

Danger of deep fakes

What are deep fakes?

- Deep fakes are digital media - video, audio, and images edited and manipulated using Artificial Intelligence.
- It is basically hyper realistic digital falsification.
- Deep fakes are created to inflict harm on individuals and institutions.
- Deepfakes can be used to damage reputation, fabricate evidence, defraud the public, and undermine trust in democratic institutions.

What is the solution?

- Media literacy efforts must be enhanced to cultivate a discerning public.
- Media literacy for consumers is the most effective tool to combat disinformation and deep fakes.
- We also need meaningful regulations with a collaborative discussion with the technology industry, civil society, and policymakers to develop legislative solutions to disincentivize the creation and distribution of malicious deepfakes.
- Social media platforms are taking cognizance of the deepfakes issue, and almost all of them have some

policy or acceptable terms of use for deepfakes.

- We also need easy-to-use and accessible technology solutions to detect deepfakes, authenticate media, and amplify authoritative sources.
- To counter the menace of deepfakes, we all must take the responsibility to be critical consumers of media on the Internet, think and pause before we share on social media, and be part of the solution to this 'infodemic'.

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Problems of the bad loans

What is a bad loan?

- A bad loan is one that which has not been 'serviced' for a certain period.
- Servicing a loan is paying back the interest and a small part of the principal depending on the agreement between the bank and borrower.

Why is there a need to recognise NPAs?

- In the banking system, the government and regulatory authorities need to have a good view of how healthy the financial system is.

- A weak financial system can eventually ruin lives and livelihoods.
- India became more aggressive in recognizing loans as ‘bad’ in the 2014 to 2015 period.
- The periodic asset quality review was introduced.
- Further, the regulator stepped in to prevent the evergreening of loans (i.e., lending more to an already stressed asset in the hope that it could be brought back to its feet).

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(NMMS) app and social audit

- In May 2021, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) launched the National Mobile Monitoring Software (NMMS) app, a new application meant for “improving citizen oversight and increasing transparency” in National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) works.
- It is to be deployed by NREGA Mates, local women at the panchayat level who are selected and trained to monitor NREGA worksites.
- The main feature of the app is the real-time, photographed, geo-tagged attendance of every worker to be taken once in each half of the day.

Need for Social audit

- Social audits are citizen-centric institutions, where the citizens of the panchayat have a direct role and say in how NREGA functions in their panchayat.
- A social audit is a process of reviewing official records and determining whether state reported expenditures to reflect the actual monies spent on the ground.
- Audits have worked well in the past, allowing the local rights holders to be invested in decisions, and hold the administration accountable themselves.
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“Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement” (MMPA)

- India will sign a “Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement” (MMPA) with Austria
- India has been keen to finalize these agreements with European countries as a stepping stone to resolving issues over the long-

pending India- European Union (EU) Free Trade Agreement and facilitating Indian professionals working in these countries, the European countries also see them as a way to curb illegal immigration from India.

- The agreement will regulate multiple entry visas for professionals and student exchange programs and will be reviewed regularly by a Joint Working Group.
- Similar mobility agreements with France, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

Multipolar Asia

- The withdrawal of the U.S. from much of continental Asia and the aggressive rise of China and the Ukraine war appear to have ended the great power concert in Asia, or what appeared as one for some time.
- Today, two major powers Russia and China are trying, though in varying degrees, to undermine the global balance of power, with several regional powers such as Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia in tow.

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Asian century and (multi)polarity

- One alternative to a unipolar world is a multipolar world with Russia, China, Japan, India, and other, smaller powers asserting themselves on the global stage.
- The other alternative is China-dominated Asia. Herein lies the challenge for India
- India, multipolarity is one premised on the rule of law or peaceful coexistence.
- One of the likely implications of a multipolar world in which Asia takes the centre stage would be a sharpening of opposition against the current global financial order.
- The so-called weaponization of globalization and trade, sanctions against Russia, and Russia's attempts in turn at evading them with help from its Asian partners (China, Iran, Turkey, India, etc.) will pose serious challenges to dollar-based trade and Western payment systems such as SWIFT.
- The aftermath of the Ukraine war has led to a serious search in parts of Asia for alternative trading arrangements and payment mechanisms

Delhi's dilemmas

- New Delhi has consistently campaigned for a multipolar world where key Asian powers have a place at the high table of international politics.
- New Delhi's biggest fear would be an Asian century without stable multipolarity.
- Even if it emerges, a multipolar world is most likely going to be a passing phenomenon, to be soon replaced by a bipolar world dominated by the U.S. and China with the others bandwagoning, balancing, and hedging.
- Third, if a bipolar world leads to great power accommodation between the U.S. and China, India's situation could be worse off.
- If the U.S. accommodates China as a peer, it could mean the U.S. accepting China's sphere of influence.
- This could make India a casualty at the altar of great power politics.

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