, manipulates public sentiment, or incites political unrest.

# Research Methodology

# Research Methodology

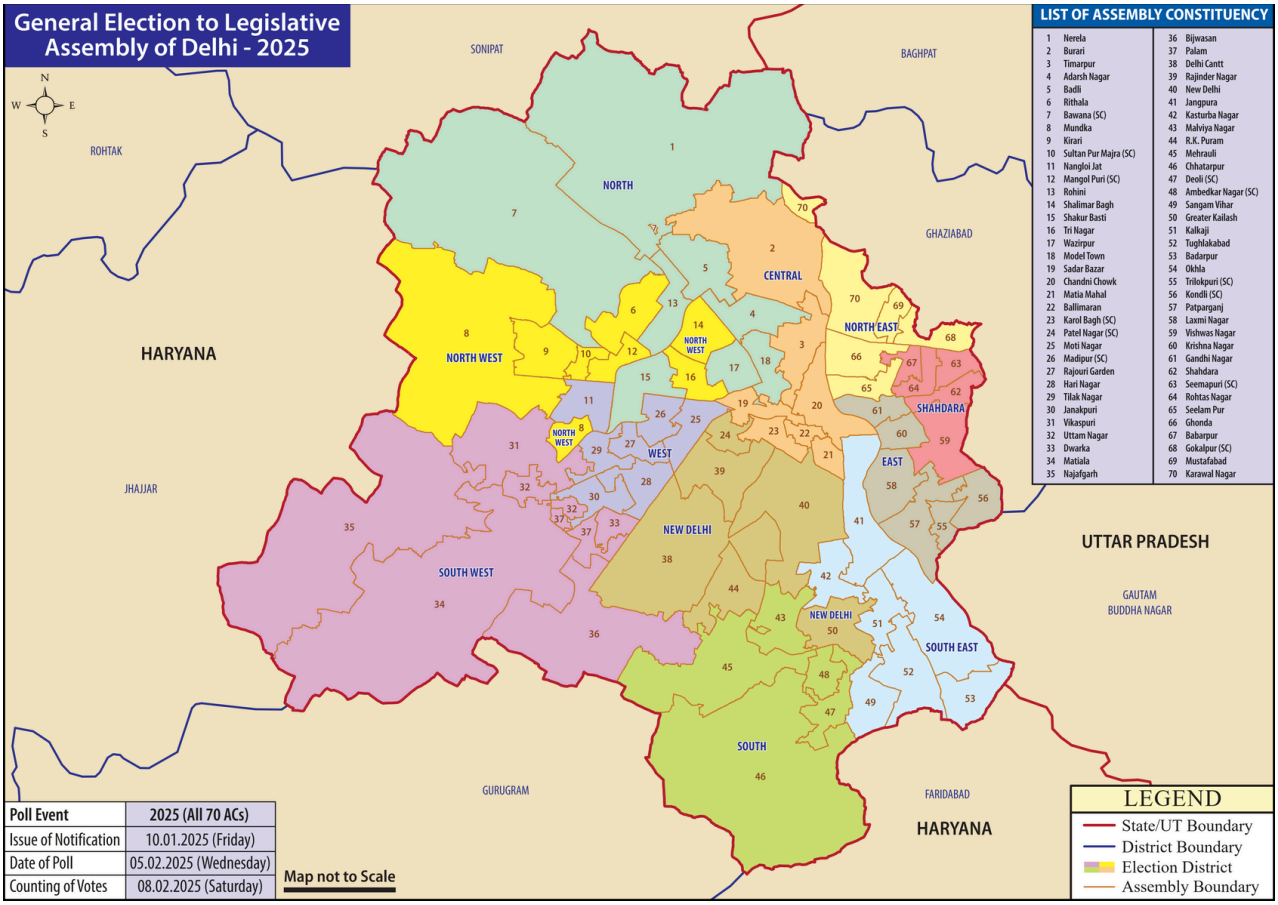
This research aims to explore the influence of AI on the Delhi Assembly Election of 2025. By identifying and evaluating the potential risks associated with AI-generated content, this study provides insights into the scope, impact, and regulatory effectiveness concerning AI in electoral processes.

## Universe of the Study

The study is aimed at exploring the use cases of AI and influence on elections and campaigns in Delhi.

## Time Period

01 December 2024- 08 February 2025




Source: Election Commission of India

# Data Collection Method

Based on the research questions RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3, mixed method was employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data for the study. Following were the data collections methods adopted:

1. **Literature review:** A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify prevailing discourses and potential impacts that were anticipated before election. The team thoroughly analysed papers and research from around the world to understand their potential impact on people and the expected impact that AI would have on voters. These papers were analysed to understand different perspective from different people, including, technologists, social scientists, ethicists, and psephologists. Reports by other think tanks, political groups, academic institutions, and the Election Commission of India were analysed comprehensively.

2. **Media Monitoring:** Systematic tracking of AI-generated political content for the purpose of campaigns and elections across social media platforms, news websites, and fact-checking portals were done. From newspapers, including, like The Indian Express, India Today, The Hindu, and The Economic Times among other were monitored thoroughly for the specified time period. Social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, X were consistently monitored and searched with relevant hashtags such as #DelhiAssemblyElections2025 #DelhiElections #AAP #BJP #Congress #ECI #ElectionCommissionofIndia #AICaseinDelhiElection, #DeepfakesinDelhiElection, #ManipulatedVideosofKejriwal, #FakeVideoOfAAPLeaders, #AIviralvideosofindianpoliticians, #AIFunnyVideosofBJPLeaders, #AIMemesofAAPLeaders and #AIinElections among many others based on the content and context. For the specified period, the research team consistently monitored political parties' social media handles. The responses to AI-generated content posts were also analysed to understand people's perceptions and their level of engagement with such content. The team also utilised Google Search and Google Alert facility to get relevant content directly in the inbox.

3. **Workshops and Expert Discussions:** An Expert workshop on the **'Use of AI in Election Campaigns'** was conducted by IGPP on **31st January 2025** to explore the impact and implications of AI in the Delhi Assembly Election. IGPP organized a workshop and a discussion with experts from various domains, including AI specialists, political campaign managers from different parties, journalists, voters, and also young voters to evaluate their perception and AI's role in election processes at the ground level. This significantly contributed to the study and understanding of on-the-ground realities and the perceptions of these stakeholders regarding AI in elections and campaigns.

4. **Voter Surveys:** Structured short survey was also conducted to understand Delhi voters' exposure to AI-generated content and their perception of such content.

5. **Official Documents:** For the purpose of understanding governments and Election Commission of India's stance on the proliferation of AI-generated content various official documents, advisory and directives were also analysed at breadth.

# Selection Criteria

Four criteria's were considered while collating AI use cases in elections and campaigns:

1. **Relevance:** Cases involving the use of AI in election campaigns or content that was circulated on social media platform and significant reach and engagement by the users were considered for the case studies.

2. **Credibility:** We made sure to use reliable sources like government documents, newspapers, trusted news channels, and reports from experts or organisations. This ensured the data was accurate and trustworthy.

3. **Diversity of Sources:** To get a full picture, we gathered information from many different places: news articles, social media posts, official government documents, Google searches, TV news channels and detailed reports. We also included examples from elections at both local and international levels to provide broader insights.

4. **Timeline:** Cases from 01 December 2025 to 08th February 2025 were analysed in the study to make sure the information was up-to-date and relevant to this election.

# Data Analysis Method

A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis was used to interpret the collected case studies and understand expectation and perception of various groups of people:

- **Content Analysis:** Examined AI-generated political content and identified patterns, trends, and analysed engagement and interactions on such content. Also, identified common themes in AI-generated narratives.

- **Triangulation:** Cross-referencing findings from media monitoring, workshop and surveys to validate findings and derive robust conclusions.

# Analysis of AI Use Cases in Delhi Assembly Election, 2025

# Minimal or No Risk Use Cases

## AI Does the Tango: The Fake Pujari and Arvind Kejriwal Dance Video

After announcing ₹18,000 per month for temple priests (pujaris) and Gurudwara granthis in Delhi, a hilarious fake video popped up showing a pujari dancing with Arvind Kejriwal. While it's funny to watch, this is a perfect example of how AI can take a real announcement and turn it into something totally out of place.

Source:X/RisingPiku

The AI generated video presents a playful scene with Kejriwal and temple priests dancing together. This video tries to publicise the pre-poll promise by Kejriwal to provide monetary support. The video aims at self-promotion of the scheme of AAP and hence is a low risk use case. The video is available on X handle "RisingPiku" and has over 12k views. The video is a fun creation, and the analysis of the comments section suggests that the video has been able to convey the same.

## AI-Generated Image of Arvind Kejriwal as Delhi's Superhero


Source: X/RisingPiku

The animated video generated using AI shows Arvind Kejriwal as Delhi's superhero in front of the Old Parliament building. The audio uses Shaktimaan's theme song to create an impactful video. Such creative and engaging content grab attention and at the same time are cost-effective, making leaders appear relatable and inspiring. For Arvind Kejriwal, this video emphasizes his achievements and positions him as a problem-solver for Delhi, appealing to voters' emotions and hopes. Such videos can easily go viral on social media, spreading the campaign's message quickly and effectively. Positive framing of Kejriwal might manipulate perceptions subtly but lacks the intensity of divisive issues.

## AI-Generated Videos of Arvind Kejriwal as Santa


Source: Instagram/risingpiku

The AI-generated video shows Arvind Kejriwal dressed as Santa, bringing the gift of Rs.2100 for women of Delhi on the occasion of Christmas. The animated video is a political advertisement by AAP to woo voters. Such videos can excite voters and make them feel connected to the party, especially if promises like financial benefits are included.

## AI-Generated Kejriwal 4.0


Source: X/RisingPiku

An AI-generated animation shared by the X user, Rising Piku, on election day, showing Arvind Kejriwal confidently cycling with the Indian flag. It bears the caption 'Kejriwal 4.0 Loading soon.' The animation can influence voters by creating a sense of certainty and momentum. Voters who are undecided may feel encouraged to support him, believing that most people are already backing him.

## Delhi Election Drama: Fictional Video Sparks Political Debate


Source: X/RisingPiku

Rising Piku, the unofficial campaigner for AAP on social media, created this AI video using Squid Games as its backdrop. It shows many leaders like Narendra Modi, Rahul Gandhi, Swati Maliwal, Mahua Moitra, Akhilesh Yadav, and others, as one of the many players. However, eventually, Arvind Kejriwal unmasks himself, emerging victorious as the Future PM.

The video carries the disclaimer in the caption that it is an AI generated video meant only for entertainment purposes and not intended to defame anyone. It's meant for self-promotion of Kejriwal and portraying him as 'Future PM'. Such fictional portrayal with disclaimer aims to present the leader as a strong leader ready to take up a senior role without harming trust in political systems.

## AI-Generated Parody: Arvind Kejriwal's 'Tera Surroor' Video


Source: - X/@MTaparia25

The AI-created video shows Arvind Kejriwal singing, 'Tera surroor' by Himesh Reshamiya. The video is a playful banter at Arvind Kejriwal during his rally speeches. The video is amusing but lacks credibility to cause real harm. Though editing of the creative is creative, Himesh Reshamiya's voice makes it evident that the video is edited. The video is a playful representation of a political leader and does aim to deceive viewers nor portray him in a bad way.

## Bringing M.K. Gandhi & Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to Modern Delhi

Source-Instagram/ aamaadmiparty_and_aapdelhi

The AI-generated video shows Arvind Kejriwal welcoming Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar at India Gate, saying, "Let me show you how I followed your vision for Delhi." They visit government schools, mohalla clinics, and metro stations, witnessing improved education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Gandhi smiles at the progress, while Ambedkar appreciates the focus on social justice.

This video could emotionally connect with voters, strengthening Kejriwal's image as a leader who delivers on promises. It may attract the poor and middle-class, positioning him as a true follower of Gandhi and Ambedkar. Such a video is a case of self-promotion presents welfare schemes and ideological figures. It also carries an AI generated label, complying with the ECI guidelines.

## AI Chatbots to Strengthen Security & Management in Delhi Assembly Election


Source: The Hindu

Delhi Police has launched two AI-driven chatbots, 'Chunav Mitra' and 'Cyber Sarthi', to help officers and paramilitary forces manage election duties effectively. These chatbots provide real-time updates on rules, security guidelines, and cybersecurity measures, ensuring smooth and secure election management. Officers can access them via a dedicated link or QR code.

Their user-friendly design simplifies complex instructions, improving efficiency. By ensuring timely communication and cybersecurity, these AI tools help prevent misinformation, enhance security, and streamline operations, ultimately leading to fair and well-managed elections. The launch of AI chatbots is an example of a positive use case of AI in Delhi elections. However, one of the potential drawbacks could be the lack of technical know-how among the police officials. Such use cases can help manage elections effectively while also saving on costs.

# Moderate Risk Use Cases

## AI-Generated video projects Arvind Kejriwal's Rule as a Failure


Source: X/ @BJP4Delhi

The BJP's AI-generated video features an animated Arvind Kejriwal asking a shopkeeper about the situation in Delhi. The shopkeeper responds, saying that BJP's momentum is picking up and that AAP's image is diminishing, describing it as a disaster (AAP-da). The video is a promotional video by BJP presenting a view that the party enjoys the support of Delhi voters and that the party is on its way to win the Delhi Assembly election.

This video was posted following ECI's advisory on use of manipulated content in elections, this video has clearly provided the disclaimer to the viewers of being a spoof and an AI video. The video seeks to build a perception of change and renewal under BJP leadership while also demoralizing the AAP supporters.

## The Magic of Arvind Kejriwal: Battling BJP's Dark Forces

Source: Instagram/ aamaadmiparty

The AI-generated video by AAP creatively uses the Harry Potter theme to convey a political message. It portrays BJP as Death Eaters, Amit Shah as Voldemort, trying to destroy Delhi's schools, while Arvind Kejriwal is shown as the protagonist protecting the city's education. This messaging taps into emotions, aiming to rally support by portraying the election as a battle for the city's future.

The BJP has been represented as an evil force, plotting for Delhi's Downfall, particularly targeting the schools established by Kejriwal. Kejriwal is presented as the saviour and hero protecting Delhi. The video is entertaining, creating a craze among the youth due to the popularity of Harry Potter. The video available on Instagram has over 3k likes and hence suggests significant public interaction.

## AAP's Bollywood-Style Video Roasts BJP's MCD Track Record

Source: X/ @AamAadmiParty

AAP's AI-generated video, set to a Bollywood song, humorously targets BJP, featuring Amit Shah, Manoj Tiwari, and other leaders, with the song, 'Jhoothi kahani, Delhi ko bhayi nahi, tabhi Delhi me BJP kabhi aaye nahi.' The video uses AI generated images, animation, real images and videos to create the song video. This spoof video available on X, was posted by the AAP party's official handle and has over 30k views. The video criticizes BJP's 15-year rule in MCD, highlighting alleged failures in cleanliness, governance, and infrastructure. This catchy and entertaining attack aims to remind voters of BJP's shortcomings while strengthening AAP's appeal. Viral videos like this aim to malign voters' perception against the opposition, and to some extent influence the undecided voters in the Delhi Assembly election.

## Political Showdown: Arvind Kejriwal vs Amit Shah and Its Impact on Delhi's Election

Source: X/ @AAPDelhi673

In this AI generated video where Amit Shah and Arvind Kejriwal discuss Delhi elections, the dialogue highlights a competitive atmosphere between the two. Amit Shah claims Kejriwal's repeated success in the Delhi CM position won't last, hinting at interference in his political campaigns. Kejriwal responds confidently, asserting the people's support and his integrity. This video like many others seen during the Delhi election is a spoof created using a scene from the superhit Telugu movie "Pushpa 2".

The video highlights the intense political exchange between political parties, primarily AAP and the BJP. The video being based on the recent superhit movie may be an attempt to utilize the popularity of the movie and portray a message that may resonate with the Delhi voters. This video was posted by AAP on its X handle and has over 9k views. Such videos might impact Delhi voters by creating heightened tensions, pushing them to reflect on the performance and trustworthiness of both leaders.

## AI Comedy Video: Amit Shah's "Faisla Ho Gaya" Moment


Source: X/ @AamAadmiParty

An AI-generated comedy video using a Bollywood scene shows Amit Shah talking to BJP leaders, asking whether Delhi people will vote for BJP or AAP. They responded by saying that they will vote for Kejriwal. Faisla ho gaya (The decision is made), creating a humorous take on election suspense.

This video adds fun to the political debate, engaging voters through humour. While BJP supporters may not find it funny, AAP supporters might support the creation of more such videos to create a bandwagon effect. Viral videos like these serve the purpose of creating a favourable atmosphere related to a specific party by inducing discussions, influencing undecided voters, and making elections more entertaining on social media.

## AAP's AI Video: Arvind Kejriwal as the People's Hero, Amit Shah as the Elite's Ally

Source: Instagram/ aamaadmiparty

In this AI-generated video from AAP Delhi's social media handle, different characters creatively introduce themselves, with Amit Shah calling his friend, an ally of Ambani. Arvind Kejriwal introduces himself as the hero of the poor, and an enemy of the corrupt, strengthening his public image. The video is evidently AI generated and is labelled as well. The editing lacks sophistication highlighting that video content generation via AI is still at a nascent stage in India.

This video projects Kejriwal as a leader of the common man and appeals to voters who benefit from AAP's welfare programs. It positions him as a champion of the underprivileged, though critics may view it as a playful political attack rather than a serious message.

## CASE 23: Visual Divide: Education vs. Economy in Delhi's Electoral Landscape


Source: X/ @DaaruBaazMehta

An AI-generated image showing a face-off between Arvind Kejriwal and Narendra Modi, the former wearing a t-shirt with "World Class Education" printed on it and the latter in a t-shirt pointing to the declining value of rupees in terms of dollars. The deepfake appears to be real, except that a watermark of Grok makes it explicit that it is AI generated.

The image is an attempt to portray that Kejriwal is a better leader than Modi since the latter is unable to maintain economic stability of the country while the former has successfully provided world class education in Delhi.

## Suit-Boot Sarkar: AAP's Rap on Narendra Modi's Lavish Lifestyle


Source: Instagram/ aamaadmiparty_and_aapdelhi

AAP Delhi's AI-generated rap video portrays Narendra Modi's luxurious lifestyle, using catchy beats and animated visuals. The rap highlights his expensive suits, foreign trips, private jets, and connections with big businessmen, contrasting them with struggling common people, unemployed youth, and farmers. The AI-generated video is filled with satire and humour, and aims to question Narendra Modi's priorities, portraying him as an elite leader distant from the common man. While it may strengthen AAP's anti-elitist image, BJP could dismiss it as negative propaganda, making its actual impact on voters depend on individual political views.

## AAP's AI-Generated Rap Video Showcases Achievements, Seeks Voter Support

Source: X/ @AamAadmiParty

AAP released an AI-generated rap video highlighting Kejriwal's achievements in Delhi, from education to electricity reforms. The video creatively features Amit Shah and Manoj Tiwari enjoying the rap, adding a humorous twist. The video has AI generated visuals of Kejriwal which appear to be real, amplifying the message the video is trying to convey. The video reinforces Kejriwal's leadership by suggesting that even BJP leaders acknowledge AAP's work.

By mixing entertainment with political messaging, AAP aims to energize supporters and appeal to young voters. The video also takes a shot at the lack of prominent party leaders in the opposition BJP. The song puts forth the question "Kejriwal nhi to kon?" meaning if not Kejriwal then who? Such rhetoric aims to establish Kejriwal as the most important leader contesting Delhi Elections with the opposition parties lacking any credible personality who can match up to Kejriwal. The video posted on X by AAP's verified handle has over 370k views suggesting significant public interaction with the post.

## AI-Generated Images and Videos Showing Foreign Leader's Involvement


Source: X/ @RisingPiku

This AI image tweet by Piku involves Italian PM Giorgia Meloni supporting Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal. The X user has tried to caution the netizens with the caption, "I just had this dream last night."


Source: Newschecker

AI-generated images featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President-Elect Donald Trump endorsing the slogan 'Fir Layenge Kejriwal' have surfaced on social media. This appear to promote the AAP ahead of the Delhi Assembly election.

Source: X/ @GaiBhainsPaniMe

The deepfake shows Mia Khalifa joining the AAP Using AI, people can create realistic-looking images and sensational stories that grab attention and confuse others.

Source: X/ @AnahatSagar

This AI-generated image shows Cristiano Ronaldo meeting Arvind Kejriwal in a school setting to promote football in Delhi. It can be a powerful tool for political campaigns.

Source: X/ @RisingPiku

Ahead of the Delhi Assembly election, a photo of AAP Chief Arvind Kejriwal with Elon Musk went viral, but experts found it to be fake. The caption of the post read, "Just spotted Arvind Kejriwal and Elon peeling oranges together... (In my dreams)."

This itself gives a disclaimer that the image is fake. AI-detection tools also confirmed the manipulation. TrueMedia found clear signs of editing, Is It AI? gave an 81% chance of it being AI-generated, and Hive AI concluded a 99.4% likelihood of deepfake content.

The increasing sophistication of AI tools makes it easier to create high-resolution, realistic yet misleading visuals, raising concerns about disinformation. While such images can momentarily mislead less informed audiences, their actual impact varies—one recent post which showed Mia Khalifa with Kejriwal had only 586 views on X till 12th February, indicating limited influence. Featuring well-known figures, such visuals can generate excitement, lend credibility to causes, and attract attention, especially among younger audiences. However, if misused, they risk misleading the public or casting doubt on authenticity. During elections, such fake visuals are often leveraged to shape narratives, as seen in attempts to portray economic improvements under AAP's rule. The blurred lines between satire, aspiration, and disinformation emphasize the need for critical assessment of digital content. While these images were unlikely to significantly mislead voters, it serves as a reminder of the growing challenge posed by generative AI in shaping public perception. Social media users must remain vigilant, verifying content before sharing to prevent the spread of misinformation and ensure a clear distinction between fictional entertainment and factual claims in today's digitally driven world.

# High Risk Use Cases

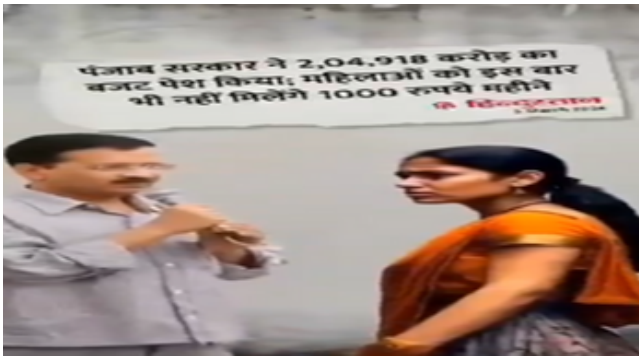
## Fake Video of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Kejriwal Causes Outrage

A fake AI-generated video was circulated showing B.R. Ambedkar beating Arvind Kejriwal. It was generated in response to a video shared on AAP's official X handle which showed Kejriwal seeking Ambedkar's blessings. This video caused public outrage, with many demanding legal actions under the SC/ST Act for disrespecting the revered leader.

Source:X/ @indian_nagrik

The AI generated video shows Dr. B.R. Ambedkar assaulting Kejriwal and hitting him. The video presents both the leaders portrayed in a bad light and hence generated public outrage. Such contents may resonate with certain sections of the population and may shape opinion through the underlying message that it conveys. In this case it portrays Ambedkar disliking Kejriwal so much that he hits him.

## AI-Generated Video of Arvind Kejriwal Being Slapped by a Woman Voters




An AI- generated video of Arvind Kejriwal and a female voter went viral announcing a promise to give Rs. 1000 to each Delhi woman if AAP came back to power. The woman slams him for a similar promise he made in Punjab elections, two years ago. Post this, the woman even slaps him for the same in disgust. Though it is evident that the video is AI generated due to the visual effects, it could have an impact on the Delhi voters.

Source: X/ @anitavladivoski

This video is highlighting AAP's unkept promise, leading to distrust for the party among the citizenries. This video could have had an impact especially on the undecided voters and shift the focus of the election to broken promises and accountability. However, the video only garnered around 3k views on X, creating an impression that not many viewers felt like engaging with it.

## AI-Generated Video of Arvind Kejriwal Being Called “Hindu Chunavi” Mahathug

Source: Instagram/ bjp4delhi

This AI generated video shared by BJP dubs a clip from Jolly LLB 2 to target Kejriwal. Kejriwal’s promises to the Pandits and Granthis are being questioned by Akshay Kumar, the lawyer. The video is an attempt to portray Kejriwal as a supporter of Hinduism only for votes and has been called a “Chunavi Hindu” Mahathug.

This AI video, though easily recognizable as manipulated, was circulated by BJP to set a narrative among the Delhi voters that Kejriwal is only interested in vote-bank politics and not Hindu welfare. Kejriwal’s past rhetoric has been scrutinised while labeling him as ‘mahathug’. This video mainly aimed at using religion to stroke anti-incumbency among voters. Labelling Kejriwal as anti-Hindu while leveraging religious sentiments in the video can deepen societal divide and influence voters' opinion during a polarized election. The video did not have any identifier that marked it as manipulated, or AI generated content but involved highly sensitive allegations against a political candidate making it a high-risk content.

## AI-Generated Attack Ads: Targeting Kejriwal with Corruption Allegations

Source: X/ @BJP4Delhi

This is a clip from Phir Hera Pheri and shows Kejriwal highlighting the corrupt practices he was involved in during his tenure as the Delhi CM. The video was shared on BJP Delhi’s official handle on X. The AI-generated video shared showing accusations of corruption against Kejriwal and his party, could have impacted the voters. These videos can make strong, emotional points that sway public opinions by presenting politicians as villains.

This kind of content can change how people feel about the politicians, possibly hurting AAP’s chances and pushing others into power.

## AI Video on Amit Shah Triggers FIR Against AAP


Source: X/ @indian_nagrik

This tweet posted on January 14, 2025, references a video that has led to the filing of an FIR (First Information Report) against AAP. The video suggests a competitive scenario between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Virendra Sachdeva is discussing with Amit Shah to challenge AAP's success and welfarism in Delhi. The video available on X was originally posted by AAP and has over 633k views.

The video utilises AI to impersonate the voice of Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP leader Virendra Sachdeva. On one hand, the video portrays BJP as villains who do not care about the Delhi public, and on the other hand, they are building narratives in favour of AAP suggesting that its schemes have benefited Delhi and its citizens. Such videos, even if fabricated, can shape public perception by planting doubts about opposing parties or leaders. The competitive scenario and legal actions arising from fabricated strategies could escalate tensions between parties and manipulate public perceptions.

## AAP's AI Video Turns BJP's CM Face Selection into a 'Shark Tank' Satire


Source: Facebook/ Aam Aadmi Party

An AI-generated video shows Shark Tank with Amit Shah, Narendra Modi as judge and BJP leaders as contestants pitching why they should be Delhi's CM. One contestant, Parvesh Verma, confidently says, 'Because I abuse and do wrong things.' Amit Shah reacts critically, making the selection process look ridiculous. This spoof video is a creative intervention in election campaigning in Delhi. The video lacks sophistication in editing with lip sync and voice not being in consonance. The video portrays BJP as a party which rewards abusive and unethical leaders. It aims to mock BJP's leadership choices, portraying them as unfit for Delhi.

## "Vote Kejriwal Ko Hi Jayega": A Sholay-Inspired Political Parody


Source: X/ @Indian_nagrik

The video is a spoof from the scenes of Sholay movie where the BJP candidates try to threaten and blackmail Thakur representative of Delhi voters to vote for BJP in the elections. The video is made by an AAP volunteer. It mocks political rivalries, using humour to amplify Kejriwal's dominance in the campaign. The video is sensitive as it presents BJP leader Manoj Tiwari suggesting that it aims to win at any cost even by using unfair practices such as fake voting. The video raises serious concern as it casts aspersions on the polling being free and fair. Satirical and playful but might polarize opinions and distract from serious issues. This video has over 180k views, suggesting significant public interaction.

## AI-Generated Image Fuels Liquor Scam Allegations Against Kejriwal Ahead of Elections


Source: X/ @MTaparia25

An AI-generated image with the watermark of Political Kida, was floated around by an anti-AAP X handle named, AAP ka Mohit, showing Arvind Kejriwal sitting on a sofa with cash in hand and a newspaper kept beside him highlighting the liquor scam. The deepfake image appears to be real at the first instance. However, the high-resolution image makes it possible for viewers to identify it as fake

The image reinforces allegations of corruption on Kejriwal, casting aspersions on his integrity. The mention of Liquor Scam worth ₹2026 crore on the poster further amplifies the scandal's scale, adding to the sensational nature of the allegation. This image creates a negative image about Kejriwal's leadership and credibility. Social media plays a crucial role in spreading such visuals, shaping narratives, and affecting public opinion. This can benefit opposition parties while damaging Kejriwal's reputation ahead of the elections.

## AI-Generated Image of Kumar Vishwas as a Transgender


Source:X/ @RisingPik

An AI-generated image has been circulating online showing Kumar Vishwas, a well-known leader, portrayed as a 'transgender' with the text saying '1100 BJP Se Mil Gaye'. A mask has been added later to the picture.

It's a clear example of how AI can manipulate visuals to mislead people and create confusion as it presents Kumar Vishwas as transgender and a paid agent of BJP. The image is created with ill intention to malign Kumar Vishwas's public image by wrongly portraying him as a transgender due to the stigma still attached to the third sex in the society. Such a gender-based targeting is condemnable by all means and should not be acceptable in any form as it propagates biases and gender-based discrimination.

## AI-Generated Video Accuses BJP of Cutting Free Services, Raising Costs for Public


Source: X/ @AAPDelhi2

The AI-generated video shows BJP leaders like JP Nadda, Manoj Tiwari, Bansuri Swaraj among others, claiming that BJP would stop free services like buses, Mohalla clinics, education, and water supply, while selling electricity to big corporations like Ambani, leading to higher costs for the public. This video was posted on X by the official handle of AAP and has over 70k views. The video aims to evoke distrust against BJP among voters in Delhi who rely on these services, especially the lower and the middle class. People may see the BJP as prioritizing corporate interests over their needs, giving an advantage to parties like AAP, which promise to continue these benefits. The AI video appears hyper realistic, however, the lip-sync and voice manipulation indicate that the video is AI-generated. A disclaimer of the video being AI generated is also given in the corner following the ECI guidelines.

## CEC Rajiv Kumar Depicted in AI-Generated Image Following Bias Claims

Source: X/ @indian_nagrik

Recently, an AI-generated image was shared on X of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), Rajiv Kumar, sleeping on a heap of money. This image follows Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's allegations that the ECI is biased towards the BJP. This deepfake image looks real, however, the watermark of Grok in the right corner of the image, helps in identifying the image is AI generated. Such claims can negatively impact public trust in the Indian electoral process and the ECI.

If voters believe that the election body is not impartial, it could lead to doubts about the fairness of the upcoming Delhi elections and influence how people vote, potentially harming democracy.

## AAP's AI-Generated Video Mocks BJP, Calls for Voter Integrity


Source: X/ @AAPDelhi

An AI-generated video from AAP's X handle humorously edits Roadies show, portraying Amit Shah and Ramesh Bidhuri as judges. The contestant, Parvesh Verma, claims he should be the party's face because he uses foul language and buys votes. Amit Shah criticizes him, calling him a failure and saying Delhi voters won't sell their votes for ₹1000. The video ends with a message urging people to vote for Kejriwal on February 5.

This satirical video aims to portray BJP negatively, reinforcing AAP's clean image while appealing to voters' pride, potentially boosting Kejriwal's support in the election. This video again has the reference to BJP indulging in unfair practice of buying votes. Such videos which cast aspersions on the election process pose a significant threat to democracy. Though the video has an AI generated label to it, this does not lessen the sensitivity of the topic given the video is posted by the official X handle of AAP and has over 50k views.

# Expert Workshop

## DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 2025 AND USE OF AI

# Workshop: Delhi Assembly Election, 2025 and Use of AI

In an effort to better understand the role of AI in the context of Indian Elections, on the **31st January 2025**, IGPP conducted a workshop on **'Delhi Assembly Election 2025 and use of AI.'** Through the workshop we aimed to understand the perspectives of panel members from various work profiles including political campaign managers, journalists, communication professionals, lawyers, sociologists and policy experts. The panel was consciously chosen to include registered Delhi voters to understand their first-hand perspective towards the evolving scenario of election campaigns and the political parties' ways of reaching out to their potential voters.

**Ms. Heena Goswami, Editorial Consultant at IGPP,** moderated the event. She initiated the discussion by putting forth questions to the panelists on the intricacies related to AI usage in elections. The discussions explored various issues, including the deployment of AI in the Delhi Assembly Election, how can the impact of AI use in elections be assessed, the factors that lead to voters' vulnerability or resilience to AI generated content, risks associated with AI- generated disinformation and targeted voter manipulation. Additionally, the discussion analyzed the effectiveness of the existing policies in regulating AI's role in elections, particularly in light of Election Commission of India (ECI) advisory to political parties on labeling AI-generated content. The key takeaway from our discussion has been summarized in this section.

## AI in Campaigning is Still Evolving

- AI-based technologies are not fully matured, and most manipulated content still relies on conventional editing rather than advanced AI tools. Deepfake is glorified as a product of generative AI, but not everything is a deepfake. Many times, these are simple edited or morphed videos using photo editing tools and the deepfakes use was minimal.
- While some bots are used, AI has not yet played a major role in shaping online political narratives.
- With respect to predictive analysis of elections, algorithms are not mature enough to predict an election result yet. A few instances when AI was used to assess the impact of voter sentiments have been successful but not always, so the accuracy has not been very good.
- Currently, AI has a cost barrier that limits its widespread application in political campaigning.
- AI has huge potential in reaching out to the last mile voter, in a personalised way but this potential has not been explored fully. This means that there is a meagre shift from traditional tools. The usage of AI has not been on the scale that people perceive it to be.

## Impact on Media and Misinformation

- Trust in legacy media has shifted to social media, making it easier for vested interests to spread misinformation. One of the journalists also showed concern about shifting of trust in media, she highlighted that **"Trust in written media has shifted from legacy media to social media."**

- This is more pronounced during the election phases when social media is flooded with campaigns and narrative-based content. Now, social media has become a major source for updates on crucial information.

- AI helps in changing narratives quickly, but much of this happens within closed groups (e.g., WhatsApp), making it hard to track.

## The Evolution of AI in Political Campaigning: Strategies That Work

> **"The most common use case of AI technology actually being implemented may be attributed to hyper-personalised messages being received by potential voters or last mile voters."**
>
> **-Political Campaign Manager 2**

- The widespread use of social media and AI allows political campaigns to assess the impact of their tactics much faster than before.

- Political parties can quickly refine their messaging based on real-time data and audience responses.

## AI-Powered Narratives: Fast-Moving but Grounded in Reality?

- To understand the impact of Narrative Propagation online, one of the political campaign manager proposed studying the **'Kinetics and Kinematics'** of political content. This refers to:
  - **Kinetics:** How fast a piece of content spreads.
  - **Kinematics:** The reasons behind its spread.

- Not all narratives circulated on social media influence voters on the ground; online trends do not always translate into real-world electoral behaviour. The use of AI into campaigns has an amplifying impact on the existing strategies in narrative building and voter outreach. Hence, AI has potential to create and amplify existing polarised content.

## Targeted Persuasion: Why Some Messages Stick and Others Fade

- Not all content impacts voter preferences rather content that aligns with the biases and beliefs of specific voter groups influences voting patterns. Hence, politics still relies on the interplay of gender, caste, region, language, identities and values in India and largely defined by these factors.

- Different sections of the same community may have varying idol figures, and content that resonates with these pre-existing leanings is more impactful.

- Some content, even if far from reality, may not alter voting decisions but can still be psychologically manipulative.

- People may share manipulated content not because they endorse the ideology but due to the thrill of spreading it.

- On a AI-manipulated video where Dr. B.R. Ambedkar can be seen slapping Arvind Kejriwal one of the experts questioned about the efficacy of such videos since it is a commonsensical knowledge that the two leaders are not a part of the same era. A political campaign manager responded that such tailor-made content, though, may be far from reality and not impact the voting preference of voters, but may be psychologically manipulative to an extent.

## On Political parties & Technology usage

- Political parties primarily focus on one-to-one connections rather than heavy reliance on AI-generated or manipulated content.
- The spread of such content is largely driven by party supporters rather than the parties themselves.
- This supporter-driven approach makes regulation and accountability more challenging, as misinformation often originates from grassroots levels rather than official party channels.

## On ECI Guidelines Regulating the Contents Online

Last sections of the workshop focussed and deliberated on the effectiveness of the recent ECI advisory issued on 16 January 2025. ECI issued an advisory to political parties to clearly label any image, video, audio, or other materials generated or significantly altered by AI technologies with notions like "AI-generated"/ "Digitally Enhanced"/" Synthetic Content." It also requires them to include disclaimers in campaign advertisements or promotional content.

- On the role of ECI, a constitutional body that overlooks the elections in India and enforcing the Model Code of Conduct during elections, one of the political campaign managers pointed that any paid campaign material (e.g., banners, posters, TV commercials) requires ECI approval whereas unpaid content on social media does not need clearance from the ECI. So, if just a video is being put out on social media no approval of any sort is required, and this is exploited by parties to circumvent regulations put by the ECI.

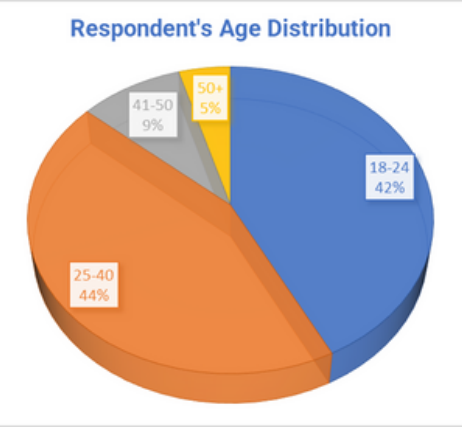

- Ms. Heena enquired about the participants opinion on the recent guidelines, to which one of them quipped, **"ECI guidelines are like statutory warnings on a cigarette box."**
- It is the supporter base, rather than political parties themselves, that is responsible for widely circulating manipulated media. Thus, the guidelines have minimal effect in curbing deceptive AI-generated content or fake narrative.

The workshop concluded that although AI-based technologies are still in their early stages, their direct impact on real-world applications remains limited. Many viral political campaigns continue to rely on conventional editing rather than sophisticated AI tools. However, AI may play a crucial role in amplifying existing political strategies by enhancing the speed, reach, and personalization of content dissemination in future as the technology matures and becomes affordable. Additionally, the shift in trust from traditional media to social media has facilitated the rapid spread of misinformation. While AI has the potential to revolutionize voter outreach, its influence on election outcomes remains uncertain, and predictive algorithms are not yet fully reliable. The prevailing concerns about AI in elections seem overstated, as the technology still needs to mature and become more affordable. Until then, conventional political campaigning techniques will remain relevant and factors such as gender, caste, culture, region, values, and identities will still be playing a significant role in Indian politics.

# Survey on AI and Delhi Assembly Election, 2025

# Survey Interpretation and Analysis

IGPP, New Delhi conducted a survey to understand voters' perception of AI use in elections and campaigns and how it influences their preferences. In the survey there were 10 questions on which responses were collected. The total number of informed respondents were 589.

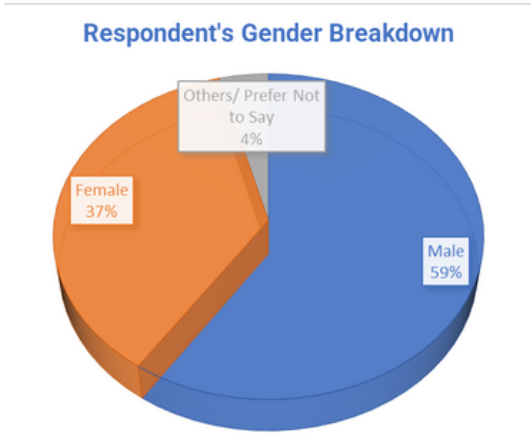


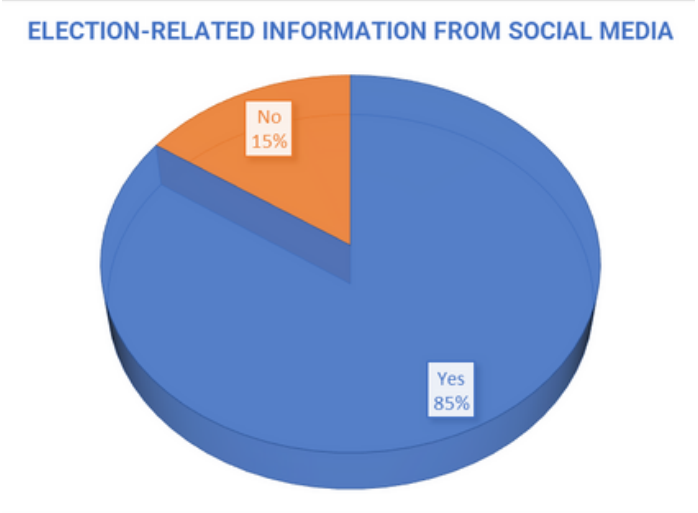

### Respondent's Age Distribution

The age group breakdown shows that the majority of respondents belong to the 18-40 years category, with 259 respondents (44%) aged 25-40 years and 247 respondents (42%) aged 18-24 years. Meanwhile, 53 respondents (9%) fall within the 41-50 years range, and 30 respondents (5%) are aged 50 years and above. These findings indicate that younger and middle-aged voters (18-40 years) are the most engaged demographic in this study.

### Respondent's Gender Breakdown

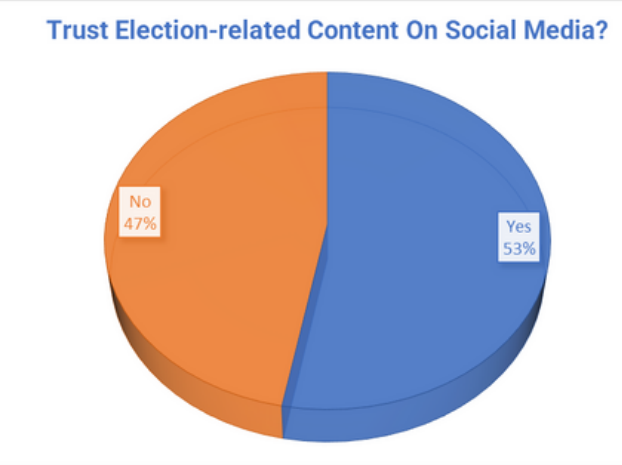
The survey had a diverse gender representation, with males forming the largest group (59%), followed by females (37%).




### Source of Election – Related Information

A significant 85% of respondents (498 out of 589) rely on social media as their primary source of election-related information. This highlights the growing influence of digital platforms in shaping public perception and political discourse. The majority of respondents depend on social media for election-related news, emphasising the need to address concerns related to misinformation, bias, and the role of social media in elections.



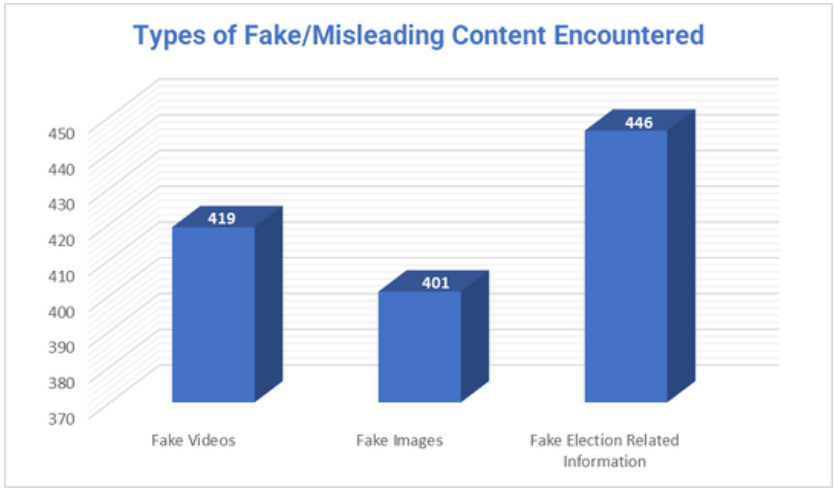

### Trust on the Election Related Content on Social Media

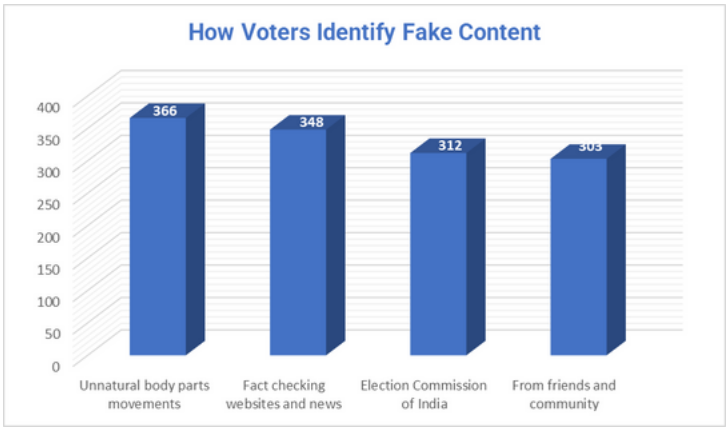
A notable 53% of respondents (312 out of 589) trust social media election content, while a significant 47% (277 out of 589) do not, indicating a near-even divide in public confidence. This split highlights the mixed perceptions of social media as an information source, emphasizing the need for stronger fact-checking mechanisms and measures to combat misinformation during elections.

### Types of Fake/Misleading Content Encountered

Fake election-related information is the most commonly encountered type of misinformation, with 446 respondents reporting exposure to such content.

Additionally, 419 respondents have come across fake videos, highlighting the prevalence of manipulated or misleading audiovisual material.



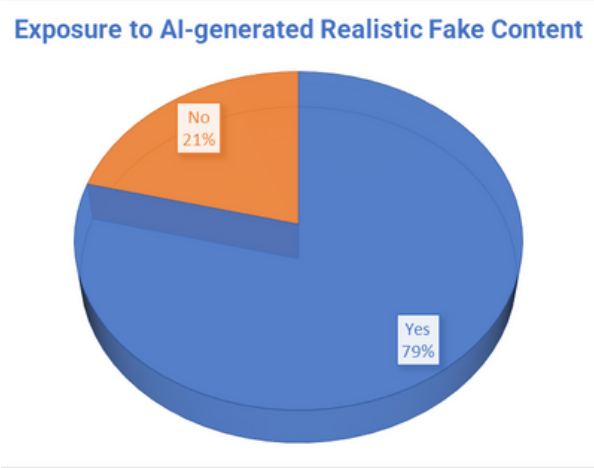



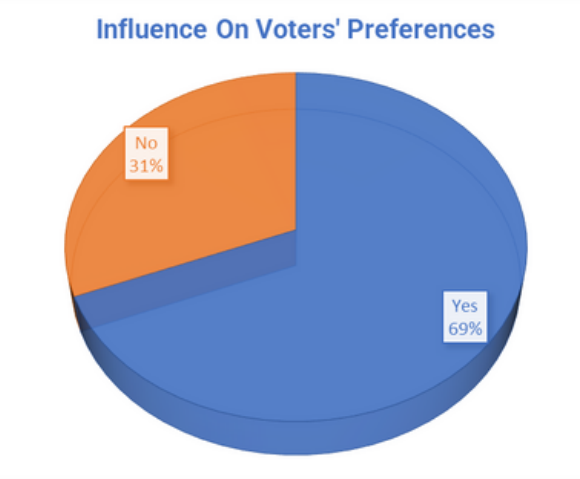

### How Voters Identify Fake Content?

The majority of respondents rely on multiple verification methods to determine the authenticity of election-related content, with 443 respondents using a combination of unnatural body movements, fact-checking websites, and official sources. This indicates that most people do not depend on a single method but instead use a mix of personal judgment, official verification, and social discussions to assess the credibility of election-related information.

### Exposure to AI-Generated Realistic Fake Content

A significant 85% of respondents (465 out of 589) have encountered AI-generated realistic-looking fake content, highlighting the growing prevalence of advanced synthetic media in election-related discourse. This includes deepfake videos, manipulated images, and fabricated narratives, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between authentic and AI-generated content. The widespread exposure to such misinformation underscores the urgent need for stronger fact-checking mechanisms and enhanced media literacy to help individuals critically assess digital information.



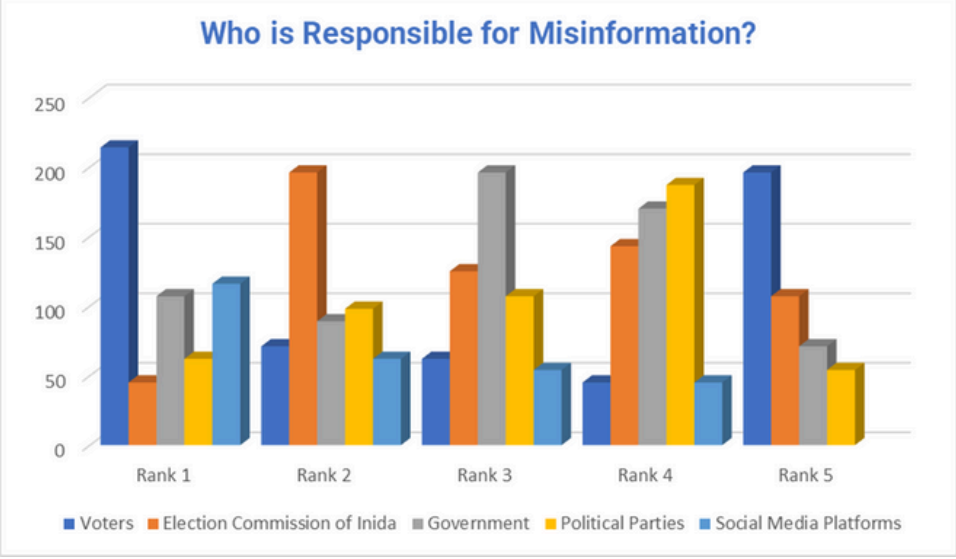

### Influence on Voters' Preferences

A significant 69% of respondents (406 out of 589) believe that fake election-related content influences their views. The data highlights the strong impact of fake election-related content on public opinion. This suggests that misinformation can play a critical role in shaping voter perceptions and potentially altering electoral outcomes.

### Who is Responsible for Misinformation?

Voters are seen as highly responsible (Rank 1 & Rank 6), a significant number of respondents placed voters as Rank 1, implying that misinformation might spread due to a lack of media literacy or critical thinking among the public. Voters are also ranked high in Rank 6, indicating divided opinions—some see them as least responsible.

Election Commission of India is considered significantly responsible (Rank 2), the ECI ranks highest in Rank 2, suggesting that many believe it plays a significant role in regulating misinformation but may not be entirely at fault.



Social Media Platforms have a mixed ranking, appearing across multiple ranks, suggesting that some believe these platforms are responsible for misinformation while others not. Overall, it highlights the need to aware and empower voters along with other efforts to counter misinformation.

# Conclusion

This survey is the important part of the whole study as it highlights diverse perspectives, particularly the role of social media in spreading AI-generated deceptive content. Social media platforms act as key facilitators of misinformation, making them a crucial point for intervention. Notably, 53% of respondents trust the content they see on social media, highlighting the platform's influence in shaping public opinion.

Given this, social media companies bear significant responsibility in curbing misinformation, especially during elections and political campaigns. However, the burden of identifying fake versus real content currently falls on voters, who often rely on personal judgment due to a lack of clear regulations and inadequate intervention from the government, social media platforms, and the Election Commission of India (ECI). This regulatory gap leaves voters vulnerable to manipulation through AI-generated misinformation.

One of the most overlooked yet critical aspects is voter awareness and empowerment. Strengthening digital literacy efforts and implementing stricter policies are essential to mitigating the negative impact of misinformation.

# ECI’s Evolving Stance on Synthetic Content Regulation

# ECI's Evolving Stance on Synthetic Content Regulation

On 16 January 2025, the Election Commission of India (ECI) issued an advisory to all political parties ahead of the Delhi elections on 05 February 2025. The advisory, titled 'Advisory for Labelling Synthetic/AI-Generated Content Used by Political Parties for Election Campaigning,' marks a significant shift in the ECI's approach to managing AI uses in political campaigns.

This move follows an earlier advisory issued on 06 May 2024, during Lok Sabha elections, which focused on the 'Responsible and Ethical Use of Social Media Platforms and Strict Avoidance of Any Wrongful Use by Political Parties and Their Representatives During the MCC Period in General Elections and By-Elections.' While the 2024 advisory emphasised legal compliance and restrictions, the latest guidelines acknowledge the increasing role of AI in elections and trying to evolve with the evolution in technology. With this latest advisory ECI aims to regulate its use through transparency measures and self-regulation by political parties.

## From Restriction to Regulation: The Shift in ECI's Approach

The 2024 advisory primarily sought to curb the misuse of AI-generated content by invoking existing laws, including the IT Act, Model Code of Conduct (MCC), and the Indian Penal Code (IPC). It mandated:

- Immediate removal of deepfake content—political parties were required to take down such synthetic audios/videos within three hours of noticing it.
- A strict directive that political parties must refrain from using AI tools that distort or spread misinformation, thereby lowering the standards of electioneering.
- Reporting fake social media accounts to platforms, and if unresolved, escalating complaints to the Grievance Appellate Committee (GAC).

While these guidelines focused on reactive measures, they lacked a pragmatic framework to proactively manage AI's role in elections and campaigns in India. This approach also ignored the reality on ground of the extend of use of AI in elections and campaigns. The guidelines were more about prohibiting, reflecting an initial stance that viewed AI as a threat to fair elections and democracy.

**Key Provisions of the 2025 ECI Advisory**

**1. Mandatory Labelling of AI-Generated Content**

Any AI-generated or synthetically altered content (images, videos, audio) must carry a clear notation such as "AI-Generated," "Digitally Enhanced," or "Synthetic Content".

**2. Disclosures in Campaign Materials**

Political parties must include disclaimers in campaign advertisements and promotional content if synthetic content is used.

**3. Encouraging Responsible AI Use**

Political parties are urged to ensure fair, transparent, and ethical use of AI in election campaigns, fostering accountability and voter awareness.

However, the 2025 advisory marks a more practical approach, acknowledging that AI is now deeply integrated into political campaigning. Instead of outright ban, the ECI has outlined strict but structured guidelines to ensure responsible AI use in elections, embarking on a more pragmatic approach to deal with the menace of deepfakes and other AI-generated content.

This shift from prohibition to acknowledgement and regulation reflects the ECI's evolving stance, moving away from seeing AI as a mere threat to recognising its inevitable role in modern political discourse.

## Why Did the ECI Issue These Guidelines?

The rapid advancement of AI technologies has led to the creation of highly realistic synthetic content, including deepfake videos, altered images, and AI-generated audio. As AI becomes a powerful tool in political campaigning, it has the potential to significantly influence voter opinions and deceive with wrong and false information or media.

The Delhi elections have witnessed an unprecedented surge in AI-driven campaign strategies, surpassing even the Lok Sabha elections in several aspects. Political parties—Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and Congress—are aggressively leveraging AI-generated promotional materials. A digital battleground has emerged, with AI-generated content flooding social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

This AI-driven electoral warfare includes, AI-generated attack ads targeting rivals, satirical content designed to sway public opinion and deepfake videos circulating misinformation are few among many others. However, the widespread use of AI in campaigns has now taken a legal turn, as political parties face FIRs for alleged violations.

## AI and Election Misinformation: The Legal Fallout

One of the most notable incidents in the Delhi elections involved an FIR filed against the AAP for allegedly sharing AI-generated photos and videos of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on its official X account.

The deepfake videos were posted on January 10 and 13, 2025. One video reportedly featured a scene from a 1990s Bollywood film, with the faces of the villains replaced by those of BJP leaders. The audio was also altered to create a conversation about the Delhi elections. Five FIRs have been filed under various sections, including, Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) Section 175 (False statement related to an election), Section 192 (Provocation with intent to cause a riot), Section 352 (Intentional insult to provoke a breach of peace), Section 356 (Defamation). The filing of these legal cases underscores the pressing need for putting guardrails for using AI in elections and campaigns, reinforcing why the ECI's latest guidelines are timely and necessary.

## Why it is a Concern?

The extensive use of AI in the Delhi Elections has transformed the battleground, where every contender is leveraging technology to shape narratives and discourses. What stands out is the easy accessibility of AI tools, allowing parties to create not just deepfake content but also personalised content for each voter—not just to enhance their own image but also to discredit their opponents.

A particularly concerning development is the dissemination of deepfake content through verified party handles, which adds a layer of credibility and increases the likelihood of voters being misled. Along with this it also highlights irresponsibility on part of political parties. This raises important questions about how misinformation spreads in elections and the role of AI in shaping voter trust.

## The Future of AI in Elections

The Election Commission of India's evolving approach to AI in elections reflects the changing nature of political campaigning. From prohibiting AI-generated deepfakes in 2024 to mandating transparency and responsible AI use in 2025, the shift is both significant and necessary. As a result of latest guidelines, political parties have now started labelling AI-generated media, marking a step toward responsible AI use in elections.

However, while labelling AI-generated content is a positive step, challenges remain. A major concern is that current advisory does not address the issue of bots and supporters sharing AI-generated content, which is one of the primary sources of such misinformation. As a result, this approach appears incomplete and is unlikely to be effective in curbing the spread of such content. Also, how these disclaimers will impact voters with low digital literacy is yet to be seen. If people cannot differentiate between real and AI-generated content, misinformation could still manipulate voter perception, despite transparency measures. How exactly these transparency measures will be operationalised in several cases is a question, whose answers will unfold in coming months.

# Recommendations

# Recommendations

As highlighted in the earlier sections, the concerns regarding the use of AI in elections is multifaceted. On the one hand, there has been a growing social media influence with a declining trust in public institutions. This alongside the rapid pace of the development of AI based technologies has facilitated the digital space to be abound with manipulated content. Currently the use of AI has not matched up to the hype created around its use as a tool that bridges digital and real world. Until now there has not been an incident of an election being decisively influenced by AI generated content rather, the availability of cheap fake remains relevant. Majority of the use cases of AI in Indian context has been limited to generating content that aims to vilify the opposition candidate. These contents thus aim to exploit the already existing bias into the mind of viewers in an effort to capture their voters.

The primary proposition that needs to be acknowledged from the above cases is that currently AI is still in its nascent stage and has not achieved its full potential. Despite AI currently not having any significant impact on electoral outcomes it cannot be completely neglected given the future potential of this technology due to technological progress. Hence, there can be substantial risk in the future. Therefore, it is imperative to take proactive and preventive measures. These measures can be taken at a different level to from technological, policy to voters' awareness and empowerment measures.

## Technological Recommendations

- **Prudent Watermarking Technology:** Strengthen AI watermarking technology and ensure AI-generated content, including images, videos, and text, contains embedded digital watermarks to trace its origin. Develop robust anti-tampering measures to improve watermark resilience against manipulation, removal, or attacks from third-party actors.

- **Ensuring Content Traceability:** To enhance transparency, content certification standards like C2PA should be integrated. C2PA is a technical standard developed to certify the authenticity and origin of digital media. It also involves embedding metadata in digital content that provides details about who created it, how it was modified, and where it originated. This also allows users and platforms to check whether an image, video, or document has been altered or AI-generated.

- **Cross Industry Collaboration and Uniform Standards:** Industry-wide standards must be implemented to take down deceptive and potentially risky content across all platforms. This requires platforms to work collectively and collaborate. This also presents an opportunity to self-regulate. Collaboration across the industry is crucial to counter AI-driven election risks. Platforms, policymakers, and tech companies should work together to share best practices, detection tools, and technical signals, strengthening collective defenses against misinformation and manipulation.

- **Adherence to MCC:** Social media platforms, as primary distribution channels for AI-generated content, should enhance content moderation, especially during elections. They must adhere to the Model Code of Conduct in India, invest in automated detection tools, and implement interoperable identifiers to distinguish between AI-generated and real content effectively.

- **Virality Monitoring & Anomaly Detection:** To mitigate misinformation risks, platforms should implement a content kinetics and kinematics framework to track the virality and anomalous traffic patterns of digital content. AI-driven monitoring should detect unexplainable spikes in content engagement. If a post exhibits abnormal virality, it should be flagged for immediate verification.

Upon detecting AI-generated viral content, platforms should immediately initiate fact-checking and verification. Necessary actions should be taken against accounts spreading false information, including content takedowns, account suspensions, or labelling misleading content. Social media platforms must adopt proactive strategies to limit election-related misinformation and deceptive content rather than reacting when harm is done.

- **Sandbox Testing for Verification:** Flagged content should enter a sandbox phase, where automated and human reviewers analyse its authenticity. If found misleading or incorrect, it should be tagged accordingly.

- **Reporting Highly Sensitive Content to ECI:** For highly sensitive content, tech companies should report directly to the Election Commission of India (ECI). The content's status should then be handled as per ECI directives to ensure lawful and fair moderation.

# Policy Recommendations

- **Clarifications related to Manipulated media and its definition:** Defining what constitutes manipulated content is important. Currently there is no clear definition of manipulated media. Given the technological advancement AI based technologies have been introduced into digital cameras with built in features of algorithms that enhance the image quality and clarity. They may involve use of AI based algorithms for such multimedia enhancement. Therefore, there is an urgent need to define a legally recognised definition of digitally manipulated media.

- **Public sensitization on cheap fakes:** The use of cheap fakes has been a major concern during the recently concluded election. This has been highlighted by experts and as per our study most of the fabricated campaign materials currently in circulation are contents made by simple modification or tampering introduced into original content without actually involving any use of AI. Controlling such manipulated media has been a challenge and given the sizable number of rural populations that has joined the digital ecosystem it has become extremely necessary to educate them regarding fake manipulated contents available on social media platforms.

- **Integration of Verifiable Content Credential on Social Media Platforms:** The content credentials verification facility is currently available on X (formerly Twitter), similar initiatives must be mandated for all other social media platforms and other large data aggregators specified under the DPDP Rules, 2025. The contents that have been manipulated must be labelled mandatorily based on their digital credentials which can be verified based on the C2PA standard. The labelling should be such that it is easily visible to the viewers.

- **Need for targeted legislation catering to deep fakes and digital impersonation:** Currently Section 66C and Section 66Dof the IT Act 2000 are invoked in cases of falsified digital impersonation of individuals. Section 66C deals with fraudulent or dishonest use of the electronic signature, password or any other unique identification feature of any other person. Section 66D deals with the cases of cheating by impersonation using electronic or digital means. Besides the sections of IT Act, section 175 of BNS (False statement in connection with an Election), 336 of BNS (Forgery) and 353 of BNS (Statements conducing to public mischief) may also be imposed. These laws are however too broad and generalised. Given the sensitive and sensational nature of political deepfakes special provisions are needed aimed at curbing contents which misrepresent individuals through digital impersonations.

Specific provisions are required prohibiting the production and circulation of fake videos or contents that are aimed at misrepresentation of facts or personalities. While framing relevant rules it must be kept in mind that its primary objective should be to prevent the spread of misinformation. The reach, speed and scale of digital platforms is enormous and once a content is online it can have far reaching consequences even before its authenticity is verified. Therefore, a proactive time bound approach is needed in this regard. Outlawing certain risky use cases of AI in elections for example, robocalls, impersonating political and any content which dissuade users to voter and exercise their political rights.

- **Ensuring that Intermediary platforms remain accountable:** Intermediary platforms have been implementing their own content moderation policies, including community notes-based moderation and third-party fact-checking programs. Meta platforms use the third-party fact checking method for content moderation whereas X (formerly Twitter) relies on community notes for content moderation. Recently Meta has announced a shift from its third-party fact checking model in the USA to community note based content moderation. Both the systems have their own flaws and associated challenges. The third- party fact checking has been reported to have been suffering from reviewer biases and was the primary reason given by Meta for the shift. A new fact checking hybrid model relying on the community notes-based approach in addition to third- party fact checking should be adopted by platforms. This would lead to reduced biases and make the fact checking accurate even for contents with local contexts. Developing such a system would require joint efforts by the government, civil societies and social media intermediary companies.

- **Mandatory Disclosure of Political Advisory Firms Involvement:** Entities engaged in digital campaigns, social media management, or political advertisements must publicly declare their involvement with political campaigns or parties. Their financial transactions, partnerships, or consultancy services related to political campaigns should be documented and made available for regulatory scrutiny.

- **Designating Political Advisory Firms as Data Fiduciaries:** Given their extensive access to user data, political advisory firms if harnessing public data should be classified as data fiduciaries, making them legally responsible for ethical data collection, handling, and processing. Even when using publicly available data, they must declare the source and nature of their data acquisition to prevent unethical micro-targeting, profiling, and election manipulation.

## Awareness and Empowerment

- **Every Voter's Responsibility to Verify AI-Generated Content:** Every individual must take responsibility for verifying political information before believing or sharing it. Voters should fact-check election news, be cautious of AI-generated deepfakes, and cross-check multiple sources.

- **AI for Real-Time Misinformation Detection:** The ECI should collaborate with tech companies to develop an AI-driven system that detects and removes fake news, deepfakes, and misleading election content in real-time across digital platforms. This would prevent false narratives from influencing voters before and during elections

- **AI Literacy Campaigns for Voters:** The government, ECI, and civil society should launch AI literacy programs to educate voters about AI's role in elections, including deepfake detection, algorithmic biases, and AI-driven political ads. Workshops, digital campaigns, and school curricula can ensure citizens make informed electoral choices.

- **Mandatory AI Transparency Labels in Political Ads:** Political parties using AI-generated content in advertisements should be required to disclose it clearly. Just as social media labels sponsored content, AI-generated ads must carry disclaimers, ensuring voters are aware of AI's role in shaping their perceptions. This should also be implemented for other accounts on social media platforms.

- **ECI's Voter Awareness Programs:** The Election Commission of India conducts voter awareness initiatives, but they should now focus on educating voters about AI-generated misinformation, deepfakes, and algorithmic biases that may influence their choices. AI literacy should be a core part of voter education.
- **Fact-Checking Initiatives by Independent Organizations:** Several Indian and global organizations actively fact-check election-related misinformation. These efforts should be expanded with AI assistance to scale verification efforts, making accurate information easily accessible to voters.

# Conclusion

# Conclusion

As 2024 began, many experts predicted that AI would significantly impact electoral processes and influence voter perceptions. However, an in-depth analysis of the Delhi Assembly Election 2025 suggests that these fears were overstated. The reality on the ground tells a different story—while AI has been widely discussed as a potential game-changer, its actual role in shaping voter behaviour remains limited. Traditional campaign methods such as mass mobilization, door-to-door canvassing, and in-person outreach continue to hold greater significance than digital strategies. This report examines the gap between AI's hype and its real-world application in electoral politics, revealing that AI's presence in the Delhi Assembly Election, 2025 was largely restricted to AI-generated memes, basic edited videos, and minor instances of deepfake content as highlighted by experts in the workshop.

While concerns about AI-driven disinformation are valid, their actual impact on elections remains limited. There were isolated instances of AI misuse, such as the last-minute deepfake videos that aimed to mislead voters—a strategy seen previously in the US elections and, in India, for example, during Maharashtra Assembly Elections, 2025, just a few hours before elections, an AI manipulated video went viral. The video shows Waris Pathan, a prominent leader of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM), saying that he withdrew from the Bhiwandi West elections to back a rival Samajwadi Party candidate Reyaz Azmi. Pathan has firmly denied these claims, labelling the video as fake and defamatory. These incidents highlight a potential threat, as last-minute misinformation leaves little time for fact-checking or countermeasures. However, in the case of Delhi's elections, the use of AI for personalized voter outreach was constrained due to factors such as limited access to high-quality data, regional and linguistic diversity, and the high cost associated with AI-driven campaign strategies.

Another key observation is that AI-driven campaigns remain a privilege of well-funded political parties. The financial burden of implementing AI tools in electoral strategies means that only larger parties can afford to integrate AI-based technologies effectively, while smaller parties continue to rely on conventional campaign tactics. The cost and resource-intensive nature of AI-driven electioneering (Shah, 2024) further limits its widespread adoption in Indian electoral politics.

Despite the growing discourse around AI's role in political narrative-building, AI has not yet matured enough to be a decisive factor in elections in Delhi as reflected by experts in the workshop and the cases that were witnessed. AI-driven narratives only appear to be effective when they build upon pre-existing, deeply rooted socio-political issues. This means that while AI can amplify narratives, it does not necessarily create new political realities or drastically alter voter behaviour. It mostly strengthens existing narratives. Furthermore, the spread of AI-generated content appears to be concentrated on platforms like X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and Facebook, with little evidence of such content gaining traction on more private, closed-group messaging platforms like WhatsApp. However, having said this, AI still has the potential to make a difference in narrative building and future also can play a significant role as it can utilise social media's potential to rapidly disseminate narratives, a coordinated approach at an unprecedented scale.

Historically, this has been achieved through various mass media channels for centuries, from the printing press to radio, television, and the internet. As technology has evolved, so have the challenges. We must be cautious about the role of AI in shaping narratives about society, governments, political parties, or individuals—especially in the long run. It is essential to ensure that AI serves us rather than the other way around. In a democracy, aligning multiple forces will be crucial to achieving this balance.

India's diverse and complex voter base suggests that personal connections, grassroots political engagement, and intricacies of socio-cultural dynamics remain far more influential than AI-powered electioneering. While AI-generated content and tools were present during the elections, they did not dictate the election's course or outcome. Instead, traditional campaign strategies—such as political rallies, meetings, and welfare promises—proved to be the real drivers of voter decisions. This underscores the fact that the influence of AI in elections is often exaggerated and that the real power still lies in ground-level political work. This has been highlighted constant by the experts in the workshop and also evident by the work of Prof. Daniel in the paper **'The Epistemic Impossibility of an Artificial Intelligence Take-Over of Democracy.'** He challenged the idea that algorithmic governance can control politics or the entire political process. He argues that AI cannot take over democracy because politics operates in a uniquely complex decision-making realm. Therefore, both the fear and the expectation of AI dominating politics are exaggerated. He further contends that AI is grounded in objectivity, where knowledge is reduced to binary categories that can be calculated. However, AI struggles with uncertainty and ambiguity. This computational approach separates information from its specific context, treating it as an isolated phenomenon. In contrast, humans navigate ambiguity effectively. As Przeworski A (1991) described, *"Democracy is organized uncertainty."* Unlike AI, human decision-making considers historical, cultural, linguistic, caste and regional contexts, recognizing the interplay of these factors in different settings.

The reason why early predictions about AI's influence on elections were poorly grounded is that they largely ignored decades of research and the realities of how politics actually works (Simon et al., 2024). Simon (2024) highlights four key reasons for this misjudgement:

- **Limited Influence of Mass Persuasion Campaigns** – Many analyses overlooked the multitude of factors that come into play in high-stakes events like elections, assuming that AI-driven messaging alone could significantly sway outcomes. This diminishes the effect of single persuasion attempt.

- **Voter Resilience to AI-Generated Content** – Given the overwhelming flood of information from various sources, AI-generated materials often struggle to cut through the noise and reach their intended audience.

- **Overstated Persuasive Effects –** The impact of AI-generated content has been exaggerated. Voters who encounter new information typically update their beliefs incrementally and tend to reject excessively tailored messages.

- **Complexity of Voting Behaviour** – Electoral decisions are shaped by a complex interplay of factors, including gender, age, values, identity, and socialization. While information—whether true or false—can influence voters to some extent, their pre-existing political leanings and deeply held values play a far more significant role.

Looking ahead, future research can explore whether AI will ever evolve beyond its current role as a supplementary tool in election campaigns. As of now, the claim that AI is revolutionising elections appears overstated. At best, AI has served as a supporting element rather than a transformative force. This raises a crucial question: Is AI genuinely reshaping political outcomes, or is its role being magnified beyond reality? Based on current evidence, the answer leans toward the latter.

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# Appendix

# Appendix

## AI & DELHI ASSEMBLY ELECTION, 2025

The following survey questions were posed to Delhi voters as part of a study analysing the impact of misinformation and disinformation on the 2025 Delhi Assembly election.

1. Do you get election-related information from social media?

    a. Yes
    b. No

2. Do you trust that the election-related content on social media is correct?

    a. Yes
    b. No

3. What type of misleading or fake content have you seen? Select one or more.

    a. Fake videos
    b. Fake images
    c. Fake information related to elections
    d. Others

4. How did you identify that content that you received is fake?

    a. Unnatural body parts movements difference in lip sync and voice
    b. Fact checking websites and news
    c. Election Commission of India
    d. From friends/community/conversations

5. Have you ever seen realistic-looking content that turned out to be fake?

    a. Yes
    b. No

6. Do you think such content makes you change views about preferences?

    a. Yes
    b. No

7. If you receive misinformation or disinformation, who do you think is responsible? (Assign a rank from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates the most responsible and 5 the least responsible.)

    a. Voters
    b. Election Commission of India
    c. Government
    d. Political Parties
    e. Social Media Platforms

8. Name
9. Your age group
10. Gender