



Social Media and The Corrosion of Public Discourse: A Critique on The Rhetoric of Post-Truth

Shankhadeep Chattopadhyay

Abstract

The exponential acceleration of ‘humbug’ inside the social media has blurred the thin lines between ‘opinion’, ‘fact’ and ‘truth’ and has become a cradle of toxic polarisation. Social media, being one of the most popular and celebrated forms of consumer culture, possesses an unthinkable potential to congregate and gather information from people and distribute them in lightning-fast speed. While by distributing information in one hand social media promotes its efficiency and by diluting itself in the labyrinths of opinions on the other hand it reflects a constant practice of the straw man fallacy. The customised news feeds on social media not only fortifies ‘truth’ from the presuppositions of the mass but also license them to dwell inside a straitened silo. Social media, under the surveillance of Artificial Intelligence [AI], has made ‘truth’ an endangered species and also fostered a strategic deployment of ‘lies’. This paper aims to offer a conceptual understanding on the rhetoric of ‘post-truth’, its types and how it corrodes public discourse by discombobulating the representation of ‘facts’ inside the media environment and further, envisages on the aspects of enclapsing post-normal conversations and its possible effects on democracy, state and humanity.

Keywords: Post- Truth, Fact, Opinion, Social Media, AI.