

TRUSTED INFORMATION ALLIANCE · REPORT

Indian Fact-Checking Ecosystem's Response to the Iran–Israel–U.S. Conflict

Misinformation Trends Observed by TIA Member-Organisations

COMPILED BY Trusted Information Alliance (TIA)

DATE May 2026

PARTNERS BOOM · Vishvas News · India Today · Newschecker · NewsMeter ·
The Quint · Factly · Telugu Post

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PART TWO • DAU CASE STUDY

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AI-Generated Video Peddled As Indian Spying For Mossad Caught In Iran

By - Srijit Das
Published - 11 Mar 2026 6:25 PM • 3 mins read



Did Army Chief Admit That India Shared Iranian Ship's Location With Israel? No!

We found no evidence to support the claim that General D... such a statement.

ABHISHEK ANAND Follow Published: 09 Mar 2026, 2:51 PM IST

This video, claiming that Randhir Jaiswal backed Israel and threatened Iran, is a deepfake

BY SUSHMITHA PONNALA ON MARCH 16, 2026

Fact Check: Iran attacks Indian oil tanker? No, video is AI-generated

show Iran launching a heavy attack on an Indian oil tanker being social media.

Mar 2026 1:01 PM

Fact Check: इजरायल में एप्पल और माइक्रोसॉफ्ट की इमारतों पर ईरान के हमले का दावे से AI वीडियो वायरल

पश्चिम एशिया में चल रही जंग के बीच के दावे से एआई वीडियो वायरल हो रहा है

By: Sharad Prakash Asthana | Published: 11 Mar 2026

Fact-Check: AI-Generated Clip Viral as Iran Attacking US Bases Near Burj Khalifa

Fact Check

US-Iran Crisis: Deepfakes Of Indian Leaders Supporting Israel Surface

Fact Check: इजरायल के पीएम बेंजामिन नेतन्याहू की ईरान के हमले में मौत का दावा झूठा

इजरायल के एप्पल, माइक्रोसॉफ्ट जैसी बड़ी कंपनियों के हेड क्वार्टर पर

Fact Check: Iran kills 16,500 Israeli soldiers? No, AI-generated video goes viral

A video circulating on social media claims to show an Israeli man saying the soldiers were killed in Iranian attacks.

By - Rahul Adhikari
Published on - 22 Mar 2026 4:41 PM

کٹ چیک: فضائی حملے میں بیت اللہ خاں پر ای کی ہلاکت ہوئی۔ سوچ چیک: خاکی کی تصویر دراصل ای ائی سے تیار کردہ



India Today Fact Check
@IndiaTodayFacts

Claim: A swarm of bees attacked a US aircraft carrier

Fact: This video is AI-generated.

Old Video Shared as Recent Visuals of Iran's Missile Attack on Tel Aviv, Israel

We found that the video dated back to June 2025.

ABHISHEK ANAND Follow Published: 11 Mar 2026, 5:23 PM IST

Fact Check: दुबई एयरपोर्ट पर हमले का वायरल वीडियो निकला एआई (AI) निर्मित

विचार मजबूती की दृष्टि से यह स्पष्ट हो रहा है कि दुबई एयरपोर्ट पर हमले का दावा करने वाले वीडियो फर्जी और ऑटो-जनरेटिव (AI) द्वारा निर्मित है।

By: Pallavi Mishra | Published Mar 10, 2026 at 8:43 AM | Updated Mar 10, 2026 at 03:27 PM

Mann, claiming that the Iran-Israel conflict could lead to the formation of "Akhand Bharat", is a deepfake

A deepfake video of Shashi Tharoor is being shared to falsely claim that he praised Pakistan and criticised the Indian

Video Of PM Modi Announcing Free LPG Cylinders Is A Deepfake

By - Jagriti Trisha
Published - 16 Mar 2026 3:15 PM • 3 mins read

AI/DEEFAKE

Israel-US Conflict With Iran: Viral Image Showing Benjamin Netanyahu Pulled Out From Rubble Is AI-Generated

Written By Vasudha Beri, Edited By Kushel Madhusoodan

மாக வழங்கப்படும் என பிரதமர் தொடர் அறிவித்தாரா?

At a Glance

This report synthesizes inputs on misinformation trends observed by eight partner fact-checking organisations during the Iran–Israel–U.S. conflict, which escalated between February and March 2026. The findings are structured around six themes, followed by a case study by the Deepfakes Analysis Unit of the TIA.

8

Fact-checking partners contributing

500+

Conflict-related fact-checks compiled

10

Indian languages tracked across outlets

Trends in Debunked Content

All eight organisations flagged the recycling of old, unrelated footage as the most dominant trend. Videos from other conflicts or industrial incidents (*such as explosions at oil refineries or nuclear plants*) were repackaged as real-time footage of Iranian strikes typically targeting Israel, Gulf nations, or U.S. military assets. A significant rise in A.I.-generated visuals marks a qualitative shift from earlier conflicts.

BOOM

Generated visuals showing fabricated military strikes; mainstream Indian news outlets amplifying false claims.

Vishvas News

Systematic targeting of Israeli/U.S. military; viral claims of Netanyahu's death; high audience polarisation—viral content favoured Iran's purported military dominance.

India Today

'War Thunder' video game footage passed off as combat; clips from 2003 Baghdad strikes repurposed as Iran-Israel strikes.

Newschecker

Fabricated news bulletins used real logos of media houses; visuals claimed to show captured military personnel and spies; communal and polarising spins created using conflict-related content.

NewsMeter

Sharp drop in video game footage and clips from previous conflicts and dominance of A.I.-generated content; overlap with misinformation about Pakistan–Afghanistan tensions.

The Quint

Heavy focus on infrastructure damage; A.I.-manipulated clips of Indian journalists, politicians pushing pro-Israel views; spike in A.I.-manipulated visuals of dead or injured leaders.

Factly

Coordinated anti-India narratives amplified via A.I.-generated/A.I.-manipulated content; falsely associating high-ranking Indian officials and politicians to claims about India's alignment with Israel.

Telugu Post

Conflict-adjacent misinformation on LPG shortages, fuel supply, and U.S. sanctions on India.

SECTION 02

Predominant Narratives

Urban devastation by Iranian strikes

Tel Aviv, Dubai, Riyadh, and Bahrain falsely shown 'ablaze' or destroyed.

India Today · BOOM · Newschecker · NewsMeter

U.S. military failure

Videos of U.S. soldiers killed or captured; naval vessels shown destroyed.

Vishvas News · NewsMeter · Newschecker

Leadership vulnerability

False reports of Netanyahu's death; Israeli and Iranian leaders struck.

BOOM · Vishvas News · India Today · The Quint · NewsMeter

India falsely inserted into the conflict

A.I.-manipulated videos of Indian leaders suggesting alliance with Israel.

BOOM · Vishvas News · Newschecker · Factly · NewsMeter

SECTION 03

Most Targeted Individuals/Groups in Debunked Content

COMMON TARGETS ACROSS ORGANISATIONS

Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel

False claims of death, resignation, strikes on residence

U.S. Military

Fabricated carrier attacks, soldier casualties, base destruction

Indian political leadership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah

Indian military leadership

Army Chief Gen. Upendra Dwivedi

ORGANISATION-SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

BOOM

Iran was the single most-targeted entity

Vishvas News

U.S. corporations (Amazon, Microsoft) in 'sabotage' narratives

Newschecker

Journalists uniquely flagged as targeted individuals

A.I.-Related Trends

Fabricated War Visuals

A.I.-generated explosions, missile strikes, and destroyed infrastructure — often designed for virality.

Manipulated Leader Videos

Real footage of Indian political and military leaders overlaid with A.I.-cloned voice expressing support for Israel or revealing sensitive information.

Synthetic Battlefield Scenes

Fabricated enemy soldiers dying, being captured, or shown in distress — pushed to signal military outcomes.

37%

BOOM:
Synthetic media debunked (32 of 86)

35%

Newschecker:
Synthetic media debunked (38 of 110)

48.3%

Vishvas News:
Synthetic media debunked (30 of 62)

~25%

India Today:
Synthetic media debunked (~19 of ~75)

35%

NewsMeter:
Synthetic media debunked (24 of 68)

37.6%

The Quint:
Synthetic media debunked (32 of 85)

~41.6%

Factly:
Synthetic media debunked (~25 of >60)

16.4%

Telugu Post:
Synthetic media debunked (15 of 91)

SECTION 05

Volume & Language of Debunked Content

Organisation	Total (number)	Formats (number)	Synthetic Media (number)	Languages (number/percentage)
BOOM	86	Video 75 · Image 7 · Text 4	32	English 48 · Hindi 33 · Bengali 5
Vishvas News	62	Video 55 · Image 5 · Text 2	30	Hindi · English
India Today	~75	Primarily video	~19	English and Hindi ~70% · Bengali · Malayalam
Newschecker	110	Video 94 · Image 16	38	Hindi 33% · English 27% · Urdu 25% · (Tamil · Bengali · Malayalam · Punjabi) 15%
NewsMeter	68	Video 63 · Image 5	24	English · Kannada · Telugu · Hindi · Tamil · Malayalam · Arabic
The Quint	85	Video 75 · Image 9 · Text 1	32	English 65 · Hindi 13
Factly	60+	Video ~35 · Image ~ 25	~25	Telugu · Hindi · English
Telugu Post	91	Video 63 · Image 25 · Audio 3	15	English · Odia · Kannada · Telugu · Urdu · Tamil · Malayalam

Challenges in Debunking

A.I. Sophistication

Detection tools increasingly failed on manipulated or generated content, especially when video quality was intentionally degraded.

Low-Quality Viral Chains

Videos were repeatedly downloaded, compressed, and re-uploaded with text overlays, rendering both human and automated analysis less reliable.

Volume & Speed

Simultaneous spread across X, WhatsApp, Telegram, and Facebook — in multiple languages — strained every newsroom.

STRUCTURAL CHALLENGE

Iran's internet blackout, lack of access to the conflict zone, and limited official-source verification forced reliance on open-source intelligence methods. This, combined with A.I. content that had no traceable 'original', made traditional verification methods such as reverse-image search ineffective.

Concluding Observations

01

Unprecedented A.I. volume

A qualitative escalation in synthetic media versus prior conflicts.

02

Deliberate localisation

Translated across Indian languages, tailored to domestic politics.

03

India systematically inserted

Fabricated statements from senior Indian officials, appear coordinated.

04

Limitations of verification tools

Low-quality video, A.I. audio, and internet shutdowns all compounding.

PART TWO · CASE STUDY

How A.I. Reeled India Into the West Asia Crisis

A case study by the Deepfakes Analysis Unit (DAU)

At a Glance: Content debunked by the DAU

27

A.I.-manipulated/A.I.-generated videos

5

A.I.-generated images

3

Languages (English · Hindi · Bengali)

Dominant False Narratives

Five interlocking narrative strands — all designed to suggest India is taking sides

1

Declared allegiance

India publicly sided with Israel in the conflict.

2

Shared expansionist agenda

India and Israel framed as targeting Pakistan and Iran together.

3

Intelligence sharing

Claim that India shared Iranian ship locations with Israel.

4

Aid to the Taliban

Israel allegedly funded the Afghan Taliban at India's request.

5

Bahrain 'Mossad spy'

Fabricated arrest, debunked by India's Ministry of External Affairs' Fact Check Unit and Bahrain's Interior Ministry.

Methodology

Synthetic Audio (Voice Cloning)

Real video footage is retained; the audio track is replaced with A.I.-generated speech cloning the subject's voice.

A.I.-Manipulated Images

Still images — such as the Bahrain 'spy arrest' photo — were altered. The DAU ran that image through A.I. detection tools and confirmed that it was likely tampered with using A.I.

OFFICIALS TARGETED BY MANIPULATED VIDEOS

PM Narendra Modi

Fabricated statements on Iran/ Pakistan

Rajnath Singh

Fake pro-Israel statement

Gen. Upendra Dwivedi

False 'confession' on intel-sharing

Shashi Tharoor

Voice-cloned critical commentary on Indian diplomacy

S. Jaishankar

False allegiance claim to Israel

Amit Shah

Manipulated Lok Sabha speech

Randhir Jaiswal

Synthetic audio over recorded press briefing

Amb. Reuven Azar

Fabricated media confrontation

Forensic Indicators

Red flags identified by RIT's DeFake Project and Northwestern University's GODDS system

Audio Clues

- Monotone, scripted delivery
- Missing ambient sounds (echo, static)
- Intonation and tempo mismatch
- Voice lacks natural cadence

Video Clues

- Teeth disappear/reappear between frames
- Teeth change shape
- Blurry mouth region
- Inconsistent facial lighting

Other Visual Anomalies

- Lips intersect with objects in front (*such as microphone*)
- Unnatural lower teeth and lip overlap
- Apparent elongation of beard

EXPERT CAUTION • RIT DeFake Project

Video quality is being deliberately degraded to obscure manipulation artefacts. In case of Army Chief General Dwivedi's manipulated video, Kelly Wu from RIT noted that it had no clear artefacts and was well-done.

Key Takeaways

A.I. is now a geopolitical weapon

Voice cloning and manipulated visuals are being deployed to manufacture international crises — not just fraud.

Neutral nations are targeted

Countries with strategic ties to multiple parties — like India — are most vulnerable to 'side-assignment' narratives.

Detection is an arms race

As generation quality climbs, forensic tools struggle to keep up; even experts can miss the artefacts.

Cross-border propagation

Pakistani social media users acted as key amplifiers, signalling coordinated transnational distribution.

Official fact-checking is critical

Debunks from official handles of MEA and PIB Fact-Check Units can be helpful.

BOTTOM LINE

The West Asia conflict marks a new phase of information warfare: A.I.-generated content reshaping diplomatic reality. Treat viral footage of officials during active conflicts with rigorous scepticism until independently verified.

TRUSTED INFORMATION ALLIANCE

Thank You

Partners: BOOM • Vishvas News • India Today • Newschecker
NewsMeter • The Quint • Factly • Telugu Post

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