Message on Misinformation in AI Era

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Message to the Young Generation on Misinformation, Disinformation, and Mal-information in the AI Era

Today, I want to share an important message with the young generation: Misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information are not new threats to humanity, ethics, and human rights-they have always existed. But in the modern age, they spread faster than ever before, thanks to advancements in Artificial Intelligence and high-speed internet. These technologies make it easier to manipulate data and rapidly distribute fake information through popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X), WhatsApp, and others.

That's why I urge you to be honest not only in your actions but also in how you share and consume information.

Before I go further, let me define the three key terms I will be referring to throughout this message:

- **Misinformation:** False information spread without the intention to deceive, but it still causes harm. However, nowadays it is often spread intentionally, driven by personal greed or harmful agendas.
- **Disinformation:** This is deliberately false information, created to mislead people. It often involves completely replacing or masking true information to serve political, commercial, or ideological purposes. In simple terms, misinformation involves manipulating the truth, while disinformation involves replacing the truth.
- **Mal-information:** This comes from true information but is twisted, exaggerated, or shared out of context with the intent to cause harm or mislead society. It's often released in cycles to make it appear like fresh, trustworthy information.

Now that you are familiar with these terms, I want to speak directly to my students, colleagues, and the international academic community.

The real root of the problem lies not just with the creators or promoters of false information-but with us, the believers. If we, as consumers of information, commit ourselves to being honest

evaluators, then we can disrupt the chain of misinformation.

This means that before we believe or share any information, we must:
- Think critically,
- Investigate its source,
- Discuss and verify facts,
- Develop informed judgment,
- And most importantly, stop the spread of harmful or misleading content.

If, after such evaluation, we identify the information as misinformation or disinformation, we must act responsibly. That includes:
- Not sharing or promoting it,
- Boycotting fake media outlets,
- Reporting fake social media accounts,
- And raising awareness to help others avoid falling into the same trap.

Blind faith is dangerous-just because information comes from someone we trust or admire doesn't mean it's accurate. In India, for example, many so-called "trusted" news channels routinely broadcast fake or distorted content-focusing not on peace and unity, but on inciting violence, religious divisions, and misleading the public about national issues like demonetization, GST benefits, and economic development.

To stop this cycle, we need to reverse the process:
False information spreads through three main actors:
1. Creators - those who fabricate the false content.
2. Promoters - those who amplify it through media and online platforms.
3. Believers - those who accept and spread it without questioning.

If we, the believers, start rejecting false content-by not liking, not sharing, reporting it, and discouraging others from supporting it-we weaken the chain. If advertisers stop funding fake media, and

if media outlets feel public pressure to present only fact-based news, the spread of misinformation will slow down significantly.

Unfortunately, many people today still engage with fake content, even when they know it's untrue-sometimes out of jealousy, bias, or political motives. In India, religious issues are often used to strengthen the impact of misinformation. Many people feel like they represent the originators of such content, even when they don't know them personally.

To conclude, the only way to break the chain of misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information is for us, the believers, to be honest and responsible. When we stop giving attention to false information, we demotivate those who create and promote it. If instead we keep engaging with fake content-liking, sharing, commenting-we strengthen its spread.

In today's AI-driven world, it has become even easier to generate fake content using tools like GPTs (Generative Pre-trained Transformers), large language models, generative AI, Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), and Agentic AI. These powerful technologies, if misused, pose serious threats to privacy, ethics, and social trust.

Now that these tools are accessible to everyone, we must use them wisely-not to harm society, but to uplift it. We must develop and apply AI technologies for the benefit of humanity, while keeping our planet, ecosystems, and shared future in mind.

In short: Use technology responsibly. Be an honest believer. And help break the chain of misinformation-for the good of humankind.