**THE FAKE NEWS MESS**

The social media has indeed made the world a global village. But there are other facets of it as well. We have no control over the content that is being circulated on the social media and as well as on the traditional media. With the advent of technology and in this era of digitization, proliferation of fake news has become facile. Have you ever pondered and made an effort to check the authenticity of the news before sharing it with other people? The answer is ‘No.’ Most people are prompted to believe whatever they read.

**What is Fake News?**

Fake news is deliberately created to misinform or deceive readers. It is centered around the two notions: mis-information and dis-information. Mis-information is the piece of information that makes false claims while dis-information is spread with the intent of either maligning or glorifying something.

There are areas that are closely related to the fake news problem: Rumor Detection, Truth Discovery, Clickbait Detection, and Spammer and Bot Detection.

**THE FAKE NEWS PROBLEM: Why is it a matter of concern?**

Now-a-days, it is quite easy to spread any news and it becomes a sensation in no time. The problem of fake news has been prevalent for several years, but it came into picture predominantly during the 2016 US Elections. Detecting fake news is a challenging task in itself as we cannot differentiate between the fake and authentic news just by reading it.

The dissemination of this false information poses potential threats to the world as they tend to polarize the opinions of the society. Fake News is often spread by the political parties to entice the voters in their favor by maligning their rivals. As reported by the Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA), about 18 fake news stories stirred mob lynching in India that claimed the lives of 23 individuals in 2018. Looking at its repercussions, it is necessary that we monitor the circulation of such falsified information before its impact on the society turns grim.

**FAKE NEWS DETECTION: Curbing the menace and the challenges ahead**

The need of the hour is to develop an automated method to detect fake news which will enable millions to receive news stories that are accurate, authentic and reliable. But how can we identify the real news from this clutter of fake news?

In this battle against fake news, researchers and organizations are trying to devise Artificial Intelligence driven methodologies that can help detect the false information. Many fact checking websites and extensions like Politifact, Media Bias Fact Check, Snopes, etc. do exist but the problem with them is that the facts can be validated only if external sources are available. Thus, fact checking tools are not reliable for just published news stories.

In the recent times, most of the research on fake news detection is being focused on the use of Natural Language Processing techniques for analyzing the textual features of the news. Using these features, machine learning and deep learning algorithms are applied for classification. Sentiment analysis, Psycholinguistic features and network-based methods are being used extensively in this direction. However, the efficacy of such models still remains contentious.

There is a lack of good quality data that clearly demarcates between legit and false stories which can be used for training our models. Also, the nuances of human language cannot be easily dealt by the machines. Therefore, it is challenging for our models to predict with 100% accuracy whether the news is fake or authentic and a totally technology led solution might not suffice in eradicating the fake news problem. Thus, an interdisciplinary effort is required to stop the spread of fake news.