Koo's Breakthrough Initiatives to Combat Misinformation Ahead of Election Results

National, March 04, 2022 - As a multi-language micro-blogging platform, Koo encourages sharing of thoughts and opinions across 10 languages and on a wide range of interests. Politics - like sports, entertainment, poetry and spirituality - garners considerable attention from users and creators on the platform, who indulge in free-wheeling conversations, debates and discussions with leaders and political parties on a real-time basis. Before and during the 2022 Legislative Assembly Elections in the five states, the platform witnessed significant momentum, with leaders and political parties Kooing extensively to build up voter sentiment and connecting with their electorates in their local language. Social media platforms took on an additional importance when election rallies were forced to go online because of the pandemic.

However, often during polling, as well as during the counting of votes, there is usually a spike in the proliferation of misinformation and fake news on social media regarding candidates and political parties, which could lead to heightened passions and misbehavior by social media users. Misinformation not only interferes with the smooth functioning of the electoral process, but severely dents voter confidence and trust in a participative democracy.

As a neutral, transparent and reliable platform, Koo stands committed to free and fair elections and abides by the Election Commission of India (ECI) guidelines. Reiterating this commitment, Koo has initiated multiple breakthrough mechanisms which collectively work towards curbing the spread of malice and misinformation during elections, while augmenting voter literacy and confidence in the electoral process.

1.Koo Community Guidelines

Koo heralds content creators and encourages the free flow of information and dialogue to build a positive social ecosystem, thereby encouraging creativity and innovation. To empower users, especially first-time users, to curate more wholesome content, Koo has rolled out its [Community Guidelines](#) in all the 10 languages that are operational on the platform. These guidelines are attuned to the Indian context and way of thought, and detail the kind of conduct that is permissible or prohibited online, with a specific reference to fake news and misinformation. The guidelines sensitize users on verifying the credibility of information before sharing the same, while also refraining from calling out information as 'fake', without having adequate proof for the same.

2.Fact-Checking

As a social media intermediary which merely hosts and transmits content shared by users, Koo does not assess the accuracy of information or interfere with content in any manner, unless required by the law. Koo is committed to provide users with a safe, trustworthy and reliable interface, and thus enables users to have access to reputed third-party resources for the purpose of fact-checking. Some prominent fact-checkers that are listed are Press Information Bureau, Navbharat Times, Aaj Tak and Google Fact Check.

These fact-checkers listed on the platform offer their services in multiple languages to benefit Koo users from across the country. Koo does not endorse any fact-checker and users must read and understand policies on how fact-checking is initiated.

Since fake news is often proliferated by bots or spam accounts, Koo proactively monitors and restricts the actions of such accounts to limit misinformation. As of 15 February 2022 more than 1450 accounts, identifying themselves as news channels or journalists or being related to news in any manner, have been restricted due to spammy or unwarranted content.

3.Voluntary Code of Ethics

To safeguard conversations online related to the elections, Koo has embraced the 'Voluntary Code of Ethics' by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). The Code aspires to fair and ethical use of social media during elections. By adopting the Code, Koo assures users of its commitment to safe and fair elections, while ensuring accountability as a responsible social media platform. Koo is devoted to the letter and spirit of the Code, and adheres to the directions of the ECI to limit any violations of the electoral code.

To supplement its commitment to the Voluntary Code of Ethics, Koo has also supported campaigns for voter awareness including Votewaliselfie, Votewalalove, Pledge to Vote which have found significant traction on the platform.

4.Grievance Redressal Mechanism

Koo has in place a robust grievance redressal mechanism through a resident Grievance Officer. Through this mechanism, the platform ensures quick turnarounds - within 24 hours - for concerns that are raised, including those pertaining to fake news. Moreover, Koo's content moderation practice is aligned with Indian laws and carries a nuanced approach, which proactively moderates content that does not adhere to prevailing guidelines and enhances safety and transparency on the platform.

5.Koo Voters Guide - To Build Voter Awareness

In January 2022, in order to empower first-time voters with an understanding about their rights and responsibilities, and to enhance public confidence in the elections, the platform released the Koo Voters Guide. The Guide focuses on the basic rights of the Indian Voter as enshrined in the Constitution of India, and enumerates the responsibilities voters need to consider before and after casting their vote. It reflects the Koo App's efforts - as a transparent, unbiased and reliable social media intermediary - in enhancing voter awareness, and in building greater trust in the electoral process. Being a multi-language platform, the Guide is available in Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi and English to benefit voters from all the poll-bound states.

To download the Koo Voters Guide, click: -

English -https://info.kooapp.com/are-you-a-first-time-voter/

Hindi - https://info.kooapp.com/are-you-a-first-time-voter-hindi/

Punjabi - https://info.kooapp.com/are-you-a-first-time-voter-punjabi/

Marathi - https://info.kooapp.com/are-you-a-first-time-voter-marathi/

Koo stands committed to ensure that social media is leveraged in a positive manner to bring a positive change in the society.