



FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION HOW TO SPOT AND INVESTIGATE?

A GUIDE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

NATIONAL CYBER RESEARCH & INNOVATION CENTRE

MODERNIZATION DIVISION
BUREAU OF POLICE
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, NEW DELHI



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New Delhi | May 2020

CONTENTS

	Page No.
Introduction	7
Types of Fake News & Disinformation	8
2.1 Fake News and Disinformation Vectors	9
2.2 Points to help the Investigating Officer identify the Fake News	11
How to Spot Fake News	15
Investigation and Reporting Procedure	17
4.1 Investigation of Fake News/Disinformation related URLs	18
4.2 Investigation of Fake News related Images	19
4.3 Investigation of Fake News related Videos	29
Legal Provisions	34
Investigative Sources	35
Conclusion	36
References	37
Few more examples of Fake News and Facts	
	Introduction Types of Fake News & Disinformation 2.1 Fake News and Disinformation Vectors 2.2 Points to help the Investigating Officer identify the Fake News How to Spot Fake News Investigation and Reporting Procedure 4.1 Investigation of Fake News/Disinformation related URLs 4.2 Investigation of Fake News related Images 4.3 Investigation of Fake News related Videos Legal Provisions Investigative Sources Conclusion References

1.0 _____

INTRODUCTION

In novel coronavirus (COVID-19) times, a lot of fake news and disinformation is going around. According to Wikipedia, "Fake News (also known as junk news, pseudo-news, or hoax news) is a form of news consisting of deliberate disinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional news media (print and broadcast) or online social media". Digital news has brought back and increased the usage of fake news or yellow journalism. Fake news is written and published usually to mislead with the intent to damage an agency, entity, or person, and/or gain financially or politically, often using sensationalist, dishonest, or outright fabricated headlines to increase readership. In this scenario, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) should adopt latest cyber investigation methods and procedures for curbing and prosecuting the sources of fake news and disinformation.



2.0 ___

TYPES OF FAKE NEWS & DISINFORMATION

Fake news and disinformation is broadly categorized into the following types, it is achieved through viral posting in formats, like, Audio, Video, Image, Textual Posts and other digital means using online social media and social networking groups.



Figure 1: Fake News and Disinformation Vectors

▶▶ 2.1 **FAKE NEWS & DISINFORMATION VECTORS**

i. Textual Post: Most of the false news is spread through textual posts on social media, that get repeatedly forwarded and shared across various social media platforms, websites and blogs.



Fake News posted on the social media

ii. Image /Photo Post: Fake news spreading agencies/people may opt for Image as tool to make the content viral. In this scenario, someone may misrepresent a photo with misleading text, or morph the photo with deep fake tools.



Nigerian pastor's old picture circulated with misleading text

iii. Video Post: One of the fake news spreading vectors is fake videos. Here, most of the video content carries false message, hatred, communal violence, etc., to spread panic.

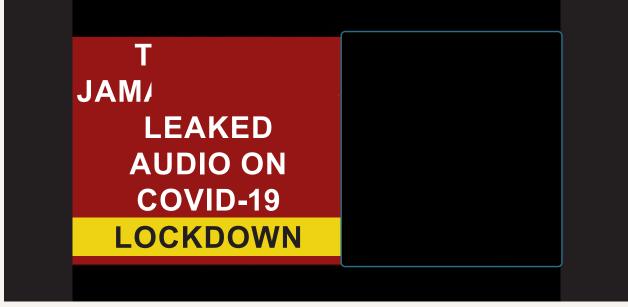


Fake video circulated across digital media platforms

iv. Fake URLs: Cyber criminals may take advantage of the situation and exploit the Corona related anxiety, by creating fake URLs through techniques like Click Jacking, Pharming and other methods. Such cyber frauds are also committed for financial gains by luring through fake coupons, discount offers, redeem coupon schemes, etc.

https://corona-gov.in?60gb https://bit.ly/2JsBZ10 http://pmyojna.ssctechnical.com

v. Fake/Viral Audios: In the present scenario, viral/fake newsmongers may create voice content and spread it across the social networking channels



A voice clip of religious leader who violated lockdown rules that went viral

▶ 2.2 POINTS TO HELP THE INVESTIGATING OFFICER IDENTIFY FAKE NEWS

- False Connection when headlines, visuals or captions do not support the contents
- False Context when genuine content is shared with false contextual information
- Misleading Content misleading use of information to link an issue or an individual
- Impostor Content when genuine contents or sources are impersonated with false or made-up sources
- Manipulated Content when genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive, as with a "doctored" photo
- **Fabricated Content –** False news content is designed to deceive and harm
- Satire or Parody No intention to cause harm, but has, the potential to fool



NO! The Government is doing NO such thing.

WhatsApp info regarding ✓

- 1. ✓ = Message Sent
- 2. ✓✓ = Message Delivered
- 3. 2 Blue ✓✓= Message Read
- 4. 3 Blue ✓✓✓ = Government has take a Note
- 2 Blue 1 Red ✓✓✓ = Government cantal action against you
- 6. एक नीली और दो लाल 1 Blue 2 Red ✓✓✓ = Government is screening your data
- 7. 3 Red /// = Government has initiated action & you'll receive summons from court



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8799711259

EMAIL GOVT. OF INDIA RELATED FAKE NEWS TO pibfactcheck@gmail.com

The only correct UPI ID of PM CARES Fund is

pmcares@sbi

The Following are FAKE

X Pacare@ybl

- X Pacare@upi
- X Pmcares@pnb
- Pmcares@hdfcbank
- X Pmcares@yesbank
- Pmcares@sbi



#PIBFactCheck

To check if any Central Govt. related Policy/Schemes is a Fact or not.

Examples of fake news



Ministry of Health & Family Welfare **Directorate General of Health Services** [Emergency Medical Relief]

New Delhi 4th April 2020

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINE FOR PPE KIT SPECIFICATION FOR COVID-19

THE REVISED SPECIFICATION OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT PPE KIT'S AS RECOMMENDED BY WHO CORONA RESPONSE AND ACTION TEAM VIDE: INTERIM GUIDANCE 4TH APRIL 2020

PERSONAL PROTECTION KIT:

- A) GLOVES-UNCHANGED
- B) FACE MASK- UNCHANGED
- C) HEAD SHIELD- UNCHANGED
- FAKE NEWS D) COVERALL SUIT/JUMP SUIT-EARLIER SPEG REVISED TO 95GSM-SPLASH PROOF/NON PERMEABLE QUALIT
- E) GOGGLES-SAME (OPTIONAL IN CASE
- F) KNEE LENGTH SHOE COVER- UNCHAN

WE SHALL KEEP YOU POSTED ABOUT ANY FURTHER WHEN IT COMES AND SEEMS TO BE APPROPRIATE.



Director Prohibition and Excise Department Government of Telangana

DATE 28 MARCH 2020 READ FOLLOWING

Go Ms No 212 e Prohibition & excise dt28 March 20 Go Ms No 212 e Prohibition & excise dt28 March 20

Director of Prohibition and Excise Department Government of Telangana State issues order no 212/2020 order say All The State Wide Wine Shops Will be Remain Open from 29th March 2020 Time 14:00 Hrs To 17:30 5 Excise Constables Duely Depaloyed for Each Shop To Maintaine Social Distance Among Distingueshed Visitors Voilating Timings Will Be Punished Under Act 386/1982 IPC

FAKE NEWS

Director

Prohibition And Excise
Department

Examples of fake news

3.0 ___

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS AND DISINFORMATION

Following table may help the LEAs to spot fake news and disinformation. Parameters given below are indicative in nature.

Sl. No.	Fake News Spotting Elements	Description
1.	Consider the source	Many messages or website links one receives may contain hoax or fake news. They may have spelling mistakes. Look for the indicative signs to check, if the information is accurate.
2.	Check Photos and Videos carefully	Photos, audio recordings, and videos can be edited to mislead the recipient. Look at trusted news sources to verify whether the story is being reported elsewhere. When a story is reported in multiple places, it is more likely to be true.
3.	• Read beyond	Headlines can be outrageous to attract clicks. Go through the whole story.
4.	Check the author	Do a quick search on the author. Is he reliable? Is he real?
5.	Supporting Sources	Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.
6.	Check the date	Reposting old news/ stories in the current context. The old stories may not be relevant to the current events.

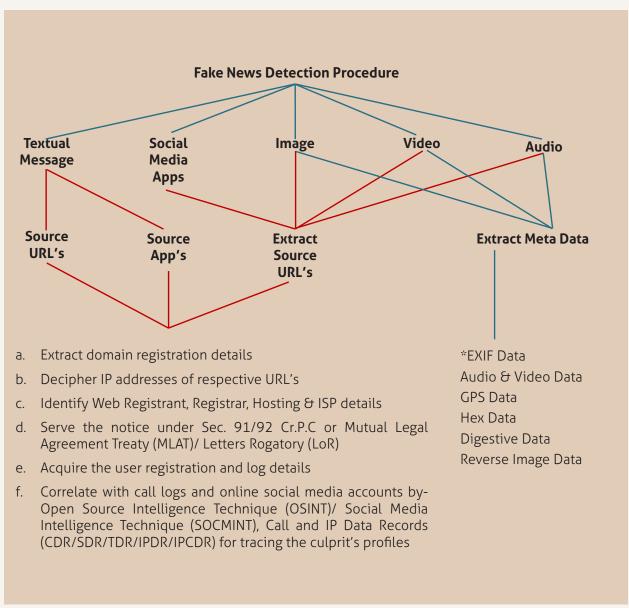
Sl. No.	Fake News Spotting Elements	Description
7.	• Check your biases	Watch out for information that confirms your pre-existing beliefs. Review facts before sharing the information. Stories that seem hard to believe are often untrue.
8.	Verify from other sources	If not sure about the truth of a message, search online for facts and check trusted news sites to see from where the story came?
9.	Understand when a message is forwarded	Messages with the "Forwarded" label help determine if a friend or relative wrote the message or it originally came from someone else. When a message is forwarded from one user to another more than five times, it is indicated with a double arrow icon
10.	Fake news often goes viral Viral	Even if a message is shared many times, this does not make it true. Do not forward a message simply because the sender is urging you to do so.
11.	Fake News Spotting & Fact Checking Sources	 https://pib.gov.in/factcheck.aspx https://www.factcheck.org/ https://reporterslab.org/fact-checking/ https://factly.in/category/fake-news/ https://www.boomlive.in/about-us/ https://factcheck.telangana.gov.in/ https://www.altnews.in/ https://www.metadata2go.com/ https://www.thequint.com/news/webqoof India Today -Anti Fake News War Room (AFWA) Times of India -Times Fact Check The Hindu -Fact Check

4.0 _

INVESTIGATION & REPORTING PROCEDURE

The Investigating officer may follow the following scenarios, and follow the instructions for fake news investigation, step by step.

- **Photo Manipulation** Easy to check, using tools such as Google Reverse Search.
- **Video Tricks** Close examination of the video and finding the original video are among the steps here.
- **Twisting Facts** Watch for deceptive headlines, opinions presented as facts, distortions, made-up facts and neglected details.
- **Pseudo-Experts, Imagined Experts and Misrepresented Experts** How to check their credentials and their statements?
- **Using the Media** Watch for false claims by referencing the mainstream media.
- Manipulating Data Look at the methodology and the questions



*EXIF - Exchangeable Image File Format, IPDR - Internet Protocol Data Record, IPCDR-Internet Protocol Call Data Record, CDR - Call Data Record, SDR - Subscriber Data Record, TDR - Tower Dump Record

►► 4.1 INVESTIGATION OF FAKE NEWS/DISINFORMATION RELATED URLS

Step 1:

Collect the screenshot of the fake news and disinformation content, and the URL, it should be copied and kept on file, with the help of website preservation tools (Camtasia, Snagit, FAW, Httrack and Foca, etc.)



Example-fake video, across digital platforms

Step 2:

If the uploaded content is Image, Video & Audio, etc., the investigating officer should download the content from the target website, using online free video download websites, like https://en.savefrom.net/10/, https://catchvideo.net/, etc., and calculate the hash value and keep it as evidence and for admissibility.



Fake News posted by anonymous user on Tiktok for promoting communal hatred

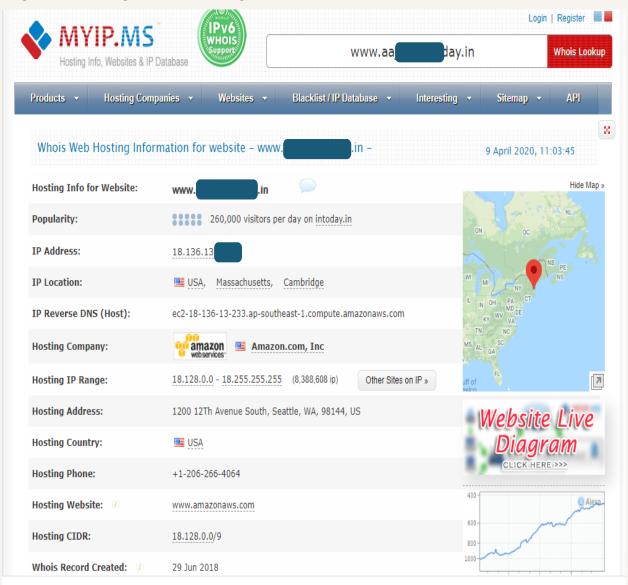
Hashing MD5: 5F369C1F464A6FDE2C54E8CC5850FD89

Hashing SHA1: 71F0DD5C3591A9D36DD32529DC07F670AF041732

Hashing SHA2: AAC98C94457539D7690FDDBF139F3583E4605DB160949C6302D0C758FEACB0E2

Step 3:

The IO should take the name of the website hosting the fake news and check through websites, like www.who.is, www.domaintools.com, www.centralops.net, www.myip.ms, etc., to get the details of the defined domain, such as "https://aajtak.intoday.in/". IO must specifically look for the domain registrar and the registrant, web hosting and ISP details.



Example- website for checking fake news domain related evidence

►► 4.2 INVESTIGATION OF FAKE NEWS RELATED IMAGES

Step 1:

If the uploaded fake news contains Image, Video & Audio, etc., the Investigating Officer should download the content from the target website. If it is a video file, IO may use online free video download websites like https://en.savefrom.net/10/, https://catchvideo.net/ and calculate the hash value and keep it as evidence and for admissibility.



Example - Morphed Image with Fake Content

Hashing MD5: 9F68EB938D248494BFA296180DBC779C

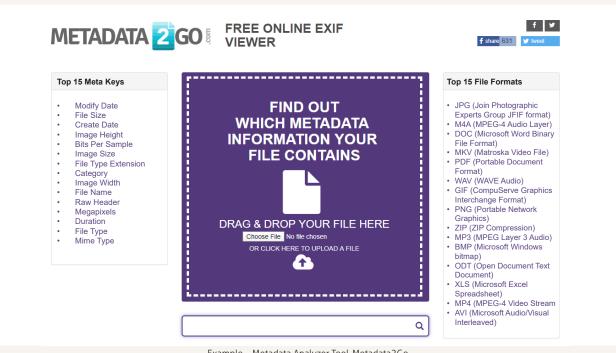
Hashing SHA1: DCBE470EB9F081925229A95751D183087939F1C9

Hashing SHA2: 1B6861833E0E6AE7C9E5766056A18B4F06BCEF68EB9A914114001C7256D88CBF

Step 2:

In case of an image file, the Investigating Officer may adopt META-DATA (Exchange Information or EXIF-DATA) extracting methods, using online websites like https://www.pic2map.com/, http://fotoforensics. com/, http://metapicz.com/#landing, https://29a.ch/photo-forensics/#forensic-magnifier, etc., for collecting more information

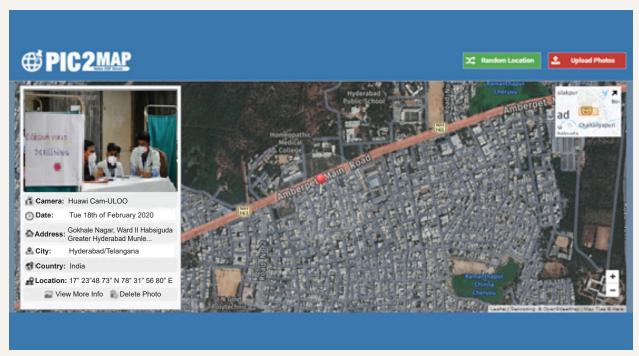
Note: Before uploading any image onto the above websites, the Investigating Officer may consider the case sensitivity because these websites are hosted on foreign servers/cloud systems, that may influence/ mislead the investigation due to data leakage.



Example – Metadata Analyzer Tool-Metadata2Go

Step 3:

After uploading the target image on to the above websites, the following Meta-Data results may be found by the IO



Example- Meta Data extraction website -PIC2MAP

GPSVersionID 2,2,0,0

GPSLatitudeRef

GPSLatitude 17.3969

GPSLongitudeRef E

GPSLongitude 78.5325

GPSAltitudeRef **GPSAltitude** 0

GPSTimeStamp 11,40,52 GPSDateStamp 2020:02:18

- View on OpenStreepMap
- View on Google Maps
- Other Images around here on Flickr



Extraction of embedded GPS details in the target image

EXIF Data	Value	
File Name	IMG_20200218_171052.jpg	
Date	04/01/2020 05:10 PM	
Filesize	2.68M	
Width	4160 pixels	
Height	3120 pixels	
Horizontal Resolution	72dpi	
Vertical Resolution	72dpi	
Mime Type	image/jpeg	
Exif Version	0210	

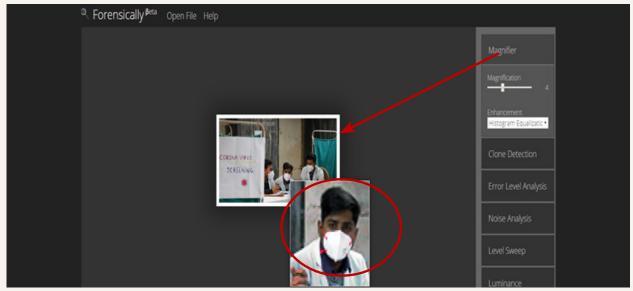
Camera Data	Value		
Make	HUAWEI		
Model	CAM-UL00		
Exposure Time	1/25 sec.		
Aperture Value	2 EV		
F-stop	f/2.0		
ISO	1110		
Focal Length	3.79.0 mm		
Exposure Program	normal program		
Metering Mode	average		
Flash Status	flash did not fire		
Light Source	Daylight		
Shutter Speed Value	46438/10000		

GPS Data	Value			
GPS Version	2.2.0.0			
GPS Longitude Ref	East			
GPS Longitude	78.5324686			
GPS Latitude Ref	North			
GPS Latitude	17.3968704			
GPS Altitude Ref	Above Sea Level			
GPS Altitude	0 meters			

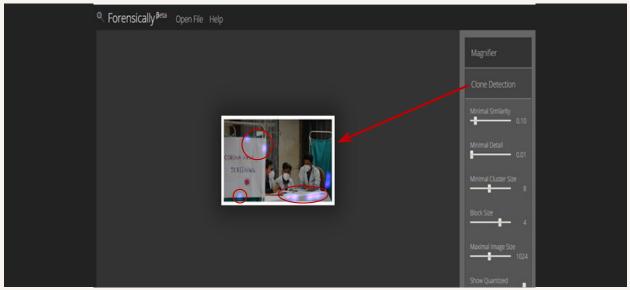
EXIF Analysis Table

Step 4:

After uploading the target image on to the website https://29a.ch/photo-forensics/#clone-detection, etc., the following Clone detection, Error level analysis, Noise analysis, Hex view, String extraction and Thumbnail, details, etc., will be available to the IO.



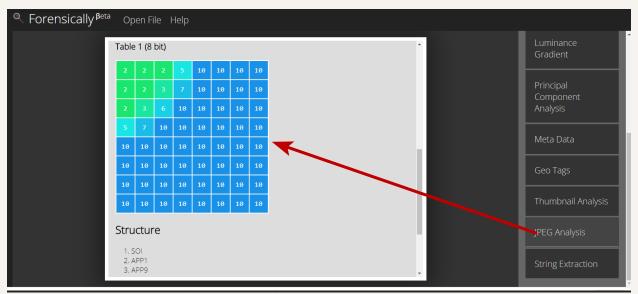
Target image magnifying and blur removing procedure



Target image, clone objects detection procedure



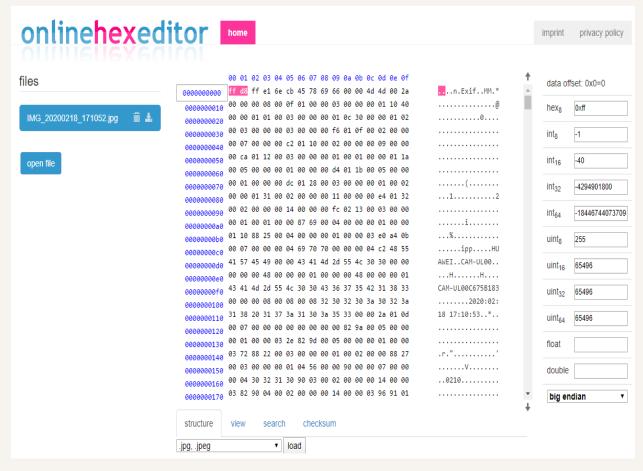
Target image luminance, component and noise analysis procedure



Target image structure analysis procedure

Step 5:

After uploading the target image on to the **https://www.onlinehexeditor.com/** website or any other hex analysis verification websites/ tool, the following unique **signature analysis results,** will be found by the IO.



File signature details

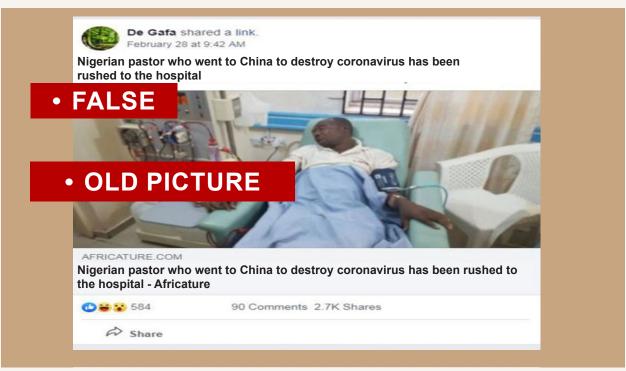
File Type	Header		Footer
	1	89 50 4E 47 0D 0A	49 45 4E 44
	2	1A 0A	-
PNG	3	89 50 4E 47	-
	4	89 50 4E 47 0D 0A 1A 0A 00 00 00 0D	-
	5	49 48 44 52	-
	1	FF D8 FF	FF D9
	2	FF D8 FF E0	FF D9
JPG	3	FF D8 FF E0 00 10	-
	4	FF D8 FF E1 4E D8	-
	5	45 78 69 66 00 00 49 49	-
	1	00 00 3B	47 49 46 38 39 61
GIF	2	47 49 46 38	00 3B
GIF	3	47 49 46 38 39 61	00 00 3B
	4	47 49 46	-
	1	42 4D	
	2	FF FF 00 01 64 00	
ВМР	3	00 00 03 00	
	4	02 00 00 00	
	5	42 41	

Indicative file signature IDs

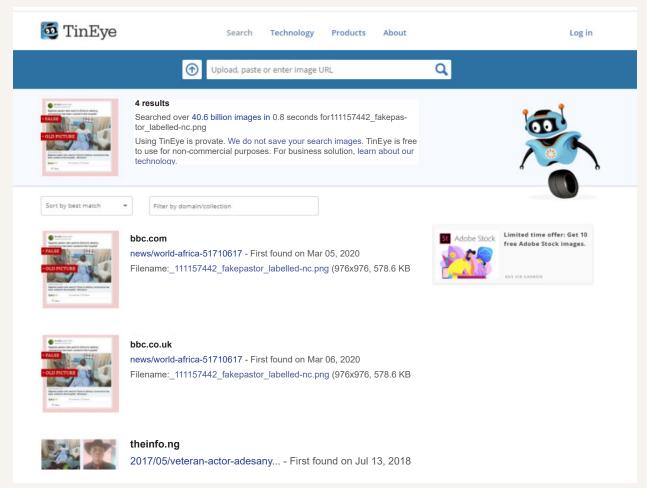
This table will help the IOs in identifying whether the image is original, morphed or animated, by cross verifying the file signatures

Step 6:

If the image is fabricated, morphed or animated or viral/trending, the Investigating Officer may use reverse image searching techniques for finding original uploading source URLs. These websites (https://reverse.photos/, https://tineye.com/, etc.) may provide search by image options instead of string searching. This *Reverse Image Search* technique is useful for verifying the source URLs of target photographs, WhatsApp images, Instagram, screenshots or fake news memes.

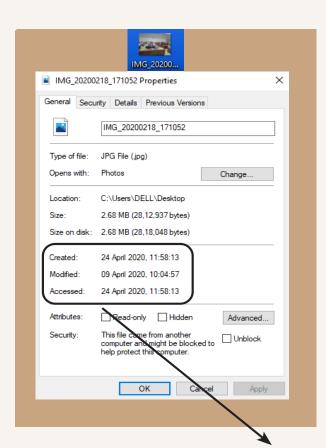


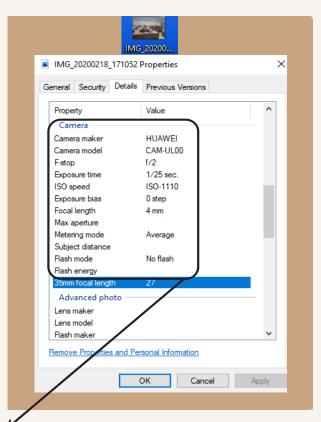
Crime Input



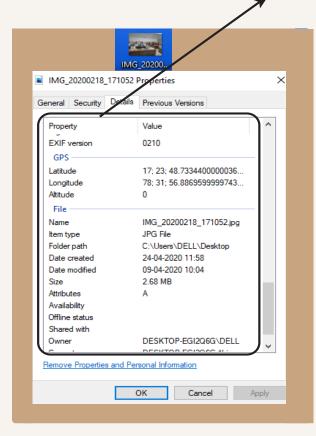
Indicative reverse image output: 10 may analyze the crime output with *CAM procedure

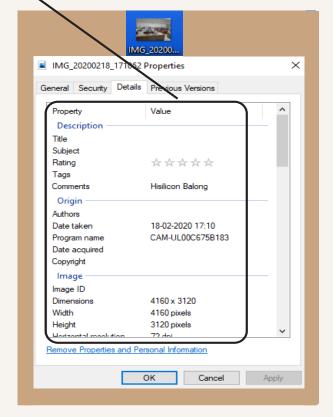
*CAM - File *Creation, Access, Modified* information

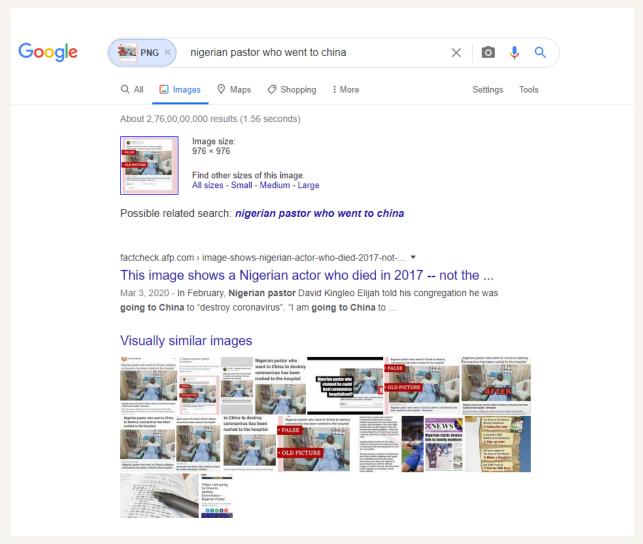




Analyzing the CAM, EXIF and other File Property Details







Indicative reverse image output by using *Google Power Search Command Methods

Note: Google Power Search Command table may help the Investigating Officer to spot the fake news and disinformation related data with the help of the following commands

*Google Power Search Command	Working Procedure	Ехатрle
<u>"</u> "	To search for an exact phrase	"Delhi-Corona" "to be or not to be"
allintitle:	Looks for all search words in the <i>title field</i> (usually seen in the blue bar at the top of user system screen)	allintitle: Delhi allintitle:"Delhi Locations"
site:	To eliminate or require certain types of sites by their <i>domain</i> name	"Delhi History" – Delhicity.gov.in (eliminates commercial sites) "Lockdown" +site:edu (requires Indian lockdown info sites)

*Google Power Search Command	Working Procedure	Ехатрle			
inurl:	To search words in the URL. Allows you to search within a specific web site	"Corona", inurl:"Corona" (Searches for specific "Corona" word at URL or Title)			
-	to <i>exclude</i> a search word(s)	Literary –Physical Forensic (search engines - Google)			
+	to <i>require</i> a search word(s)	+Delhi Police (search engines – Google)			
~	Tilde symbol searches for variations (synonyms)	~help finds synonyms for help: faq, guide, tutorial, tips			
*	A wild card, will stand for punctuation (which Google ignores) or will do a proximity search replacing up to 5 words	archetypal*mythopoeic = archetypal/mythopoeic "myths*man" = myths of man, myths about man, myths inform man			
OR	Looks for any words in your search not all (good for searching synonyms)	"New historicism" OR historicism OR literary			
	ADDITIONAL DATABASE COMMANDS				
AND	Looks for all words in your search	Delhi AND "Corona"			
OR	Looks for any words in your search not all (good for searching synonyms)	"Delhi Hospitals" OR Delhi Forensic Colleges OR literary			
NOT	To exclude a search word	Cyber Criminals			

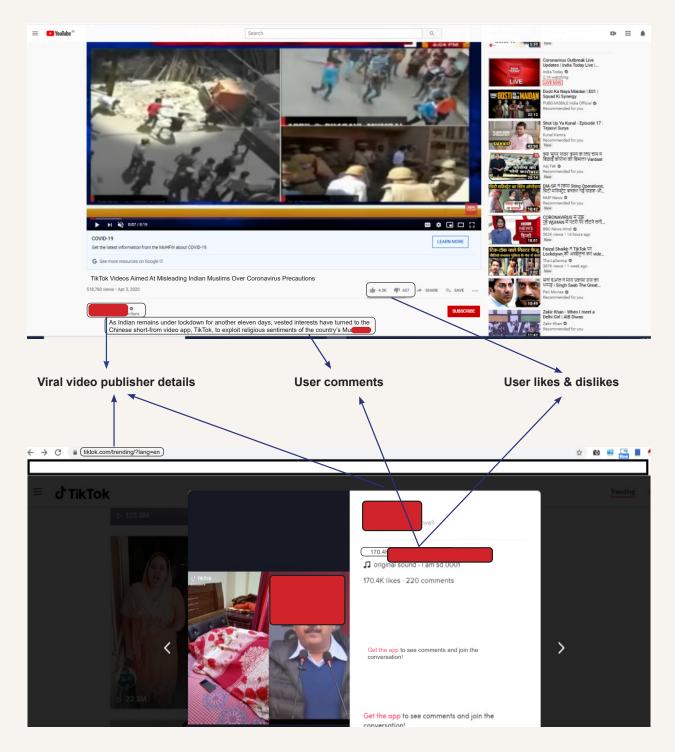
Indicative Google Power Search Commands table

►► 4.3 INVESTIGATION OF FAKE NEWS RELATED VIDEOS

Step 1:

The Investigating Officer may identify the source of uploaded fake video files and URLs, download the video file from the target website or through **https://en.savefrom.net/10/,** and calculate the hash value and keep it as evidence and for admissibility.

E.g. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mG2WBTdbJiE



Example- Defamatory Video

Hashing MD5: OBDB9CE7AD51CFAB08BA6BDF16DF0206

Hashing SHA1: EAE9E11F73D794CB390B9F1960718F491509CC94

Hashing SHA2: E39C85158CEE9ACFD0F13642299AA1EEE5DB616AA3B53C739012D38BD19FEC7C

Step 2:

IO should collect fake or disinformation videos of published URLs, upload user credentials and comments for investigation.



Target Video source collecting procedure through OSINT websites

Step 3:

If the fake video source is Youtube and if it is circulated across the social media, IO should use https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/, website for collecting Video ID, Upload Date, Upload Time and Thumbnails, etc.



Youtube DataViewer

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mG2WBTdb.



Clear

TikTok Videos Aimed At Misleading Indian Muslims Over Coronavirus Precautions

As India remains under lockdown for another eleven days, vested interests have turned to the Chinese short-form video app, TikTok, to exploit religious sentiments of the country's Muslim population to discourage it from practising socialdistancing and mask-wearing as part of Covid-19 measures. An investigation by a Delhi-based digital lab, Voyager Infosec, into more than 30,000 clips circulated this week suggests a set pattern of targeted disinformation campaign aimed at the Indian Muslim community. The videos show young boys, teens and adults playing Muslims, who discourage fellow Muslims from exercising precautions. These TikTok conversations are laced with religious overtones. Subscribe to India Today for NEW VIDEOS EVERY DAY and make sure to enable Push Notifications so you'll never miss a new video. All you need to do is PRESS THE BELL ICON next to the Subscribe button! India Today TV is India's leading English News Channel. Indian Today You Tube channel offers latest news videos on Politics, Business, Cricket, Bollywood, Lifestyle, Auto, Technology, Travel, Entertainment and a lot more. Stay tuned for latest updates and in-depth analysis of newsfrom India and around the world! Download Mobile App from Indian's No.1 News Video Publisher: https://indiatoday.app.link/zKoSVVDrnP Follow us: Official website: https://www.indiatoday.in/ Twitter: https://twitter.com/IndiaToday Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/IndiaToday

Video ID: mG2WBtdbJiE

Upload Date (YYYY/MM/DD): 2020-04-03

Upload Time (UTC): 14:29:59 (convert to local time)

Timestamp

Thumbnails:



Reverse Image Search

Target Video Timestamp & Thumbnails collecting procedure

Step 4:

If the IO wants to collect similar videos with **Geo-Tagging** and **Geo-Fencing** procedures, he may use **https://mattw.io/youtube-geofind/location,** website for collecting geo-location, based on fake or viral video content across the social media.



Update January 16th! Every video result now has a link to my new youtube-metadata project to give all possible details from the YouTube API about that video and its author. Check it out!

Location

india

Drag and drop the green point or type desired location and hit enter.

Radius

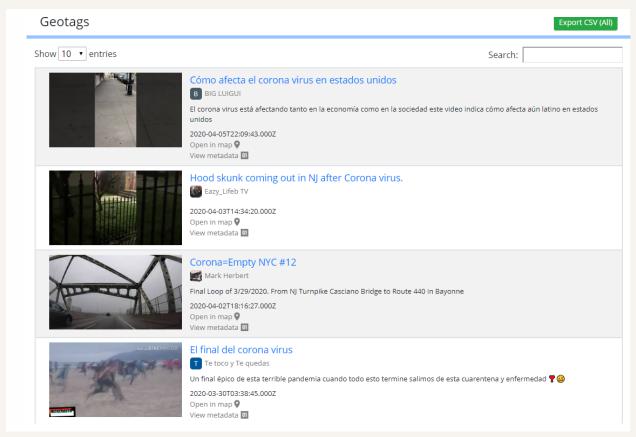
10 Km

YouTube May return results close yet outside the specific search radius.

Keywords

Keywords as if actually searching YouTube.

Location based fake news parsing procedure



Similar fake video identifying procedure

5.0 ____

LEGAL PROVISIONS

The following table is intended for Investigating Officers to understand the legal provisions to be applied while presenting fake news and disinformation related cases in a court of law:

Fake News & Disinformation	Information Technology Act, 2008	Indian Penal Code, 1860
Cyber Defamation	 Sec -67 Sec -67A Sec -67B Sec -72 	 Sec -499 Sec -500 Sec -292 Sec -294 Sec -506 Sec -509
ldentity Theft	 Sec -66C Sec -43 Sec -66 Sec -66B Sec -66E Sec -72 Sec -72A Sec -85 	 Sec -464 Sec -465 Sec -468 Sec -471 Sec -474 Sec -477A Sec -120B Sec -406
Impersonation	 Sec -66D Sec -66C Sec -43 Sec -66 Sec -66B Sec -67 Sec -67A Sec -67B 	 Sec -419 Sec -417 Sec -426 Sec -468 Sec -469 Sec -471 Sec -474 Sec -354A Sec -500 Sec -509
Trolling	 Sec -66E Sec -67 Sec -67A Sec -67B 	 Sec -500 Sec -354A Sec -354C Sec -354D Sec -509 Sec -504 Sec -505 Sec -506 Sec -507 Sec -153A Sec -153B Sec -295A Sec -292 Sec -120B

6.0 _____

INVESTIGATIVE SOURCES

The following table may help the Investigating Officers in investigating and curbing fake news and disinformation related crimes. The following websites are indicative in nature.

Investigative Sources	Suggested Investigative Websites Name	
Fake News Reporting Portal	https://cybercrime.gov.in/	
	https://pib.gov.in/factcheck.aspx	
	https://www.factcheck.org/	
Fake News Spotting & Fact Checking Websites	https://reporterslab.org/fact-checking/	
	https://factly.in/category/fake-news/	
	https://www.boomlive.in/about-us/	
	https://factcheck.telangana.gov.in/	
	https://www.altnews.in/	
	https://lookup-id.com/	
	https://stalkscan.com/	
	https://citizenevidence.amnestyusa.org/	
Social Media Related Fake News	https://youtube.github.io/geo-search-tool/search.html	
Investigation Asst. Websites	https://twitter.com/search-advanced	
	https://www.facebook.com/altnews.in	
	https://twitter.com/AltNews	
	https://www.metadata2go.com/	
	Fake news debunker by InVID & WeVerify https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/fake-news- debunker-by-inv/mhccpoafgdgbhnjfhkcmgknndkeenfhe	
	RevEye Reverse Image Search https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/reveye-reverse- image-sear/keaaclcjhehbbapnphnmpiklalfhelgf	
Fake News Investigative Web Plugins	EXIF Viewer https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/exif-viewer/ mmbhfeiddhndihdjeganjggkmjapkffm	
	Send to Exif Viewer https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/send-to-exif- viewer/gogiienhpamfmodmlnhdljokkjiapfck	
	Take Webpage Screenshots Entirely - FireShot https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/take-webpage- screenshots/mcbpblocgmgfnpjjppndjkmgjaogfceg	

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CONCLUSION

The extensive spread of fake news has the potential to gravely impact individuals as well as the society at large. Therefore, fake news detection in cyber space has become an important issue for the LEAs. The step by step procedure will assist LEAs in spotting and investigating fake news in a systematic manner. It will also help in effective prosecution of offenders involved in such mischievous acts.



8.0 ___

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9.0 _

FEW MORE EXAMPLES OF FAKE NEWS AND FACTS

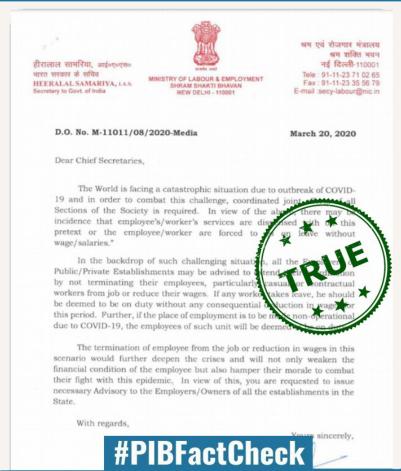






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