

GOOGLE RELEASES \$1 MILLION TO COMBAT FAKE NEWS IN INDIA

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Tech major Google has announced a \$1 million Google.org grant that will help Internews, a non-profit organisation that empowers people worldwide with trustworthy, high-quality news and information, launch a new initiative promoting news literacy among the Indian public.

As per Google, the funding support will be part of Google.org's broader, \$10 million commitment to media literacy, in collaboration with the Google News Initiative (GNI), whose India Training Network comprises 240 senior Indian reporters and journalism educators, has been working to counteract fake in their newsrooms and beyond.

As part of the exercise, Internews will select a team of 250 journalists, fact checkers, academics and NGO workers, who will be trained on a curriculum developed by global and Indian experts, adapted to local needs and available in seven Indian languages.

The training will also be extended to new Internet users in non-metro cities in the country, to help them effectively navigate the internet and assess the information they want.

California-based Internews Inc. has already trained over 80,000 people in media skills across 70 countries.

In a mission to build a more informed world, which is inherently tied to the reporting of journalists and news organisations, Google News Initiative has been working with the news industry to help journalism thrive in the digital age.

Indian journalist Bharat Nayak knows misinformation can have dangerous consequences. He's witnessed it too often in his home state of Jharkhand, India, says a post on india.googleblog.com.

"Indian society has been gravely affected by 'fake news', which has contributed to a rise in hatred and violence, and horrific incidences of lynching," said Nayak.

Concern about misinformation was especially pronounced around last year's Indian general election—where more than 600 million people voted in the biggest democratic exercise in history.

In partnership with DataLeads and Internews, the Network has provided in-depth verification training for more than 15,000 journalists and students from more than 875 news organisations, in 10 Indian languages. Using a "train-the-trainer" approach, it has also helped support nearly all of the fact-checking initiatives launched by Indian media over the past year.

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