

# **BANGLADESH ELECTIONS 2026: HARMFUL DIGITAL NARRATIVES & BEHAVIORS**

*Analysis Report No. 2 | November - December 2025*

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## About this report

This report is the second in a social media analysis series that explores digital narratives and behaviors around the 2026 Bangladesh elections. Other reports in this series can be found [here](#).

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines Bangladesh's political discourse and civic integrity during November–December 2025, in the lead-up to the 2026 General Elections and the July Charter referendum. Building on the [August–October 2025 baseline analysis](#), the report analyses data from Facebook, TikTok, and X to track the evolution of harmful digital narratives and behaviours (including misinformation, hate speech, and incitement to violence) alongside constructive narratives related to de-escalation, democratic norms, and social cohesion.

Findings show that social media remains a key arena for contesting political transition and electoral legitimacy, with narratives intensifying as the election approaches, alongside persistent calls for peace and de-escalation of violence. Bangladesh's political landscape underwent significant changes during this two-month period. Major offline developments - including the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) verdict against Sheikh Hasina, the assassination of Sharif Osman Hadi, the return of Tarique Rahman, and the death of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia - triggered sharp spikes in online activity. These moments both amplified harmful narratives and, in some cases, generated rare instances of cross-political consensus around justice, restraint, and public respect. At the same time, narratives around foreign interference, particularly those implicating India, became more prominent and increasingly intertwined with challenges to the legitimacy of the interim government. Overall, November and December were characterised by persistent polarization and the continued spread of digital harm, with online discussions closely mirroring political developments on the ground.

Taken together, this continuation analysis confirms that Bangladesh's online information environment remains volatile and highly contested as the electoral period approaches. Digital narratives increasingly shape civic integrity, public trust, and social cohesion, with online discourse often amplifying polarization, mis/disinformation, and risks of escalation into offline harm. In this context, sustained monitoring and a deeper understanding of digital harms are essential to anticipating emerging risks, informing coordinated responses, and identifying opportunities for de-escalation. Timely, evidence-based interventions will be critical to ensuring that the online information space supports — rather than undermines — a peaceful and credible electoral process in the months ahead.

## KEY INSIGHTS

**Digital polarization mirrors deep political fragmentation** | The online landscape reflects Bangladesh's contested political transition, with competing narratives over the legitimacy of the interim government, the meaning of the July 2024 uprising, and the credibility of democratic institutions. This fragmentation threatens to undermine voter confidence and institutional trust as elections approach.

**Offline political violence directly fuels online escalation** | Major events including the ICT verdict against Sheikh Hasina, the assassination of Sharif Osman Hadi, Tarique Rahman's return, and Khaleda Zia's death triggered massive spikes in social media activity. The correlation between real-world violence (arson, bombings, protests) and inflammatory online content suggests a dangerous feedback loop where digital and physical tensions reinforce each other.

**Foreign interference narratives are weaponizing regional tensions** | Anti-India sentiment has intensified due to perceived Indian interference, asylum provision for Awami League leaders, and alleged involvement in domestic violence. This geopolitical dimension adds complexity to the electoral environment, as political actors leverage external threats to delegitimize opponents and rally nationalist sentiment. It further risks inflaming nationalist sentiments, exacerbating communal tensions, and complicating Bangladesh's regional diplomatic environment during the election period.

**The interim government faces a legitimacy crisis in digital spaces** | Awami League-aligned accounts systematically challenge the Yunus administration's mandate and independence, particularly around the electoral process and July Charter referendum. This sustained delegitimization campaign, amplified across platforms, risks eroding public acceptance of electoral outcomes regardless of their credibility.

**Constructive counter-narratives demonstrate resilience potential** | Calls for peace, de-escalation, and fact-checking show that online spaces can support civic integrity. The cross-political consensus around Osman Hadi's death and Khaleda Zia's passing reveals moments where shared values can transcend polarization, suggesting opportunities for strategic intervention.

**Digital harms are systematic electoral risks, not isolated incidents** | The persistent presence of mis/disinformation, hate speech, and incitement to violence across all platforms indicates that these are structural features of the current information environment. As electoral timelines compress, these dynamics will likely intensify, directly threatening the credibility and peacefulness of the February 2026 elections.

**Jamaat-linked disinformation campaigns are actively shaping the information environment ahead of the elections** | The analysis identifies a notable volume of content accusing Jamaat and its affiliates of spreading false, exaggerated, or manipulated narratives to inflate perceptions of popular support and discredit political rivals. This includes rumor-based campaigning, strategic distortion of events, and coordinated messaging designed to manufacture legitimacy and influence voter perceptions. Such practices risk distorting political competition and weakening informed civic participation ahead of the polls.

**Communal and religious targeting poses physical security risks** | Anti-minority rhetoric, particularly targeting Hindu communities, and religiously coded political attacks create conditions where online hostility can translate into offline violence. The Dipu Chandra Das incident demonstrates how quickly digital narratives can fuel dangerous mob dynamics during the electoral period.

# INTRODUCTION

This analysis was conducted to support understanding of digital harms in the lead-up to Bangladesh's 2026 elections, with a focus on:

1. Identifying prominent online narratives related to the elections;
2. Assessing how these narratives may shape public perception and engagement; and,
3. Mapping the prevalence and characteristics of mis/disinformation, hate speech and other digital harms.

The report is intended as a practical resource for civil society organisations (CSOs), media actors, policymakers, the Bangladesh Electoral Commission and international partners working to safeguard civic space, information integrity and governance during a critical electoral period. It is the second in a series of analyses that will continue throughout the election period and to the end of March 2026.

## Political Transition and the Digital Environment

Bangladesh's current political landscape is shaped by a long history of contested elections, political violence, and concentration of power. After the student-led uprising in July 2024, a State crackdown and excessive force led to a wider political shift. According to [UN figures](#), 1,400 people died and thousands were injured. These events resulted in Sheikh Hasina's resignation and departure, with Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus forming an interim government.

The interim government has committed to institutional reforms and accountability, including the proposed July Charter, while preparing for national elections and a referendum. These processes have intensified political competition and narrative contestation. Social media platforms have become key spaces where actors interpret the meaning of the July uprising, debate legitimacy of the current administration, mobilize supporters, and discredit opponents.

In this environment, online narratives are closely intertwined with offline dynamics, including protest activity, communal tensions, electoral integrity, and perceptions of foreign influence. Understanding how these narratives circulate and evolve is therefore essential for anticipating risks and identifying entry points for mitigation.

## METHODOLOGY

The baseline analysis used targeted social media analysis to examine election-related discourse across Facebook, TikTok, and X. Data collection was guided by a curated list of keywords and accounts in Bangla, English, and transliteration, covering:

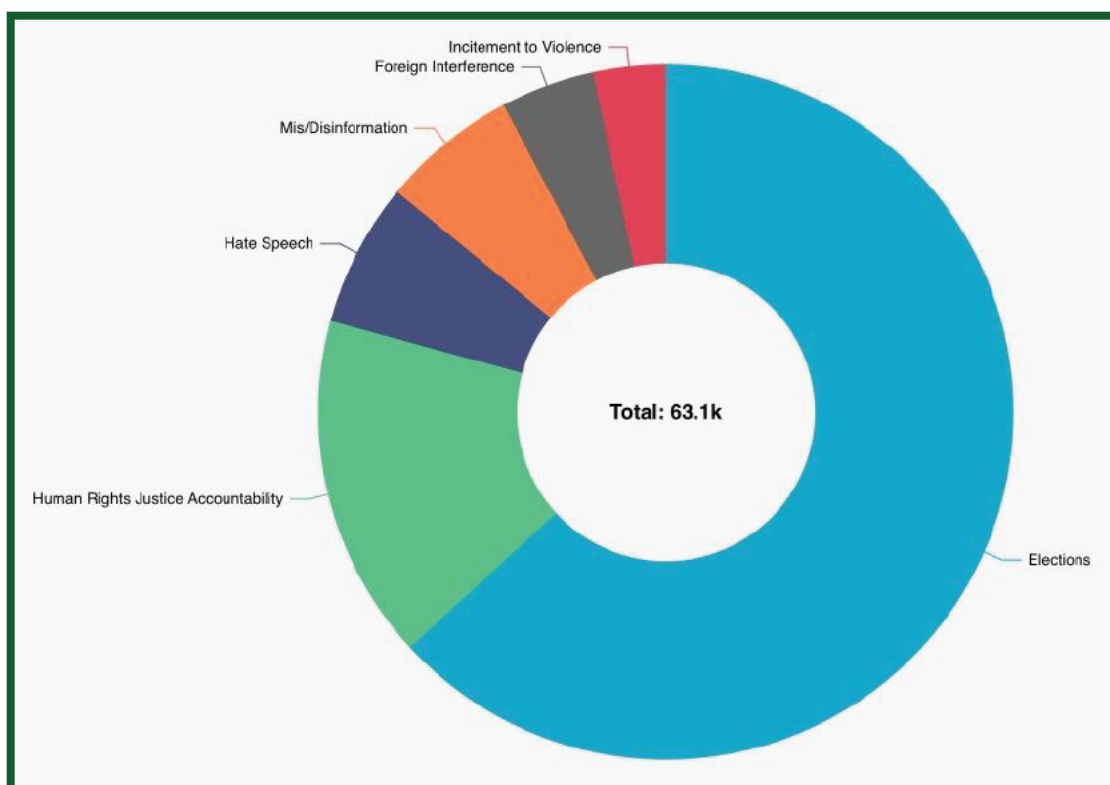
- General election-related terms (e.g. voting, polling, campaigns, election results);
- Bangladesh-specific political language and commonly used phrases;
- Prominent slogans associated with political parties, movements, and the July protests;
- References to key political issues (e.g. justice for July, the July Charter, interim government, quota movement); and,
- Names of major political parties, leaders, institutions, and other influential actors.

Content was collected from open source platforms using Build Up's social media analysis toolkit, [Phoenix](#). Posts were classified into six topic areas: elections; human rights/ justice/ accountability; foreign interference; mis/disinformation; hate speech; and, incitement to violence. In total, 179k pieces of content were collected from Facebook, TikTok and X from the period 1 November to 31 December 2025, of which 63.1k were classified for the purposes of this analysis.

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were collected from  
Facebook, Tiktok and X, of  
which 63,000 were  
classified for analysis***

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This report utilizes a sample of publicly available social media data from November-December 2025. This sample does not represent the absolute volume of posts there are during this period, but allows for a broader assessment of the social media landscape. By corroborating this analysis with an understanding of offline events and a comprehensive political analysis, we can paint a clearer picture of the current environment.

It is important to understand that while social media platforms enforce their own content moderation policies and community guidelines to address hate speech, mis/disinformation, and violent content, the posts identified in this analysis are those that we specifically classify as digital harm in the context of the Bangladesh elections.

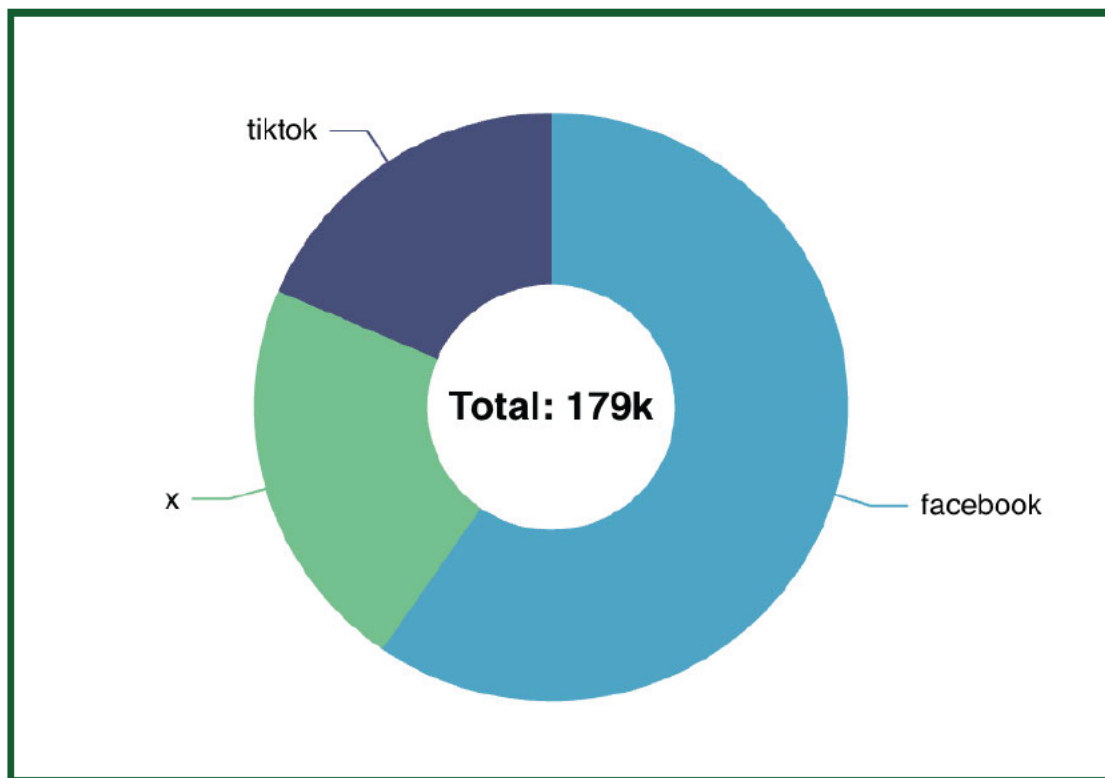
As with any data collection and analysis, the tools used have certain limitations. These include:

- A risk of false positives for terms/ keywords that have the same meaning;
- Data collection is restricted to publicly available information; and,
- The intersecting nature of the topics, meaning a single post may relate to two distinct digital harm issues/ narratives.



# FINDINGS

## Platform Usage and Trends



### Facebook

Facebook continues to remain the most popular and used social media platform in Bangladesh among all demographics. Content production is highly concentrated, with a small number of political party pages and prominent actors responsible for a large share of posts, underscoring Facebook's role in both sustained political messaging and mobilization. Between 1 November - 31 December 2025 it can be observed that there has been a ramp up of online campaigns by candidates and party official pages as the election nears.

- 99.2k posts collected from 42.4k unique authors generated 301.9m likes, 20.2m comments and 25.3m shares.
- Posting volume increased and decreased based on offline events throughout November and December
- Content characterized by long-form political commentary and event coverage
- Small cluster of party pages and high-profile influencers produce roughly 25% of all posts

## TikTok

TikTok plays a growing role in political communication through short-form, emotionally charged videos. It shows particularly high engagement levels and a higher prevalence of AI-generated or manipulated content.

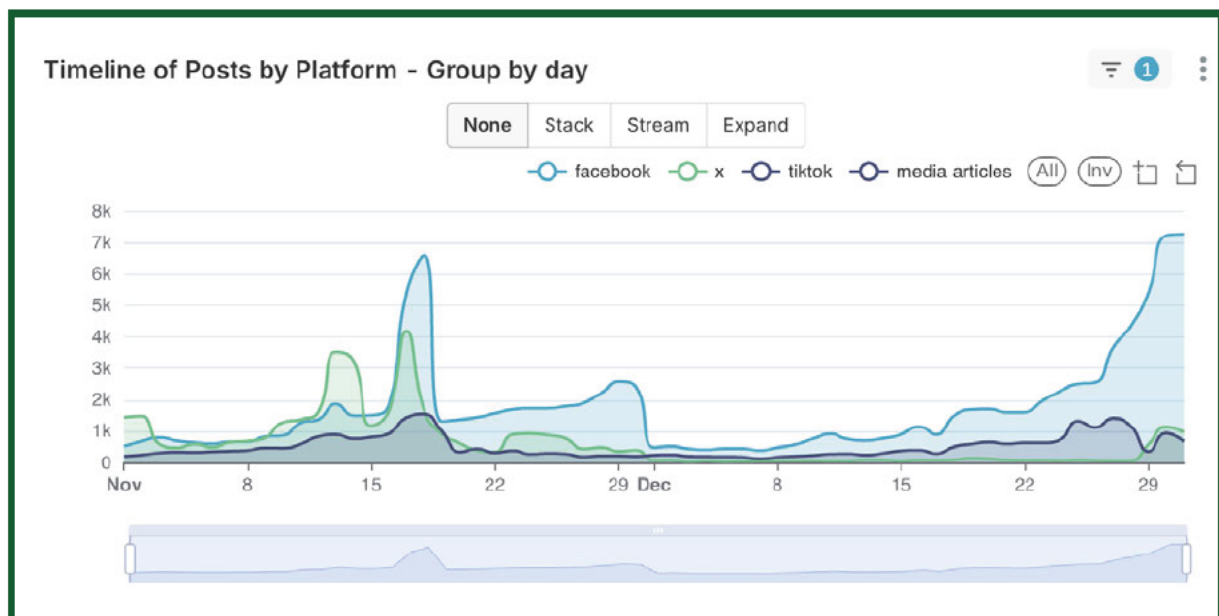
- 30.4k videos from 18.2k unique authors, generating 322.1m likes, 9.7m comments and 31.8m shares
- Despite lower volume than Facebook, engagement per post is significantly higher
- Content dominated by fan-style edits, emotional retellings of political leaders, their work, and quick clips about elections
- Misinformation more implicit through strategic clipping and editing disguised as news

## X (formerly Twitter)

X hosts a large volume of elite-driven and geopolitical commentary, including significant participation from non-Bangladeshi accounts. Discussions on foreign interference and communal issues are especially prominent here.

- 37.9k posts from 18.4k unique authors, with roughly 9.4m likes, 2.3m retweets and 644k replies & quotes.
- Significant spike between September 14 and 18, with lower engagement beginning of December but driving up mid-December corresponding to on the ground events
- Used primarily for live commentary, geopolitical discussions, and foreign interference narratives
- Amplifies attacks on minorities, often from non-local, non-Bangladeshi account

## Spikes in Online Political Activity & Corresponding Events



There are two prominent spikes between the months of November and December 2025. As Facebook is the most prominent social media platform used in Bangladesh, the volume of posts collected is more compared to other platforms.

### Mid-November

- The Interim Government under Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on 13 November **announced that a national referendum on the July Charter** would be held alongside the February 2026 election, reaffirming electoral timelines and constitutional reform processes. This led to significant discussion with over 15k posts in our data published between 12-15 November, regarding the Charter, discussing what a referendum is and its legitimacy.
- On 17th November 2025, **Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) delivered a verdict sentencing former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in absentia** for crimes against humanity. A landmark decision that drew widespread public attention with over 25.3k posts published between 16-19 November 2025, highlighting a domestic debate and international commentary. which included support as well as criticism regarding the fairness of the trial as it was conducted in absentia.
- The surge in social media posts preceding the ICT hearing aligns with real-world violence observed around Bangladesh, including arson and crude bombings targeting public transport and the residences of interim government officials. This correlation is reflected in an increase in posts that both incite violence and report on the violence occurring on the ground.

### Mid- to Late-December

A significant increase of posts was observed from mid-December. With a massive surge within a short period of time, as the year closed off with major political developments in Bangladesh triggering massive online engagement.

- The **death of youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi** in mid-December 2025 saw a significant spike. Protests erupted after the attack on 12 December, intensified on 18-19 December when Hadi died in hospital, and spread into large demonstrations demanding justice and accountability. This period saw violent clashes, attacks on newspaper offices and cultural institutions, and nationwide demonstrations, which were widely shared and debated online with over 12k posts published between 12-20 December 2025.
- On 25th December, **Tarique Rahman, standing Chairman of BNP and son of Khaleda Zia, returned to Bangladesh** after 17 years in exile. This not only drew large crowds in the capital of Dhaka but an increased online activity not only from pro-BNP supporters but from all demographics as this marked a significant turning point in Bangladesh's politics. Over 24.8k posts highlighted this event published between 24-26 December 2025
- The most prominent spike is around 29-30th December when news emerged of former Prime Minister (PM) and **BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's decline in health and subsequent death**. A prominent figure in Bangladesh's democratic struggle, this event

engendered massive support from wellwishers from all walks of life, showing respect to the first female PM in Bangladesh both online and offline. This resulted in over 26.4k posts published between 27-31 December 2025.

## Harmful Digital Content & Behaviors

### Hate Speech (4.09k posts)

Hate speech remains consistently embedded within political discourse, frequently targeting political opponents and, in some cases, religious or communal groups. Since October, levels of hate speech across platforms have remained steady. This pattern continues to include historically loaded slurs and dehumanizing language directed at political rivals and opposing groups. While some content explicitly condemns hate speech, the broader discursive space remains saturated with targeted and inflammatory language. Hate speech here contains implicit and explicit posts that target and dehumanize certain groups or individuals based on their protected attributes such as gender, religion and distinctive characteristics along with deliberative use of anti-democratic words.

- *Politicized hate speech* | Opponents labeled as "terrorists," "রাজাকার" (collaborators), traitors, fascists and dictators. .
- *Religious / communal hostility and exclusion* | Using religious slurs and exclusionary words.
- *Mixed and ambiguous cases* | There are a small subset of posts that condemn hate speech or describe it as a problem.
- Higher percentage observed on Facebook, following X.

### Mis/Disinformation (3.83k posts)

Misinformation and disinformation have escalated since October, frequently reintroducing topics that have already been debunked. Common tactics involve presenting political groups and candidates positively through fabricated endorsements from public figures and foreign nations, alongside smear campaigns designed to damage the reputation of targeted candidates. A significant challenge in Bangladesh is that this mis/disinformation is often crafted to manipulate public perception and influence the narrative leading up to the election. These campaigns cleverly blend partial truths with outright false or exaggerated claims, making verification difficult and severely eroding public trust in institutions. The overall harm is intensified by the frequent inclusion of hate speech and incitement to violence.

- Mixes partial truths with unverified claims, presenting speculation as fact.
- Erodes trust in institutions and independent information sources.

### Foreign Interference (2.6k posts)

Discussions concerning foreign interference have increased since October. This surge reflects escalating political tensions between Bangladesh and India, largely triggered by the assassination of Osman Hadi. Allegations linking the perpetrators to the Awami League (AL)

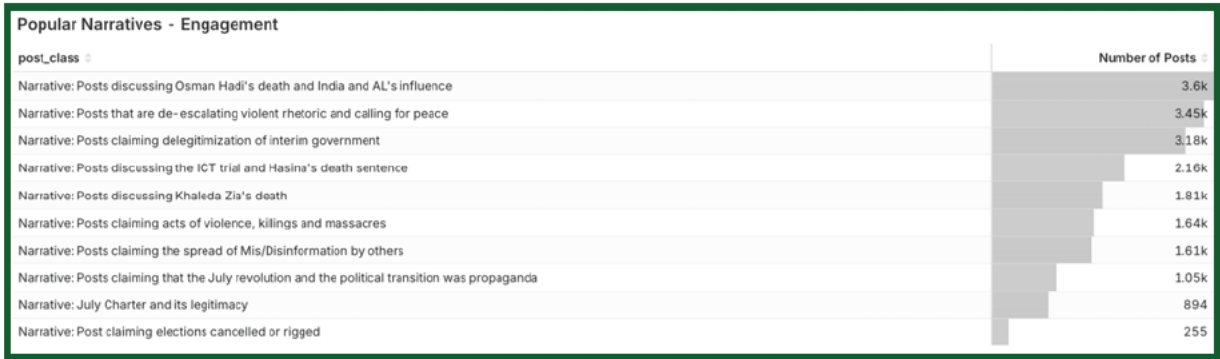
and feeling towards India, combined with India’s continued silence on providing asylum to prominent AL figures, have intensified public resentment toward both the AL and India.

- Posts speculate the involvement of foreign countries in the regime change following the 2024 protests that ousted Sheikh Hasina.
- Posts speculating the role of India in communal tensions and the assassination on Osman Hadi.
- A lot of AL affiliated accounts accuse the Yunnus government of having ties with foreign countries to destabilize Bangladesh.
- Most of the posts intersect with misinformation.

### Popular Narratives

The political events of November and December have led to a shift in popular social media narratives and engagement compared to October. The most engaging topic during these two months was the long-anticipated ICT trial of Sheikh Hasina, a development that drew significant public interest following the initial investigation.

While established narratives, such as the legitimization of the interim government, claims of violence, and calls for de-escalation, remain prominent, two new dominant narratives have emerged. These are related to the assassination of Osman Hadi and the passing of Khaleda Zia in December.



### Harmful Narratives

Ahead of the elections, four significant and often interconnected harmful narrative clusters are particularly prominent. Collectively, these narratives are harmful because they systematically undermine trust in democratic institutions, political transitions, and civic participation. By promoting delegitimization, foreign interference conspiracies, and external blame, they normalize suspicion and rejection of lawful political processes. The narratives blur the line between legitimate critique and mis/disinformation, encouraging audiences to dismiss credible information as propaganda. Over time, this dynamic deepens polarization, erodes social cohesion, and increases the risk that online tensions translate into offline instability.



Harmful Narratives - Engagement	
post_class	Number of Posts
Narrative: Posts claiming delegitimization of interim government	3.18k
Narrative: Posts containing anti-India sentiments	2.34k
Narrative: Posts claiming that the July revolution and the political transition was propaganda	1.05k
Narrative: Posts accusing "foreign agents"	1.04k

### Posts questioning the legitimacy of the interim government (3.18k posts)

Throughout November and December, a dominant social media narrative focused on the performance of the Yunus-led interim government, particularly its handling of the electoral process and ongoing political violence. Analysis of content found most of these posts originate from Awami League-aligned pages, student organizations, and individual commentators, revealing a consistent and strongly worded theme questioning the interim administration's legitimacy, mandate, and independence. This narrative intensified in the lead-up to the ICT trial of Sheikh Hasina.

A smaller and more moderate set of posts, while still critical of the interim government's foundations, adopted a more pragmatic tone by acknowledging the administration's limited capacity and constrained mandate. The primary risk posed by this narrative lies in its sustained effort to undermine the perceived legitimacy of the current governance structure and Bangladesh's political transition. This dynamic is further exacerbated by speculation and rumor, which contribute to polarization and erode public trust in the ongoing political process.



This post shows a faction of AL party supporters in the UK protesting the current interim government, tied to the recent ICT verdict against Sheikh Hasina.

Caption: *"Rule of Law & Social Justice is our goal" A movement against the unlawful judicial system of Bangladesh and illegal government. Organised by Bangobondhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad, UK. #AwamiLeague #Chatroleague #UKAwamiLeague #স্বপ্ন"*

## Posts containing anti-India sentiments (2.34k posts)

Several factors have contributed to the deteriorating Bangladesh-India relations:



**Existing and New Grievances:** Issues such as the Border Security Force (BSF) killings of Bangladeshi nationals persist, alongside new speculation that the killers of Osman Hadi were AL-linked individuals who escaped to India.

**Media Portrayal:** Indian media's framing of Bangladesh's political process as unstable, violent, and exaggerating the influence of extremist factions has also been a point of contention.

**The Dipu Chandra Das Incident:** A public lynching and murder of a Hindu man, Dipu Chandra Das, over a rumour garnered strong reactions from India regarding the state of minorities in Bangladesh. This led to an exchange of accusations, with Dhaka calling New Delhi hypocritical regarding its own lack of minority protection.



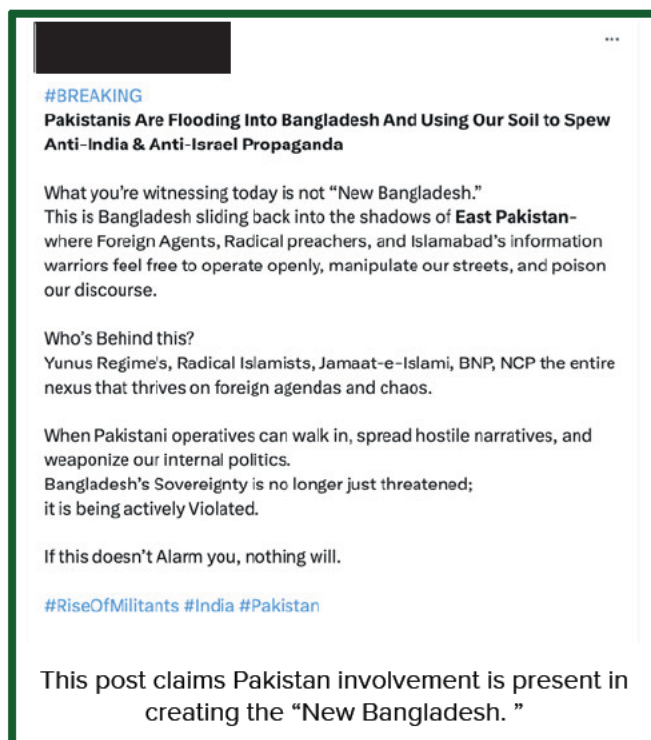
This post shows a rally held in Dhaka where people are saying “Not Delhi but Dhaka” implying that Bangladesh is not run by Delhi but by Dhaka.

দিল্লি না ঢাকা" ঢাকা ঢাকা শহীদ শরিফ ওসমান হাদী ভাইয়ের জানাজায় জাতীয় সংসদ ভবন থেকে, মুজিববাদ মূর্ত্যবাদ..! # # #bangladesh #100k #hadi

This overall environment raises legitimate concerns about India's current foreign policy towards Bangladesh and its perceived hegemonic tendencies, particularly when Bangladesh attempts to assert its sovereignty and pursue a foreign policy independent of Indian influence (e.g., aligning with Pakistan or China). However, this environment has also given rise to widespread hateful sentiments, xenophobic rhetoric and a broad anti-India narrative.

## Post framing the July revolution and political transition as propaganda (1.05k posts)

At the same time, competing political actors accuse one another of fabricating or distorting the meaning of the July 2024 uprising. Such framing blurs the boundary between legitimate critique and mis/disinformation, encouraging audiences to dismiss unfavorable reporting as

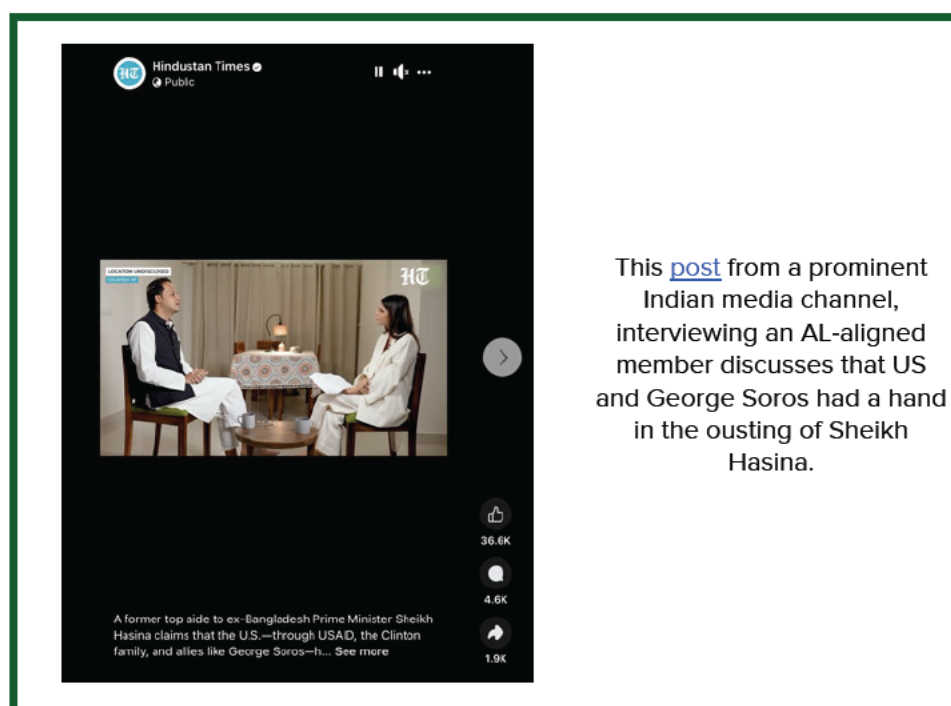


inherently false and further deepening polarization. The persistent framing of the July protests as orchestrated propaganda continued to generate substantial engagement across social media platforms.

This sustained traction carries significant risks for the stability of Bangladesh's political environment. By promoting the idea that the protests were not a genuine expression of public will but rather an externally influenced, manipulated, or partisan political maneuver, this narrative undermines democratic discourse and delegitimizes collective civic action.

## Posts accusing "foreign agents" (1.04k posts)

Since late October, a surge in social media posts has been observed, alleging a conspiracy by "foreign agents" to influence Bangladesh's democratic process. These accusations, primarily leveraged by political factions to discredit opponents, specifically target perceived interference from India - often overlapping with existing "anti-India sentiments" - as well as from the US and other Western nations. This trend is contributing to further political delegitimization and polarization, while simultaneously being used to legitimize various popular movements.



This [post](#) from a prominent Indian media channel, interviewing an AL-aligned member discusses that US and George Soros had a hand in the ousting of Sheikh Hasina.

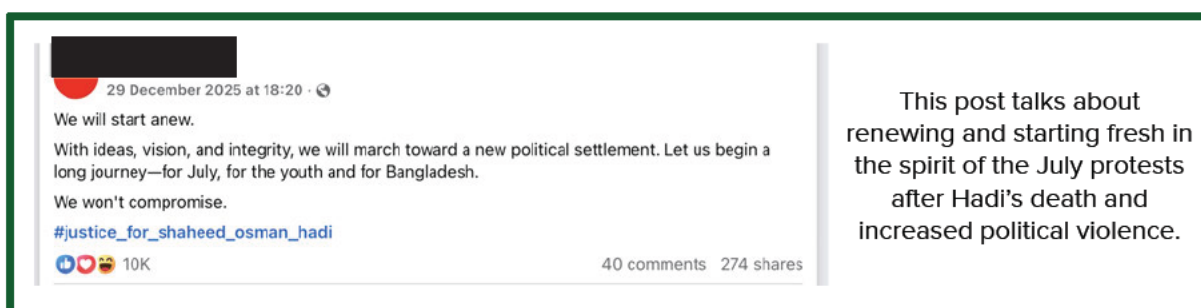


## Constructive Narratives

Despite the prevalence of harmful content, the analysis identifies strong constructive dynamics. Collectively, these narratives are constructive because they promote restraint, accountability, and reflection within an otherwise polarized information environment. Calls for de-escalation and peace help counter inflammatory rhetoric, reduce the risk of violence, and create space for shared civic values during moments of national tension. Discussions that caution against rumors and highlight the spread of mis/disinformation encourage more responsible information sharing and critical engagement with online content. Together, these narratives strengthen social cohesion, support nonviolent political expression, and reinforce norms of accuracy, ethical conduct, and civic responsibility in public discourse.

### Posts calling for de-escalation of violent rhetoric and peace (3.45k posts)

Despite an increasingly polarised political climate, there remains space for constructive narratives and cross-cutting unity, particularly around calls for peace amid heightened uncertainty, mob violence, and the spread of mis/disinformation. Public consensus emerged most clearly around two moments: the widespread outpouring of support for Osman Hadi and demands for justice following his death, and the passing of Bangladesh's first female prime minister, which prompted an overwhelming expression of public respect across political lines.



### Posts claiming the spread of mis/disinformation by others (1.61k posts)

Users frequently engage by offering corrections, warning others about rumors, reflecting on the media's and AI's role in information distortion, and accusing political rivals of propagating falsehoods.

There has been a strong and sustained pushback against Indian media outlets and India-originating accounts perceived to be spreading misinformation about Bangladesh. This response stands in contrast to broader anti-Indian sentiment, as available evidence points to instances of mis/disinformation and [coordinated information manipulation](#) originating from India-based accounts, particularly on X.

During this period a prominent theme across the observed posts is the strong accusation leveled against Jamaat for spreading lies, rumors, and distorted narratives. This suggests an effort by Jamaat and its affiliates to manufacture a false narrative aimed at portraying the party favorably and exaggerating its popularity among the general public.

In addition, some posts highlight religious duties in Islam to avoid spreading falsehoods, while others feature direct responses from Jamaat leaders to the accusations they face. This online conversation underscores the existing real-world tensions surrounding Jamaat's claims. It also reflects a wider caution and distrust toward Jamaat's conservative political stance among political activists, commentators, journalists, and the general public.

20 November 2025

তথ্য শেয়ার করার আগে ভেরিফাই করুন। যাচাইহীন শেয়ার—অপপ্রচার, গুজবের ইন্ধন ও গুনাহের পথ। মুসলিম কখনও গুজবের মাইক হয় না।

হে ঈমানদারগণ, যদি কোন ফাসিক তোমাদের কাছে কোন সংবাদ নিয়ে আসে, তাহলে তোমরা তা যাচাই করে নাও।

কোন লোকের মিথ্যাবাদী হওয়ার জন্য এতটুকুই যথেষ্ট যে, সে যা শুনে (সত্যতা যাচাই না করে) তা-ই বলে বেড়ায়।

53K 2.4K comments 2.8K shares

The post encourages individuals to confirm the accuracy of information before sharing it, noting the prevalence of propaganda and rumors. It further advises that Muslims, in particular, should refrain from being propagators of unverified information.

# IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS

The upcoming elections in Bangladesh will take place within a highly volatile digital landscape, as revealed by the analysis. This environment, characterized by intense polarization, disputes over legitimacy, and narrative manipulation, poses significant risks to the integrity of the electoral process. Social media is now the main platform where political actors operate, seeking to influence public opinion not only by mobilizing support but also by shaping perceptions of reality, authority, and democratic legitimacy.

A key concern is the proliferation of mis- and disinformation, politicized hate speech, and narratives alleging foreign interference. Specifically, content that challenges the legitimacy of the interim government and frames the July 2024 uprising as propaganda is eroding public trust in institutions and the election itself. As the polls draw nearer, this type of emotionally charged, short-form content is expected to escalate, likely leading to voter confusion, disengagement, and a reduction in meaningful policy debate regarding accountability and reform.

The digital harms identified during the election period extend beyond mere information integrity, threatening social cohesion and physical security. Ongoing attacks targeting religious communities, xenophobic rhetoric, and dehumanizing political discourse raise the risk that online hostilities could spill into physical intimidation, confrontation, or violence, especially during volatile moments in the political calendar.

Despite these risks, online spaces also offer avenues for resilience. The presence of widely shared content promoting peace, calls for de-escalation, and public efforts to debunk rumors demonstrates this potential. Therefore, the analysis underscores the critical need for coordinated monitoring, rapid response mechanisms, and collaboration among civil society, media, regulators, and platforms ahead of the elections. This is essential to ensure that digital environments support, rather than undermine, civic integrity during this crucial democratic transition.

Overall, the findings underscore the need to treat digital harms as a core electoral risk, rather than a peripheral issue. Sustained monitoring, cross-sector collaboration, and context-sensitive responses are essential to mitigating risks and strengthening public confidence ahead of the elections. Strengthening collaboration among civil society organizations, independent media, and fact-checking initiatives can enable more effective monitoring and early detection of harmful narratives, while reducing fragmented or duplicative responses. In parallel, clearer and more consistent regulatory approaches, developed through meaningful consultation with civil society and paired with proactive engagement with social media platforms, are essential to ensuring accountability while safeguarding legitimate political expression.

Looking ahead, investment in civil society capacity and public education will be critical to mitigating digital harms and supporting a more informed electorate. Equipping organizations with the tools and skills to analyze online narratives, document digital harms, and

communicate responsibly can strengthen evidence-based responses and early warning mechanisms. At the societal level, promoting digital literacy, verification practices, and respectful online engagement can help reduce the amplification of polarizing and violent content. Taken together, these measures highlight that addressing digital harms must be treated as a core component of election preparedness. Proactive and coordinated engagement with the online information environment will be essential to safeguarding civic space, reinforcing public trust, and supporting a more credible and peaceful electoral transition in Bangladesh.



Build Up is an international non-profit organisation that uses new tools for old problems, and old tools for new problems. We implement programs, conduct research, and develop technical solutions to engage with conflict and build societies in which everyone can thrive. We are a digital-first organization, which means we both use digital technologies throughout our peacebuilding work and deeply understand the impact of technology on conflict. [Find out more about the team and our work here.](#)